



MERIDIAN
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

where the love of learning lives

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017

Contact Information

Main Office

(202) 387-9830

(202) 238-0036 (facsimile)

Website

www.meridian-dc.org

Locations

Elementary School (Grades PK3-6)

Meridian Public Charter School

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(202) 387-9830

Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Meridian Public Charter School

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2016-17 School Calendar

August

18 Back to School Night (5:00 pm Elem; 5:30 MS)

22 First day of school

September

5 NO SCHOOL – Labor Day

12 – 23 MAP Testing (K – 8)

15 Parent Involvement Event

30 NO SCHOOL – Teacher Professional Development

October

10 NO SCHOOL – Columbus Day

20 Parent Involvement Event

27 Family Fun Night

28 End of 1st Quarter

29 Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

November

4 NO SCHOOL – Parent Teacher Conferences

11 NO SCHOOL – Veteran's Day

17 International Day

Parent Involvement Event

18 Early Childhood Harvest

Thanksgiving Basket Drive

23 – 25 NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break

December

2 NO SCHOOL – Teacher Professional Development

15 Winter Concert (Elementary School)

16 Winter Concert (Middle School)

19 – 30 NO SCHOOL – Winter Break

January

2 NO SCHOOL – New Year's Day (Observed)

9 – 19 MAP Testing (K-8)

16 NO SCHOOL – MLK JR. Day

19 Parent Involvement Event

20 NO SCHOOL – Inauguration Day

27 End of 2nd Quarter

February

6 NO SCHOOL – Parent Teacher Conference

16 Parent Involvement Event

17 NO SCHOOL – Teacher Professional Development

20 NO SCHOOL – President's Day

24 Black History Month Celebration

March

- 2 Dr. Seuss Day
- 3 – 10 MAP Testing (K-8)
- 13 NO SCHOOL – Teacher Professional Development**
- 16 Parent Involvement Event
- 30 End of 3rd Quarter

April

- 13 Poetry Slam (Middle School)
- 14 NO SCHOOL** (Tentative – Snow make-up day, if needed)
- 17 – 21 NO SCHOOL – Spring Break**
- 27 Parent Involvement Event

May

- 1 – 18 PARCC Assessments (3 – 8)**
- 19 NO SCHOOL – Parent Teacher Conference**
- 29 NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day**

June

- 2 8th Grade Celebration/Dance
- 12 End of 4th Quarter
- 13 8th Grade Promotion
- 15 Kindergarten Promotion
- 16 Last Day of School**

**Calendar subject to change*

I. About Meridian Public Charter School

Mission Statement

Meridian Public Charter School is a rigorous Pre-K to 8th grade school, which academically and socially prepares its diverse student population to be successful in an increasingly global and technology-based society.

History

Meridian Public Charter School was founded in 1999 by a group of dedicated individuals who shared a common belief that they could improve the lives of the children who reside in the District of Columbia. With this belief, Meridian Public Charter School opened to one hundred students in Pre-Kindergarten through Third Grade. The group quickly recognized that students would be better served if they started school earlier. This thought was the driving force of expanding our student body to include three-year-old students. Each year Meridian added one grade to accommodate the progression of our third graders until we reached 8th grade.

Meridian is managed by a Board of Directors of which many were the original founders of the school and long standing leadership team. Under this leadership, Meridian was accredited in 2006 by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, Meridian has made substantial gains in reading and mathematics and has been named a Top School in the District of Columbia.

Meridian Public Charter School now serves over six hundred students from age 3 through 8th grade. Our school boasts a rich history and has been the cornerstone of the community for many years.

Accountability Agreement

It takes a village.

The following is a contract between parents, students and the school. Meridian recognizes that in order for true learning to take place, there must be a partnership between home and school.

AS TEACHERS OF MERIDIAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, WE WILL:

- Provide a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Ensure effective learning experiences.
- Promote high expectations for student's achievement, responsibility and behavior.
- Establish and maintain open communication with students and parents.
- Meet individual student's educational needs.
- Comply with school, local, district and federal policies.

AS ADMINISTRATORS OF MERIDIAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL WE WILL:

- Provide high quality, well-articulated, standards-based, curriculum.
- Establish a learning environment that is nurturing, mutually respectful, and includes appropriate resources and materials.
- Keep parents/guardians informed of student's academic progress.
- Support the partnership between parents, students, staff and community.

AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN, I WILL:

- Make sure my child attends school daily and on time.
- Ensure my child is prepared for school (sleep, breakfast, dressed appropriately in the school uniform).
- Communicate daily with my child about schoolwork.
- Support the school's vision and mission for academic success.

- Promote high expectations for my child's behavior and academic achievement.
- Maintain open communication and participate in decisions regarding my child's progress.

Meridian Code of Values

Responsibility

At the Meridian Public Charter School, students will learn to fulfill obligations and duties even when it is difficult to do so. Responsibility entails order – putting things back where they belong and taking care of personal property and common spaces. Vandalism, graffiti, or littering is not tolerated at the school. Responsibility means doing one's homework neatly, completely, and in a timely fashion. It also means fulfilling obligations to others both inside and outside of the classroom.

Perseverance

Perseverance means that you learn to stick to a task until you get it done.

Respect

All members of our school community are encouraged to interact in a warm and friendly manner. Students are expected to demonstrate respect by walking quietly in the halls, without pushing, shoving, or hitting others. Respect for others begins with respect for one's self. This is shown in how you dress and behave both at school and at home – including wearing uniforms daily. Respect for one's self and others is part of building strong personal character.

All members of the student body and staff are expected to be respectful to each other. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

Compassion

At Meridian, students will learn to care for others. Caring about one's classmates is a building block for strong school spirit. Caring is being generous and remembering the generosity of others.

Honesty

Telling the truth is essential to all communications. Cheating, stealing, lying or other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be honest at all times.

Cooperation

Working effectively with others is an important part of success. Students are expected to collaborate and work with their peers when appropriate.

Courage

Courage is mental or moral strength to withstand danger, fear or difficulty. At Meridian, students are encouraged to be courageous when faced with adversity.

Self-discipline

Self-discipline means controlling one's behavior and emotions for the purpose of self-improvement. Self-discipline leads to self-control, which is essential to building strong character.

Fairness

Fairness means free from bias or injustice. At Meridian, teachers and students are encouraged to treat others the way they would like to be treated.

Loyalty

Loyalty is allegiance to a person, country, group or cause. Developing loyalty to our friends and family is part of growing up. You will have the opportunity to meet many good friends at the Meridian Public Charter School.

II. General Policies

Enrollment

Students must have all enrollment information completed and turned in prior to a student attending school; it is imperative that all information is correct. Students without proper contact information will receive notice at home for correction.

Students are considered enrolled upon completing the school's enrollment process and proving residency. The enrollment process will be shared with families annually. Students may not enroll in more than one school at the same time in the District of Columbia.

Residency

All students must prove DC residency during the designated enrollment slot for each student. If there are any residency disputes, the parent/guardian has three (3) calendar days to submit the additional documentation. If residency cannot be proven by this time, the child will automatically be un-enrolled. DC residency must be proven by the legal guardian. If anyone besides the birth mother or birth father is proving residency, legal documentation must be submitted proving guardianship. Meridian will initiate a residency investigation upon receiving evidence that a family is not living in the District of Columbia.

Emergency Contact Information

All students must have Emergency Contact Information on file, listing the names and phone numbers of any adults (18 or older) who may be contacted in the case of an emergency. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep this information accurate and current. Students and/or student records will not be released to any individual not listed on the Emergency Contact Information. Changes and/or updates to the Emergency Contact Information must be done in writing by the primary parent/guardian. Verbal changes will not be accepted.

Transfer or Withdrawal of Student

Students may withdraw from Meridian PCS during the school, before the school year or after the school year. Students who wish to withdraw must complete the Withdrawal Form, return all assigned textbooks, and pay all outstanding school fees. A parent or guardian of record is required to come to the school and sign the necessary forms for a Student withdrawal or transfer from MERIDIAN PCS. Parents/Guardians must provide proof of enrollment in a subsequent school within ten (10) calendar days. Failure to do so will result in the student being considered truant. Proper truancy protocols will be followed.

Students who withdraw from Meridian at any point may not re-enroll during the same school year. Students must begin the enrollment process as new students for subsequent school years and follow enrollment and lottery protocols.

Re-Enrollment Deadline

In December of each year, we will announce our re-enrollment period for eligible returning Students who have first rights to reserve a space for the next school year. We will announce the re-enrollment process and deadlines via community flyers, letters sent home, website updates, Power Announcements® and other communications. Please adhere to the deadline so that we may welcome your children back for the upcoming school year. Once we start our admissions process to admit new Students, your child will forfeit his/her space if s/he has not officially re-enrolled by submitting necessary documentation.

Homeless Students/ McKinney-Vento

Meridian provides services for students who qualify as homeless under the McKinney Vento Act. Families receive information on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act annually. The school's McKinney-Vento liaison acts as the main point of contact for families and government agencies. Referrals may be made to the school's social worker or McKinney-Vento liaison.

The McKinney-Vento liaison annually informs staff and parents/guardians of steps to take when referring a child for assessment, common signs of homelessness, and services that will be made available to all identified students. Referrals and assessments will be on-going throughout the year. Once a student is successfully identified, the liaison—in cooperation with school staff—ensures and records that all services are being rendered to the student if need is presented; Metro cards, uniforms, and supplies will be handled through the office of the liaison. All students, regardless of situation, are tracked academically through their principal and/or social worker. If a student is identified for having an IEP, through the statewide database system, they will receive Special Education in a timely manner from the Special Education Department. On a quarterly basis, the McKinney-Vento liaison will check in with all students identified as homeless to verify that services are being provided. If, at any time, a disciplinary hearing is required due to an identified student's actions, the liaison will sit in on the meeting to verify that those actions were not as a result of their living situation.

All identified students will be re-assessed annually, unless a change in living situation is presented to the school.

Damaged, lost or stolen items

Meridian is not responsible for any student personal property or school issued materials to a student that are damaged, lost or stolen. Students should only bring necessary school supplies with them to school. Meridian strongly discourages students from bringing in costly items such as electronics, jewelry, or toys. The school will not reimburse students for damaged, lost or stolen items.

Grievance/ Complaint Policy

Meridian values the input of students, parents and guardians, and encourages parents to offer feedback on any aspect of the school program. A quality educational program for students at MERIDIAN PCS can be achieved best by all individuals working together harmoniously. There will be times, however, when an individual may feel the need to file a complaint. When complaints or concerns occur, they should be resolved at the school or at the lowest possible administrative level through an informal process of cooperative agreement among the affected individuals.

However, when the informal process fails to provide resolution, an individual is entitled to file a formal complaint and seek a review of any administrative decisions made by school system staff members. Complaints and concerns should be initially directed to the following individuals:

- Teacher (if appropriate)
- Student Dean
- Principal

Formal Complaint Process

When a concern or complaint is not resolved through the informal process, you may initiate the formal complaint process outlined below.

The first step in the formal process is to obtain a Formal Complaint Form from the school's website and return it to the student's Dean and/or Assistant Principal. You may attach descriptive or supportive information to the form. Keep a copy of the form and any attachments.

When your complaint form is received at the school, the Student's Dean and/or Assistant Principal or designee should contact you within three (3) school days to establish the date, time and place of a meeting to discuss your concern, if such a meeting has not already occurred. Usually, this meeting will take place within ten (10) school days. Within 10 school days of receipt of the written complaint, or this meeting, if any, the Student Dean and/or Principal should respond to you in writing with a decision.

Sometimes a complaint or its resolution may be too complicated or, for other reasons, cannot be decided within 10 school days. In such cases, the Student Dean and/or Principal or designee will contact you within the first 10 days and arrange for an extension of the decision for no more than an additional 10 school days.

If you are not satisfied with the written decision, or if you do not receive a reply to your formal complaint within the specified time, you may request that your complaint be considered by the Head of School. You must file your request for review within 15 calendar days of the Student Dean/Principal/ Assistant Principal response or the date when a decision was to have been made.

If you wish to request a review, forward the Complaint Form to Head of School, with a note explaining the basis for disagreeing with the decision. The Head of School will respond, using a procedure and time limits similar to those followed by the Student Dean/ Principal, as follows: (a) a meeting may be arranged within 3 work days; (b) a resolution on the review within 10 work days after the meeting, if any; and (c) an extension of an additional 10 work days if the matter is unusually complicated or otherwise requires additional time. The Head of School or his /her designee may respond by phone or in writing.

All formal grievances must abide by the school's grievance policy available on the school's website.

If you feel your complaint, whether administrative or programmatic, is not addressed properly at the school level, you may file a complaint with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). The most current OSSE complaint form can be found at:

http://osse.dc.gov/seo/frames.asp?doc=/seo/lib/seo/assessment_and_accountability/OSSE_ESEA_Complaint_Policy.pdf

If you have a concern or grievance that you wish to share with Board of Trustees, please contact the Chair of the Board.

School Meals

Access to healthy foods is an important factor leading to academic success. Meridian strives to provide nutritious meals and snacks to our students before, during, and after school through a comprehensive school meal program. Meridian participates in the National School Lunch program and serves both breakfast and lunch to all students.

Schools are required to increase participation in the meal programs through development of a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan that may include flyers, home mailings, or website advertisements. This should include efforts to reach beyond the local school community, including encouraging greater community coalitions. This also may include creating after-school cooking clubs for families, more parent workshops, community/school gardens, and providing wellness resources to families.

All families are required to fill out the “Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application” to determine their eligibility for free or reduced-price lunches before Friday, September 26, 2015. This form does not carry over from the prior school year. Parents must complete and sign a new form each school year. New Students enter on a “full pay” basis until they turn in their form and receive a letter indicating the disposition.

Breakfast

Meridian will continue to operate a universal “Free for All” School Breakfast Program. Meridian has implemented the “grab and go” model for middle school students. Breakfast is served from 7:30 – 7:50am at the elementary school and 7:55 am – 8:15 am at the middle school.

Lunch

Meridian will ensure that all students will be served free lunches. Meridian will provide a minimum of 30 minutes to eat lunch.

After School Snacks

After-school snacks, when offered, will contribute to children’s diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Schools serving after-schools snacks will comply with the requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

Nutritional Quality of School Meals

All meals served must meet the requirements of the DC Healthy School Act and the National School Lunch Program.

Meridian will offer a specialized meal for any students that have religious, dietary or medical restrictions. Meridian will also post menus, ingredients, and food origins information in school offices and on school websites to help students and families learn more about the breakfast and lunch options at school.

Meridian will prohibit students’ ability to leave campus to obtain fast food for lunch or other meals. We ask parents to refrain from bringing fast food lunch to school for their students. Removing students from the school building at midday for lunch is a disruption to the school day. Parents will be required to follow the school’s early dismissal policy.

School Materials

The school provides a variety of materials to aid students’ learning. Students must use these items with care and respect, as they and their parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of any school property that is lost or damaged. Students purchase their own notebooks, folders, pens, pencils, paper, and other necessary school supplies.

Student Fees

Student fees accumulated during any school year must be paid in full to receive final report cards, transcripts, or school records when graduating, withdrawing or transferring a student. Students at terminal grades with an

outstanding balance will not be allowed to participate in promotion activities. If students have outstanding bills, they may not be able to participate in school activities throughout the school year or subsequent school years.

Families receive updates of student account bills throughout the school year. Student fees are assessed for the following:

- Textbooks
- Lunch bill
- School uniforms
- School IDs
- School supplies
- Student consumables (workbooks, novels, lab materials, any other supply provided to a student).
- School issued electronic devices used by the student (laptop, e-reader, tablet, etc.)
- Student field trips
- Any other item where a fee is assessed by the school

Video/ Audio Recording

Video and audio recording of events not open to the public involving a) school employees carrying out their school-related duties, and/or b) students, and/or c) parents and/or d) others involved in school-related business, including but in no way limited to meetings between parents and teachers/administrators, IEP team meetings and other special education – related meetings, meetings between or among administrators and school employees and/or meetings between or among school employees only and/or meetings between or among administrators only shall not be permitted.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Executive Director in her/his sole and exclusive judgment. Prior written requests to video or audio record events as aforesaid must be made to the Head of School at least 48 hours prior to the event that the requestor seeks to video or audio record. Such permission should only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and where doing so will be in the best interests of MERIDIAN PCS in pursuing its educational mission and in the best interests of students. If permission is granted to video and/or audio record an event, under no circumstances may any recording of any kind whatsoever be made public, posted on the internet, or sold.

Nothing herein shall be interpreted to prohibit any person from video or audio recording any school-related event which is open to the general public, including but not limited to athletic contest, fine arts performances, debate tournament, etc. A person may not profit directly or indirectly from the recording of any such public event by selling or posting such recordings on the internet for a fee.

Video Surveillance

Meridian is secured with video surveillance equipment. Video cameras record and monitor school activity before, during, and after school. Students and/or visitors to the building should not have the assumed right to privacy. Video footage will be reviewed as deemed necessary by school administration, Deans, and/or security. Video footage is the property of Meridian and will not be released except to law enforcement. To ensure the privacy of all students, the school will not honor any requests to view video footage by anyone except law enforcement.

III. Parent Involvement

Parent Involvement Plan

MERIDIAN PCS strives to build strong relationships with parents and guardians. Parents who are interested in volunteering at our school or contributing their time or talents to assist other families are encouraged to contact the Principal and/or sign up to join the Meridian Family Association.

Parent Advisory Council

As a Title I school, Meridian PCS is required to have a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to regularly consult with parents regarding the use of Title I funds in the school. The overall goal is to insure that parents are involved in school life, and to support active partnership with other members of the school community. PACs are involved in the development of the school's Title I Parent Involvement Plan. Schools are required to hold regular meetings at a time convenient for parents, including an annual meeting where information about Title I funded programs and other related issues are discussed and shared.

Meridian's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) has three main goals:

1. To establish a network of parents to disseminate pertinent information to share common strategies to encourage greater parent participation in the Meridian community
2. To identify successful best practices from other sources that can become models for parent involvement programs at Meridian.
3. To empower parents with skills and knowledge to become advocates for Title I Students at Meridian.

IV. Meridian Policies

A. Visitor Policy

All visitors to the building are to sign the Visitors' Log at the receptionist's desk and must show a valid ID. The receptionist will issue a visitors' pass to the visitor. This pass must be worn at all times while at Meridian. This policy is strictly enforced for the safety of our children. Visitors will not be allowed in the classrooms without the visitor's pass. Upon departure, all visitors should sign out with the receptionist.

We ask that guests make appointments to see teachers. If you need to speak with a teacher, please contact the teacher by phone, email, or leave a message at the receptionist's desk.

Any visitor who interferes with the work of students or employees of Meridian will be asked to leave immediately. Any visitor wishing to visit a current student must be included on the student's Emergency Contact Form. The school will not allow anyone to see a student if he/she is not included on the form. Any changes to the Emergency Contact Form must be done so in writing from the parent/guardian listed as the primary contact for the student.

B. Attendance Policy

Daily attendance is a vital aspect of student success. It is important that students are present and on time every day of school. The Compulsory Attendance Law of the District of Columbia requires children from age 5 to 18 to enroll in and attend school regularly. If your child is aged 3 or 4, it is important to understand that enrolling your child in Meridian Public Charter School means that you have enrolled your child in an educational program. Your child is expected to attend school every day.

- Our elementary school day begins at 7:30 am and ends at 3:00 pm.
- Our middle school day begins at 7:50 am and ends at 3:25pm.

Students are expected to attend school every day that we are in session. Families are expected to ensure that their student is in school. Attending school every day and on time is critically important and has a huge impact on your child's academic success. We ask that families not schedule vacations or nonemergency appointments during school time.

Students at Meridian are expected to:

- Arrive to school on time
- Be prepared for class with supplies and books
- Ask your teacher for missed assignments after an absence
- Seek assistance from staff if you have trouble getting to school

Students who are absent from school are not permitted to:

- Be on school property
- Participate in school activities
- Attend school activities and/or after school activities

Excused Absences

Excused absences count towards a student's total absences. All excused absences must be documented within **5 calendar days of the absence**. The following absences are considered excused absences.

- Death in the student's immediate family (verification required);

- Illness of the student (a doctor's certificate is required for a student absent more than two consecutive days);
- Observance of a religious holiday;
- Out-of-School Suspension or In-School Suspension;
- Medical reasons such as a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note should be provided when the student returns to school);
- Failure of the District of Columbia to provide transportation in cases where the District of Columbia has a legal responsibility for the transportation of the student;
- Absences to allow students of military to visit with their parent or legal guardian immediately before, during, and after deployment, as appropriate;
Other absences approved **in advance** by the Meridian administration upon the written request of a parent/guardian;
- Student employment or related absences are **not** excused absences.

Documenting an Excused Absence

When a student returns to school after an absence, s/he should bring a note to the Attendance Officer within five (5) days. The note should include the date(s) of the absence, the reason for the absence, and any required documentation. ***An original doctor's certificate should be provided for medical appointments scheduled during the school day or absences due to illness totaling three or more days.***

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are when students are absent from school without a valid excuse, with or without parental approval. Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Doing errands
- Cutting classes
- Shopping
- Oversleeping
- Babysitting

Consequences of Absences

We understand that children get sick and that emergencies come up, but good attendance is critical to their education. Please be aware that the following are part of the Meridian attendance policy:

- If a student has 20 or more unexcused absences (consecutive), s/he will be automatically un-enrolled.
- Students who are un-enrolled will not be eligible to return to Meridian for the school year in which they were un-enrolled. If an un-enrolled student wants to return to Meridian for the next school year, s/he will need to reapply through the normal admissions process. Information about the admissions process will be available on the school's website.

Arrival and Dismissal

Elementary School

Parents should not drop off their children before 7:30 a.m. unless they are enrolled in Before Care. Upon arrival, students will go directly to the cafeteria. Breakfast is from 7:30 a.m. – 7:50 a.m. and students shall be seated in

their classroom ready for work at 8:00 a.m. Students will not be allowed to enter into the building or loiter in the receptionist area until breakfast is served.

Students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. following a staggered dismissal plan shared with families annually. After dismissal, students will not be allowed to re-enter into the school. All students who participate in any extracurricular activities or after-care will be picked up and escorted by their teachers/instructors.

Middle School

Students will be allowed to enter the school at 7:30 am unless they are participating in the Before Care program. Upon arrival, students will go directly to the cafeteria. Breakfast is from 7:55 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and students shall be seated in their classroom ready for work at 8:25 a.m. Students will not be allowed to enter into the building or loiter in the receptionist area until breakfast is served.

Students are dismissed at 3:25 p.m. After dismissal, students will not be allowed to re-enter into the school. All students who participate in any extracurricular activities or after-care will be picked up and escorted by their teachers/instructors. The purpose of this routine is to establish order. Also, it is important that each teacher supervises his or her class in order to promote an orderly environment.

Medical Appointments

Parents/guardians are discouraged from making medical appointments during the school day. If a student must attend a medical appointment, the parent/guardian must pick the student up from school.

Students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds without the physical presence of a parent/guardian to sign them out of school in the main office.

Late Students

If a student misses 26% to 59% (arrival between 9:59am - 12:10pm) of the school day the student will receive a half-day absence. If he/she misses 60% (arrival after 12:10pm) of the day, the student will receive an unexcused absence for the full day.

Early Dismissal

Students must have signed transportation forms on file stating how they are to be dismissed. Written documentation must be provided by a parent/guardian if a student needs to leave in a different manner. If a student needs to leave early for the day, advanced notification is appreciated. Students should not leave school before dismissal on a regular basis. If a parent comes to pick up a child after 2:30pm but before dismissal, they may be asked to wait. If the parent/guardian or other approved dismissal party will be late because of an emergency, please contact the school office as soon as possible. Traffic is an ongoing challenge in our communities – please exercise caution, civility, and patience.

In the rare event that a student needs an early dismissal, the following procedures must be followed:

- A parent/guardian must send documentation in writing to the attendance officer. The attendance officer will verify the documentation and approve or deny the early dismissal.
- The student will be considered excused if the dismissal is for a reason that is in accordance with the excused absence policy.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day, Meridian's on-site nurse may be able to address the student's needs. If a student is too ill to remain in school and needs to leave school, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Early dismissals are only granted when requested from a parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts that are documented during the enrollment process.

Students are not allowed to leave school by telephone request or written note alone.

Teachers will ensure that the receptionist has a schedule of conferences or meetings. Visitors who request to meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal must make an appointment with the school secretary. While we will make every effort to accommodate your request as soon as possible, our priority is to ensure that our teachers are providing uninterrupted instruction to students. Please allow up to 24 hours for a teacher to respond to your request.

The procedures outlined are established to minimize the disruption to the instructional program and daily routine of the school.

C. Truancy Policy

Definition

Truancy is the willful absence from school by a minor (5–18 years of age) with or without parental approval, knowledge, or consent.

A truant is a minor (5–18 years of age) who, without a valid reason and with or without parental knowledge or consent, does not attend school. A truant is defined as any student who accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences in one school year. Students between the ages of 14 and 18 who accumulate 15 or more absences will be referred to DC Court Services for truancy. Students under the age of 14 will be reported to CFSA, per District of Columbia policy.

Further, students who are chronically tardy and absent may be subject to the following responses:

- Family meeting to address student needs
- Home visits by school support staff
- Parents of students with **five (5)** unexcused absences will be requested to participate in a truancy conference and referred to the Student Support Team
- Students with seven **(7)** unexcused absences will receive a Metropolitan Police Department/Meridian PCS notification letter
- Parents of students with ten **(10)** total absences – excused or unexcused will be requested to participate in an Attendance Conference (SST) and will be referred to the Office of State Superintendent of Education
- Students ages 5-13 with ten **(10)** unexcused absences will be referred to the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) for suspected educational neglect
- Students ages 14-17 with fifteen **(15)** unexcused absences will be referred to Court Social Services
- Students ages 5-13 with fifteen **(15)** unexcused absences will be referred to Office of Attorney General
- Course grades or year-end promotion may be affected by unexcused absences
- Students with twenty **(20)** consecutive days of absence will be dropped from the school's roster.

Truancy Enforcement

All uniformed law enforcement officers in the District are responsible for truancy enforcement.

- If a truant is picked up by the police, s/he will be transported in a police vehicle to the school.
- Parents/guardians are notified of the student's truancy status.
- Parents/guardians and students may be required to attend a truancy conference.

D. Anti-Bullying Policy

At Meridian Public Charter School, the administration and staff create policies and procedures to create a safe learning environment that promotes positivity, community, acceptance, and respect. Acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation are an attack on the core values Meridian strives to instill in our students. Therefore, we have instituted a bullying prevention policy to investigate all incidents of bullying and issue appropriate consequences for those that bully and remedies for victims of a bullying incident.

Meridian Public Charter School defines bullying as pervasive or persistent physical, verbal, or electronic contact that interferes with a student's physical/mental health, academic performance, or ability to participate in school activities. These comments or actions are typically based on a student's race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sex, age, appearance, sexual orientation, gender identification or expression, intellectual ability, political affiliation, family, or disability—whether these characteristics are actual or perceived.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power where one person repeatedly acts to harm another person by:

- Placing a person in reasonable fear of physical harm to his/her person or property.
- Causing a substantial detrimental effect on a person's physical or mental health.
- Substantially interferes with a student's academic performance or attendance.
- Substantially interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges provided by Meridian Public Charter School.

Acts of bullying are prohibited on school grounds and school sponsored events. Students may also report incidents of bullying that occur in the immediate area surrounding the school or while in transit, to and from school.

Behaviors that can escalate into bullying include but are not limited to:

Verbal	Physical	Social	Electronic
Teasing	Hitting	Purposefully excluding peers	Mean/threatening messages sent via text, email, or social media
Taunting	Pushing	Spreading rumors	Rumors sent via text, email, or social media
Threatening	Kicking	Public embarrassment	Posting/sending embarrassing pictures or videos on social media
Sexual comments	Punching	Instigating	

Any student that believes that they are being bullied should report the problem to a teacher or any staff member. Additionally, parents/guardians that witness bullying should report it to a Meridian Public Charter School staff member. Retaliation against a person who reports a bullying incident or provides information about a bullying incident is prohibited.

When an act of bullying is reported:

- Staff will ensure the student being bullied is in no immediate danger.
- Parents/guardians of all involved will be notified of the incident report and informed that an investigation will be conducted to determine if the incident is an act of bullying.
- An investigation will be made to determine if bullying occurred or if the incident was simply a conflict.

The investigation will include interviews of students, parents, teachers, and witnesses.

- A determination will be made by the school administration as to whether the reported incident involved bullying.
- Parents will be notified of the outcome of investigation.
- Regardless of outcome of the investigation, mediation between students will take place.

Consequences would be determined on a case-by-case basis, with the desired outcomes being:

1. The student that was being bullied no longer is bullied and feels safe and comfortable in school.
2. The student who bullied makes restitution and no longer exhibits bullying behaviors.

Bullying at Meridian is a Tier 4 infraction and can result in a variety of consequences. Progressive disciplinary actions, consistent with Meridian's Code of Conduct will be applied. The following list of consequences serves as a guide to available responses to bullying, including but not limited to:

- Temporary removal from class
- Lunch detention
- After school detention
- Parent contact/conference
- Behavior contract
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Police referral

Meridian takes a proactive approach to prevent bullying. We promote positive behavior and positive school culture with our Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), character education and promotion of the school's code of values which include: responsibility, perseverance, respect, compassion, honesty, cooperation, courage, self-discipline, fairness, and loyalty.

E. Uniform Policy

Meridian Public Charter School employs a uniform policy that is strictly enforced throughout the school year, including half days and birthdays.

Dress Code Requirements

Elementary School:

Females

- Navy blue, light blue, or white collared shirts
- Navy blue pants, shorts, or skirts
- Solid white or navy blue sweater
- Meridian fleece

Males

- Navy blue, light blue, or white collared shirts
- Navy blue pants or shorts
- Solid white or navy blue sweater
- Meridian fleece

Middle School:

Females

- Light blue collared shirts
- Navy blue pants, shorts, or skirts
- Solid white or navy blue sweater
- Meridian fleece

Males

- Navy blue, light blue, or white collared shirts
- Navy blue pants or shorts
- Solid white or navy blue sweater or sweatshirt
- Meridian fleece

For all students:

- All skirts and shorts must be to the knee, not above.
- Hats are prohibited.
- Students should wear closed-toed shoes. Open toed shoes and sandals are prohibited; they are not safe and may cause injury to the student.
- Hooded sweatshirts are considered outerwear, along with coats and jackets; and may not be worn to class or around the building.

F. Cafeteria Policy

Listed below are some rules and the cafeteria procedures, which will help ensure appropriate conduct and an orderly lunch period. Lunches may be brought with the student in the morning or purchased in the cafeteria. Lunch must be eaten in the designated areas at the designated times. Students may not leave campus for meals unless part of a predetermined field trip or school-sponsored activity.

1. Students should enter the cafeteria quietly, orderly, and be seated.
2. Respect and politeness must be shown to all, including the cafeteria staff, lunch helpers or volunteers.
3. Students' tables will be assigned by grade level. The adult in charge may allow students to change seating for good behavior.
4. No jackets, hats, or anything other than the student uniform may be worn during the lunch period.
5. Cell phones or other portable electronic devices are not to be used.
6. Students must be patient while waiting to be served. A single file line must be maintained while awaiting food.
7. No food may be brought back through the food service line once it has been purchased.
8. Students must be seated at a table when eating. Once seated, there is to be NO moving from your table without permission. Students should refrain from shouting across tables.
9. Students must remove trash from tables, chairs and the floor and wait for the trash can to be brought to them.
10. Throwing food, ice, or other objects is not allowed. Running, excessive noise, "horse play", or other disruptive behavior is not allowed. All unacceptable behavior will result in school detention and/or removal from the cafeteria for specified time period.

G. Student Health/ Welfare Policies

Ill Students

In order to maintain a healthy school, parents/guardians must not send their children to school with any contagious diseases such as the flu, strep throat, chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis (pink eye), ringworm, scabies, or lice. Students with any of these conditions will be sent home from school until they are no longer contagious. Parents must pick up their child within two hours of being notified that their child is sick with a contagious illness. Meridian may request that the parent/guardian provide a doctor's note showing that their child is no longer contagious. Please notify the front office if you discover that your child may have been exposed to a contagious disease.

Parent/guardians should not send their children to school within 24 hours of vomiting or running a fever of 100 degrees or higher. Students should not return to school until 24 – 36 hours after beginning the course of antibiotics.

Students who are ill should remain at home rather than attend school and risk infecting other Students. In the event that a Student becomes ill or is in need of first aid, the school nurse will be available during school hours. In all non-emergency situations, a Student will be permitted to go to the Health Office after he or she has been excused from the scheduled class or activity with a signed pass.

If the student is too ill to continue with the day's schedule, Meridian will contact the parent or guardian to make arrangements for the student to go home. School homework will be provided to the student. In all other cases, the student will be expected to return to class immediately after being seen by the nurse.

The following symptoms can help you determine when to keep your child home from school:

- An oral temperature of more than 100°
- Persistent cough
- Stomach ache
- Earache
- Diarrhea
- Red or Pink Eye
- Pale or flushed face
- Sore throat
- Loss of energy or sleep
- Headache
- Rash or infection of the skin
- Thick yellowish discharge from the nose
- Nausea or vomiting

Students must be symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. The school reserves the right to ask a parent for medical clearance from a doctor for a student to return to school.

The DC DOH does not permit students to remain at school if they have a communicable disease or symptoms of a communicable disease. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should notify the school's nurse within 24 hours after the student has developed a known or suspected communicable disease. If a student is found to have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease, a notice will be sent home indicating the disease and the nature of the illness. The names of the students will not be provided. All information about communicable diseases is confidential.

Communicable Diseases

The following communicable diseases must be posted or reported:

- Chicken pox/varicella
- Conjunctivitis, infectious (pink eye)
- Diarrhea: viral, parasitic or bacterial (e.g., E. coli, Salmonella, Shigella, Rotavirus, Norwalk agent, Enterovirus, Giardia)
- Diphtheria
- Fifth Disease/Erythema infectiosum
- Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

- Herpes simplex virus stomatitis (severe case of oral herpes)
- Impetigo
- Influenza (the flu)
- Lice
- Lyme Disease
- Measles
- Meningitis, viral or bacterial (e.g., meningococcus, enterovirus)
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Rabies
- Rubella
- Ringworm of scalp or body
- Scabies
- Stomach virus
- Strep throat/Scarlet fever
- Tuberculosis
- Typhoid Fever

Lice

Meridian will follow the guidelines of the American Pediatric Association for children with lice in school. Current recommendations do not recommend children are prohibited from school for lice. If your child has lice, we ask that the child is treated thoroughly. If additional nits/eggs are found, the child will need to return home for additional treatments. Please consult your child's pediatrician regarding the most effective treatments for lice removal.

Physical and Dental Examination Requirements

DC law requires that when a student attending public school in the District enters Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, and 11th grades, he or she must furnish the school with a certificate of health, completed and signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner within the calendar year immediately preceding the first day of the school year or the date of the student's enrollment in the school, whichever occurs later. The examination shall cover all items required by the certificate of health form for the student's particular age group. Meridian PCS is a public school and subject to this law.

Any student, in any grade, who participates in a sports activity is also required to provide a health certificate, completed and signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner, in order to participate.

Immunization Requirements

All children entering and attending school in DC, including Meridian, are required to show documented proof of complete, current, correctly-spaced immunizations, or proof of medical or religious exemption (Immunization of School Students Act of 1979 — DC Law 3-20 and DCMIR Title 22. Chapter 1). Students who do not have necessary documentation may not attend school. The list of immunizations required by the DC Department of Health is available from the DOH website www.doh.dc.gov.

Administration of Medicine

Meridian encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Ask your physician for a medication schedule that will accomplish this. In those few cases where this is

not possible, please bring in the medication to the school nurse. The medication needs to be in the original container with the appropriate prescription label and the appropriate Student Health Authorization for Administration of Medication Form. We store the medicine in a secure location in the nurse's office. We will administer the medication from the school nurse's office. Please be aware the medication cannot travel back and forth to school – once it's given to us for your child's use, it must remain with us until it needs to be refilled. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to ask for two separate prescriptions when at the doctor's office with your child. Students are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school. Students who have asthma or issues with anaphylaxis may benefit from a plan. Please contact the school Nurse for the appropriate form for your physician. For further information on medication or any health related issues, please call our nurse.

Parents must secure all remaining medication by the last day of school from the school nurse. Any medication left after the last day of school will be discarded.

Authorization for Medical Procedures

Please inform Meridian's Health Office before the start of the school year if your student needs to receive any medical procedures (for example a breathing nebulizer treatment). You must also complete the Parent/Guardian Consent Form/Physician's Medical Procedure Order before the procedure can be performed. Additional information is available from the nurse.

Students who do not have the necessary health documents on file with MERIDIAN may be excluded from school until the required documents are presented. Parents are expected to abide by/with the necessary health regulations before the start of each school year.

Medical Appointments

Parents/guardians are discouraged from making medical appointments during the school day. If a student must attend a medical appointment, the parent/guardian must pick the student up from school.

Students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds without the physical presence of a parent/guardian to sign them out of school in the main office.

Mandated Reporting

Our student's safety is our first priority at Meridian. Because schools are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, we will call the Child and Family Services Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline if:

- A student tells a staff member that they are being abused at home, there is drug use in the home, have been sexually abused, are engaging in child pornography or prostitution, have witnessed domestic abuse, are being threatened at home, or don't want to go home because they are afraid.
- A student threatens suicide or threatens to kill or seriously harm another person.
- A staff member sees physical signs of abuse such as bruises, burns, fractures, etc...
- A staff member notices signs of neglect including lack of basic food and clothing, inappropriate hygiene, lack of appropriate supervision, lack of medical treatment, or the child is residing in an inappropriate or dangerous environment.
- A student is engaging in risky behavior (including sexual behavior, drug use, etc...) and the parents are not able to or unwilling to intervene.
- A student has 10 or more unexcused absences or an extreme tardy problem.
- A student is being kept from school to care for family members or to do chores or work around the house.

- A student is not attending school because they are holding a job.
- Parents are repeatedly not returning phone calls, responding to notes or letters home, or are not coming up to school for meetings.
- Parents have withdrawn a student and fail to provide documentation of enrollment in another education institution within 10 days.

The school will not disclose to families which staff member(s) notified CFSA of suspected abuse or neglect.

H. Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency requiring the closure of school, best efforts will be made to notify all parents by phone. In addition, such information will be communicated to television and radio stations. Please watch channels NBC4, FOX5, WJLA7 and News Channel 8 for Meridian closing information. For early closing, school delays, and school closures due to inclement weather, Meridian will follow the same schedule as the District of Columbia Public Schools or as indicated by the Head of School. All students are required to have an emergency card on file at the office. Should contact information such as an address or phone number change, please furnish accurate information to the school.

I. Technology and Cell Phone Use Policy

Meridian PCS has a strict policy, which prohibits student cell phone use during school hours. Cell phones in classrooms have a negative impact on academic performance because they distract students from being fully engaged participants in the learning process. Cell phone use during school hours can also increase instances of cyber bullying and inappropriate posts to social media web sites.

Student cell phones should be turned off prior to entering the school building and placed inside their locker or cubby. Visible cell phones will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or guardian. Repeated violations will result in additional consequences.

In case of emergency, parents are asked to contact the elementary school at 202-387-9830 or the middle school at 202-796-2667.

J. Internet Security Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all computers that reside on the inside of the schools Internet firewall.

Purpose

A policy of Internet safety is enforced by The Meridian Public Charter School's Technology Services Division (MPCS- TSD). This policy includes methods and measures to block or filter Internet access from both minors and adults to certain visual depictions. These depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) anything considered child pornography, and (3) any depiction harmful to minors. Infractions to any of these rules are punishable by expulsion from the network and/or by law in the District of Columbia. The MPCS-TSD is responsible for providing security for the school's network only. This policy identifies the Internet/Intranet security responsibilities for both Meridian servers, workstations and school owned and operated notebooks computers.

Internet/Intranet Security Responsibilities

The Meridian Technology Services Department will provide the following:

1. A separate area on the network referred to as the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) for Internet Web and FTP Servers. All Internet web and ftp servers must reside on this area of the network. MPCS-TSD will also

provide web and ftp hosting services for sites that do not have the capabilities of moving servers to this isolated area on the network.

2. Unrestricted access from the trusted side of the school network to the Internet. Some restrictions may be added at the discretion of MPCS-TSD if certain protocols or traffic is determined to be a security threat. MPCS-TSD will work as a Computer Security Incident Response Team to identify such security threats and determine the appropriate action.
3. A firewall allowing only approved externally initiated access from the Internet to the trusted side of the school network by all students and faculty. All access through the firewall will be submitted to and reviewed by the Meridian Coordinator, who will approve or deny the access. Such decisions may be appealed to the Principal.
4. Monitoring of all external connections to the trusted side of the school network. All external dedicated connections must use the approved method as designated by the Administration.
5. Auditing of the school network including the detection and reporting of intrusion attempts performed continuously in an automated fashion. Daily review of the audit logs during the workweek. Meridian will notify proper authorities within 24 hours when the network is involved in any breaches of network security.
6. Management of Domain Name Services and Internet Protocol (IP) Addresses. MPCS-TSD will assign IP addresses for authorized users of the school network. All workstations will use the enterprise DNS and DHCP services. MPCS-TSD may implement additional security measures as needed using software and/or hardware configurations for protecting the school network or ensuring secure communications. These may include encryption or filters restricting certain types of network traffic.

Unauthorized connections to the school network will not be permitted. Connections creating routing patterns that flood the network with unnecessary traffic are not allowed.

V. Academic Program

A. Academic Standards

Meridian students engage in a rigorous educational program that is in alignment with the Common Core State Standards. Our educational program is focused on teaching critical thinking and problem solving skills. In addition to creating lifelong learners, our students will be independent thinkers with the ability to solve problems, reason and communicate effectively.

B. English Language Learners

Program Description

English Language Development (ELD) is a component of a total program designed to serve the needs of ELL students. ELD is a specific curriculum that addresses the teaching of the English language according to the level of proficiency of the ELL student. All learners acquire English faster and easier if the curriculum they receive and the methodologies utilized to deliver the curriculum are finely tuned to their evolving fluency. The ELD curriculum is essential to the success of all ELL students and is closely linked to the first goal of bilingual education; English language proficiency. All ELL students must, by law, receive ELD instruction in addition to the core curriculum.

ELD is a part of the daily program for every ELL student at Meridian Public Charter School. It is neither relegated to a nonspecific exposure to the English language through activities with English only students (i.e., during Physical Education, Music and Art etc.) nor is it the only instruction ELL students receive. It is a vital, planned, specific component of the total education.

Student Placement

All students are given a home language survey asking parents to indicate the primary language spoken in the home. If English is indicated, students are assumed to be English proficient. If any language other than English is checked, the student's name will be submitted to the Office of Bilingual Education in order to check the status of previous testing. If this office has testing information, they will send it to the school to become a part of the permanent file. All other students will be tested at the school level to determine their English proficiency level.

C. Special Education Services

Definition

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004): Child with a disability means a child evaluated in accordance with Sec. 300.304 through 300.311 as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as "emotional disturbance"), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, and other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

Overview of Special Education Services

The student Support Team at MPCS seeks to improve the performance of students with disabilities, and assist in narrowing the achievement gap by ensuring equal access to curriculum and differentiated instruction in the least restrictive environment.

Parents of new students should advise the school of any previous IEPs or special services their child received in the past. If a student received special education services at his or her old school, he or she will not be officially

enrolled until MERIDIAN PCS has the complete IEP and evaluations. All parental requests for evaluations or any special education documents must be made in writing.

Eligibility

Children with disabilities from Pre-Kindergarten to grade 8 may be eligible for special education services. Federal law defines “children with disabilities” as having any of the following types of disabilities:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Disability
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment (including blindness)

If a teacher or parent/guardian believes a student should be evaluated for special education services, the referral must be made in writing and/or verbal communication to the schools’ Student Support Coordinator. Written parental permission must be obtained before any formal evaluation is undertaken. Any requests for evaluation that are made contemporaneously to a disciplinary incident will be granted expedited evaluation consistent with 34 CFR §300.534(d). Evaluations will begin with an in-school committee consisting of the Student Dean or designee, a regular teacher, the referring teacher, if applicable, and the parent. If warranted, the evaluation will continue with a specialized external team. The purpose of referrals is to determine the most support we can provide for each child in the least restrictive environment. For more information regarding Special Education Services please contact the Special Education Department. Please note, end of year referral requests have no impact on promotion decisions.

D. Student Intervention Team (SIT)

Identifying Students with Special Needs

At Meridian Public Charter School, a Student Intervention Team (SIT) has been assembled to provide student assistance, governed by federal and state mandates. SIT is a collaborative response to intervention team process, providing tiers of support to students.

Legal Standard

Our SIT program is the system that provides interventions and supports to students with needs in the areas of academics, social/emotional, to ensure students are not inappropriately referred for special education services in reference to the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Overview of Student Intervention Team

In addition to the multifaceted curriculum at Meridian Public Charter School, and a differentiated learning environment through group interventions, the Student Intervention Team (including general education teachers, school administrators, parents, related service providers, counselor, and nurse) will come together to collaboratively identify individual interventions that will target the student's strengths and weaknesses in the areas including academics, social/emotional, motor development, or speech.

The SIT program performs the following functions:

1. Creates a process of assessment, collaborative planning for student instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring.
2. Provides teaching staff with a tool to ensure that students do not struggle due to personal lapses in their academic or social-emotional abilities, limited English proficiency or ineffective instruction in reading or mathematics.
3. Serves as a screening tool for students that may be eligible for a 504 plan or special education services.

E. Standard Course of Study

Elementary School (Grades K-6)

Students at the Elementary school will take the following courses:

- Students in grades PS – 3 will focus on reading and mathematics instruction.
- Students in grades 4 to 6 will take four (4) core academic classes (Mathematics, Reading (English Language Arts), Science, and Social Studies).
- All students also take “specials” classes, which may include: Physical Education, Spanish, Music, Art and Technology.

Middle School (Grades 7-8)

Students at the Middle school will take the following courses:

- Four (4) core academic classes (Mathematics, Reading (English Language Arts), Science, and Social Studies).
- All students also take specials classes, which may include: Physical Education, Spanish and Music.

Academic Calendar

The school year is divided into four quarters. The quarters are approximately 9 weeks to allow students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of specific skills. At the end of each quarter, Students will receive grades in all classes.

Grade Attainment

Early Childhood (PK3-2)

Grade	Level	Definition
4	Proficient	Student demonstrates a solid mastery of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject.
3	Progressing	Student is making progress towards proficiency.
2	Emerging	Student is beginning to understand the content and skills taught in that subject.
1	Needs Development	Student is working at a basic level in that subject.
Blank	Not introduced	Skill has not been introduced to the student.

Elementary and Middle Grades (3-8)

Percentage	Grade	Definition
90%-100%	A	Student demonstrates a deep mastery of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject.
80%-89%	B	Student demonstrates a solid understanding of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject.
70%-79%	C	Student has a limited understanding of the content or skill that have been taught in that subject. The quality of their work just meets minimum requirements.
60%-69%	D	Student has significant skill and/or content deficits and is performing below minimum requirements.
0-59%	F	Student does not demonstrate enough mastery of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject and is performing significantly below minimum requirements.

Report Cards

At the end of each quarter, students will receive a report card. If concerns arise, please contact the teacher. To schedule a parent-teacher conference outside of the designated dates, please contact the teacher or administrative assistant for your student's school. The dates of the Parent-Teacher Conferences are on the school calendar.

Meridian encourages parents to be proactive by utilizing PowerSchool to keep abreast of your child's academic progress (login and information will be provided). Should parents and/or guardians have any questions about their child's grades, they should contact the appropriate teacher and schedule a conference.

Final Grades

The final, year-end grade for a course is the numerical average of the four quarters. Each quarter is weighted equally. Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Homework

Homework is designed to reinforce the day's lessons by practicing skills and/or using new skills in different contexts in order to promote student mastery. Homework assignments are designed to be developmentally appropriate for each grade level and to help students reinforce and review skills and concepts taught in class.

Family members are encouraged to attend school-sponsored workshops for parents/guardians about their child's academic program (e.g. Back-to-School Nights, Literacy Nights, Math Nights, etc.) and to ask their child's teacher(s) for additional ways to support students' academics at home.

F. Promotion and Retention

Meridian PCS aims to prepare students academically and socially to matriculate to the next grade. Promotion criteria differ based on student's grade levels. Students must meet all criteria of the promotion policy for his/her grade level in order to matriculate to the next grade.

If a student is required to attend summer school in order to obtain skills they may not have mastered during the regular school year, he/she must successfully complete summer school to be promoted. Students with Individual Education Plans will have MDT meetings to review the student's status if promotion is in jeopardy.

Promotion for Grades K-8

For an elementary student in kindergarten through sixth grade to be promoted to the next grade level, he or she must do the following:

- Successfully complete the academic requirements for the current grade level in core subjects.
- Maintain compliance with the school's attendance policy.

G. Nutrition Education

One component of a comprehensive health education program is nutrition education. Schools will provide nutrition education that:

- is part of the health education course;
- is accessible to all students;
- is integrated into other content areas such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects (resources will be disseminated to teachers and other staff);
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally- relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with Meridian's curriculum, school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services and education programs;
- incorporates wellness nights into school programming;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers, parents and community partners.

H. Character Education

Character education in conjunction with a clear, consistent, and cohesive discipline plan is an important way to help children develop increased attachment to learning. Character Education leads to increased emotional resilience and social competence, and reduces high risk and aggressive behaviors. At Meridian, we use our Code of Values and a variety of curricular resources to impart character education.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

At Meridian Public Charter School, students will be encouraged to make appropriate choices regarding their personal conduct. Following are the chief means by which faculty and staff will ensure order and support the development of good character at the School.

PK3 – 2nd Grade

The "Clip Chart" serves as the PBIS system for our students in grades PK3- 2. The clip chart is a color-coded system with positive adjectives and reinforcement phrases used to monitor a student's appropriate and inappropriate behaviors within the classroom. Each classroom contains a behavior chart, which serves as a visual representation of a student's behavioral choices in following classroom rules and expectations throughout the day. Each student has the opportunity to clip up/down throughout the day.

Color/Definition/Phrase	Expectation	Recognition/Consequences	Rewards
Green: Meeting Expectations "Awesome, Ready to Learn"	The daily starting point for all students. We expect all students to achieve this expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clip up to Blue Keep up the good work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meridian Money Sticker Student of the day entry
Blue: Rising above expectations: "Way to go, good day"	A student has exceeded the daily expectations by making good choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clip up to Silver Keep up the great work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meridian Money Sticker Student of the day entry
Silver: Exceeded expectations: "Super student, excellent job"	A student has exceeded all expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role model: top of the chart You are a rock star 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meridian Money Sticker Student of the day entry
Yellow: Warning (2x): "Oops, think about it"	Warning: student is not meeting expectations. Student has an opportunity to get on track in order to stay with the group/lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal redirection (1st time) Clip down to orange (2nd time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has chance to get back on track Clip up to green and above
Orange: Consequence: "Slow down, make better choices"	Not meeting expectations: student has had two warnings and now must go to the Resent spot (away from group but inside classroom)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal redirection Clip down to Red (2nd time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has chance to get back on track Clip up to green and above
Red: Parent contact: "Stop, Outside support"	Not meeting expectations or displaying inappropriate behavior. Student is not successful in re-setting their behavior in the classroom and warrants immediate removal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal redirection PK-K: Buddy Room for 10 min Parental contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has chance to get back on track Clip up to green and above

Grades 3-6

These grades will be utilizing Class Dojo to monitor and encourage positive behaviors.

Grades 7-8

These grades will utilize and adhere to the school-wide discipline plan. These grades will utilize Class Dojo to monitor and encourage positive behaviors. Parents will have access to student's records through the system as well.

**Meridian Public Charter School – Middle School Campus
Positive Behavior Intervention Matrix**

The 5 P's	All Locations	Hallway	Classroom	Cafeteria	Restroom
Prompt	Be where you're supposed to be when you're supposed to be there	Walk to your class and arrive on time	Be seated and quiet when the bell rings	Exit the cafeteria and return to class	Return to class quickly when you're finished
Productive	Strive for success by making good choices and working toward your goals	Walk safely to your next class and keep your hands to yourself	Be focused and on task during instruction	Finish eating by the end of your lunch period	Limit talking and don't play
Prepared	Proper preparation prevents poor performance	Have a hall pass when you're out of class	Have necessary materials prior to entering class	Follow cafeteria seating rules	A hall pass is required to use the restroom
Polite	Treat others the way you want to be treated	Walk quietly through the halls	Respect your teachers and classmates	Clean up after yourself	Put paper towels in trash and flush when you're done
Positive	Eliminate negative thoughts/actions	Pick up trash if you see it	Put forth your best effort	Be open to asking others to join your age appropriate conversation	Write your name clearly on the sign-in sheet

VI. Student Code of Conduct

Disciplinary Response to Student Behavior

The school's Discipline Policy is designed to address conduct that might reasonably lead the school to forecast substantial disruption of or material interference with school activities, undermine the school's basic educational mission, or interfere with the rights of others. The following are details regarding when the policy applies, disciplinary action that may be taken for violating the policy, a list of infractions, and other school policies that parents must review with their children.

Jurisdiction

While the provisions of this Code of Conduct purport to control, regulate, or establish standards for the actions, behavior, or activities of students of Meridian PCS, those provisions are enforceable by school authorities, both during regularly scheduled school hours, as well as such other times and places, including, but not limited to, the following:

- When the student is on school grounds
- When the student is on or off school grounds participating in or attending any school function or activity, including, but not limited to, extended learning, extra- curricular activities, field trips, or class trips sponsored by the school
- While the student is away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the school (this specifically includes, but is not limited to, bullying and cyber bullying)
- When the student is off school grounds while wearing the school's uniform and traveling on public transportation or transportation provided by MERIDIAN PCS; and
- En-route to and from school while wearing the school's uniform

Disciplinary Action

Students who violate the discipline policy will be subject to one or more of the following documented actions at the discretion of the school administration and the Board of Trustees. A Student's failure to adhere to any of the following may result in further disciplinary action. Mandatory parent/guardian involvement is required as part of student re-entry into classroom and additional parent involvement may be mandated in some cases.

Progressive Discipline Tiers

Tier 1

Tier 1 behaviors are those behaviors that are defiant and cause minor disruptions to the academic environment. Tier 1 behaviors result in classroom-level disciplinary responses. Tier 1 behaviors may be elevated or to a higher tier depending on the severity and number of occurrences.

Behavior	In-Class Disciplinary Consequences	Out of Class Disciplinary Consequences
1.1 Deliberate classroom disruption (Yelling, Tapping, Talking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal redirection • Follow the school-wide behavior management system • (Class Dojo) • Seating change • Teacher/Student conference • Teacher /Student behavior contract • Parent phone call/text • Teacher/Parent conference • Parent/Guardian shadowing • Cell phone confiscation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary removal from class • Lunch detention • After school detention • Parent contact/conference • Behavior contract • School beautification • School community services
1.2 Excessive noise in the classroom, hallway, or cafeteria		
1.3 Tardy to class		
1.4 Attending class without required class materials		
1.5 Uniform policy violation		
1.6 Excessive noise in the classroom, hall, or building		
1.7 Taking food from cafeteria without permission		
1.8 Eating in classrooms		
1.9 Unauthorized locker use		
1.10 Running in the classroom, hallway or school building		
1.11 Misuse of school computer, office equipment or classroom materials		
1.12 Any behavior or other conduct not listed in any other tier, that is insubordinate or causes minor disruption to the academic environment but does not involve damage to school property or harm to self or others		
1.13 Use of cell phone in school		

*Multiple Offenses will result in higher tier consequences.

*All offenses should be documented at all times.

Tier 2

Tier 2 behaviors are those behaviors that cause disruption to the academic environment, involve damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self and/or others. Tier 2 behaviors result in school-based and administrative disciplinary responses.

Behavior	In-Class Disciplinary Consequences	Out of Class Disciplinary Consequences
2.1 General noncompliance with classroom/school rules or teacher/staff instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal redirection • Follow the school-wide behavior management system (Class Dojo) • Seating change • Teacher/Student conference • Teacher /Student behavior contract • Parent phone call/text • Teacher/Parent conference • Parent/Guardian shadowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary removal from class • Lunch detention • After school detention • Parent contact/conference • Behavior interventions • School beautification • School community services • Behavior contract
2.2 Disrespectful comments toward teachers/staff		
2.3 Directing profanity or obscene/offensive gestures toward peers		
2.4 Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between students that is horseplay. (Pushing, slapping/hitting, wrestling and etc.)		
2.5 Making verbal threats toward peers		
2.6 Throwing objects that may cause injury or damage property		
2.7 Throwing food or intentionally starting/participating in a food fight		
2.8 Skipping class		
2.9 In Violation of a behavior contract that stipulates suspension for further violations		
2.10 Any behavior or other conduct not listed in any other tier that causes disruption to the academic environment, involves damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others		
2.11 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behaviors		

*Multiple Offenses will result in higher tier consequences.

*All offenses should be documented at all times.

Tier 3

Tier 3 behaviors are those behaviors that cause significant disruption to the academic environment, school operation, or cause harm to self or others. In addition to lesser consequences, Tier 3 behaviors may result in either suspension.

Behavior	In-Class Disciplinary Consequences	Out of Class Disciplinary Consequences
3.1 Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, plagiarism or claiming a peer's assignment as your own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal redirection • Seating change • Grade reduction (academic dishonesty only) • Teacher/Student conference • Parent phone call/text • Teacher/Parent conference • Parent/Guardian shadowing • Removal from class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch detention • After school detention • Parent contact/conference • School community service • Behavior interventions • Behavior contract • Out-of School short-term suspension • Out-of School long-term suspension
3.2 Communicating slurs/derogatory comments based on race, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, appearance, place of residence and etc...		
3.3 Obscene, seriously offensive, or abusive language or gestures towards students/staff.		
3.4 Verbal threat of physical harm or action against another student		
3.5 Fighting or assault where there is no injury and/or weapon		
3.6 Leaving class without permission		
3.7 Leaving the school building without permission		
3.8 Causing disruption on school property or at any Meridian sponsored/supervised activity		
3.9 Gambling		
3.10 Stealing		
3.11 Vandalism – deliberate destruction or damage to property of a peer or school under \$500		
3.12 Sale of items without authorization		
3.13 Possession or distribution of obscene material on school grounds		
3.14 Lying to or giving misleading information to school staff		
3.15 Skipping detention or other issued consequences		

3.16 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 2 behaviors		
3.17 Any behavior or other conduct not listed in any other tier that causes disruption to the academic environment, involves damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others		

*Multiple Offenses will result in higher tier consequences.

*All offenses should be documented at all times.

Tier 4

Tier 4 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier that are illegal, cause significant disruption to school operation, or cause substantial harm to self or others. In addition to lesser consequences, Tier 4 behaviors may result in either suspension or expulsion.

Behavior	In-Class Disciplinary Consequences	Out of Class Disciplinary Consequences
4.1 Bullying/Cyberbullying – severe, pervasive or persistent physical or verbal contact that interferes with a student’s physical/mental health, academic performance, or ability to participate in school activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent phone call/text • Teacher/Parent conference • Teacher /Student conference • Parent/Guardian shadowing • Removal from class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-School Disciplinary Action • Parent contact/conference • Behavior interventions • Behavior contract • Out-of School short-term suspension • Out-of School long-term suspension • Expulsion • Police Referral
4.2 Using/sharing cellphones, computers or other electronic devices to view or display inappropriate videos/photos of others and self		
4.3 Activating a false alarm or placing a false call to 911		
4.4 Possession of a weapon		
4.5 Possession of fireworks or explosives		
4.6 Arson or bomb threat		
4.7 Fighting which creates a substantial risk of injury or results in injury		
4.8 Planning or participating in a group fight that results in injury		
4.9 Inciting others to violence or disruption		
4.10 Engaging in sexual acts on school premises or at school-related functions (including sexual harassment)		

4.11 Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct		
4.12 Retaliation for reporting sexual assault/harassment or bullying/cyberbullying		
4.13 Acts of exceptional misconduct at other schools		
4.14 Interfering with school authorities		
4.15 Tampering with, changing, or altering an official record or school document		
4.16 Assault with a weapon		
4.17 Attack/assault on a student or staff		
4.18 Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to intimidate or threaten another individual		
4.19 Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to injury another individual		
4.20 Any Behavior or Conduct that is not listed in any other Tier that is illegal causes significant disruption to school operation or causes substantial harm to self or others		
4.21 Property damage over \$500		
4.22 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1, 2 and 3-A behaviors		

*Multiple Offenses will result in higher tier consequences.

*All offenses should be documented at all times.

Disciplinary Terms and Definitions

Academic Dishonesty: Using or submitting information through methods not approved by teachers or administration, obtaining data that is classified, and/or taking ownership for information or documentation that is not created by the student. This includes, but is not limited to plagiarizing, cheat sheets, unapproved materials during testing, possession of answer keys or tests and/or completing another student's assignment. Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Alcohol: Any liquid which contains alcohol, either manufactured or mixed, or any intoxicating beverage; the violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession or use of intoxicating alcoholic beverages.

Arson: Arson is the crime of intentionally and maliciously setting fire to attempt to damage any real or personal property by fire or an incendiary device.

Assault/Battery: The willful and unlawful use of force or violence upon the person of another; has three primary elements present - (1) an aggressor, who (2) intended to cause physical harm, to (3) an innocent person.

Computer Inappropriate Use or Misuse: Using the computer/Internet for any other purpose than research or study or to view unauthorized material including but not limited to chat rooms, pornographic material, and game sites; includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized access to, modification of, use of, creation or destruction of computer stored data and programs and the inappropriate use of electronic devices and instruments.

Defiance: A daring or bold resistance to authority or to any opposing force, open disregard or contempt; the refusal or failure to carry out lawful or reasonable instructions of authorized school personnel or failure to comply with Friendship regulations, behavior contracts, or classroom rules.

Disorderly Conduct: Disorderly conduct includes, but is not limited to: yelling, running, pushing, shoving, or engaging in horseplay. Excessive verbal or physical interaction which substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment or poses a serious threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others; serious campus disruption.

Distribution/Possession/Under the Influence: A student who distributes controlled substances to another student and the student who receives the controlled substance and or passes the controlled substance to another shall be subject to the disciplinary penalties for distribution of controlled substance.

Drugs: The possession, receipt, use, being under the influence of, cultivation, transportation, sale, purchase, or negotiation for the sale or distribution of any controlled or unlawful substance; possession or use of an inhalant or any substance represented as drugs (such as designer drugs, caffeine pills, herbs, foods), or any prescription drug for which the student does not have a valid prescription and/or which is not in the original container on school property or at a school-sponsored activity on property other than school property. A student, who distributes “drugs”, is defined as a student who possesses, gives to or leaves drugs for another student. It also applies to the student who takes, receives, passes to/from or picks up the “drugs”. Drug paraphernalia is any apparatus or material that may be used in the cultivation, use, manufacture, or distribution of drugs.

Fabrication/Forgery/Alteration/Destruction: Intentionally providing false or misleading information or the withholding of valid information from a school staff member. Any form of tampering with records/documents either for one’s own purpose or to alter the records of others for any purpose. It also includes, but is not limited to, the writing and signing of notes and papers by any person not authorized to do so, misrepresenting a situation, or falsely signing another’s name to such notes or other papers.

False Alarms: Willful and/or malicious activation of an emergency alarm or response designed to evacuate the campus when no emergency exists. This applies to threats made verbally, physically, in writing or by any other method, including but not limited to 911 phone calls, issuing a bomb threat, setting off a fire alarm, etc.

Fighting: Mutual participation in an altercation with physical violence that requires physical restraint and/or results in injury; to include group fighting.

Gambling: The wagering of money or something of material value on an event with the primary intent of winning additional money and/or material goods.

Gang-Related Activity/Behaviors: Any activity that can reasonably be associated or identified with a gang, such as, but not limited to, symbols, special dress, verbalizations or colors or distributing any gang-related literature or communications of any kind of gang language.

Harassment (and bullying): Any electronic, written, verbal or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the students physical or mental health
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges by a school

Horseplay: Rough, rowdy, boisterous play, pranks or play fighting.

Inappropriate Language: The use of profane, obscene, abusive language or gestures, or the possession of objects or pictures which are disrespectful, offensive or socially unacceptable and which can or tend to disrupt the school environment, a school function, or extracurricular/co-curricular activities. This includes the taking and / or sending, of inappropriate or offensive images or texts using electronic devices as well as being in the possession of inappropriate images or texts.

Incitement: To provoke, urge on or coerce another to engage in an activity which is prohibited under this code. The consequence may not exceed the penalty for the activity.

Offensive: Any act, utterance, or item that is generally inappropriate, including but not limited to, curse words, obscene gestures, and obscene materials including but not limited to writings, drawings, magazines, and pictures.

Possession: Any student who has any item on his/her person, within their personal effects, or within any vehicle in which he or she has arrived on Friendship property or at a school sponsored activity on property other than Friendship property shall be considered to be in possession of such item.

Robbery: The taking or attempting to take anything of value under confrontational circumstances from the control, custody, or care of another person by force or threat of force or violence and/or putting the victim in fear.

Sexual Assault: Any unwanted sexual contact towards another person that is achieved by force, threats, bribes, manipulation, pressure, tricks, and/or violence.

Sexual Harassment: Is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature; Undesired sexual behavior towards another; unwanted or repeated verbal or physical sexual behavior that is offensive and objectionable to the recipient, causes discomfort or humiliation, or creates a hostile environment.

Sexual Contact (also contact or behavior of a sexual nature): Any contact or behavior of a sexual nature regardless of consent including, but not limited to, lewd or suggestive movement or displays as well as physical contact. Shakedown, strong arm, extortion, obtaining of money or property (something of value) from an unwilling person by means of coercion or intimidation.

Theft: Acceptance, possession, sale, purchase, transfer and/or taking of property belonging to another person with the intent to prevent or deprive the rightful owner of its use.

Threats (also threaten): Verbal or physical acts and/or written statements regarding harm to an individual's life, physical or emotional well-being and/or personal property. Additionally, obtaining or attempting to obtain any item or money by intimidation, force, fraud or illegal use of authority is considered extortion. These actions include but are not limited to arguing, balling up fists, writing notes, extortion, displaying a weapon and posturing.

Tobacco Products: Possession/Smoking: A student smoking, using smokeless tobacco, in possession of tobacco products, distributing or selling of tobacco products on school property, school buses, or in attendance at a school-sponsored activity will be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

Trespassing (also loitering): To enter or remain on a Friendship campus without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry, including students under suspension or expulsion.

Uniform Policy Violations: Wearing clothing other than what is specified in the Meridian Public Charter School Dress Code (i.e., wearing of sweat hoodies, non-regulatory clothing, overcoats and jackets).

Vandalism: Willful or malicious destruction, defacement or damage to school and/or personal property.

Weapon: Any object that is or can be used as a means to physically harm, threaten, intimidate or endanger someone. These items include but are not limited to knives, guns, fireworks, razors, BB guns, box cutters, etc.

[Discipline Responses Definitions](#)

Behavior Contract/Discipline Plan: The student meets with teachers to create a written contract that includes objectives and the specific performance tasks that the student will accomplish to meet those objectives. The contract is signed by the student and teacher and, where appropriate, by the parent or guardian. A behavioral contract between a student and appropriate school personnel may define expected behaviors, conditions, and consequences.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) is a written, specific, and purposeful plan which describes behavioral interventions and other strategies that will be implemented to reduce and/or prevent targeted misbehaviors and reinforce appropriate replacement behaviors.

Counseling: Individual/Group Counseling: Counseling provides students with an outlet to share issues in privacy that may be negatively impacting their attendance, behavior, and/or academic success. Students discuss and formulate goals, and learn problem solving strategies that will enable them to overcome a variety of personal challenges. Counseling could be provided by a guidance counselor, mental health counselor or school psychologist.

Detention: At the discretion of the administrator, upon notifying the parent/guardian, detention is held after school and/or Saturday morning at the school the student attends. Parents/guardians are responsible for the student's transportation.

Exclusion/Deprivation of Privileges: At the discretion of an administrator, a student is temporarily banned from attending school sponsored events to include, but not limited to, field trips, special assemblies, parties, co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

Expulsion: Permanent dismissal of a student from the school program and school activities. If an expulsion is approved, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to place the student in another school unless the student is considered Special Education.

Home Bound Services: Due to severe conduct referrals and long-term suspensions, a student maybe recommended, on a case-by-case basis for home-bound services; academic services provided in a non-traditional setting.

In-School Disciplinary Action: Disciplinary actions such as lunch or after school detention, loss of privileges, exclusion from extracurricular activities, written reflection, conflict resolution, mediation, or similar actions of short duration that do not result in the student's loss of academic instruction time.

Mediation: At the discretion of an administrator, a mandatory meeting may be held between the student, parent/ guardian, and administrator (and/or teacher as appropriate) to address any issues to include, but not limited to, misconduct, violation of the Code of Conduct, poor attendance, and/or academic evaluation. In this meeting all parties will come to a mutual understanding of any future repercussion that may occur if issues persist.

Mentoring Program: A mentoring program matches a mentor who may be a counselor, teacher, student and/or leader with a protégé. The object of this relationship is to help the protégé in his/her personal, academic and social development.

Parent/School Conference: Conferences between/among any combination of student, teachers, parent/guardian, and administrator may be held to discuss student conduct and/or problems. Such conferences consider alternatives available and seek to determine a plan of action which will be most beneficial to the student.

Parent Shadowing: A parent/guardian will come in an attend class with their student. Shadowing can last a class period up to an entire school day.

Referral to Law Enforcement Agencies: Student may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for behavior that is illegal and/or exceeds Meridian PCS's Code of Conduct.

Restitution: Parents are responsible for replacing, repairing, or compensating for any items that have been damaged or stolen. Failure to do so will result in consequences including but not limited to seizure of student records.

SIT Team: Student Intervention Teams are school-based teams that utilize a multidisciplinary approach to encourage student success through prevention and intervention strategies and supports. The SIT Team will create an individualized plan to help students overcome their academic and/or socio-emotional difficulties.

Temporary Removal of Student from Classroom: A student is removed from the classroom for less than half a school day, not to extend beyond the time of dismissal on the day of the disciplinary action. During any such removal, the student shall be supervised by the ISS Coordinator and provided with instructional materials.

Severe Disciplinary Action: Suspensions and Expulsions: Suspension and/or expulsion from school are two formal disciplinary actions the school can employ in the event a student's behavior warrants such consideration. As these actions are serious in nature, a formal procedure is outlined for both below.

Suspensions: A student can be suspended for either one serious behavioral violation or an accumulation of minor infractions. In the event the suspension, the student is not permitted to be on campus until the suspension ends. A suspension can also be for a portion of the school day, one day, or multiple days depending on the severity of the infraction.

An administrator is entrusted with the responsibility and authority to make decisions related to suspension.

When a potential incident is reported/referred, the administrator will:

- Gather all relevant information to assess the accuracy of the incident in question.
- Meet with the student(s) involved in the incident – this will include the student accused of the infraction as well as any other student involved either on the receiving end and/or as a witness to the incident.
- Meet with the teachers or adults on campus who submitted the report, witnessed the incident, or might have information related to the matter.
- Reference the code of conduct manual to insure the decision to suspend, and the length of the suspension, is appropriate in relationship to the infraction.
- Inform the parent immediately in the event the student is suspended.
- Provide a letter of suspension to the parent that formally documents the incident.
- Additionally, when a suspension is issued, the following procedures are implemented:
- The student is immediately removed from the formal learning environment and will remain in the office until the parent arrives to take the student home.
- The administrator will meet with the parent upon their arrival on campus to review or discuss the matter.
- A copy of the suspension letter is placed in the student's file at school. This letter will remain in the file for the duration of the student's enrollment at Meridian PCS. When the student leaves Meridian the suspension letter and all related disciplinary documentation will be expunged.

Prior to the student returning to school, a "re-entry" meeting is scheduled to take place the morning of the student's return to school. Parent/guardian attendance is required.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Out-of-School Suspensions

Suspension of a student is a consequence for inappropriate behavior choices that warrant the removal of a student from the school community for a period of time. This is done with great care since it will result in loss of instructional time and participation in classroom and school activities.

Out of school suspension (OSS) a student has been suspended from school for an infraction and the disciplinary sentence is served off the school campus.

- Short-Term Suspension – Out-of-School suspension: one (1) to ten (10) days.
- Long-Term Suspension – suspensions beyond ten(10) school days.

Before a student is suspended, an informal conference will be held that will include the following (as age appropriate):

- Oral or written notice of the Code of Conduct violation for which the suspension is considered
- An explanation of the evidence or facts for the suspension
- An opportunity for the student to tell his/her side of the story
- If a suspension is given, the reason for the suspension

The following steps will be taken when a student receives an OSS:

1. The school administrator will call the parent/guardian to inform them of the reason(s) and the decision to suspend the student, as well as provide the details of the suspension. All notices regarding disciplinary action will be given to the parent/guardian in writing and must be signed by the principal or designee. Notices will include the date(s) of the suspension and when the student may return to school. The parent will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible if the student is being sent home that day.
2. Students who are suspended will be given academic work for the duration of time they are out of the classroom. It is, however, the responsibility of the student and his or her parent/guardian to ensure the timely completion and submission of any additional class assignments that were missed during this time. During the period of suspension, the student is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school sponsored activities, field trips, or programs.
3. For students with disabilities (this includes students with IEPs or 504 Plans and students who are in the process of being evaluated for Special Education) who are suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, a multi-disciplinary team will review all relevant educational records contained in the student's file or in possession of the school to determine whether the student's violation of school rules was a manifestation of the student's disability.
 - a) If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be returned to his/her educational placement.
 - b) If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student's file will be reviewed to determine disciplinary action in accordance with the policies contained in this section.
4. The school will require the parent/guardian of a student returning to the classroom after a suspension to first meet with the principal or dean for a collaboration meeting. The school counselor, classroom teacher(s), and school administrators may also be in attendance. The purpose of the meeting is to develop a plan of action or student contract that identifies desired behavior and how the student will be supported in this plan both at home and at school. Parents and students are also asked to review and affirm their commitment to the school discipline policy.

When a student is serving an OSS, s/he may not be on school grounds before school, during the school day, or after school.

Re-entry Meeting

The re-entry is mandatory for both student and parents. It occurs the morning on which a student returns to school from a formal suspension. If the parent or student does not attend the re-entry meeting, the student is not allowed to return to school until the meeting is held. The student's absence from school during this period will be considered an unexcused absence. The meeting typically takes place prior to the start of the school day and lasts approximately 20-30 minutes. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the student and parents with the opportunity to reflect on the significance of the suspension and what the student has learned as a result of the disciplinary action and, to set the stage for a successful reintegration into the school environment. The student should be prepared to acknowledge the behavior that led to suspension and commit to a plan to abide by Meridian's code of conduct, meet specific behavior expectations, and avoid repeated misconduct. A document that summarizes the meeting is created, signed, and placed in the student's file.

Special Notes of Concern Regarding Counting Suspension Days

Suspension days shall be counted as follows:

- The day the student left school should be counted as a part of the suspension, provided he/she was denied class participation before 12 noon of that day.
- The suspension shall terminate at midnight on the day listed as the last day of suspension.
- Times when school is not officially scheduled are not to be counted as part of the suspension time. (Should school be cancelled for any reason during a scheduled suspension day, the suspension will lengthen to include the time school was actually in session).

Make Up Work for Suspension

Students who are suspended shall be offered make-up work assignment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the school and make arrangements for the receipt and return of all assignments. In the case of long-term suspensions, unless other arrangements are made, teachers are to give work in two-week increments, and students must complete and return work before receiving additional work. All IDEA mandates will be followed for student with disabilities.

Participation at School and School Related Activities During Suspension

Students who have been suspended from school shall not be eligible to participate in any school functions for the entire period of their suspension.

Disciplinary Plans/Behavior Contracts

A student who has committed repeated violations of the Code of Conduct or a major violation of the Code of Conduct may be placed on disciplinary plan. Prior to the imposition of disciplinary plan, Meridian PCS will provide the student and his/her parents with an opportunity for an informal conference as in the case of suspension, above. If placed on disciplinary plan, the student and his/her parent/guardian will be notified in writing that the student has violated school policy and that future violations will incur more stringent disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from Meridian PCS.

If, while on Disciplinary Plan or a Final Plan contract, a student violates another major school policy, s/he may be expelled. Each violation is treated on a case-by-case basis. The length of disciplinary plan and its conditions will be determined individually for each student by the Administration. Plan is a serious status with severe consequences. Students can be expelled for violations of disciplinary plan and behavior contracts.

A student's Dean will make reasonable attempts (three phone calls or written communications or email or any other form of contact) to contact a parent/guardian regarding a student's Disciplinary Plan status. If a parent fails to communicate and/or refuses to sign a contract, the contract shall be enacted. A final copy of the contract will be provided to the parent/guardian.

Steps in Disciplinary Plan

1. After a student is placed on disciplinary plan, s/he will be required to attend a conference with the Dean and/or another member of the Administrative team and his/her parent/guardian. During this conference a Disciplinary Plan contract will be signed stating behavioral goals and/or a timeline for meeting behavioral goals (e.g. no ISS or OSS and fewer than three detentions).
 - a. If a student meets the stated expectations of the Disciplinary Plan s/he will be reviewed by their Dean and/or Administration at which point s/he may be removed from Disciplinary Plan.
 - b. If a student fails to meet the state goals of the Disciplinary Plan contract will result in further action which may include a Final Plan contract or expulsion from Meridian PCS.

2. If the student violates Disciplinary Plan, s/he may be placed on a Final Plan Contract, if the violation does not warrant expulsion. This contract is a serious document that makes clear that repeated minor or major violations of the Code of Conduct could result in expulsion from Meridian PCS.
3. If a student meets the stated expectations of the Final Plan contract, s/he will be reviewed by their Dean and/or Administration at which point s/he will be placed on Disciplinary Plan.
4. If a student fails to meet the stated goals of the Final Plan contract s/he will come before a Disciplinary Hearing which will review the student's behavior to date and make necessary recommendations which could result in expulsion from Meridian PCS.

Expulsion

Students may be expelled for:

- Extreme violations of the Code of Conduct that significantly and demonstrably harm the educational environment of Meridian PCS or harm the safety or security of Meridian PCS students, staff, faculty, or others associated with Meridian PCS.
- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct after appropriate remediation have been attempted.
- Violation of Disciplinary Plan or a Final Plan Contract.
- Any student violating the Gun Free School Act will be permanently expelled.

Discipline Due Process

Suspension – Short term

The decision to suspend a student for a short term-suspension (10 or fewer days) shall be made by a school administrator (e.g. Dean, Principal, Head of School, or any other school administrator) without the recommendation of the student's teacher or other staff. The administrator issuing the suspension will determine the number of days for suspension based on the severity of the infraction and previous infractions. The suspension shall become effective immediately unless otherwise stated by the administrator issuing the suspension. See special notes regarding Counting Suspension Days.

For students facing suspension of less than 10 days, prior to issuing the suspension, the Dean, or other administrator, will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. After this meeting, the Dean or other school administrator will issue written notice to the parent detailing the length of and reason for the suspension. The Dean or other school administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the suspension via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Written notification may be given to the student when the parent/guardian is notified by phone/email of the suspension.

The parent/guardian may appeal a student's suspension of less than 10 school days. The parent/guardian should follow these steps:

1. To initiate an appeal, the parent/guardian must contact the school Principal in writing within 24 hours of the suspension notice being issued. The parent/guardian must request an appeal in writing and indicate the reason for appeal. Incomplete requests for appeal will not be heard/scheduled.
2. Within 48 hours of receipt of the appeal, the Principal will schedule a suspension appeal meeting with the parent/guardian.
 - a. If the Principal issued the original suspension the appeal will be heard by the Head of School. If a conflict exists, the appeal will be heard by a Board of Trustee member (as designated by the Board).
3. The result of the suspension appeal may be one of the following:

- a. Uphold the suspension.
 - b. Uphold the suspension but clear the student's record of the suspension at the end of the quarter.
 - c. Determine that the suspension was not within school guidelines, overturn the suspension, and order that all records and documents regarding the disciplinary proceeding be destroyed. No information regarding the suspension will be placed in the student's permanent record, or shared with anyone not directly involved in the proceedings.
4. A written decision of the appeal will be provided to the parent/guardian within 48 hours of the hearing.

Long-term Suspension and Expulsion

The decision to recommend a student for a long-term suspension (more than 10 school days) or expulsion shall be made by a school administrator (e.g. Dean, Principal, Head of School, or any other school administrator) without the recommendation of the student's teacher or other staff. In recommending expulsion, the administrator will consider the severity of the infraction, the Discipline Policy, the student's previous infractions, any student Discipline contracts, and the student's age. A student recommended for an expulsion will have a Disciplinary Hearing to review the recommendation. Head of School will make a final decision as to the student's expulsion.

When a student commits an offense that is eligible for a long-term suspension or expulsion an investigation into the offense shall be conducted by a Dean, Assistant Principal, or another school administrator. The investigation shall include:

- Notify the student of the infraction(s)
- Accept information from the student and other persons who have knowledge of the incident.
- The student involved shall have the opportunity to express his/her side of the problem.
- The Dean or administrator conducting the investigation will determine the accuracy of the infractions(s) based on this information.

Students for whom long-term suspension or expulsion is being considered will be given notice and an opportunity to be heard before a final decision regarding suspension or expulsion is made. For students facing suspension of 10 days or more, including expulsion, a Dean or another school administrator will meet with the student, notify the student of what he/she is accused of doing and the information that the school has to believe that the student engaged in such behavior, and give the student an opportunity to present his/her side of the story or explanation for his/her behavior. If necessary, the Dean or other administrator will conduct an investigation into the circumstances of the student's behavior and any explanation provided by the student. At the Dean's or other administrator's discretion, the student may be suspended pending the results of this investigation and recommendation for further disciplinary action from the Dean or other administrator. This investigation will be completed within 3 business days and, if necessary, a Discipline Hearing will be scheduled after the completion of the investigation.

After the meeting with the student and any investigation, the Dean, or other administrator, will issue written notice to the parent with a recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion and the reason for this recommendation. This notice will explain the information that is being relied on as a basis for the recommendation. The Dean or other school administrator may notify the parent/guardian of the suspension/expulsion via phone or email in addition to providing written notification. Any parent/guardian meetings may occur by phone.

Within 10 school days of the recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion, a Discipline Hearing will be held to make a final determination about the disciplinary action proposed.

Discipline Hearing

A student will have a Discipline Hearing when:

- He/she been recommended for expulsion or violated an expellable offense;
- He/she is recommended for a long-term (10+ day suspension).

The Discipline Review Panel (DRP) will consist of the Principal and one other school administrator. If the Principal has a conflict with the student or is involved in the incident being reviewed, a designee will be appointed who is not conflicted. The Discipline Review Panel serves as an impartial decision maker. DPR are closed to the public.

During the hearing, a school administrator(s) will carry out the following procedures:

1. A statement of the Code of Conduct violation and summary of the Discipline Hearing procedures.
2. An explanation and review of the evidence or facts for which potential long-term suspension/ expulsion is being considered. If video footage is available of the incident, the panel will view the footage.
3. The student may be represented by his/her parent/guardian and one additional advocate.
4. The student may present any information that he/she wants to the Discipline Review Panel to consider. The panel may ask questions regarding the matter to anyone present at the hearing. An advocate may speak on the student's behalf. The student has the right not to speak on his/her own behalf. Neither the school's representative at the hearing nor the student nor his/her representative(s) will be given the opportunity for cross-examination during the hearing.
5. Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the hearing, the panel will make a recommendation regarding the consequence. The panel's recommendation will be effective immediately.
6. The student/family will be informed of the decision via phone within two (2) school days of the conclusion of the hearing and written notification will be mailed within three (3) school days of the decision. This notice will contain information regarding appeal procedures.
7. If a parent/guardian does not request a hearing, or fails to attend the hearing at the scheduled date, time, and place, the right to a hearing will be waived. Therefore, the school will proceed with its determination regarding the proposed infraction and the ruling of the Disciplinary Review Panel. The findings from the hearing will be approved and take effect immediately. Appeals will not be accepted by students who do not appear at the initial hearing.

In making its decision, the Discipline Review Panel will review evidence presented at the hearing, any statements heard on behalf of the school or student, the Meridian PCS Code of Conduct, and prior conduct and/or academic performance, if applicable. The decision of the DRP will be the majority vote. If panel members cannot agree, the expulsion will not be issued.

Discipline Panel Hearing Appeal

Any student who is expelled has the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Head of School within three (3) school days of the written notice of expulsion being issued. The following process shall be implemented for all appeals.

1. An appeal hearing date will be set within seven (7) school days of the receipt of the Appeal request.
2. The appeal hearing date will occur within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the hearing being set.

3. Appeal hearings will be heard by the Head of School. If the Head of School has a conflict he/she may be replaced by a Board of Trustee member without a conflict. The Board Chair will designate a Board member in such instances.
4. The student may be represented by his/her parent/guardian and one additional advocate.
5. The student has the right to speak on his/her behalf at the Appeal Hearing. The student may choose not to speak at the Appeal Hearing.
6. The student may not return to Meridian PCS and participate in school activities while an appeal is pending.
7. Appeal hearings are closed to the public.
8. If a parent/guardian fails to appear at the Appeal Hearing the right to appeal is waived, and the original disciplinary decision will stand.

In making its decision, the Head of School (or designee) will:

1. Review all evidence and documentation from the DPR and any supporting documentation;
2. Review any statements heard at the DPR on behalf of the school or student;
3. Review the Meridian PCS Code of Conduct;
4. Review the student's prior conduct and/or academic performance;
5. The Head of School (or designee) may ask questions regarding the matter to anyone present at the hearing. One advocate may speak on the student's behalf. The student has the right not to speak on his/her own behalf. Neither the school's representative at the hearing nor the student nor his/her representative(s) will be given the opportunity for cross-examination during the hearing.

If the expulsion is overturned, the cumulative record of the student and any other school-maintained records will reflect that conclusion. If the Appeal Panel upholds the expulsion, the expulsion shall be imposed, and such decision will be final. Decisions made by the Head of School (and or designee) during the Appeal process will be final.

Special Notes Regarding Audio/Video Recording of Discipline Review Panels (DRP) and Appeal Hearings

All disciplinary hearings are closed to the public. All such hearings may not be recorded using a video or audio recording device under any circumstances and may only be audio-recorded as required to provide accommodations by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A written request must be made 48 hours prior to the hearing to audio-record the hearing to the student's Dean.

Participation at School and School Related Activities and Re-Enrollment

Students who have been expelled from Meridian PCS shall not be eligible to participate or attend any school functions. Students will not be eligible to re-enroll for subsequent school years. Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from Meridian PCS.

Procedures for Suspending and Expelling Students with Disabilities

The basis for disciplining, suspending or expelling students with disabilities shall be no different than the basis for such actions taken against students without disabilities. Reasonable accommodation of a student's disabilities shall not prevent the school from applying its discipline policy to students with disability when their behavior is not related to the disability. However, students with disabilities are entitled to certain additional procedural protections during the discipline process. These protections include, but are not limited to, requirements for a meeting to determine if behaviors resulting in expulsion or suspension longer than ten (10) days are a manifestation of a student's disability. Parents can request more information about this process and a copy of the procedural safeguards by contacting the Special Education Coordinator or Section 504 Coordinator.

VII. Notices

A. Notice of Non-Discrimination

The primary goal of Meridian Public Charter School is to ensure that each student achieves at the highest possible level. Education is to be provided in a manner that does not discriminate or cause harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or social and family background.

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VI”), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (“The Age Act”), applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Meridian Public Charter School (“Meridian”) are hereby notified that Meridian does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

Students, parents and/or guardians having inquiries concerning Meridian’s compliance with Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act as they apply to students or who wish to file a complaint regarding such compliance should contact Meridian’s Chief Operations Officer, who has been designated by Meridian Public Charter School to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act as they relate to students by calling (202) 387-9830.

For inquiries or to file a complaint regarding Meridian’s compliance with ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act as they relate to employees or third parties, please contact Meridian’s Chief Operations Officer, who has been designated by Meridian to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act as they relate to employees or third parties by calling (202) 387-9830.

B. Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Grievance Procedures for Parents and Students

Parents and guardians who want to learn more about their rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act can obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards from the Section 504 Coordinator, Aleia Johnson – 202-387-9830, ajohnson2@meridian-dc.org

Any person who believes that Meridian has violated the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act may submit a complaint pursuant to Meridian’s Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through, Aleia Johnson – 202-387-9830, ajohnson2@meridian-dc.org

C. Notice of Grievance Procedures for Employees and Third Parties

Employees who believe that Meridian has violated the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act may submit a complaint pursuant to Meridian’s Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through Jeff Cooper – 202-387-9830, jcooper@meridian-dc.org

D. Safeguard of Student Information Policy

Meridian complies with all D.C. and federal laws regarding student privacy. Please see the attached FERPA notice for more information.

All student records are treated as confidential and kept under restricted conditions. Parents may request to review their child's record at any time, or to be informed of information contained therein. Parents may request a photocopy of their child's records but files may not be removed from the school location where they are maintained. Meridian Public Charter School will fulfill requests from parents for photocopies within 48 hours.

Viewing Student Records

Parents or legal guardians may request to view their child's records. Requests should be made in writing to the school principal. The school will schedule an appointment within 15 school days of the written request. Records must be viewed under the supervision of the school principal or their designee and may not be removed from the school's main office.

Special education records are filed separately from regular student records. Requests to view these records should be made directly to the Director of Special Education.

In the case of a withdrawal, records will be transferred directly to the receiving school from Meridian upon the completion of the withdrawal form, and receipt of a records request from the receiving school. Under no circumstances will cumulative files be released to parents or guardians.

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;

- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the Federal Relay Service. Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

**THE SIGNED PARENT AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM AND COMMITMENT CONTRACTS
TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.**

PARENT AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Parent/Student Handbook has been prepared so students, parents/guardians and members of the Meridian family will be fully aware of the policies, procedures and expectations set forth by Meridian Public Charter School. Failure to return this acknowledgement will not relieve any students or parent/guardians from the responsibility for the knowledge of the contents of this Parent Student Handbook.

I have read and reviewed the Parent/Student Handbook.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature Date

Student's Signature Date

(PRINT) Student's Name and Grade

MERIDIAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITMENT CONTRACT (STUDENT)

Students learn best when their parent/guardian takes an active interest in their education. Meridian Public Charter School has prepared this Commitment Contract and asks that you, as well as students, teachers, and the principal, agree to participate in this Commitment. By signing, you and your child indicate that you have read this contract carefully, have discussed it with your child, and most importantly, agree to form a partnership with the school as it relates to your child.

AS A STUDENT AT MERIDIAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, I WILL:

- Inform my teachers and family if I need help with my schoolwork.
- Review weekly reading and math materials independently as well as with my family.
- Review and use monthly enrichment words daily to expand my vocabulary.
- Fulfill the responsibility of writing down all assignments, completing all class work and homework every day, and turn in assignments on time.
- Report to school in uniform, on time, and prepared daily.
- Be an active listener and participant in my journey of gaining knowledge.
- Abide by the school Code of Conduct

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Name

Grade Level

MERIDIAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITMENT CONTRACT (PARENT/GUARDIAN)

As a parent or guardian of a Meridian Public Charter School student, I am committed to supporting and guiding my child as he/she successfully carries out the above responsibilities. I will:

- Send my child to school in uniform daily and on time. If I am not able to meet this requirement, I will contact my child's teacher regarding my child's absence or tardiness by sending a letter or by calling, as well as providing any necessary medical notes.
- Let my child's teacher know if my child has any problems with learning and be proactive in finding a solution.
- Inform my child's teacher of any absences and submit the proper documentation for my child to be excused for his/her absence.
- Review and incorporate the monthly common core words with my child daily.
- Link reading and math concepts that my child has learned to pursue his/her interests and goals.
- Immediately inform my child's teacher of any changes regarding my complete contact information.
- Provide updated contact information including phone numbers and email address.
- Assist my child with his/her homework and if I am not able to help my child, I will seek resources within the school and/or within the community.
- Attend all Parent Teacher Conferences and workshops that will benefit me and the success of my child.
- Volunteer a minimum of 12 hours in Meridian by working in the classroom with my child's teacher or within the school building. If I am not able to volunteer during school hours, I can participate in after school events such as Open House, Math Night, Family Fun Night, Literacy Night, and Parent Teacher Association meetings.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student's Name

Grade Level



Formal Complaint Form

Name:	Phone:
Address:	City, State, ZIP
Email Address:	Cell Phone:
Student:	Student Date of Birth:
School:	Grade:
Please state the nature of your complaint (attach additional sheets if necessary):	
Please state the resolution requested (attach additional sheets if necessary):	
Signature of Complainant:	Date:
Level I: Administrative Disposition – To be completed by the Dean / Supervisor Date Received: _____ Initials: _____ Date Contact: _____ Date of Meeting: _____ Action on Complaint: Signature: _____ Date: _____	

If you wish to request a review of the resolution offered by the Dean/ Supervisor you may do so by forwarding this form with a note explaining your reason for disagreement with the decision to Head of School.

Level II: Administrative Disposition – To be completed by the Head of School/ Designee Date Received: _____ Initials: _____ Action on Complaint: Signature: _____ Date: _____	
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Meridian Public Charter
School
2120 13th St NW
Washington, DC 20009