



Parent and Scholar Handbook

Dr. LaWanda M. Clark-Roy, Principal

Ms. Melinda Bell, Administrative Assistant

2450 Frayser Blvd.

Memphis, TN 38127

901-353-1475/office

901-308-1430/fax



Welcome Letter from the Principal

Greetings Parents and Scholars of Memphis STEM Academy,

WELCOME to Memphis STEM Academy! We are honor to serve as your source of educational development. As the principal of Memphis STEM Academy, I enthusiastically embrace the task of continuing to utilize fiscal, human, and material resources at my disposal to ensure that students are prepared with the necessary tools to become tomorrow's leaders to transform lives and communities.

This school year will be a year of setting and reaching attainable goals, working smarter and taking our school and student achievement to the next level of "GREATNESS". At Memphis STEM Academy, we offer a strong compliment of special instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering that enhances the regular education experience for our students. Our professional instructors are dedicated to these additional content areas and work closely with the general education teachers to provide a meaningful experience that connects the work being done in the classroom to the student's lives outside of the school.

This year, we will focus not only on student achievement, but will collaborate closely with parents and community members to enhance the MSA experience. We will continue our partnership with the University of Memphis, as well as increase the level of parental involvement in the school improvement process. The success of our scholars hinges on the development of a mutually beneficial relationship amongst the school, family and community. Together we will enhance student learning, strengthen the family unity and transform the community.

I am humbled and most appreciative of the opportunity presented to me to play a vital role in the educational development of your scholar. Thank you for entrusting the staff and faculty of Memphis STEM Academy with your child. I look forward to the exchange of ideas, as we all to work in harmony, much like a symphony, to create educational masterpieces for many years to come. Let's make this year so amazing, that last year gets jealous!

Warmest Regards,

Dr. LaWanda M. Clark-Roy, Principal

Memphis STEM Academy



Mission Statement

The mission of Memphis STEM Academy is to promote academic excellence and future student success through a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and ongoing engagement in problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork and communication.

S.O.S.

Seasons of Success

My S.O.S. stands for my season of success.
Within my seasons are elements of truth.
I have to be committed to everything I render.
I must be persistence because I can never surrender.
My character must go a long way in this race.
And honesty will always keep me from any type of disgrace.
I must be dependable because others will count on me.
I must be reliable as the roots of a thousand year old tree.
We lack responsibility in many of our hearts but we must be tenacious and reverse those negative charts.
I believe in service and for this I am proud.
I will offer hope to the masses and the crowds.
When no one has a vision I will step forward with ease.
For I am a leader and leader must lead.
This is my season of success so watch me take care of business and do my very best.

Tagline

The MSA experience, growing tomorrow's leaders to transform lives and communities.

MSA mascot is known as the "Scholar" and black and gold are the school colors. Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance and sign the Star Spangled Banner, everyday as a part of their morning devotion.



Memphis STEM Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs.

VISITORS TO SCHOOLS

Except on occasions such as school programs, athletic events, open house and similar events at which the general public is invited, all persons with the exception of school district personnel and students entering the school buildings or school grounds at which they are enrolled are prohibited from entering any school building or school grounds unless they have first reported to the school office and been granted permission to enter the school building or school grounds by the school principal or his/her designee. The principal or his/her designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the staff or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act.

SCHOOL FEES AND DEBTS

A. Requested Fees (may only be requested)

The following fees may be requested from but not required of any student, regardless of financial status:

1. Fees for activities that occur during the school hours (the required one hundred eighty (180) instructional days), including field trips, any portion of which fall within the school day; or for activities outside regular school hours if required for credit or grade;
2. Fees for activities and supplies required to participate in all courses offered for credit or grade, including interscholastic athletics and marching band if taken for credit in accordance with local board policies;
3. Refundable security deposits collected by a school for use of school property for courses offered for credit or grade, including interscholastic athletics and marching band if taken for credit.

B. Required Fee/Fines (may be required)

The district may require and collect the following fees/fines from students:

1. Fines imposed on all students for late-returned library books; reasonable charges for lost or destroyed textbooks, library books, workbooks or any other property of the school;
2. Debts incurred to a school;
3. Costs for extracurricular activities occurring outside the regular school day including sports, optional trips, clubs or social events.

CHILD CUSTODY/PARENTAL ACCESS

Memphis STEM Academy requires students to be enrolled in and registered for school by their custodial parent or legal guardian or a person who provides the school with written permission from the custodial parent/legal guardian to register the student. Unless a Tennessee court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent or legal guardian shall be the one whom the district holds responsible for the education and welfare of that student. Parents and/or legal guardians shall have the right to receive information contained in school records concerning their minor child. However, the personal information of a custodial parent and/or legal guardian shall not be released to a non-custodial parent with the child's education record. The board, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's rights to be kept informed of the student's progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to the rights of the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent and/or legal guardian shall be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order which curtails these specific rights. Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, shall be granted reasonable access to the student at the school and shall be given access to all the student's educational records including, but not limited to, the student's cumulative file and the student's special education file, if applicable. No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a student at school unless:



1. The person seeking custody of the student presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the student; and
2. The person seeking custody shall give the school official reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the child at school.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Assessment

Regular assessment is important in order to guide the provision of academic services, enhance district and classroom instructional strategies, and measure student learning and students' progress toward meeting the district's academic achievement standards. Therefore, the district shall employ a comprehensive student assessment system to help ensure that students remain on course to meet the academic achievement standards of the district and on target to meet the grade level standards recognized by state and federal governments.

Promotion and Retention Decisions

Assessment of the student in the context of the total learning situation and its attendant circumstances should be used to determine what is best for the student. Factors to be considered in deciding what is best for the student should include:

1. current skill level;
2. the student's age;
3. achievement potential;
4. previous performance;
5. evaluative data;
6. chances for success with more difficult material when current skills are inadequate;
7. number of absences;
8. previous retention;
9. maturity level;
10. standardized test results; and
11. what benefits can be accomplished by retention.

Promotion

Promotion shall be based on skill mastery and shall be considered on the basis of what is best for the student in terms of school success.

Conditional Promotion and/or Assignment to Transitional Classes

If a student's ability to succeed at the next grade level is highly questionable, consideration shall be given to conditional promotion and/or assignment to transitional classes if such classes exist.

Retention

Retention is used to help students improve their knowledge base by providing an additional year of instruction to address inadequate skills mastery. Retention will be considered on an individual basis. Deficiencies in several of the factors to be considered in deciding what is best for the student that are listed above indicate that retention shall be considered. Retention, however, should not be used as a punitive measure or as a way to hold a student back because of parental wishes when a student's performance does not warrant it or when the school feels retention is inappropriate.



Special Consideration

Special consideration for promotion and/or retention shall be given to students with special academic, social, and emotional needs.

Third-Grade Promotion/Retention

A student in the third grade shall not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student has shown a basic understanding of curriculum and ability to perform the skills required in the subject of reading as demonstrated by the student's grades or standardized test results. However, such student may be promoted if the student participates in a Shelby County Board of Education approved research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year. This provision shall not apply to students who have IEPs pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq.*

Academic Interventions

It is expected that interventions will occur on an ongoing basis and that effective intervention strategies may result in a student's promotion. Therefore, instructional strategies, classroom grades, and intervention opportunities shall be monitored and reviewed by principals on a regular basis.

Required Interventions

Academic interventions shall be required for the following students:

- Students who are not making satisfactory progress toward academic benchmarks;
- Students who have not met promotional standards by the end of the school year (retained students);
- Students who are one or more years behind grade level in a course or grade;
- Students not performing at the level to meet the College Readiness Benchmarks, as defined by ACT.

Student Evaluation and Intervention – Grades 3-8

A criterion-referenced test will be administered in subjects and grade levels in accordance with policy of the State Board of Education. Based on achievement data from the benchmark years 3, 5, and 8, there shall be a research-based intervention initiated by the local education agency for students scoring below proficient in reading, language, and mathematics on the criterion referenced portion of the state achievement test. The intervention shall occur during the year following the benchmark assessment data. Evidence of compliance with this requirement shall become a component of the school improvement plan.

English Language Learners (ELL)

ELL students shall meet the same standards as all students. However, in accordance with federal law, English language proficiency shall not be the sole factor in determining that a student has not met performance standards for promotion. Intervention strategies shall include, where appropriate, assistance in the development of English language proficiency.

Students with Disabilities

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities shall be governed by SCS student standards established for students without disabilities. Students with disabilities who meet the requirements established by the Tennessee Board of Education shall earn regular diplomas. All enrichment, interventions/remediation, opportunities, benefits and resources made available to students without disabilities shall be made available to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities may be exempt from promotion/retention standards if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team determines that the student does not have the ability to successfully meet general curricular standards. Students with disabilities are not subject to promotion/retention standards if, due to the nature and severity of their disability, they have an IEP allowing them to take an alternative form of state assessment.



Parent Concerns

Parents who disagree with the decision of the teacher(s) and principal regarding the promotion or retention of a student may appeal the decision to the chief operating officer or his designee. The decision of the chief operating officer or his designee shall be final.

TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Distribution and Access

Students are provided access to textbooks/instructional materials to enhance the learning process. Additionally, individual copies of textbooks may be distributed/issued to students. In accordance with state law, every student shall be permitted to take any textbook specifically issued to the student home for the purpose of studying the textbook. This does not prevent the school or a teacher from requiring a student to return the textbook during school hours.

Care and Protection

Textbooks/instructional materials are issued to the students with the understanding that the textbooks/instructional materials will be properly maintained and returned at the appointed time. Sanctions will be invoked in the event that a student refuses to pay for lost or damaged textbook/instructional materials at the replacement cost less reasonable depreciation. Sanctions are intended to prohibit lost or damaged textbooks/instructional materials through willful intent or neglect and include:

1. The withholding of all grade cards, diplomas, certificates of progress, or transcripts until restitution is made.
2. The refusal to issue any additional textbooks/instructional materials until restitution is made. (However, access to textbooks/instructional materials shall be provided.)

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any student or parent from voluntarily purchasing textbooks/instructional materials.

ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSION

Entrance Age

A child must be five (5) years of age on or before August 15th for the 2017-2018 school year.

A child must be six (6) years of age on or before September 30th of the current school term to be admitted to the first grade. All children entering the first grade must have attended an approved kindergarten.

Any transfer student legally enrolled as a first grade student in another state who will be six (6) years of age no later than December 31st of the current school year, making application for admission, shall be eligible for enrollment at Memphis STEM Academy.

Any child legally enrolled in an approved kindergarten in another state during the preceding school year and who could have enrolled in the first grade in that state in the current school year, making application for admission, shall be eligible for enrollment in the first grade in Memphis STEM Academy provided he/she is six (6) years of age on or before December 31st of the current year.

Students with disabilities who reside within the Shelby County School District may be enrolled in Memphis STEM Academy provided the eligibility requirements determined by the state of Tennessee have been met.

Cut-off Date for Entering Kindergarten

Parents/legal guardians/custodians are encouraged to enroll students who are of legal age in kindergarten at the beginning of the school year. Students who have not been enrolled previously in kindergarten will not be accepted after the first thirty (30) days of the school year. Students who have been enrolled previously in an approved kindergarten will be accepted at any time.



Students enrolling in kindergarten who have not previously enrolled in any school will furnish the following:

- 1. Certified birth certificate:** Other evidence of age is acceptable only if the certificate is not available, such as a foreign born student, and only if approved by the Department of Attendance and Discipline.
- 2. Proof of Immunization:** Please see the preceding section entitled “Immunization (New State Immunization Rules and Certificate).”
- 3. Physicals:** Physical examinations are a requirement for entry into kindergarten or new students entering a Tennessee school for the first time (within the last 12 months is acceptable).
Out-of-state physicals for entering students in kindergarten or a Tennessee school for the first time are acceptable; however, documentation on the Tennessee Immunization Certificate is necessary for submission to the school along with all immunizations transferred to the Tennessee Department of Health Immunization Certificate. Proof of physical exam is required.
- 4. Social Security Card:** Students who cannot provide a social security number will be assigned a personal identification number. The General Office Secretary (GOS) is provided instruction as to procedure to assign PIN numbers at their in-service. Students cannot be denied admission to public schools because they did not provide a social security number at registration.

General Enrollment

Proof of legal residence and legal custody shall be required for enrollment in school (unless otherwise prohibited by law and/or board policy).

First-time Enrollment

The parent/legal guardian/custodian of any student entering school for the FIRST TIME must present:

1. At the time of registration, officially acceptable evidence of date of birth (Examples include documents such as birth certificates, visas, passports, or adoption documentation.)
With regard to birth certificates, the name used on the records of a student entering school must be identical to the name shown on the birth certificate unless evidence is presented that such name has been legally changed through a court as prescribed by law. If the parent/legal guardian/custodian does not have or cannot obtain a birth certificate, then the name used on the records of such student will be the same as that shown on documents which are acceptable to the school principal as proof of date of birth. Exceptions will be made for students who meet the federal homeless/migrant provisions and guidelines;
2. Evidence of a current medical examination the medical examination must be completed by a doctor of medicine, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, certified nurse practitioner, or a properly trained public health nurse; and
3. Evidence of state-required immunizations parents or legal guardians shall be responsible for having their children immunized against designated diseases as authorized by the Tennessee Commissioner of Health.

Proof of Residency

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, parents/legal guardians/custodians having lawful control of students (proof of legal custody shall be required) must provide the following proof of residence in order to enroll a student in Shelby County Schools/Memphis STEM Academy.

General Proof of Residency

The parents/legal guardians/custodians having lawful control of the student must provide two (2) of the following items listed below:

1. Driver's license or other state or government (military) issued identification bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year;
2. Most recent MLGW or municipal water bill of the owner, renter or lessee of the home in which the student will reside during the current school year;



3. Mortgage statement or deed of the owner of the home in which the student will reside during the current school year;
4. Lease of the lessee of the home in which the student will reside during the current school year;
5. Rental agreement of the renter of the home in which the student will reside during the current school year;
6. Real Estate tax receipt;
7. Public assistance/government benefits check, card, or papers;
8. In the event that two (2) of the items listed above cannot be provided, residency may be established by submitting other documentation deemed to be appropriate proof of residence by the department responsible for verifying residency.

Shared Residency Requirements

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, in the case in which a student resides with his/her parents/legal guardians/custodians having lawful control of the student in the home of someone else, the following proof of shared residency must be provided in order to enroll a student in Memphis STEM Academy:

A. Unless otherwise approved by the department responsible for verifying residency, the homeowner of the home in which the student resides must accompany the parents/legal guardians/custodians to registration and provide two (2) of the items listed in the **General Proof of Residency Section** above; and

B. The parents/legal guardians/custodians having lawful control of the student claiming shared residency must provide two (2) of the following items listed below:

1. **Driver's license or other State or Government (military) issued identification** of the parent/legal guardian/custodians having lawful control of the student, bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current year;
2. **Car registration** of the parent/legal guardian/custodians having lawful control of the student bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year;
3. **Voter registration** of the parent/legal guardian/custodians having lawful control of the student bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year;
4. **Payroll stub** of the parent/legal guardian/custodians having lawful control of the student bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year;
5. **Three (3) significant pieces of mail** with a forwarding sticker bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year;
6. **Government Assistance Communication** directed to the parent/legal guardian/custodians having lawful control of the student bearing the address at which the student will be residing during the current school year.
7. In the event that two (2) of the items listed directly above cannot be provided, residency may be established by submitting other documentation deemed to be appropriate proof of residence by the department responsible for verifying residency. The parents/legal guardians/custodians of homeless students shall not be subject to the provisions outlined in the Shared Residency Requirements section above.

Homeless Students

Homeless students shall have equal access to the same free appropriate public education as provided to other students.

1. The McKinney-Vento Act (Section 725) defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, or similar settings due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - Abandoned in hospitals;



- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations);
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; or
- Unaccompanied youth, including youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, such as runaways and youth denied housing by their families.

2. The aforementioned youth have the following rights:

- The right to immediate enrollment in school, even if lacking paperwork normally required for enrollment (e.g., such as previous academic records, immunization records, proof of residency or other documentation);
- The right to attend 1) his/her school of origin, 2) last school attended, or 3) the school in the attendance area where the family or youth is currently residing, based on the parent's request or views of an unaccompanied homeless student and where feasible to the district considering the best interests of the student;
- The right to receive transportation to his/her school of origin, if this is requested by the parent or district staff charged with assisting homeless students;
- The right to services comparable to those received by housed schoolmates, including transportation and supplemental education services;
- The right to attend school along with children not experiencing homelessness. Segregation based on a student's status as homeless is strictly prohibited.

The rights of homeless students as defined above shall be posted in all schools and other places around the community (e.g., shelter, soup kitchen, etc.).

District staff charged with assisting homeless students shall be identified by the superintendent (or designee) and shall ensure that services and information regarding the rights existing under federal law are provided to students and parents who are homeless.

Power of Attorney for Childcare

Parents of a minor child may delegate to any adult person residing in this state temporary care-giving authority regarding a minor child when hardship prevents the parent(s) from caring for the child. Hardships identified are:

1. The serious illness or incarceration of a parent or legal guardian;
2. The physical or mental condition of the parent or legal guardian is such that care and supervision cannot be provided;
3. The loss or uninhabitability of the child's home as the result of a natural disaster.

When one of the above hardships is applicable, the custodial parent(s) and the caregiver must make an appointment to meet with Student Equity Enrollment and Discipline (**S.E.E.D**) in order to complete the application for Power of Attorney. Hardships not listed above should be referred to juvenile court to change the custody.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, TRUANCY, AND WITHDRAWAL

Attendance

The Tennessee State Compulsory Attendance Law (T.C.A. §49-6-3001 and T.C.A. §49-6-2007) requires that pupils of legal age attend school (ages of six and seventeen years, both inclusive) unless special circumstances arise which temporarily or permanently excuse the student from attendance. This also applies to five (5) year old students who have attended school for six (6) weeks. By state law, the student's school year shall consist of a minimum of 180 teaching days exclusive of all vacations, as approved by the board of education. (T.C.A. §49-6-3004) The annual calendar is divided into two semesters. A copy of this calendar is included at the front of this handbook.



Attendance Policies and Procedures

Calls are made to each parent of an absent student, daily. Calls are made to the home/cellular phone number of record. The student's absence will be recorded with an "AT" until a parent note or a doctor's note is presented the next day after the absence.

Excused Absences:

- **Illness of student**
- **Death or serious illness within the student's immediate family**
- **Representing school**
- **Religious holiday**
- **Legal court summons: not the fault of the student**
- **Extenuating circumstances as approved by the principal.**
- **Parent/Guardian deployment**

A parent note must be received within two days from the date of the absence. Notes will not be accepted after that time.

- Notes should be presented by the student to the 1st period teacher.
- Parent notes should include:
 - Student's full name
 - Date of absence
 - Reason for absence(s)
 - Signature of parent, current phone numbers
- All notes are subject to verification.
- Students who have missed 3 or more days in a row, need to submit a doctor's note.

Late Arrival to School

If a student arrives to school after 7:30 a.m. he/she MUST check in to the office to get an admit to slip to class.

A parent must sign in student and/or provide a signed note to explain the reason for the late arrival.

Excessive unexcused lateness to school will be considered truancy and will result in disciplinary action and can be reported to Shelby County Schools Pupil Services.

Checking out of School

If a student must leave school during the day, the parent or guardian must come to check the student out. Check outs for doctor appointment will be unexcused until the student brings a "Return to School" note from the doctor's office.



Excessive Absences/Check-Ins/Check-Outs

Students who accumulate a total of 10 or more absences, check-ins and check-outs will be required to present a doctor's not in order for any future attendance event to be considered excused.

Unexcused Absence Procedures

- If a student is absent without an excuse, the school must use school-based procedures as well as appropriate interventions to encourage regular school attendance. The following attendance procedures shall be used:
 - First Two (1st and 2nd) Unexcused Absences-documented phone calls to parents/guardians on the first day and second day of the first two days of unexcused absence.
 - Third (3rd) Unexcused Absence-Warning letter to parents/guardians informing them of truancy laws and the consequences of noncompliance and requesting a parent/teacher conference.
- After the student's fifth (5th) unexcused absence, the first official attendance letter will be automatically generated by the school and sent to the parents/guardians informing them of their noncompliance with the compulsory attendance laws, the consequences for failing to comply, and that their presence is requested at a meeting of the Student Attendance Review Team (SART). This team is designed to identify the cause(s) of the unexcused absences in order to bring the parent/guardian and student in compliance with attendance laws.
- The SART team must develop a Parent/Student Action Plan (PSAP) to address the cause(s) of the unexcused absences and identify interventions that eliminate the underlying problem and enable the student to attend school on a regular basis. The Plan must be signed by all members of the team and shall be monitored on a regular basis. If the parent/guardian does not cooperate, the plan can be implemented with the student's signature, but the Plan must document attempts to contact the parents/guardians.
- After a student has accumulate ten (10) or more unexcused absences the student will be referred to, the truancy office and/or the District Attorney General Office for appropriate legal action.

Enrollment of Students Beyond compulsory Attendance Age

During the first twenty (20) days, students beyond compulsory attendance age [eighteen (18) years of age or older] who have been continuously enrolled with the district may register for school through the standard registration process. However, upon enrollment, all such students shall meet with their school principals and other appropriate staff to evaluate academic options and make appropriate education placement referrals for the students, including overage for grade students; and outline the academic and behavioral expectations of the student within the school.

An application for admission must be evaluated for approval by the principal for a person eighteen (18) years of age or older who:

1. has dropped out of school and wants to re-enter; **or**
2. fails to enroll within twenty (20) school days after school officially starts, unless one or more of the following applies:
 - a. The student can show proof of satisfactory attendance in another school system during the first twenty (20) day period.
 - b. A doctor's certificate states that illness has prevented enrollment during the first twenty (20) day period.



- c. The district is required to permit the student to enroll under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Students not initially accepted for enrollment by the principal may then contact the district department responsible for student services for possible enrollment.

Attendance of Students Beyond Compulsory Attendance Age)

Any student having passed the compulsory attendance age may be dropped from the rolls after three (3) consecutive unexcused absences, or an aggregate five (5) unexcused absences, from class or school, upon approval of the superintendent (or designee).

Compulsory Attendance

Students between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17), both inclusive, must attend a public or non-public school. The principal shall be responsible for the initial placement of students entering school for the first time. A parent/guardian or legal custodian who believes that their child is not ready to attend school at the designated age of mandatory attendance may make application to the superintendent (or designee) for a one (1) semester or one year deferral in required attendance. Any such deferral shall be communicated to the principal of the school that the student would have attended. In accordance with the provisions outlined in the state law, the Board may temporarily excuse students from complying with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law.

Attendance and Excuses

Memphis STEM Academy believes that regular attendance is a necessary requirement of all students.

All students are expected to attend school on each day that school is officially in session and remain at school for the entirety of the school day. Only the following reasons will be considered for excused absences:

1. Illness, injury, pregnancy, homebound circumstance, or hospitalization of student. Memphis STEM Academy may require a parent conference and/or physician verification to justify absences after the accumulation of ten (10) days of absence during a school year. Notes must be date specific and will be required for subsequent absences beyond ten (10) days.
2. Death or serious illness within the student's immediate family.
3. When the student is officially representing the school in a school sponsored activity or attendance at school-endorsed activities and verified college visits.
4. Special and recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of their faith. Any student who misses a class or day of school because of the observance of a day set aside as sacred by a recognized religious denomination of which the student is a member or adherent, where such religion calls for special observances of such day, shall have the absence from that school day or class excused and shall be entitled to make up any school work missed without the imposition of any penalty because of the absence.
5. A court order; a subpoena; and/or a legal court summons.
6. Extenuating circumstances over which the student has no control as approved by the principal.
7. If a student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is a member of the United States Armed Forces, including a member of a state National Guard or a Reserve component called to federal active duty, the student's Principal shall give the student:
 - a. An excused absence for one (1) day when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is deployed;
 - b. An additional excused absence for one (1) day when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student returns from deployment; and
 - c. Excused absences for up to ten (10) days for visitation when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is granted rest and recuperation leave and is stationed out of the country.
 - d. Excused absences for up to ten (10) days cumulatively within the school year for visitation during the deployment



cycle of the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student. Total excused absences under this section (c) and (d) shall not exceed a total of ten (10) days within the school year. The student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of the deployment of the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student.

8. Participation in a non-school-sponsored extracurricular activity. A school principal or the principal's designee may excuse a student from school attendance to participate in a non-school-sponsored extracurricular activity, if the following conditions are met:

- (1) The student provides documentation to the school as proof of the student's participation in the non-school-sponsored extracurricular activity; and
- (2) The student's parent, custodian, or other person with legal custody or control of the student, prior to the extracurricular activity, submits to the principal or the principal's designee a written request for the excused absence.

The written request shall be submitted no later than seven (7) business days prior to the student's absence.

The written request shall include:

- (A) The student's full name and personal identification number;
- (B) The student's grade;
- (C) The dates of the student's absence;
- (D) The reason for the student's absence; and
- (E) The signature of both the student and the student's parent, custodian, or other person with legal custody or control of the student.

The principal or the principal's designee shall approve, in writing, the student's participation in the non-school-sponsored extracurricular activity.

The principal may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school year; however, such the principal shall excuse no more than ten (10) absences each school year for students participating in non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

A written statement within two (2) school days of the student's return to school shall be required from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for each absence.

If necessary, verification is required from an official source to justify absences.

All absences other than those outlined above shall be considered unexcused.

Parents may appeal unexcused absences to their child's school principal (or designee).

The appeal must be:

- (1) in writing and include documentation necessary to support the appeal;
- (2) submitted within five (5) school days of the parent's receipt of the first official attendance letter generated by the school and or District that is referenced in policy 6016 Truancy District; and
- (3) based on one or more of the allowable reasons for excused absences outlined in this policy. Within five (5) school days of receipt of the request for appeal, the Principal (or designee) shall review the appeal, meet with the parents to allow them an opportunity to be heard, and render a decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the



principal (or designee) that is compliant with applicable law and district policy is final. (This appeal process for determining unexcused absences is ancillary to a truancy decision rendered by a juvenile court judge as described in TCA 49-6-3010.)

Questions regarding school-level decisions may be directed to the district department responsible for academic school operations. Parents may direct their questions to the Office of Student Equity, Enrollment, and Discipline (S.E.E.D.).

Make-up Work

In the event of an excused absence, students are expected to make up work missed within a reasonable time. In the event of an unexcused absence, one day of makeup time shall be allowed for each day of unexcused absence, if the following conditions are met. The parent of a student or a student with an unexcused absence must submit a written request to the teacher to make-up the work and must participate in an appropriate intervention (e.g., student or parent conference with the teacher, Saturday school, online tutorial, other appropriate intervention determined and scheduled by the teacher). For absences due to long-term suspension (over 10 days)/expulsion, the program of making up work shall be in accordance with state law.

Truancy

Unauthorized absence from school is considered truancy and will be treated as such. This includes absence from any class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled and remedial programs that are offered at no cost to parents provided that prior to requiring the student to attend the program a commitment of transportation is provided to those students who qualify for transportation to and from school. The principals, in coordination with any teachers who provide instruction to a student and any other appropriate school faculty, shall make the decision to require the student's attendance at such remedial instruction occurring outside of the regular school day, including but not limited to programs conducted during the summer and after the conclusion of the regular school day pursuant to state law.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENT AND EVALUATION OF PUPIL PROGRESS

Assignment of Students to Classes

The assignment of students to classes and classes to teachers is the responsibility of the principal. Each school shall develop and publish for students and parents any criteria and/or processes involved in the selection and assignment of classes.

STUDENT RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (commonly known as "FERPA") (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) affords parents (which includes legal guardians) and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a request form that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The parent or eligible student must provide two types of identification prior to reviewing the student's record, with one piece of



identification containing a photo of the requester. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the date, time and place where the records may be inspected. If the parent or eligible student is unable to inspect and review the educational record, the District will arrange other ways to make the record available or copy the record. A fee for copying records for a custodial or noncustodial parent may be charged, depending upon the amount of information requested. The school may also charge a fee when third parties request copies of records.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend their child's or their education record should complete and submit to the District department responsible for student information a form stating explicitly why it is believed that the information is inaccurate, misleading or an invasion of privacy and how the record should be amended. If MSA decides not to amend the record as requested, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of its decision and of his/her right to a hearing. The request for a hearing must be submitted to the District department responsible for student information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. MSA defines a "school official" as a person employed by the network as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, counselor, researcher, or support staff person; a person serving on the school board who needs the information for an officially designated purpose; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a specific task; and a contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other outside party to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions that it otherwise would use employees to perform, provided that the entity is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of education records and is subject to the same conditions governing the use and re-disclosure of education records as the school. MSA considers a school official to have a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her duties as identified by the school. MSA does not release educational records to school officials if the school official is requesting the record with the expressed or implied intent of recruiting students to the school or sharing information about the school to students and parents.

Upon request, the District may also disclose education records without consent to officials of another school, school district or institution of higher education in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

A parent or eligible student may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office if he/she believes that FERPA has been violated. The complaint must be filed within 180 days of the date of the alleged violation or of the date the complainant reasonably knew or should have known of the alleged violation. A parent or eligible student may also file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office if he/she believes that the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment has been violated. Such complaints may be sent to the following:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202



Accumulative Records

A confidential accumulative record of educational history and progress is maintained in a secured file for each student enrolled in the school system. This accumulative record contains all courses taken, grades received, credits earned, attendance, as well as results of achievement tests taken and suspensions/expulsions. Records are copied/transferred by school officials upon formal request from the receiving school.

Special Education Records

Special education records are maintained for students currently served by an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) and receiving services such as speech, CLUE, Functional Skills, etc. The psychological and other relevant records are kept in individual schools in separate folders. These confidential folders are maintained in a locked file cabinet or a locked room. The psychological reports are maintained at the Department of Exceptional Children. When special services are discontinued or the student withdraws from the district, the Special Education student record is forwarded to the Department of Exceptional Children. A request for these records along with a Confidential Release of Information must be signed by the parent/guardian or student, if of legal age, and must specifically request "Special Education Records" and must be forwarded to the Department of Exceptional Children. Records will not be released to outside agencies without a signed release from the parent/guardian or student of legal age, with the exception of release to other school districts as permitted under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; Buckley Amendment) (Public Law 93-380).

Military Recruiters

Parents have the right to request in writing that their child's name, address and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without prior written consent. This request shall be presented to the school principal at the beginning of each school year.

DEPARTMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN & HEALTH SERVICES

Memphis STEM Academy offers a wide range of services to meet the needs of students with disabilities, including gifted students. Eligible students from ages three through twenty-one are served in all schools. A full continuum of services, including related services such as Speech/Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy, are available within the network. Specialists are available to work with students with visual impairment, hearing impairment, or behavior problems.

Student Referral

Parents, teachers or administrators may refer students for evaluation for suspected disability and special education services. If parents are concerned about their child's learning or behavior in school, they may call or write their child's teacher or school administrator expressing these concerns. If parents suspect that their child has a disability, including a medical condition, that is impacting their education or behavior at school and wish to discuss having their child evaluated for eligibility for special education services and supports, they may request a meeting from their child's school administrator to discuss evaluation. Parents should submit this request in writing or ask a school staff member to write their request down. If a parent requests an evaluation for special education services, a school administrator may explain the student intervention and referral process and offer parents the option to see how a student responds to general education academic and behavioral interventions prior to determining whether a child should be evaluated for special education services. A school administrator may also explain supports and accommodations available under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act for students with disabilities whose needs may be met without special education services.

The district does not discriminate in evaluation or programming on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, or disability. Parents, teachers, or administrators may refer students for screening to its gifted services



program (CLUE). As with all students with disabilities, a continuum of service options is offered for gifted students. Services may range from consultation to subject or grade acceleration. Parents interested in gifted screening for their child should contact the school principal for a review of student data or other program information. Further requests regarding student referrals may also be forwarded to the school administration.

HEALTH SERVICES

Immunization

No students entering school, including those entering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, those from out-of-state and those from nonpublic schools, will be permitted to enroll (or attend) without proof of immunization. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school, which the student is to attend. Exceptions, in the absence of epidemic or immediate threat, parents or guardian shall file with school authorities a signed, written statement that such measures conflict with his/her religious tenets or practices; or due to medical reasons if such student has a written statement from his/her doctor excusing him from such immunizations.

Waiver of Immunization Requirements

State law (T.C.A. §49-6-5001) provides waiver of immunization requirements under the following conditions.

1. Absent epidemic or threat of epidemic, parents may object in writing, when immunization conflicts with the teachings and practice of a well-recognized religious denomination to which the parents adhere. However, if an epidemic or threat of epidemic occurs, objections on the behalf of religious teaching are invalid.
2. Certificate in writing from a physician stating that such immunization would be harmful to the student involved is provided to the school for the student's permanent file.

Hospitalization

If your child has experienced hospitalization related to accident/injury, or chronic illness, please notify the school administrator if your child requires accommodations. This will allow for smooth transition and seamless re-entry to school.

Acute and Chronic Health Issues

· Acute Health Issue may be defined as:

An illness, disease, condition or issue that occurs suddenly, is of short duration and will require accommodation for school attendance.

· Chronic Health Issue may be defined as:

An illness, disease, condition or issue considered stable or unstable that lasts over a long period and will require accommodation for school attendance.

Parents/guardians of students attending MSA need to complete a Confidential Student Health Information form annually.

Parents/guardians of students with a disease, illness, condition or issue of an acute or chronic nature need to contact the school if your child requires assistance.

If requested, based on individual student health information, the school nurse will develop an Individualized Health Care Plan, Specific Action Plan or Fact Sheet and communicate with school personnel to implement an appropriate plan. "Students with Life threatening Food Allergies" and Diabetes are managed in the school setting in accordance with the T.C.A. §49-5-415 and the State Department of Education and Health "Guidelines for the "Use of Health Care Professionals and Health Care Procedures in the School Setting" and "Health Care Management".



Administering Medicines to Students

It is the policy of the MSA that all student's medication be administered by a parent at home. Under exceptional circumstances medication may be administered by a designated school personnel under the appropriate administrative regulations or accordant state law.

Medication in Schools

If, under exceptional circumstances, a student is required to receive medication during school hours and the parents cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the school nurse or the principal's designee will administer the medication in compliance with the applicable state and federal regulations.

Written Parent Permission Required

1. Written instruction signed by the parent or legal guardian will be required and will include: (Authorization for Administering Medicine at School)
 - a. student's name;
 - b. name of medication;
 - c. purpose of medication;
 - d. time to be administered;
 - e. dosage;
 - f. possible side effects;
 - g. termination date for administering the medication;
 - h. name and phone number of prescribing physician.
2. The signed Parent Authorization form will be kept on file at the school.
3. All medication will be brought to the school by the parent or guardian, unless other arrangements have been approved by the school principal, but under no circumstances shall a student bring the medication to school by himself/herself. All medication must be brought in its original container whether it be a prescription or non-prescription medication.
4. The principal or the principal's designee will:
 - a. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication being taken;
 - b. Keep a record of the administration of medication on designated form and will keep this record on file at school;
 - c. Keep medication in a locked area (Exception: Students with Asthma who have inhalers, epi-pens, diabetic supplies and pancreatic enzymes at school may keep such materials in their possession or with teacher in the classroom "provided the parent has completed an Action Plan, obtained the prescribing physician signature and completed a Parent Authorization Form. The forms are available from the school nurse;
 - d. Return unused medication to the parent only or discard appropriately. If discarded at school the following procedure will be followed:
 - i. Medication will be disposed of in a manner so that no student will be able to get the medication.
 - ii. The method used, the date the medication is discarded, and the person or people involved will be documented.
5. The parents of the student must assume responsibility for informing the school principal of any change in the student's health or change in medication. The dosage of a medication or the time of administration CANNOT be changed by a phone call from a parent/guardian."
6. Should medication of an invasive nature (i.e., intramuscular, intravenous, suppository) be required to be given by school personnel for emergency response or action, call the Department of Coordinated School Health at 901.416.2424 to work with a school nurse to obtain proper physician orders, instructions and provide the required proper training for appropriate personnel.
7. The school system retains the discretion to reject request for administration of medicine.
8. A copy of this procedure will be provided to parents upon their requests for administration of medication in the schools.



Communicable Diseases

The board recognizes its responsibility to protect the health of its students as well as to uphold their individual rights.

Communicable Diseases Requiring Exclusion from School

Students may be excluded from school to prevent the spread of contagious disease. The principal or designee may exclude a student, but no child shall be sent home from school without first informing the parents. The student must be isolated until he/she goes home. A student suspected of having, or being able to transmit, a contagious disease shall be excluded from school, and a report made to the State Department of Public Health for those diseases requiring mandatory reporting. Contagious diseases include, but are not limited to: red measles, German measles, chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, scarlet fever, diphtheria, Vincent's angina, conjunctivitis, ringworm, impetigo, scabies, pediculosis (head lice), or other disease diagnosed as contagious.

Readmission

If the suspected condition is found not to exist, the principal or designee may readmit the student.

In the case of communicable disease, the student may be readmitted on presentation of a written statement from the family physician, and/or completion of the period of exclusion required by the State Department of Public Health.

In the case of ringworm, impetigo, or scabies the student may be readmitted once treatment has begun and proof of treatment is presented to the principal or designee.

In the case of pediculosis (head lice) a student may be readmitted for inspection following treatment. If proof of treatment is presented to the principal or designee and no live lice are present, the student may return to class.

Acquired Immune Deficiency System

Mandatory screening for communicable diseases not spread by casual, everyday contact, such as HIV infection, will not be a condition for school entry or attendance

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The standards for Shelby County Schools dress reflect "common sense" and a concern for each student's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. To that end, Memphis STEM Academy establishes a basic dress code to ensure appropriate and modest dress.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

In order to maintain conditions suitable for learning, no person shall enter onto a school bus except students assigned to that bus and authorized school/District personnel, unless otherwise provided by law, Board policy, and/or contract. Parents of students are responsible for their child's supervision until the child boards the bus in the morning and re-continues after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a student boards the bus - and only at that time - does he or she become the responsibility of the school system. Such responsibility shall end when the student is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, MSA shall require students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Students are under the supervision of the bus driver while on his/her bus, and all reasonable directions given by the bus driver shall be followed. A school bus driver may, pursuant to state law, use reasonable force when necessary under the circumstances to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another person. The school bus driver will notify the principal of any serious discipline problem caused by a student being transported to the principal's school, and may be called upon to assist the principal, if necessary. Except as provided by law, a student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal, in consultation with the department responsible for



student transportation, determines that the student's behavior causes disruption on the bus, or if a student disobeys local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. Suspension of ridership privileges may be in addition to school disciplinary measures that may be taken by the principal according to the Student Code of Conduct. Suspension of ridership privileges may be the only disciplinary action taken when deemed appropriate for the level of the offense. In the event a suspension from school is issued for a bus conduct offense, the ridership privilege suspension will begin the student's first day back to school. The suspension of a student from riding the school bus is subject to the same review and appeal procedures as a school suspension. However, to ensure compliance with applicable state and/or federal laws/regulations, the principal will consult with the Department of Special Education before assigning or suspending bus rider privileges to students receiving special education services.

By law, employees who interact with students in the course of their assigned duties, may relocate a student from the student's present location to another location in emergency situations. Such employees may also intervene in a physical altercation between two (2) or more students, or between a student and a District employee. Reasonable force may be used to physically relocate or intervene in such conflicts if a student is unwilling to cooperate .

Students must ride their designated bus determined by the student's address of record. Additionally, students are not permitted to exit at a point other than the student's regular bus stop, unless they have been granted a waiver pursuant.

Use of Video Cameras

Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. MSA shall keep all video recording of students confidential and shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to video recordings when such recordings are considered as part of the student's education and behavioral record as determined by the network and in accordance with the law. Video recordings may only be accessed by the parent of the student involved, employees of the school involved who have a legitimate educational interest in the recording, and MSA Security. The recording may be shared with the appropriate law enforcement agency if the principal has requested assistance. Video surveillance shall be used only to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff, and property.

Students in violation of bus conduct rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established policy and regulations governing student conduct and discipline.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Students are responsible for abiding by the rules for riding the school bus.
- B. School bus drivers are responsible for fostering a safe school bus environment, maintaining appropriate behavior while driving, and meeting the requirements for school bus drivers as outlined in state law and/or by contract.
- C. Principals and teachers are responsible for providing school bus rules to parents and students.
- D. Principals and/or the department responsible for student transportation are responsible for responding to complaints about student behavior by bus drivers or other students.
- E. The department responsible for student transportation is responsible for implementing this policy.
- F. The department responsible for attendance and discipline is responsible for monitoring and reviewing behavioral consequences issued to students, including bus suspensions, and for counseling with school administrators when consequences issued to students are not in compliance with MSA policy and/or state or federal law/regulations.
- G. The department responsible for district-wide special education services is charged with making information available about bus suspension of students receiving special education services.



STUDENT CONDUCT

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

The district shall develop and communicate a comprehensive prevention and intervention program. The program shall include a parental engagement component outlining strategies for parents to support the prevention of inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior in their children and participate in intervention efforts if such behavior occurs. Additionally, prevention and intervention strategies may include classroom, school-wide, or district-wide assessment and supports for students who exhibit and/or are victims of behaviors involving threats; poor attendance/truancy; violence/weapons/gangs; drugs/alcohol; or harassment/intimidation/ bullying/cyber-bullying.

School-Wide Intervention Behavior Plans

Each school shall strive to promote and support appropriate behavior in students at the school by implementing behavior programs that integrate school and district-wide behavior intervention strategies with all aspects of a school's support services. To this end, each school shall develop a School-wide Behavior Plan that is consistent with district policies and applicable laws. At a minimum, the School-wide Behavior Plan shall outline the school's operating procedures for utilizing various prevention and intervention strategies and utilizing progressive discipline within the school.

Disciplinary Measures

Several disciplinary measures may be employed to support acceptable student behavior. Disciplinary measures include parent/administrator conference, confiscation of items, loss of privileges, before/after school detention/Saturday school, suspension from the bus, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and remand/alternative placement. With the exception of privileges restricted by the principal, suspension from the bus and confiscation of items, schools shall not impose multiple disciplinary measures on a student for a single offense or violation of the Code of Conduct. The principal may restrict activities for students who accumulate a certain number of suspensions. Activities that may be restricted by the principal and the actions that may place students on restriction shall be communicated to students and parents by the principal.

Confiscation of Items and/or Loss of Privileges

1. Confiscation of Items

"Confiscated items" include beepers, telephone pagers, laser pointers, and cellular phones, prohibited electronic devices, and any other item prohibited by the district. Unless the district extends the return time of confiscated items because the item or its contents may be evidence of violation of law or policy, the parent may pick up the item at the time and location designated by the principal at the close of the next school day following the day that the parent received notification of confiscation or earlier at the principal's discretion. Thereafter, the parent may pick up the device by appointment. The district does not take responsibility for confiscated items and will not compensate the owner for any lost, stolen, or damaged confiscated items while in the custody of the district.

2. Loss of Privileges

Students may lose privileges including, but not limited to, the following:

- Loss of classroom privileges
- Loss of parking privileges
- Loss of extracurricular/athletic or other school-wide privileges
- Privileges restricted by the principal



In-School Suspension

The in-school suspension program includes a behavior management component that teaches students skills to improve their behavior and make good choices while allowing students the opportunity to complete their regular classroom assignments in an isolated environment. The principal, including vice/assistant principal, has sole discretion to issue in-school suspensions.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-school suspensions vary in length from one (1) to ten (10) days. It is not the intent of the system to remove students from the school society for minor violations. Therefore, suspension from school should be used with caution and only in appropriate cases. The principal, including vice/assistant principal, has sole discretion to issue out-of-school suspensions from one (1) to ten(10) days.

1. A behavioral intervention plan shall be developed for students who accumulate more than five days of suspensions during the school year.
2. Multiple suspensions shall not run consecutively; nor shall multiple suspensions be applied to avoid expulsion from school. Reasonable effort shall be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately regarding any suspension. If contact with the parent/guardian cannot be made, the student will remain at school until dismissal time except in cases of police arrest or an emergency, such as when the student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property in the school or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process. Students on suspension must not be permitted to enter school property, attend class, or participate in school-sponsored activities while under suspension, unless otherwise allowed by law.

Expulsion

Expulsions vary in length from eleven (11) days to the remainder of the school year or one (1) calendar year for state-mandated expulsions. [Any single suspension in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or multiple suspensions totaling 15 days in one month is an expulsion.] The principal may issue expulsions subject to student legal due process rights regarding appeals of expulsions [suspension of more than ten (10) days] and in accordance with the district-wide Student Code of Conduct. The chief operating officer may modify a state-mandated one-year expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

Safety Assessment Associated with Expulsion

When the student's infraction involves:

- a credible/substantive threat of harm;
- possession of a dangerous weapon (firearm, knife, taser, explosive, etc.);
- assault resulting in serious bodily injury to staff/student(s); or
- off-campus felony with a firearm,

The principal/assistant principal or designee shall: 1) consult with appropriate district staff responsible for IDEA (i.e., SPED and 504) to determine whether a student has an *identified or suspected* need for services under IDEA and hold a manifestation determination meeting if necessary; and 2) immediately refer the student for safety assessment.

Expelled students who either chose to appeal or chose not to appeal their expulsions may, at the discretion of the parent and upon assignment by the district, participate in alternative school or may attend other appropriate educational settings during the remainder of the expulsion.

The office responsible for alternative schools will inform the parents that the placement decision is being taken under advisement pending outcome of the safety assessment. Safety assessment findings and recommendations will be utilized in making the placement decision and in the implementation of the safety plan of the student. Students with a confirmed *identified or suspected*



need for services under IDEA shall be exempted from this advisement period and may receive immediate alternative school placement or other appropriate accommodations.

The safety assessment advisement period must be completed within ten (10) days of the original incident. If extenuating circumstance exist preventing the completion of the safety assessment within ten (10) days of the incident (e.g., failure of parental/family participation in the safety assessment), then the department responsible for alternative schools shall convene a district administrative committee to discuss and make a recommendation regarding the appropriate placement of the student and the educational services (e.g., safety plan) available for the student. The district administrative committee shall include representatives of the departments responsible for alternative schools, attendance and discipline, and coordinated school health safety assessment, 504 implementation, special education services, and, when applicable, legal services. Upon consideration of the discussion and recommendations of the administrative committee, the department responsible for alternative schools shall make the placement determination and provide a justification if alternative placement is not made.

Suspension from the School/MATA Bus

Except where prohibited by law, students who engage in bus-related misconduct may be suspended from riding the school or MATA bus to and from school. Decisions involving temporary/permanent removal from school bus or MATA bus ridership will be made by the principal. In such cases, the student would typically continue his/her school assignment, but he/she would have to find another means of transportation. Truancy laws would still be in effect. Additional disciplinary actions may also apply when bus related misconduct involves a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. The district shall comply with applicable state and/or federal laws/regulations regarding the suspension of a student receiving special education services from school/Mata bus transportation.

Reporting Procedures

Mandatory reportable criminal offenses shall be reported in accordance with state law and Board policy. The principal shall consult with department responsible for security when determining whether local law enforcement should be contacted regarding any violation of the Code of Conduct that does not require mandatory reporting to law enforcement or other agency. For reporting discrimination and sexual harassment, any student or parent/legal guardian who believes s/he is experiencing student-to-student discrimination or sexual harassment shall report such circumstances to a teacher, counselor, or principal immediately. If the report is made to a teacher or counselor, s/he must notify the principal immediately.

Special Education Considerations

Students who also qualify for special education services determined to have violated this policy may be suspended, expelled, or remanded or otherwise disciplined only in accordance with special education laws and policies. For zero tolerance offenses, remand of a student who qualifies for special education services must be based on recommendation of the IEP team and the student must have a manifestation meeting prior to remand or exclusion from school for over ten (10) days.

Unless a disciplinary infraction is the direct result of a student's disability, the student will be disciplined in the same manner as a nondisabled student. The district, parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP team shall review all relevant information to determine:

- a. if the conduct was a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP; and/or
- b. if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability.

Serious safety issues involving weapons, drugs, or inflicting serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function will result in removal for up to forty-five school days. In cases of expulsions [suspensions longer than ten (10) days], the student must continue to receive educational services.



Regular education students may invoke rights under special education laws under certain conditions, including if the parent has expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the district, or the student's teacher, that the student is in need of special education and related services.

The school district must also contact the education specialist at the Department of Children's Services if a foster child (with or without an identified disability) has allegedly committed an offense that may result in a suspension of ten (10) or more days or has had a petition filed against him/her by the school or school system.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

(Offenses and Penalties by Category)

The infractions of school discipline at Memphis STEM Academy listed below are grouped into categories according to the seriousness of the offense. This list is not intended to be exclusive or all inclusive. For infractions not specifically listed below, school principals shall assign discipline in accordance with the category that appears to be comparable to the offenses specifically listed in the category.

Category A – State Zero Tolerance Offenses

1. Aggravated assault resulting in serious bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, school resource officer, or any other school employee;
2. Unlawful possession, sale, or evidence of use of drugs/narcotics at school or at a school-sponsored activity;
3. Unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

Penalty for *Category A* Offenses:

- Expulsion/Suspension for 180 days

Notification will be made to law enforcement authorities. Any modification of this penalty can only be made by the Chief Operating Officer

Category B

1. Possession of a knife or any potentially lethal weapon, Taser, or explosive on school property or at a school-sponsored activity;
2. Being under the influence of and/or evidence of drinking or possession of alcoholic beverages in school or at a school sponsored activity;
3. Off campus criminal behavior that results in the student being legally charged with an offense that would be classified as a felony and the student's continued presence in school poses a danger to person or property or disrupts the educational process;
4. Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a violent felony or issuance of a violent felony delinquency complaint against a student if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. (**Out of school suspension is not permitted for this offense. Remand or expulsion is require.*);
5. Gang activities - Activity that is threatening and/or intimidating, harassing in nature or recruiting; gang notebooks with gang pledges, codes and symbols that are used in communication such as threats and warnings and recruiting; gang related fights, and all types of violent acts; gang graffiti especially drawn on school property (bathrooms, lockers and hall walls); electronic devices such as cell phones with recognized gang text, with gang symbols, signs and language that is threatening and or intimidating;
6. Being under the influence of and/or evidence of use or possession of drug paraphernalia, substances for huffing, any substance under guise of it being a controlled substance or prescription drug, and/or medical preparations without proper medical authorization;
7. Possession, use or distribution of counterfeit money on school property or at any school-sponsored activity;
8. Assault upon any teacher, principal, administrator, school resource officer, or any other school employee;
9. Continuous and/or severe *Category C* Offenses.



Penalty for *Category B* Offenses:

- *Out-of School Suspension or
- Expulsion (11-180 day)

When appropriate, notification will be made to law enforcement authorities. Modification of this penalty can be made by the COO or the Disciplinary Hearing Authority.

Category C

1. Threatening bodily harm to school personnel, including transmitting by an electronic device any communication containing a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to a school employee and the transmission of such threat creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention;
2. False accusations against school personnel;
3. Making a threat, including a false report, to use a bomb, dynamite, any other deadly explosive or destructive device, including chemical weapons, on school property or at a school-sponsored event;
4. Smoking and/or the possession of tobacco products by students while in or on school, properties or under school's jurisdiction during school hours or while participating in a school-sponsored event;
5. Gang activities - any gang related activity not specified in Category B;
6. One (1) or more students initiating a physical attack on an individual student on school property or at a school-sponsored activity;
7. Malicious destruction of or damage to school property, including electronic media, or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school;
8. Stealing or misappropriation of school or personal property (regardless of intent to return);
9. Immoral or disreputable conduct;
10. Continuous and/or severe Category D Offenses.

Penalty for *Category C* Offenses:

- In-School Suspension or
- Out-of School Suspension

When appropriate, notification will be made to law enforcement authorities.

Category D

1. Open or continued defiant attitude or willful disobedience toward a member of school staff;
2. Vulgar, profane, immoral/disreputable or rude remarks or non-verbal action to staff member or fellow student;
3. Physical or verbal intimidation or threats to other students, including hazing;
4. Threatening bodily harm to another student, including transmitting by an electronic device any communication containing a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to a student and the transmission of such threat creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention;
5. Fighting in or on school property unless, in accordance with state law, the principal recommends no disciplinary action for a student who is deemed to have acted in self-defense or defense of another;
6. Possession of mace or disabling sprays;
7. Inappropriate use of electronic media, including, but not limited to, all calls (land line, cellular or computer generated), instant messaging, text messaging, audio recording devices, iPods, MP3s or any type of electronic music or entertainment device, and cameras and camera phones;
8. Sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious harassment/discrimination;
9. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment;
10. Refusal to produce an object identified by metal detectors;
11. Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in any acts in Categories A, B or C;
12. Continuous and/or severe Category E Offenses.



Penalty for *Category D* Offenses:

- Parent-Principal Conference; or
- Before/After School Detention/Saturday School; or
- In-School Suspension; or
- Out-of-School Suspension

Category E

1. Habitual and/or excessive tardiness;
2. Class cutting;
3. Intentional disturbance of class, cafeteria or school activities;
4. Leaving school grounds without permission;
5. Being in an unauthorized area without permission;
6. Tampering with grades or report cards;
7. Possession of lighters or matches;
8. Possession of and access to beepers, cellular phones or other electronic communication devices during school hours without written permission of the principal;
9. Inciting, advising or counseling others to engage in any acts in Category D;
10. Dress code violation, including wearing, while on school grounds during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment.

Penalty for *Category E* Offenses:

- Parent-Principal Conference; or
- Before/After School Detention/Saturday School; or
- In-School Suspension

CELL PHONES/PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

It is the Network's policy **that students are prohibited from possessing any type of phone or personal communication device that is turned on or in visible/audible use at any time during the regular school day.**

MEMPHIS STEM ACADEMY PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

To comply with all pertinent mandates of state and federal regulatory standards which require that all parents have access to various levels and types of parental involvement activities with no person excluded based on race, religion, creed, gender, socio-economic status, physical impairment or age, the school district/network will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all its schools.



ATTENDANCE

Breakfast:

7:00 – 7:20 Breakfast is served.

Class Start Time:

Classes begin at 7:30. Scholars are seated in class at 7:30 am.

Late Arrivals:

Scholars that arrive at 7:30 are late and must be signed in by a parent or guardian. The scholar will then receive a tardy slip indicating whether the tardy is excused or unexcused. When a scholar accumulates “4” unexcused tardies/absences a disciplinary letter will be issued requiring a parent/guardian to attend an attendance meeting with the school attendance review team (SART).

Tardiness:

Excessive tardiness or unexcused absences (5 or more) will result in severe disciplinary measures up to, and including suspensions, or a visit from the truancy office. Excessive checkout, tardiness, and absences may effect your child’s enrollment. As a scholar, timeliness is an important trait to maintain now and in the future. Perfect attendance is rewarded at MSA as an honor.

Early Check-Outs:

There are no checkouts after 2:30 pm, as this interferes with instructional time for your child. Listed parents and guardians must come to the office to check out students. The approved parent or guardian is required to bring in a copy of a state issued identification.