

# MIDTOWN PUBLIC STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK

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## Introduction

The 2025–2026 Student and Family Handbook outlines the key policies, procedures, and expectations that help foster a safe, respectful, and thriving school community at Midtown Public Charter School. When followed consistently, these guidelines support our shared commitment to academic excellence, strong character, and meaningful community engagement.

This handbook serves as a guide to student conduct and school operations. It is reviewed annually by the Midtown Public Charter School Board, with updates and revisions published as needed to reflect our evolving needs and priorities.

If you have any questions or need clarification beyond what is included in these pages, please do not hesitate to contact our school team. We are here to support you.

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## Principal's Note & Welcome

Dear Midtown Scholars and Families,

It is with great honor and heartfelt excitement that I welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year as the Principal of Midtown Public Charter School. As we open this new chapter together, I want you to know how deeply committed I am to every student, every family, and every staff member in this community.

Midtown was founded ten years ago with a bold vision—to create a school where equity, excellence, and high expectations were not just aspirations but realities for all students. Today, we proudly carry that vision forward, reigniting the promise that Midtown made to our community: to be a place where every child can lead, grow, and succeed.

As a proud community school, we know that student success is a team effort. That means building strong partnerships between families, educators, and the wider community. Equity is not just a word at Midtown—it is a call to action. We work every day to ensure that all students have access to the opportunities and support they need to thrive.

I invite you to join us in this journey—to reignite, to rebuild, and to rise. Let's make this school year one that is rooted in purpose, powered by belief, and driven by the limitless potential of every Midtown student.

Here's to a year of meaningful learning, joyful service, and unstoppable growth.

With Maverick Pride,

***Patrick G. Edmond, M.Ed***



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## **Mississippi Code § 37-11-55**

Per Mississippi Code § 37-11-55, the local school board shall adopt and make available to all teachers, school personnel, students and parents or guardians, at the beginning of each school year, a code of student conduct developed in consultation with teachers, school personnel, students and parents or guardians. The code shall be based on the rules governing student conduct and discipline adopted by the school board and shall be made available at the school level in the student handbook or similar publication. The code shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Specific grounds for disciplinary action under the school's discipline plan;
- (b) Procedures to be followed for acts requiring discipline, including suspensions and expulsion, which comply with due process requirements;
- (c) An explanation of the responsibilities and rights of students with regard to: attendance, respect for persons and property; knowledge and observation of rules of conduct; free speech and student publications; assembly; privacy; and participation in school programs and activities;
- (d) Policies and procedures recognizing the teacher as the authority in classroom matters, and supporting that teacher in any decision in compliance with the written discipline code of conduct. Such recognition shall include the right of the teacher to remove from the classroom any student who, in the professional judgement of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment, to the office of the principal or assistant principal. The principal or assistant principal shall determine the proper placement for the student, who may not be returned to the classroom until a conference of some kind has been held with the parent, or guardian during which the disrupting behavior is discussed and agreements are reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. If the principal or assistant principal does not approve of the determination of the teacher to remove the student from the classroom, the student may not be removed, and the principal, upon request from the teacher, must provide justification for his/her disapproval;
- (e) Policies and procedures for dealing with a student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities;
- (f) Procedures for the development of behavior modification plans by the school principal or assistant principal shall also include the reporting teacher and student's parent for any student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities for a second time during the school year; and
- (g) Policies and procedures specifically concerning gang-related activities in the school, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities.

**The following document shall stand as evidence to the compliance of the previous code and shall be disseminated as such.**

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## **PART 1:**

### **Student and Family Handbook**

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## Notice of Non-Discrimination

The primary goal of Midtown 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 Midtown Public Charter School ("Midtown") are hereby notified that Midtown does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admissions or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

Students, parents and/or guardians having inquiries concerning Midtown'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 Tony Yarber who has been designated by Midtown 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.

For inquiries or to file a complaint regarding Midtown's compliance with ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act as they relate to employees or third parties, contact Dr. Kristi Hendrix (below). Dr. Hendrix has been designated by Midtown 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.

Tony Yarber

(601) 354-7770

[tonyyarber@midtownpublic.org](mailto:tonyyarber@midtownpublic.org)

Dr. Kristi Hendrix

(601) 354-5373

[kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org](mailto:kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org)

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## **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.

Any person who believes that Midtown 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 Midtown's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by requesting through Dr. Kristi Hendrix, [kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org](mailto:kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org)

## **Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Employees and Third Parties**

Employees who believe that Midtown 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 Midtown's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through Dr. Kristi Hendrix, [kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org](mailto:kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org)

## **Safeguard of Student Information Policy**

Midtown complies with all Mississippi and federal laws regarding student privacy. Please see the FERPA notice below, and in the "Student Records" section of this handbook.

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.

Midtown Public Charter School will fulfill requests from parents for photocopies within 48 hours.

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## **Viewing Student Records**

Parents or legal guardians may request to view their child's records. Requests should be made in writing to the Compliance Manager. The school will schedule an appointment within 15 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 Midtown 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 and 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 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 highschool 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.

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- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that 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 decided 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 a 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 the Family Policy Compliance Office at the following address:

Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

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## **Accountability Agreement**

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

AS TEACHERS OF MIDTOWN 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 families.
- Meet individual student's educational needs.
- Comply with district/national policies and regulations regarding public schools.

AS ADMINISTRATORS OF MIDTOWN 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 each 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, dressed appropriately in 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.

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## Resolution Policy

In case an issue or concern arises, the following steps may be taken:

- Work closely with your child's teacher to resolve the issue.
- If problems cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent/guardian should contact the Assistant Principal or Principal.
- If problems cannot be resolved with the Principal, the parent/guardian should contact the Director of Schools, Tony Yarber, [tonyyarber@midtownpublic.org](mailto:tonyyarber@midtownpublic.org)
- If problems cannot be resolved with the Director of Schools, please contact the Executive Director of Midtown Partners, Dr. Kristi Hendrix, [kristihendrix@midtownpublic.org](mailto:kristihendrix@midtownpublic.org).
- If problems cannot be resolved with the Executive Director, please contact the Midtown Public Charter School Board of Trustees Chair a [boardchair@midtownpublic.org](mailto:boardchair@midtownpublic.org)

## Mississippi Statement

Midtown Public Charter School is building the next generation of entrepreneurs and citizens in Jackson by providing an academically rigorous, 21st century education that develops students' character, critical thinking skills, and self-efficacy.

## Re-Enrollment Policy

Every returning student must complete the re-enrollment application and provide supporting documents each school year. Students who miss the deadline for any step in the process will not be guaranteed a continued spot.

## New Student Enrollment Policy

Every new student must complete an enrollment application. Upon notification to begin the next step in the process, families will complete a registration packet. Parents and guardians must provide a series of required documents. Families must also provide documentation of the student's promotion status, regardless of school setting. This includes proof of

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promotion from their previous educational institution, even if the student was homeschooled. Students who miss the deadline for any step in the process will not be guaranteed a spot.

## **Technology-Enhanced Classrooms**

Technology is a key component of the world in which we live and an ever-changing trend. Therefore, Midtown deems it necessary to keep our students and teachers abreast of these resources and changes. In addition to the technology/coding class that all 4th, 7th and 8th grade students are required to take, all students will be issued a computer for on-site usage. This one-to-one initiative that Midtown has adapted will allow the students of Midtown to scale within a global and national level.

### **Add a section with the technology policy for damaged Chromebooks.**

#### **Chromebook Damage Policy**

Students are responsible for the careful use and maintenance of their issued Chromebooks. The Chromebook is verified to be in good working condition at the time of assignment. Each student will be assigned one (1) Chromebook to use for the duration of the school year. It will be identified using a label with the student's name. In the event of damage to a Chromebook, the following policy applies:

##### Reporting Damage:

- Any damage to a Chromebook, regardless of how it occurred, must be reported immediately to the student's teacher.
- The teacher will then complete an online damage report.
- The Assistant Principal will contact families to notify them of a reported damage.

##### Assessment of Damage:

- The Midtown technology department will assess the damage to determine the cost of repair or replacement.

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- Students will not be issued another device or be allowed to borrow one in class. They will complete paper or other alternative assignments until the device is repaired or replaced.

#### Financial Responsibility:

- If a student's Chromebook is damaged, the student's family will be responsible for 100% of the repair or replacement cost. This includes, but is not limited to, damage caused by:
  - Placing objects on the keyboard before closing the lid.
  - Exposing the device to extreme temperatures or liquids.
  - Attempting unauthorized repairs or modifications.
  - Physical abuse or vandalism.
  - Dropping it
  - Damage that occurs inside a bookbag
  - Drawing/tracing on the computer screen
  - Removal of keys
- Lost or Stolen Chromebooks: Students and families are responsible for lost or stolen Chromebooks. A police report must be filed for stolen devices. The student's family will be responsible for the full replacement cost of the device.
- Unpaid Fees: Unpaid fees for Chromebook damage or replacement may result in the student losing access to technology. Diplomas, transcripts, and withdrawal forms will be withheld until all outstanding fees are paid.

#### General Care Guidelines:

- Students should always carry their Chromebooks with two hands.
- Food and beverages should be kept away from the Chromebook.
- Students should never attempt to disassemble or repair the Chromebook themselves.
- Students should not loan their Chromebook to a peer.
- Students should not add stickers, tape, or other adhesive materials to the device.
- Students should not carry the Chromebook by the screen.
- The Chromebook is school property and may be subject to inspection at any time.

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Midtown reserves the right to adjust this policy as needed. The most current policy will always be available in the student handbook and on the school website.

## **Internet Security Policy**

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all computers that reside on the inside of the school's Internet firewall.

### **Purpose**

A policy of Internet safety is enforced by the Midtown 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 Midtown Public Charter School. The MPCS-TSD is responsible for providing security for the school's network only. If someone accesses content that violates the internet safety policy through their personal device that is connected to their wireless carrier, they are still in violation of internet safety protocol.

## **English Language Learners**

### **Mission**

The U.S. Supreme Court stated in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974):

"There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education."

Our mission is to increase the level of English proficiency for students whose first language is a language other than English. By doing so, we are increasing the likelihood of academic achievement as well as productivity in the workplace in America.

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## **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 will be tested at the school level to determine their English proficiency level using the universal Mississippi Screener.

## **Special Education Services**

### **Definition**

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004): Children 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 series of emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another 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 department of special education at Midtown Public Charter School 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.

### **Identification, Assessment, and Evaluation Process: School Age Students (Kindergarten-2nd and 4th - 8th Grade)**

A student who is suspected of having a disability is referred to the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) by the parent, medical personnel, or Student Intervention Team member. The MDT meets to review the referral and existing data, information from the parent, previously implemented instructional interventions and strategies, current classroom-based assessments/curriculum measures and observations. Based on the information, the MDT

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determines the need for assessment. If assessments are recommended, the school-based staff obtains parent permission and conducts the recommended assessment. The MDT then meets at an eligibility meeting to determine the need for an Individualized Education Plan.

Note: If a parent has an educational concern and/or believes their child may have a disability, please contact your special education director: Ebonie Ross, (601) 354-7770, [ebonieross@midtownpublic.org](mailto:ebonieross@midtownpublic.org).

## **Eligibility**

Children with disabilities from Kindergarten-2 and 4th - 8th grade 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
- Development 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)

## **Related Services**

Related Services are support services that may be required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from his/her individual education program (IEP). A related service is recommended only when necessary for a student to benefit from special education. If a student does not need special education, related services cannot be provided through an IEP. The student's related service needs are part of the IEP, which will specify the amount and type of service that the student is to receive. These services are provided at no cost to the parent.

## **Related Services with an Individualized Education Plan at Midtown**

- Specialized Instruction
- Speech and Language
- Physical Therapy

- 
- Occupational Therapy
  - Behavioral Therapy

## **Student Intervention Team (SIT)**

### **Identifying Students with Special Needs**

At Midtown 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 support to students with needs in the areas of academics or socioemotional well-being 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 the SIT Team**

In addition to the multifaceted curriculum at Midtown 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/or nurse) will come together to collaboratively identify individual interventions that will target the student's strengths and weaknesses in the areas including academics, socioemotional well-being, motor development, or speech.

The Student Intervention Team program performs the following functions:

- Creates a process of assessment and collaborative planning for student instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring.
- 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 and mathematics.

- 
- Serves as a screening tool for students that may be eligible for a 504 plan or special education services.

#### *Tier I: Universal Supports*

All students at Midtown Public Charter School receive high quality instruction at their development level in academics and related service programming. This high-quality instruction is a research-based curriculum based on rigorous standards. Tier 1 consists of universal interventions that prevent problem behavior and academic struggles in the building that all students have access to.

#### *Tier II: Supplemental Supports*

Students at Midtown Public Charter School receive research-based curriculum utilizing rigorous standards. Throughout each student's academic program teachers monitor student progress by collecting anecdotal and qualitative data in order to adjust academic programming to meet their developmentally appropriate needs. Tier 2 consists of supplemental support designed to provide additional and/or targeted interventions to students who have had access to Universal (Tier 1) supports and are not responding positively to them.

#### *Tier III: Individual Supports*

Tier 3 consists of individual supports that meet the needs of students with the most intense and/or persistent problems. Students are moved to Tier III when support and intervention from previous two tiers have been found unsuccessful based on data collection and evaluation. Individual support involves a process that investigates why a behavior is occurring in more detail and the development of a positive behavior intervention plan OR an Instructional Monitoring Plan that includes more intensive research-based interventions, closer/more detailed progress-monitoring, and more staff time/resources dedicated to the problem.

If at the end of the SIT Process (movement through Tier I, II, and III), the student data reveals that interventions and supports were unsuccessful, a MDT Meeting may be held with Special Education to review data and determine next steps.

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## **Communication**

Midtown Public Charter School embraces open communication between the Midtown staff, students, families, and the community. While frequent correspondence between teachers and parents is encouraged, Midtown also distributes a periodic newsletter highlighting upcoming events, programs and accomplishments. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled on the academic calendar and progress reports and report cards are issued during each academic advisory period.

## **Attendance Policy**

The Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement is responsible for ensuring that all Mississippi students are afforded the opportunity to attend school and to enforce the Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law § 37-13-91 of the Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated. The law governs compulsory school attendance. It requires a parent, legal guardian or custodian who has legal control or charge of a child age six (6) to seventeen (17) to enroll him or her in an education program (i.e. public, private, or home school).

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 non-emergency appointments during school time. Students who are absent from school (excused or unexcused) cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission.

If a student exceeds 15 absences (excused or unexcused) in a school year, Midtown PCS reserves the right to retain the student in his/her current grade OR have the student un-enroll and return to the student's neighborhood school. Students are afforded rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") should their absences be related to a disabling condition.

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All absences will be reported as unexcused absences unless the school receives the following documentation:

- Only a doctor's note will count for an excused absence(s). For students who have regularly scheduled visits to a doctor or dentist, only the portion of the day spent at the appointment plus travel is excused. Students are expected to be in school before and/or after the appointment;
- Religious holiday (please notify school in advance);
- Parent note indicating there is a family funeral - the child will be excused only for the day of the funeral unless extenuating circumstances apply;
- Parent note indicating there is a family emergency - emergencies include house fires, house floods, or incidents of violence in the home. An emergency is defined by the presence of an emergency response team (fire, ambulance, police, CPS, etc.). Students are expected to be at school as soon as possible after the situation is resolved; or
- Court documents mandating a court appearance - the child will be excused only for the day(s) indicated on the court documents

### **Tardiness, Early Dismissal, and Appointments**

All students are expected to be in their classrooms by 8:00am. Students who arrive after 8:00 am will be considered tardy. For students who are tardy, parents or guardians must sign in with the main office and must provide a valid reason for their tardiness.

A student leaving school early due to illness must be signed out through the main school office by 2:45pm (1:00 pm on Wednesdays) and no early dismissals will be granted after 2:45pm (1:00 pm on Wednesdays) unless there is an emergency.

All early dismissals are made from the office, not from the classroom. The responsible adult will go to the main office and work with the receptionist to complete an early dismissal. In the event a student is directed to take an alternate form of transportation, the student will not be released until the designated time. Please schedule non-emergency and doctor's appointments for after school. Excessive requests for early dismissal will be treated in the same manner as excessive tardiness.

*What can parents do?*

- Let your child know that you think that school is important.
- Set a regular bedtime schedule; age should not be a factor.
- Provide your child with plenty of time to get ready for school.

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- Provide an alternate plan of transportation for getting your child to school on time.
  - Schedule medical, dental, and other appointments before and after school hours when possible.
  - Plan scheduled appointments around the school day; allow him or her to miss only that time necessary for the appointment.
  - View tardiness is unacceptable behavior.
  - Make sure your child arrives at school on time daily.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Students should plan to arrive at school between 7:30 and 8:00 am each day. Parents are not allowed to drop off their children before 7:30am. Upon arrival, students will go directly to the designated arrival area. Breakfast is served from 7:30 and 8:00am and students shall be seated in their homeroom for attendance at 8:15am. Students will not be allowed to enter into the building or loiter in the receptionist area until breakfast is served.

Students are dismissed at 3:45pm (2:00 pm on Wednesdays). After dismissal, students will not be allowed to re-enter 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.

## **Uniform Policy**

Students who arrive at school without the proper uniform will meet with an administrator to contact the parent/guardian for the required dress code attire. Please do not allow students to wear sandals or open-toe shoes. These shoes are not safe and may cause injury to the student. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Midtown Public Charter School has a uniform policy that is mandatory during all school days. Midtown enforces a uniform policy for the following reasons:

- To show respect for our appearance
- To show cohesion as a community and encompass a sense of equality since the primary focus in school is academic excellence and not style of clothing
- To prepare students to dress properly for future professional endeavors such as high school interviews, college interviews, and employment interviews.

Our uniform policy is strictly enforced and we cannot allow any exceptions. Students will be inspected throughout the day to ensure proper uniform attire.

The uniform for all students is as follows:

|                 | Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Wednesdays                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tops            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red polo shirt with school logo (long-sleeve or short-sleeve). Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Students may wear undershirts beneath their polo shirts (including long-sleeve shirts), but undershirts must be white, black, or gray; and they must not have any words or logos showing on the sleeves.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White oxford shirt. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.</li> <li>Red tie (traditional tie, crossover tie, or bowtie)</li> </ul> |
| Bottoms         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khaki or black-colored dress pants, shorts, or skirts (straight leg or regular fit only; no skin-tight bottoms; no flare, cargo, or wide-legged pants are permitted. Cargo pants are pants that have more than one pocket on the legs of the pants). Pants cannot have designs on them and must be plain khaki or black. Pants may not be worn below the top of the hips. Ripped pants are not allowed. No pants made of spandex materials are allowed. If pants are too tight (determined by faculty and staff), students will need to call home to get another pair of appropriately fitted pants. Skirts must be knee-length or longer. Students may wear navy or white tights. Tights with patterns or other colors are not permitted. Leggings are permitted if they go to the ankle. Students wearing skirts must wear shorts underneath.</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Jackets         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may also wear a grey fleece with our school logo over their uniform. The collar of the polo shirt or oxford shirt must be seen while students are wearing sweaters or sweatshirts.</li> <li>Students will not be able to wear coats during class.</li> <li>Students may not wear hooded sweaters or sweatshirts.</li> <li>During the winter when the temperatures fall below 40 degrees, students are required to bring a jacket to school.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Belt            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students wearing pants or shorts must also wear a solid black or brown belt</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Shoes and socks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students should wear shoes with any combination of white, black, or brown. Shoes must have laces. Students may not wear shoes with wheels or lights and may NOT wear boots during the school day, although snow or rain boots can be worn to and from school and</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                           |

|  |                                                                                                                                 |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | during outdoor recess. Students must wear socks. They must be plain black, white, gray, or navy. Students may not wear sandals. |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### *Hats, Bandanas, Headbands, Wave Caps, Earrings, Chains, and Braids*

Once students enter the school building, the wearing of hats, bandanas, or wave caps is not permitted. Hats, bandanas, or wave caps worn inside the school building will be confiscated. If your child wears a head covering for religious reasons it must be black or white. Students can wear simple headbands, hair bows, and clips. Hair must be neat and well groomed. Hair must be a natural hair color. Staff will use their discretion with hair accessories that are distracting to learning. If earrings are worn, they must be simple studs only (no large, hoop, or dangling earrings). Chains must be worn underneath student's shirts at all times. Students cannot wear chains that cannot be tucked in. Jackets, overcoats, or any clothing tied around the waist or neck is not permitted. Students may wear their hair in braids. Students may not wear disruptive jewelry, such as talking or beeping watches.

The faculty and staff are at liberty to determine if any items appear unprofessional or distracting to learning. If so, then the students will be asked to change or be required to remove the said item. These items include: hair, makeup, jewelry, accessories, and clothing.

## **Grading Policy**

Students enrolled at Midtown will take the following courses:

- Four (4) core academic classes: Mathematics, Reading (English Language Arts), Science, and Social Studies.
- All students will take physical education and one additional special course.
- Students in grades 4, 7, and 8 will take a computer science course.

| Percentage    | Grade | Definition                                                                                                  |
|---------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 100% - 89.5%  | A     | Student demonstrates a deep mastery of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject.        |
| 89.4% - 79.5% | B     | Student demonstrates a solid understanding of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject. |

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|               |   |                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 79.4% - 69.5% | C | Student has a limited understanding of the content or skill that has been taught in that subject.                                                                        |
| 69.4% - 59.5% | D | Student has significant skill and/or content deficits and is performing below minimum requirements.                                                                      |
| 59.4% - 0%    | F | Students does not demonstrate enough mastery of the content and skills that have been taught in that subject and is performing significantly below minimum requirements. |

### **Progress Reports and Report Cards**

Midtown issues grading reports at two points of each quarter. Midway through the quarter, students will receive a progress report. At the end of each quarter, students will receive formal report cards. On each report card, students receive one grade per subject area. Midtown PCS encourages parents to be proactive by utilizing the progress reports to keep abreast of your child's academic progress. Students and families can also access grades on their PowerSchool account at any time. Should the parent and/or guardian have any questions about their child's grades, they should contact the appropriate teacher and schedule a conference.

### **Final Grades**

The final grade for a course is the numerical average of the individual quarters. Each quarter is weighted equally. Please see policy for further details around retention in their current grade.

### **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 visitor's pass to the visitor. This pass must be worn at all times while at Midtown. This policy is strictly enforced for the safety of our

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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 the guests to make appointments to see teachers. If you need to speak with a teacher, please leave a message at the receptionist's desk.

Teachers will ensure that the receptionist has a schedule of conferences or meetings. Visitors who request to meet with the Principal/Head of School, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students must make an appointment with the front desk. Please provide 48 hours' notice when requesting to meet with a teacher or administrator.

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

All visitors are required to comply with the Midtown handbook and exemplify professionalism. At various times during the year (such as during the global COVID-19 pandemic), the principal reserves the right to restrict visitor use as he or she deems necessary.

## **Emergency Situations**

In the event of an emergency requiring the closure of school, best efforts will be made to notify all parents and guardians by phone and social media. In addition, such information will be communicated to television and radio stations. Please watch local Jackson channels for closing information. For early closing, school delays, and school closures due to inclement weather, Midtown will follow the same schedule as the Jackson Public Schools or as indicated by the Principal. 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.

## **Midtown Public Charter School Local Wellness Policy**

Midtown will establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation of the Local Wellness Policy. Midtown will monitor implementation and evaluation of the policy.

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Midtown will annually review the policy, and will update it every three years. This process will include engagement of students, families, and school staff to measure success.

## **Section 1: Ensuring Quality Health Education, Nutrition Education, Physical Education, and Opportunities for Physical Activity**

### **Health Education**

At every grade level, Midtown ensures that students receive a sequential, comprehensive, and standards-based health education program. Midtown's program is taught by qualified personnel, is based on the needs of students, and is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote health and protect their health.

Before inviting a community partner in to assist with health education, the Principal/Head of School will ensure that the community partner's curriculum aligns with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (MDE) Health Education Standards.

### **Nutrition Education**

One component of a comprehensive health education program is nutrition education.

Schools will provide nutrition education that:

- is of the health education course.
- is accessible to all students.
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contents, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, or 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 Midtown's curriculum, school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services and education programs.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education is an important part of the Midtown curriculum at every grade level. This program includes team, individual and cooperative sports and physical activities, as well as aesthetic movement forms, such as dance, yoga, or the martial arts.

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Midtown will provide Physical Education that is:

- required for 5-8th grade students, at least 150 minutes per week; and 45 minutes of Health.
- recognized as part of the academic program and is therefore a “right” not a “privilege,” and which should not be withheld from students.

Physical Education teachers will continue to implement a curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health. Midtown will continue to enhance the quality of physical education curricula and increase training of physical education teachers through site-based and mandatory staff development.

An appropriate alternative activity to physical education shall be provided for students with a physical disability that restricts excessive physical exertion.

Physical Education staff, in collaboration with the school administration, will appropriately limit the amount or type of physical exercise required of students during air pollution episodes and inclement weather conditions.

## **Section 2: Establishing Nutritional Guidelines for All Foods Served and Sold on Campus During the School Day**

Access to healthy foods is an important factor leading to academic success. Midtown strives to provide nutritious meals and snacks to our students before, during, and after school through a comprehensive school meal program.

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, or providing wellness resources to families.

### **Breakfast**

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Midtown will continue to operate a universal “Free for All” school breakfast program. Breakfast is served from 7:30-8:00 am.

## **Lunch**

Midtown will ensure that all students will be served free lunches. Midtown will provide students a minimum of 24 minutes in which 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-school snacks will comply with the requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

## **Nutritional Quality of School Meals**

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

Midtown will offer a specialized meal for any students that have religious, dietary, or medical restrictions with a doctor’s note. We 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. Menus will also be posted on TV’s in the front of the cafeteria.

Midtown will prohibit students’ abilities to leave campus to obtain fast food for lunch or other meals.

## **Competitive Food Guidelines**

Midtown strives to eliminate students’ access to unhealthy foods on school grounds, including competitive foods. Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages available or sold outside of the federally-reimbursable child nutrition programs. They are available in vending machines, a la carte lines, snack bars, and other places in the school. They also include food and beverages used for school fundraisers and student rewards. Midtown students will not have snack or drink vending machines or school stores accessible by students. Midtown will only market and promote foods and beverages that

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meet the nutrition standards described above, and Midtown will encourage teachers and families to not bring soda and other beverages high in sugar content on school grounds, including in student lunches from home. Midtown will prohibit third parties other than school related organizations and school meal service providers from selling food or beverages of any type to students on school property from 90 minutes before the school day begins until 90 minutes after the school day ends. Midtown will limit celebrations that involve food or beverages during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Midtown highly discourages food treats to be brought in for the purposes of celebrating birthdays, holidays, or special events. Such action will only be permitted under limited circumstances and only with previous approval from the principal.

### **Section 3: USDA Non-Discrimination Statement**

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

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

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at:

[http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **Health Services**

The school's registered nurse (when available) will be at the school to administer medication to students who require it during the school day, and to provide counseling on health-related issues, first aid to injured students, and care to ill students. In the absence of the nurse, the SIS Manager or designee will oversee all first aid or administration of medication.

If a student requires medication while in school, the school must have on file an Authorization to Dispense Medication form, filled out by the student's physician and signed by a parent or guardian. No student is allowed to bring medication to the school without the administration's full knowledge. Students who have provided the school with medication dispensation authorization forms should bring the medication to the school on the first day, or contact the school to make other arrangements.

This requirement applies to all medication, including Tylenol, aspirin, and asthma inhalers. If a student needs to take Tylenol or aspirin during the school day, the student must have on file the authorization signed by his/her physician and a parent/guardian, giving the school permission to administer the medication during the school year. If a student needs to have an asthma inhaler with him/her at school, the student must provide administration with the order from his/her physician stating that the student needs to carry the inhaler. The parent/guardian must provide the administration with a second inhaler that will be kept in the nurses' office.

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## **First Aid Provision and Medical Emergencies**

Minor accidents, cuts, scrapes, and bruises will generally be treated at the school by the school nurse or by selected teachers and administrators. The school is not equipped to handle medical services beyond basic first aid. In the event that a child requires emergency medical care, a parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian or other emergency contact cannot be reached, the school may need to initiate medical treatment. Thus, it is essential that we have on file each student's Health Emergency Card, which provides up-to-date contact information for parents/guardians, and which gives the school permission to initiate emergency medical treatment if a parent/guardian cannot be reached.

## **Complaint Process**

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

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the Principal/Head of School, the complaint can be forwarded to the Midtown Public Director of Schools, 215 McTyere St., Jackson, MS 39202.

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## **Promotion Policies**

Students who accumulate more than 15 absences during the school year will automatically be considered for retention at their current grade-level. Please refer to the attendance policy section of the handbook for more details about this policy. Note that absences resulting from out-of-school suspensions are not excused.

Students who fail one or more of their major classes for the year will be retained in their current grade level, unless the school leadership team or a committee of school faculty members and/or administrators assembled by the principal decides to grant an exception. Students may also be retained in their current grade level if they end the year reading below grade level.

## **Promotion and Retention of Students with Disabilities**

There are additional crucial considerations when making retention decisions for students with exceptional needs for whom an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) has been developed. Careful considerations regarding promotion criteria, retention research outcomes, and alternatives to retention are always important, but are given even more deliberation in cases of students with IEPs.

Local governing boards adopted standards for promotion apply to students with disabilities; however, IEP teams may choose to recommend individualized promotion standards for students with significant disabilities for whom substantial modifications to the general curriculum are made and defined in the student's IEP. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that the IEP specify any alternative promotion standards or requirements which may be based on the student's progress on IEP goals. Additionally, other factors such as age and least restrictive environment may be considered by the IEP Committee to determine appropriate placement.

## **Family Connection**

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

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

### **Lost and Stolen Property**

We strongly encourage families to ensure that children do not bring valuable objects to school. Any item that students bring to school that may cause disruption will be confiscated at the school. We make every reasonable effort to return all personal property to the appropriate parent; however, the school is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen property, or compensating the family for the value of that property. The school is not responsible for cell phones that are not handed in to the lock box at the beginning of the day.

### **Transportation**

The school uses reputable and dependable buses for eligible students. Eligible students are those students who live outside a one-mile radius from MPCS. The school will send a notice to you about your bus stop location, time of pick-up and drop off, and bus numbers. If you move during the school year, please contact the main office and ask to speak to the Director of Operations. We will submit your new address to our bus partner in order for your child to receive a new transportation assignment.

If the bus is ever late, students will not be marked as “tardy” if their school bus arrives at school late. You may call the Director of Operations in order to have the dispatcher track the location of your child’s bus.

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*Dropoff/Pickup:* Families who drive students to school in the morning are requested to drop their students off in the designated area only when staff are present. Parents/Guardians or their designees may pick students up directly from the school at dismissal time. Parents and guardians should not go to the classroom to dismiss their students before the regular dismissal time.

*Walkers:* Families who have elected to have their child walk to and from school should notify the school in order to determine the availability and location of crossing guards (if any).

### **Transportation Accommodations**

Special transportation services will be arranged for students with disabilities as stated in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Some students may be eligible for door-to-door bus service. Other students with disabilities are picked up and dropped off at a corner near home or walk to school. Students with medical or physical conditions may receive door-to-door service by submitting a letter from the doctor to the Director of Operations. The Director of Operations will contact the doctor to discuss the appropriate transportation services for these students and at the time limits of those services.

### **Denial of Transportation**

We consider the school bus to be an extension of the classroom. That means that we have the same standards of behavior on the school bus. Students who violate the discipline code while on the bus may be disciplined and may be denied transportation, either for the remainder of the year or for a temporary suspension. The student is expected to come to school on the days when he or she is not allowed on the bus, unless the student has also been suspended from school.

Please note that parents are not allowed to get on the school bus or van to speak with the driver, monitor, or any student. If parents have a problem with the school bus driver, monitor, or a student, they should inform the Director of Operations of the situation. School administrators will then conduct an investigation into your concern or complaint.

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## Student Records

### Standardized Testing

As is required by the state, all students in grades third through tenth participate in the state of Mississippi exams administered in the spring of each academic year. Additionally, Kindergarten students will participate in the state of Mississippi exams in the fall, winter, and spring. From time to time, students may take other exams as well in order to measure their academic progress and may be asked to provide routine information.

### General Information

Federal and state laws provide parents and eligible students (those who are age 14 or older) with rights of confidentiality, access, and amendment relating to student records. Copies of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), detailing these rights, are available in the main office. The following is a general overview of the provisions in FERPA.

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

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

Student & Family Directory Information: For the purpose of maintaining efficient contact with families and publicizing student and school accomplishments, Midtown Public Charter School maintains a practice of releasing directory information, consisting of any of the following: the student's name, address, telephone listing, data and place of birth, dates of attendance, class, participation in recognized activities and sports, honors and awards, and post-graduation plans. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release of any

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of the above information, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the Principal. Absent receipt of a written objection, the directory information will be released without further notice or consent.

Photographs, Video, Audio, Recorded Comments: For the purpose of publicizing students and school accomplishments, and/or documenting and studying teacher practice, Midtown Public Charter School has a practice of recording student life through photography, video, audio, or otherwise recorded comments. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release or publication of any of the above, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the Principal. Absent receipt of a written objection, any of the above may be released without further notice or consent.

Please see the Regulations for a description of other circumstances in which student records may be released without the consent of a parent or eligible student.

### **Access to Non-Custodial Parents**

A non-custodial parent seeking access to a student record must submit a written request and other documentation to the Principal on an annual basis. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding access to records by non-custodial parents are requested to contact the Principal for detailed information regarding procedures.

Parents and eligible students have a right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures by a school district to comply with the requirements of the student records law and regulations. Families are encouraged to first connect with the Principal, and then with the Midtown Partners Executive Director, and then - if still unsatisfied - with the Mississippi Charter Authorizer, Executive Director at 239 N. Lamar St., Suite 207, Jackson, MS 39201.

Complaints relative to federal statutes or regulations governing student records may also be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC.

## **Harassment**

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Midtown Public Charter School is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. Midtown Public Charter School requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

### **Definition of Harassment**

*In General:* Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

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

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

- Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education.
- The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
- Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education, or participation in extracurricular activities.

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

## **Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited**

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

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

*Complaints of harassment by peers:* In the event the complaint consists of a student's allegation that another student is harassing him/her based upon the above-referenced classifications, the student may, in the alternative, file the complaint with one of the school's complaint managers, who is the school's Principal.

*Complaints of discrimination based upon disability:* A person who alleges discrimination on the basis of disability relative to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a person, who because of a handicap need or is believed to need special instruction or related services, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 766, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, must use the procedure outlined in the Procedural Safeguards Manual, rather than this Grievance Procedure.

A copy of the Procedural Safeguards Manual is available from the following individual:

Ebonie Ross, Director of Special Educations  
Midtown Public Charter School

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

## **Harassment Complaints**

### *Contents of Complaints and Timelines for Filing*

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

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

### *Investigation and Resolution of the Complaint*

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

The Grievance Administrator will interview witnesses whom s/he deems necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint, and will gather other relevant information. Such interviews and gathering of information will be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### *Appeals*

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If a Grievance Administrator does not satisfy the grievant with a disposition, the grievant may appeal the disposition to the Midtown Partners, Executive Director, as follows:

Executive Director

Midtown Partners

215 McTyere St.

Jackson, MS 39202

(601) 354-5373

The Executive Director will issue a written response on the appeal to the grievant within ten (10) school days of receiving the appeal. If the grievance continues to not be satisfied, an appeal may be filed with the Midtown Partners Board of Trustees, as follow: Chair, Board of Trustees, Midtown Partners, 215 McTyere St, Jackson, MS 39202, (601) 354-5373

Generally, a grievant may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, as follows:

- Within 180 calendar days of alleged discrimination or harassment, or
- Within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of the school's final disposition on a complaint filed through the school, or
- Within 60 calendar days of receiving a final decision by the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education Appeals, or
- Instead of filing a complaint with the school.

## **Hazing**

### § 97-3-105. Hazing: initiation into organization.

(1) A person is guilty of hazing in the first degree when, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury.

(2) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than

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Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six (6) months, or both.

(3) A person is guilty of hazing in the second degree when, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person.

(4) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (3) of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00).

(5) The provisions of this section shall be in addition to other criminal laws, and actions taken pursuant to this section shall not be prosecutions for other violations of criminal law.

## **Charter School Law / Regulations**

If an individual believes that the school has violated any provisions of the charter school law or regulations, he/she may file a formal complaint with the Midtown Partner Executive Director ([kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org](mailto:kristihendrix@midtownpartners.org)), and then - if necessary - to the organization's Board of Trustees (215 McTyere St., Jackson, MS 39202).

After receiving the complaint, the Board must send a written response to the individual within 30 days. If the Board does not address the complaint to the individual's satisfaction, the individual may submit the complaint to the Mississippi Charter Authorizer Board's Executive Director at 239 N. Lamar St., Suite 207, Jackson, MS 39201. A parent/guardian may file a complaint with the Mississippi Department of Education at any time if he/she believes that the school has violated any federal or state law or regulation.

## **Appendix A: Midtown Family Involvement Policy**

### **Objective**

With the interest of student achievement in mind, the administration has developed the following Family Involvement Policy. The goal of this policy is to provide families with the information, resources, and opportunities necessary to support their students and to monitor their progress.

### **Development and Review**

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As a matter of policy, the Schoolwide Plan, this Family Involvement Policy, and the Contracts of Mutual Responsibilities will be reviewed in the spring of each year by the Parent Involvement Committee, which will recommend revisions to the administration.

### **School Policy: Family Input**

At the beginning of each school year, the school will oversee the organization of a Parent Involvement Committee. The committee will be open to participation from all parents and families of children attending the school and will meet regularly. The committee will provide parents and families with the opportunity to plan and participate in school-wide events as well as provide parents and families with the opportunity to provide input and feedback on important school policies.

### **Keeping Families Informed and Involved**

In order to ensure that parents and families have the information necessary to monitor the performance of their students, the school will take the following measures each year:

- Distribute a Student and Family Handbook to each family describing school policies and procedures in organized and detailed fashion.
- Conduct mandatory orientation sessions for new students and their families. During these orientation sessions, a representative of the school will review the most important elements of the Student and Family Handbook with new families.
- Provide a regularly distributed progress report.
- Provide parents the opportunity to meet and confer with each of their child's teachers during parent conference sessions.
- Provide parents and families with the email addresses of each of their child's teachers.

### **School-Parent Compact**

All parents and guardians will sign the following Contract of Mutual Responsibilities each year in conjunction with a school representative. The compact will be reviewed each year in conjunction with the Parent Involvement Committee. See Appendix B for details.

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## Appendix B: Contracts of Mutual Responsibility

Student name (please print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Student homeroom teacher (please print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

| PARENT / GUARDIAN                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | STUDENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>I have received and read a copy of the Midtown Public Charter School Student and Family Handbook and understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school.</p> <p>As a Midtown Public Charter School parent/guardian, I agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Make school a safe and orderly environment by supporting the school as it enforces the school's code of conduct / Student and Family Handbook, including policies regarding immediate conferences and the issuance of discipline consequences and suspension.</li><li>2. Ensure that my child arrives at school at the scheduled time, 7:45am-8:00am and attends school regularly. I have read the attendance policy in the student handbook and understand the school's policy regarding lateness, excused and unexcused absences, and annual absences in excess of 15 days.</li><li>3. Ensure that my child wears the</li></ol> | <p>I have received and read a copy of the Midtown Public Charter School Student and Family Handbook and understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school.</p> <p>As a Midtown Public Charter School student, I agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Show focus by always working hard to achieve my personal best.</li><li>2. Show integrity by always trying to do the right thing.</li><li>3. Show respect for myself, other people in our school community, the property of others, and the learning</li></ol> | <p>As a Midtown Public Charter School employee, I certify that the school agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ensure that valuable school time is utilized thoughtfully and efficiently so that the school can provide our students with an education that is academically rigorous and that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Mississippi College and Career-Ready Standards.</li><li>2. Make the school a safe and orderly environment by enforcing school rules as consistently as possible and by doing our part to instruct our students regarding appropriate and inappropriate behaviors at school.</li><li>3. Communicate regularly with parents regarding</li></ol> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>appropriate school uniform daily, as explained in the dress code section of the Student and Family Handbook.</p> <p>4. Communicate regularly with my child's teachers regarding my child's academic and behavioral performance and regularly attend events at the school.</p> | <p>environment.</p> <p>4. Show self-determination by making choices about my behavior and accepting the consequences.</p> <p>5. Show teamwork by caring for others.</p> | <p>their child's behavioral and academic performance through progress reports, report cards, parent conferences, telephone contact, and by welcoming parents to the school.</p> |
| <p>_____<br/>Sign</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>_____<br/>Sign</p>                                                                                                                                                   | <p>_____<br/>Sign</p>                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p>_____<br/>Date</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>_____<br/>Date</p>                                                                                                                                                   | <p>_____<br/>Date</p>                                                                                                                                                           |

## Appendix C: Anti-Bullying Policy

### Leadership and Process

#### *Priority Statement*

At Midtown Public Charter School, students are held to the highest behavioral standards and we work to foster a positive and safe learning environment.

The school is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in

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school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying, and the school is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. We have established this plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

#### *Needs Assessment*

Each year, the administration will file and monitor incidents of bullying (using the bullying incident report form in each case) in order to track outcomes under the plan.

### **Access to Resources and Services**

#### *Identifying Resources*

The Dean of Students will be available as necessary, to either or both the target and the aggressor in reactions to incidents of bullying. In the event that students require counseling in a language other than English, the school will arrange for counseling in the child's native language. In the event that the school is incapable of providing necessary services, the school's Leadership Team will work with families to arrange for outside services.

The most important resource we have in creating a positive and healthy school climate, is the development of strong relationships between students and the adults in our school. All of our efforts to develop and sustain a positive school climate are assets in this regard, including the maintenance of small "total-student-loans" for teachers, ensuring that classroom teachers are responsible for small groups of students and therefore have the capacity to develop strong relationships with each one.

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For students on the autism spectrum, the IEP team will consider and specifically address the skills needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. When an evaluation indicates a disability that affects social skills development, or when the student's disability makes him/her vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing, the IEP will be drafted to address the skills needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

## **Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation**

### *Reporting Overview*

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. All reports should be made or relay to the Assistant Principal. School staff members are required to transmit any reports directly to the Principal. Reports can be made anonymously.

Information on reporting procedures will be made available each year to all students, families, and staff via the Student and Family handbook. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### *Reporting by Staff*

A staff member will report any bullying incidents immediately to the Dean of Students in addition to following all other customary disciplinary procedures.

### *Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others*

The school expects all members of the school community who witness an incident of bullying to report it to the Assistant Principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no

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disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

*Responding to a Report of Bullying or Cyberbullying or Retaliation*

Before investigating, the Assistant Principal will take steps to ensure safety of targets and witnesses.

Upon determining that an incident of bullying has taken place, the Assistant Principal will notify parents of all involved parties as well as the Principal.

If the reported incident involves students from another school, the Principal will notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) involved in the incident so that each school may take appropriate action.

If the Principal has reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the police. If an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in the school, the Principal shall contact the police if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

*Investigation*

The Assistant Principal will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and in doing so will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. The Assistant Principal will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. To the extent possible, the Assistant Principal will maintain confidentiality during the process. The Assistant Principal will make a written record of the investigation.

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### *Determinations and Responses to Bullying*

The Assistant Principal will make a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Assistant Principal will take steps to ensure:

- The target and/or reporter (if different from the target) is made to feel safe and is in no way restricted in participating in school or benefitting from school activities. As part of this process, the Dean of Students will meet with the target and his/her family in order to assess the target's needs and to ensure the successful restoration of the target's safety, including a possible counseling referral.
- The aggressor faces stiff disciplinary action and that the aggressor and the family of the aggressor are given access to additional educational resources (including possible counseling referral) and further understand that any repeated instance will meet with increasingly severe consequences.
- Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). All students will be provided with protection under the law and under this policy regardless of their legal status.
- Within a reasonable period of time following the determination, the Dean of Students will contact the target and/or reporter (if different from the target) to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Dean of Students will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

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## Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

- on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electric device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

## Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

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Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

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

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

### **Relationship to Other Laws**

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

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

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## **Appendix D: Student Bus Expectations**

The buses at Midtown Public Charter School are considered a privilege and not a right. Just as in school, students are expected to follow a certain protocol while riding on the bus.

Students must meet the following expectations to ride on the bus:

1. Stay silent. There is no talking on the bus. We value safety and respect. The driver will be able to focus on a safe ride home more if students are quiet. Furthermore, students who want to read or have a peaceful ride home deserve the opportunity.
2. Stay in assigned seats and keep feet out of the aisle at all times. There are no exceptions to this rule. Do not get out of your seat to help a teammate with a window, to clean out someone else's trash, or anything else. Furthermore, feet must be out of the aisle, as feet sticking out create a trip hazard. Staying in your assigned seat is the only way we can guarantee students a ride home and will prevent any confusion on the bus.
3. Backpacks must be carried in front and seated on laps. Riding public transportation is all about respecting the people around you. Keeping your belongings in front of you will ensure that no one is unintentionally hit or bumped. Keeping your backpack on your lap will help ensure that your belongings stay in your possession and are not kicked or lost under a seat.
4. Leave it better than you found it. This applies to school, life, and certainly the bus. You will be responsible for your assigned seat. Each day the seat will be checked and it should be free of paper, pencils, trash, wrappers, writings, etc. Take pride in your seat. It will be yours for the year.
5. Windows may be let down, but must end up. However, please be respectful of the people behind you as the wind will be in their face. Also, only move the window when the bus is at a complete stop. Most importantly, in concordance with leaving it better than you found it, the window must be up before you exit the bus.
6. Food, candy, and drinks must be consumed off the bus. Under no circumstances is it acceptable for any food, gum, candy, drinks, etc. to be eaten on the bus routes. It only takes one bump of the bus for something to get caught in your throat, food to go down the wrong pipe, or drinks to spill. This is for your safety first and for cleanliness second.
7. Greet your driver and be appreciative. The expectation is that students and drivers greet each other upon boarding the bus with a friendly good morning, hello, good evening, how are you today, etc. Upon exiting the bus, students should at the very least say thank you, but respectful creativity is applauded such as have a great day/night, much obliged, thanks and see you tomorrow, etc.
8. Riding the bus is a great time to read and study. Many students have long rides and a quiet bus is a great place to read and do some extra studying. However, any writing must be done off the bus. All writing utensils (and anything else sharp) must remain in backpacks.
9. Students are not allowed to pass notes or leave trash on the bus.



## **PART 2:**

### **Response to Student Behavior**

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## Definitions

For the purpose of this code, the following definitions apply:

Cyberbullying means harassment or bullying where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

Disability means (a) a physical, mental, or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic, or neurological conditions which prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques or (b) a record of such an impairment or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in all provisions of this article dealing with employment, the term must be limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the complainant from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held.

Disruptive student means an elementary or secondary student under the age of 21 who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom.

Employee shall mean any person receiving compensation from Midtown Partner/Midtown Public Charter School, an employee of a contracted service provider, or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to title nine-B of article five of the Social Services Law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to such school, its students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involve direct student contact.

Gender means actual or perceived sex and shall include a person's gender identity or expression.

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Harassment and Bullying shall mean the creation of a hostile work environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that either: (1) has or would have the effect or unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional, and/or physical well-being, including conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause emotional harm; or (2) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury to a student or to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. Such definition includes acts of harassment or bullying that occur: (a) on school property; and/or (b) at a school function; or (c) off-school property where such acts create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Such conduct shall include, but not be limited to, those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or any other legally protected status. For the purpose of this definition, the term threats, intimidation, or abuse shall include verbal and nonverbal actions. Emotional harm that takes place in the context of harassment or bullying means harm to a student's emotional well-being through creation of a hostile school environment that is so severe or pervasive as to unreasonably and substantially interfere with a student's education. Material incident of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination means a single verified incident or a series of related verified incidents where a student is subject to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination by a student and/or employee on school property or at a school function. In addition, such term shall include a verified incident or series or related incidents of harassment or bullying that occur off school property, and is the subject of a written or oral complaint or the superintendent, principal, or the designee, or other school employee. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or any other legally protected status.

Parent(s) is defined as the adult (e.g. parent, guardian) who is legally responsible for the student(s) in question.

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School bus means every motor vehicle owned by a public or government agency or private school and operated for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers, and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity, to or from school or school activities, or, privately owned and operated for compensation for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers, and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to or from school or school activities.

School function means any school-sponsored co-curricular event or activity on or off campus.

School property means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus.

Violent student means an elementary or secondary student under the age of 21 who: commits an act of violence against any school employee; commits an act of violence on school property against any student or other person lawfully on school property; possesses, on school property, a gun, knife, incendiary bomb, or other dangerous instrument capable of causing physical injury or death; threatens, on school property, to use any instrument that appears capable of causing physical injury or death; knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of any person lawfully on school property; or knowingly or intentionally damages or destroys school property.

Weapon means a firearm as defined in 18 USC § 921 for purposes of the federal Gun-Free Schools Act. Weapon is also any other device, instrument, material, or substance that can cause physical injury or death.

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## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Students do have rights. They have the legal rights given to them by the Constitution and other laws. These rights include the right to an education, the right to express their opinions, and the right to be free from insidious discrimination. Students also have human rights. These include the right to be treated with dignity and the right to contribute to the educational process.

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.

It is the responsibility of the students to conform to the following:

1. Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
2. Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
3. Dress and groom to meet fair standards of safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property. Students should dress and groom so that they do not cause a disruption to the educational process.
4. Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
5. Comply with state and local laws.
6. Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
7. Attend school daily and be on time to all classes and other school functions.
8. Make up work when absent from school.
9. Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the course of study prescribed by the state and local school authorities.
10. Report accurately and not use indecent or obscene language in student newspapers or publications.

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## General Conduct

Acceptable school conduct is based on respect for self, fellow students, faculty, staff, and school property. Specifically:

### School-Wide Expectations

- M - Meaningful Work - Make it matter by doing your best and knowing why your work is important.
- A - Act with Joy - Act with kindness and use a positive attitude in everything you do.
- V - Value Growth Value effort by learning new things, trying hard, and learning from mistakes.
- S - Show Leadership - Show the way by making good choices and helping others succeed.

### Expectations for General Student Conduct

Expectations for General Student Conduct

- We believe every student deserves a safe, respectful, and engaging learning environment. To help create this community, all students are expected to:
- **Attend school every day and be on time.** Punctuality and consistent attendance are key to academic success.
- **Be prepared for class.** Bring all necessary materials and come ready to learn.
- **Show respect to everyone.** This includes peers, staff, guests, and school property.
- **Use safe, kind, and responsible words and actions.** We are all responsible for creating a positive school climate.
- **Dress neatly and appropriately for school.** Clothing should support a focus on learning.
- **Report concerns right away.** If there's a problem, tell a teacher, other adult at school, or a parent. If a parent is contacted first, they should notify the principal, assistant principal, or dean immediately.

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- **Follow all school and classroom rules.** Each teacher may have specific expectations that support school-wide success.
  - These expectations help ensure that every student can grow academically, socially, and emotionally in a safe and structured environment.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Students are expected to arrive at class on time, with necessary materials, and to be cooperative and respectful during all scheduled periods. If a student fails to meet these expectations, the teacher may contact the student's parents. Should this not remedy the situation, the teacher should refer the matter to the Assistant Principal and/or the Behavior Management Team.

### **Academic Integrity**

As part of a school community, students and faculty have the duty and responsibility to promote academic integrity. This means that students are responsible for completing their own, authentic work. The purpose of assignments is to develop the skills and measure the progress of each student. Students learn more and attain a feeling of accomplishment through their own hard work and initiatives.

Students should follow these rules of academic integrity:

- Do your own work.
- Follow assignment directions and do not use AI (Artificial Intelligence) unless instructed by the teacher.
- Don't let others use or copy classwork, homework, quizzes, or tests. Others should not get credit for work that you have done.
- If you are helping someone, do not do the work for him or her.
- If you are working in a group, follow the teacher's directions on sharing work.
- Be truthful.
- If you are uncertain about the directions, ask the teacher for clarification.

Students who fail to follow these rules will face disciplinary consequences.

### **Passing in Hallways**

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In order to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning, students shall adhere to the following:

- Students are to travel from one location to another quietly and quickly. No running is permitted.
- Students are not to wander or congregate in the hallways.
- Students are to refrain from physical contact.

### **Specific Cafeteria / Town Hall Expectations**

Listed below are the expectations to be followed while using the cafeteria / town hall, which will help to ensure appropriate conduct during breakfast, lunch, or other assemblies.

- Students will enter the cafeteria quietly, orderly, and be seated.
- Respect and politeness must be shown to all, including the cafeteria staff, lunch helpers, or volunteers.
- Students' tables will be assigned by grade level. The adult in charge may allow students to change seating as they see fit.
- No jackets, hats, or any other type of outer-wear will be worn while in the cafeteria unless first approved by a teacher or other administrator.
- Cell phones or other portable electronic devices are not to be used without the consent of the lunch monitors on duty (see cell phone policy).
- Students will be patient while waiting to be served. A single file line will be maintained while waiting to receive meals.
- No food will be brought back through the food service line once it has been purchased. If there is a problem with the item purchased, the student will first speak with the teacher or lunch monitor, before approaching any cafeteria staff.
- Students will be seated at the table while eating. Once seated, there will be no moving from the table without permission. Students will refrain from shouting across tables.
- Students will clear any remaining food or debris from tables, chairs, and floor, and place it in the trash receptacles as they are brought around.
- Throwing food, ice, or any other objects while in the cafeteria / town hall is not permitted. Running, excessive noise, "horse play" of any kind, or any other

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disruptive behavior is also not allowed, and will be cause for removal from the cafeteria for a specified time. Detention or other remediation may also be assigned to the offending student(s).

### **Removal from Class by Teacher**

Teachers are expected to use traditional classroom management techniques to maintain order in the classroom. These techniques include:

- Sending the student to the hallway briefly;
- Sending the student to an administrator's office for a brief "time out" or for the remainder of the class time only; or
- Sending a student to a school counselor or other staff member for counseling.

Time-honored techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removal for the purpose of this code.

Under SAFE School laws, a teacher may remove a violent or disruptive student from class when the student's conduct poses a danger or is substantially disruptive or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. Such disruption occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

### **Bullying Prevention**

A policy concerning online or electronic cyber-bullying, harassment, profanity, or other unbecoming language/content by Midtown Public students during school hours.

### **Statement of Purpose**

Midtown Public Charter School acknowledges that all students have the right to participate fully in the education process, free from bullying and harassment, and in that regard, a safe and civic environment in school is necessary for students to learn and to achieve high academic standards. Bullying and harassment, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, are forms of conduct that disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Because students learn by example, school

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administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment.

## Definitions

- a. Bullying means written, verbal, or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing the student (or students) in reasonable fear of physical harm. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the board or state educational agency. This also includes association with a person or group with one or more of the abovementioned characteristics, whether actual or perceived.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
  - On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
  - At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
  - At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
  - At school bus stops;
  - On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased, or used by Midtown Public Charter School; or
  - Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by Midtown Public Charter School.
- b. Harassment means written, verbal, or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the board or state educational agency. This also includes association with a person or group with one or more of the abovementioned characteristics, whether actual or perceived.

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- c. Cyber-bullying means use of any electronic communication technology to bully or harass, as defined above, one or more students, regardless of location or the type of electronic technology and electronic communication that is used for bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying.

### **Scope of Proscribed Conduct**

This policy is applicable to all educators, staff members, students, and volunteers, and covers conduct that takes place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that is used for bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying.

### **Prohibition on Bullying Behavior**

Bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying are prohibited in Midtown Public Charter School. Retaliation or threats of retaliation meant to intimidate the victim of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying, or toward those investigating incidents thereof, are also prohibited. Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by Midtown Public Charter School if the act or acts in question: (1) create a hostile environment at school for the target; (2) infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or (3) materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### **School Responsibility**

- a. The school leader shall identify the school administrator(s) responsible for collecting and responding to reports of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying.
- b. The school shall receive and investigate complaints from parents, students, educators, and staff members, which allege that a school is failing to implement this policy.
- c. This policy will be distributed annually, and will also be included in any school student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and student handbooks.
- d. The school principal and designated administrators within Midtown Public shall create environments where the school community upholds the standards of respect and civility and understands that bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying, any investigation thereof, and any disciplinary action taken.

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- e. The school principal shall maintain written or electronic records regarding all complaints of bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying, any investigation thereof, and any disciplinary action taken.

## **Educator and Staff Responsibility**

Educators and school staff share responsibility for modelling appropriate behavior and creating an environment where mutual respect, civility, tolerance, and acceptance among students and staff are promoted and where students understand that bullying and harassment are inappropriate, harmful, and are taken seriously.

All educators and school staff members will take reasonable measures to prevent bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying and are obligated to report in a timely manner any such acts or complaints of such that come to their attention.

Midtown Public Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subject to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Students share responsibility for helping to create a safe school environment by not engaging in or contributing to bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying, treating everyone with respect, and being sensitive as to how others might perceive their actions or words.

Any student who observes an act of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying should report the incidents to school authorities in a timely manner.

### *Complaint procedure:*

- a. All allegations of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying shall be reported to the designated school administrator, either orally or in writing. Any student, parent or guardian, volunteer, educator, or staff member may file such a report. If a report contains incomplete information, the designated administrator shall take responsible measures to contact the individuals involved to determine whether an investigation should be pursued.

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- b. Upon receiving a complaint of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying from any student, educator, staff member, or parent, the designated school administrator shall:
- i. promptly and thoroughly investigate the alleged incident of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying;
  - ii. take immediate steps, at the administrator's discretion, to protect any involved students, educators, or staff pending completion of an investigation;
  - iii. provide notification to the parents or guardians of all involved students, provided that such notification does not endanger the health, safety, or well-being of any student;
  - iv. maintain a written or electronic record of the complaint, any investigation, and any intervention or disciplinary actions taken;
  - v. take proper disciplinary action immediately following the conclusion of the investigation; and
  - vi. issue a report in a timely manner regarding the complaint, investigation, and any disciplinary measures taken to all involved students, parents, and educators, while maintaining the privacy and safety of any involved students.
- c. Reports of bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying may be filed anonymously. However, disciplinary action cannot be taken based on an anonymous report. Anonymous reports will be investigated with the same procedures, timelines, and vigor as other reports and disciplinary action can occur based on the results of the investigation.
- d. Students who file false reports of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying will be subject to disciplinary measures.
- e. School administrators shall also use this procedure to investigate complaints of retaliation or threats of retaliation meant to intimidate the victim of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying, or towards those investigating incidents thereof.
- f. Incidents of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying that involve criminal activity shall be reported to law enforcement.

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- g. The findings of the School Leader shall be considered final.

### **Notification of Parents and Guardians**

When a complaint of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying is filed, the designated school administrator shall notify the parents or guardians of all involved students. Additionally, when the investigation is completed, the designated administrator shall issue a report in a timeline manner regarding the complaint, investigation, and any disciplinary measures taken to the parents or guardians of any involved students while accounting for student privacy. Private educational or personal data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school shall not be disclosed to the extent protected by law. In certain circumstances, disclosure of the basis for which a student is bullied may result in additional negative consequences to the student's health and wellbeing. Prior to notification of any parent or guardian regarding any incident of bullying, harassment, or cyber-bullying, school authorities must consider the issue of notification as they would any other educationally-relevant decision, considering the health, wellbeing, and safety of any student involved in the incident.

### **Discipline**

Disciplinary actions for bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying may include, but are not limited to: warnings; counseling; loss of opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, school social events, or graduation exercises; loss of school bus transportation; community service; in-school suspension; short-term suspension; or transfer to another school, among others. The specific consequences should be consistent, reasonable, fair, age-appropriate, and match the severity of the incident. While Midtown Public takes ALL reported cases of bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying seriously, we promote progressive discipline and intervention as opposed to "zero tolerance" policies.

### **Professional Development**

The school shall implement ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members, including but not limited to educators and school staff, to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying.

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## **Student Training and Prevention**

The school shall present in age-appropriate language the Board's policy on bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying as part of any orientation program conducted for students at the beginning of each academic term. This will also include instruction on how to prevent bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying; the process for filing complaints; and the process/consequences that will result from the complaint. The policy will be distributed annually.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that (a) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (b) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property; (c) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (d) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (d) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Midtown Public shall be a cell phone and social media free zone for students. Students that bring a cell phone to school must check in any cell phones or communication devices.

Any cell phone or communication device that is discovered on school premises but not in use by the student (e.g. in a student's backpack, etc.) shall:

1. On the first occurrence, be confiscated and held by the school until the day of the day.
2. On the second occurrence, be confiscated for a minimum of one week or picked up at the school by a guardian.
3. On the third occurrence, be confiscated until the end of the semester or picked up at the school by a guardian.
4. On the fourth or greater occurrence, be confiscated until the end of the year or picked up at the school by a guardian.

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Any cell phone or communications device that is discovered on school premises in use by a student (e.g. in a student's hands, on/near a student's person, etc.) shall:

1. On the first occurrence, be confiscated for a minimum of one week or picked up at the school by a guardian.
2. On the second occurrence, be confiscated until the end of the semester or picked up at the school by a guardian, and the student must serve two days of detention or equivalent.
3. On the third occurrence, be confiscated until the end of the year or picked up at the school by a guardian, and the student must serve three days of detention or equivalent.
4. On the fourth or greater occurrence, the school leader may consider suspension or other consequences for the student.

Any student that posts onto a social media account during school hours or on school premises no matter its content (positive or negative) shall:

1. On the first occurrence, receive one day of detention or equivalent and a parent conference.
2. On the second occurrence, receive two days of detention or equivalent and a second parent conference.
3. On the third occurrence, receive a one-day suspension or equivalent and a third parent conference.
4. On the fourth or greater occurrence, the school leader may consider additional suspension or other consequences for the student.

## **Tier 1 Behaviors**

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

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### List of Tier 1 Behaviors

|                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1 General defiance/non-compliance (classroom/school rules)                                                  |
| 1.2 Deliberate classroom disruption (yelling, throwing, running, backtalk)                                    |
| 1.3 Defiance/disrespect to authority/refusal to follow rules and directions and/or socially rude interactions |
| 1.4 Use of profanity or vulgarity/offensive gestures towards or with peers                                    |
| 1.5 Excessive noise in the classroom, hall, or building (during class or transitions)                         |
| 1.6 Use of cellphone, gaming, music devices during school hours (not approved by teacher)                     |
| 1.7 Verbal threat towards students and staff                                                                  |
| 1.8 Aggressive posturing (face-to-face with clenched fist)                                                    |
| 1.9 Out of area / playing in hallway or restroom areas                                                        |
| 1.10 Inappropriate displays of affection (rubbing, kissing, grabbing, pinching, etc.                          |
| 1.11 Excessive non-completion of assignments and missed assignments                                           |
| 1.12 Cheating (classwork, homework, tests, or other assignments)                                              |
| 1.13 Repeated and blatant refusal to follow uniform policy                                                    |

### In-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)

- Verbal redirection
- In-class refocus seat/area
- Behavior contract
- Teacher/student conference
- Parent contact: Phone, in writing, text message, email, or face-to-face
- Teacher/parent conference

### Out-of-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)

- Contact/Conference with School Based Leadership (Assistant Principal)

- Temporary removal from class
- On-site detention
- Parent/guardian shadowing
- Refocus room
- Parent contact/conference
- Behavior interventions/contracts
- Off-site short-term suspension
- Off-site medium-term suspension

## Tier 2 Behaviors

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

### List of Tier 2 Behaviors

|                                                                                                                                   |
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|                                                                                                                                   |
| 2.2 Directing pr                                                                                                                  |
| 2.1 General non-compliance (classroom/school rules)                                                                               |
| profanity or obscene/offensive gestures towards staff                                                                             |
| 2.3 Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between students (pushing, slapping/hitting, wrestling and etc.)                 |
| 2.4 Leaving classroom without permission                                                                                          |
| 2.5 Throwing objects that may cause injury or damage to property                                                                  |
| 2.6 (a) Out of area / skipping class<br>2.6 (b) Unauthorized presence in hallway during class time / unexcused lateness for class |
| 2.7 Intentional misuse of school equipment/supplies/facilities                                                                    |
| 2.8 Vandalism - deliberate destruction or damage to property of another person or the school up to \$100.00                       |
| 2.9 Tattooing/defacing/symbol marking another person's body parts                                                                 |
| 2.10 Throwing food or intentionally starting/participating in a food fight                                                        |

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| c                                                                                                            |
| 2.12 Theft/stealing another person's property with a value up to \$100.00                                    |
| 2.13 In violation of a behavior contract that stipulates medium/long-term suspensions for further violations |
| 2.14 Persistent physical behaviors such as biting, hitting, kicking, etc.                                    |
| 2.15 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behavior(s)                                                     |

### **In-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Teacher/student conference
- Behavior contract
- Parent contact in writing or by phone
- Teacher/parent conference

### **Out-of-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Contact/Conference with School Based Leadership (Assistant Principal)
- Contact/Conference with School Principal
- Temporary removal from class
- Additional support services provided
- Parent contact/conference
- Refocus
- Behavior interventions
- Off-site short-term suspension
- Off-site medium-term suspension

### **Tier 3 Behaviors**

Tier 3 behaviors are those that cause significant disruption to the academic environment, school operation, or cause harm to self or others. Tier 3 behaviors may result in either on-site or off-site suspension.

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### List of Tier 3 Behaviors

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.1 Academic dishonesty: Cheating, plagiarism, sharing of testing/quiz information or claiming a peer's assignment as your own                                                                                                                                               |
| 3.2 (a) Bullying and cyber-bullying or using humiliating or intimidating language towards others in person or via social media<br>3.2 (b) Using/sharing cellphones, computers, or other electronic devices to view or display inappropriate videos/photos of others and self |
| 3.3 Communicating slurs/derogatory language based on race, religion, sex, age, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3.4 (a) Truancy: Skipping class, skipping school, skipping detention and/or ISS<br>3.4 (b) Leaving school property                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3.5 Fighting or adult where there is no injury and no weapon (verbal and/or physical threat or action against another person)                                                                                                                                                |
| 3.6 Theft/stealing property value over \$100.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 3.7 (a) Causing disruption on school property or at any Midtown sponsored/supervised activity<br>3.7 (b) Acts of exceptional misconduct at other schools                                                                                                                     |
| 3.8 Inappropriate use of Midtown PCS computer/network: restricted websites, offensive emails, or offensive social media sites                                                                                                                                                |
| 3.9 Extortion, gambling, forgery, hazing, trespassing                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.10 Lying to or giving misleading information to school staff                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3.11 Verbal, written, intimidating postures, or physical threat to person/staff or property                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3.12 Possession of tools or instruments that could be used as weapons                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.13 Positing/distributing materials or literature that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to students and staff. Posting material on the internet, social websites, or sending material electronically via email or cell phone.                          |
| 3.14 Any behavior or conduct that is not listed in any other tier that causes significant disruption to the academic environment or causes harm to self or others                                                                                                            |
| 3.15 In violation of a behavior contract that stipulates home-bound services/home school transition for further violations                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3.16 Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 and Tier 2 behavior(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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### **In-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Teacher/student conference
- Behavior contract
- Parent contact in writing or by phone
- Teacher/parent conference
- Grade reduction for academic dishonesty
- Parent/guardian shadowing

### **Out-of-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Contact/Conference with School Based Leadership (Assistant Principal)
- Contact/Conference with School Principal
- Temporary removal from class
- Parent contact/conference
- Behavior interventions/contracts
- Additional support services provided
- Refocus
- Off-site short-term suspension
- Off-site medium-term suspension
- Off-site long-term suspension
- Police referral
- Home school transition
- Homebound services

## **Tier 4 Behaviors**

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. Tier 4 behaviors may result in off-site suspension or expulsion.

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### List of Tier 4 Behaviors

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| 4.1 (a) Activating false alarm/false call to 911<br>4.1 (b) Arson/bomb threat. Possession of fireworks or explosives<br>4.1 (c) Weapons                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4.2 (a) Fighting, which creates a substantial risk of/or results in minor/major injury<br>4.2 (b) Participating in a group fight, which has been planned, causes disruption to school day, and results in injury<br>4.2 (c) Inciting others to violence, fighting, or disruption                                                                         |
| 4.3 Persistent harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex/sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, personal appearance, etc.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4.4 (a) Sexual harassment and/or sexual misconduct (verbal/physical) (terms, phrases, questions, jokes, etc.) and (touching, kissing, rubbing, grabbing, etc.)<br>4.4 (b) Commission or attempted commission of any act of sexual assault or sexual aggression. Retaliation for reporting harassment and sexual harassment, assault or sexual aggression |
| 4.5 Tampering with, changing, or altering an official record or document of a school. To include student grades, report card, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4.6 Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to cause injury to another individual                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 4.7 Possession of a weapon or replica/imitation weapon (including water guns) other than weapons subject to the requirements of the Gun-Free Schools Act. Any behavior that violates the Gun Free School Act.                                                                                                                                            |
| 4.8 Assault with a weapon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 4.9 Assault/physical attack on a student or staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 4.10 Possession, use, distribution, or selling of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, or drug paraphernalia, unauthorized possession/use of over-the-counter medication                                                                                         |
| 4.11 Use, possession, or bringing loaded/unloaded firearm to school, includes but not limited to pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, bb guns, shotguns, etc.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4.12 (a) Vandalism/destruction of property over \$500.00<br>4.12 (b) Theft of property over \$500.00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4.13 Use, threatened use, or transfer of any weapon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.14 In violation of a behavior contract that stipulates expulsion for further violations                                                                                      |
| 4.15 Any behavior or conduct that is not listed in other tier that is illegal, causes significant disruption to school operation, or causes substantial harm to self or others |
| 4.16 Documented patterns or persistent Tier 1, 2, and 3 behavior(s)                                                                                                            |

### **In-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Contact Assistant Principal
- Contact/Conference with School Principal

### **Out-of-Class Disciplinary Consequence(s)**

- Off-site medium-term suspension
- Off-site long-term suspension
- Home school transition
- Police referral
- Expulsion
- Hearing with disciplinary committee
- Homebound services

### **Self-Defense Policy**

It will generally not be considered a violation for students to act in self-defense, as long as (a) the student reasonably believes that acting in such a manner is necessary to defend himself or herself against others' imminent use of unlawful force, and (b) the use of self-defense is not excessive; that is, that only the amount of self-defense needed to exit immediate danger is used. No additional harm or other use of "fighting back" is permissible, and these actions would be considered use of force as described above.

### **Formal Disciplinary Action: Suspension and Expulsion**

Suspension and/or expulsion from school are two formal disciplinary actions the school can employ. In the event a student's behavior is defined within Tier 3 or Tier 4, such behavior

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warrants the following consideration. As these actions are serious in nature, a formal procedure is outlined for both below:

## **Suspension**

A student can be suspended for either one serious behavioral violation or an accumulation of patterned minor infractions. In the event the suspension is “out of school,” the student is not permitted to be on campus until the suspension ends. The Assistant Principal and/or assigned Administrator is entrusted with the responsibility and authority to make decisions related to suspensions, with approval from the Principal. When a potential incident is reported/referred, the Assistant Principal or Principal 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 teacher or adult on campus who submitted the report, witnessed the incident, or might have information related to the matter.
- Reference the Student and Family Handbook (above Tiers) to ensure the decision to suspend, and the length of the suspension, is appropriate in relationship to the infraction.
- Principal approval.
- The parent or guardian will immediately be contacted regarding the final decision made.
- A letter of suspension to the parent will be provided, upon pickup of the student that will formally document the incident/infraction/decision.

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 or guardian arrives to take the student home.

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- The Assistant Principal and/or Administrator will meet with the parent upon their arrival on campus to review or discuss the matter.
  - A formal note of receipt of the suspension notice will be presented for parent/guardian signature to confirm the receipt of suspension documentation.
  - 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 Midtown Public Charter School.

Prior to the student returning to school, a re-entry meeting is scheduled and required to take place the morning of a student's return to school. An explanation of the re-entry process is noted as follows:

### **Re-entry meeting**

The re-entry meeting occurs the morning on which a student returns to school from a formal suspension. The meeting typically takes place prior to the start of the school day and lasts approximately twenty to thirty (20-30) minutes. Student, parent(s)/guardian(s), Dean of Student, BMT (Behavior Management Team) will meet with the Assistant Principal. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the student and parents with the opportunity to reflect on the incident and what the student has learned as a result of the disciplinary action. This will set the stage for a successful transition into the school environment. A document that summarizes the meeting is created, signed by the student and Assistant Principal, and placed in the student's file.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is removal from school for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days, and up to one calendar year. In the case of expulsion, the student's parent or legal guardian shall be notified of the time and place of a hearing before a Disciplinary Hearing Committee.

The hearing shall take place within 10 days or less of the notification at a time and place designated by the Hearing Facilitator, and a decision shall be rendered following the hearing. At the hearing, the student and his/her parent/guardian may be present and

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represented by legal counsel. If a student withdraws during the pendency of any disciplinary recommendation, the withdrawal shall be deemed a waiver of any right to a hearing or appeal. The disciplinary recommendation of the principal or of the hearing committee at the time of the withdrawal shall be deemed the final disciplinary action. A summary of the evidence against the student shall be included in the student's disciplinary record.

*Principal's investigation:* In dealing with alleged misconduct, the principal shall investigate the incidence and hear reasonably available accounts. The student will be allowed to raise any defense he/she thinks relevant. If the student requests that other witnesses be questioned, the principal should talk to them if reasonably possible. If the student makes a reasonable claim of other defensive material that, if true, would free him/her from blame, reasonable steps should be taken to obtain the information. However, if other defensive material is not immediately available, the principal should consider postponing disciplinary action for a reasonable time until such evidence may be presented.

*Hearing for expulsion:* Whenever the principal seeks an expulsion, written notice must be given to the student and the parent as soon as possible. The notice shall include: (a) the rule allegedly violated and the acts of the student who was thought to have violated the rule, including a summary of the evidence against him/her; (b) the penalty that the principal plans to recommend to the Disciplinary Committee, or plans to apply if the hearing is waived; (c) a tentative time and place for the hearing; (d) a description of the hearing procedures; (e) a notification that any written statements regarding the misconduct are available at the school for examination by the student and his/her representatives - as applicable, the principal may censor written statements for the protection of witnesses; (f) a notification that the student's school records are available at the school for examination by the student and his/her representatives; and, (g) a statement that before expulsion can be invoked, the student has a right to a hearing which may be waived if the student and his parents agree by furnishing the principal to a signed waiver to that effect. The student and his/her parents shall notify the school within 24 hours after receipt of the notice as to whether they will waive the hearing. If no notification is received, the hearing schedule will be observed.

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*Appeal of expulsion:* A student aggrieved by the Disciplinary Committee's decision may appeal to the Board of Education by filing a written request with the Superintendent's office within ten days from the date of the Disciplinary Committee's decision. The written request for a hearing must contain an itemized list of the reasons why the parent/student/guardian feels that the Disciplinary Committee's decision should be overturned or modified and a summary of the facts that support this position. A request for appeal which does not contain the required information shall not be valid.

*Readmission after expulsion of one calendar year:* An expulsion is generally for one school calendar year. At the end of a calendar year, the expelled student may apply for re-admission. If granted re-admission, the student may be required to complete up to one year of readmission in an alternative center. If re-admission is in either December or May, the student may be required to complete the remainder of that month and all of the next regular semester in an alternative center.

### **Prohibited Activities During a Suspension / Expulsion Period, or While Assigned to Alternative Center**

When a student has received out-of-school suspension or has been expelled, he/she is prohibited from entering any of the school buildings or school grounds, attending any day or night school functions or riding a school bus except for a pre-arranged conference with an administrator during the period of the suspension/expulsion.