



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023–2024

	1

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	5
Contact Information.....	6
School Calendar.....	7
Bell Schedule.....	8
Mission Statement.....	9
Behavioral Management Philosophy.....	9
Academic Integrity.....	10
Activity Eligibility.....	10
Alternative Credit.....	10
Athletics and Activities.....	11
Attendance.....	13
Cell Phone and Electronic Devices.....	18
Computer & Technology Use.....	19
Closed Campus.....	19
Concurrent Enrollment.....	20
Credits.....	20
Disrespectful Behavior & Insubordination.....	26
Dress Code.....	28
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco & Vaping.....	29
Fighting, Threatening, Assault, Intimidation.....	29
False Emergency or Hoax.....	30

	2

Fees and Fines.....	30
Graduation.....	31
Harassment and Bullying.....	31
Hazing or Initiation.....	32
Homework Policy.....	32
Honor Roll.....	32
Illness during the School Day.....	32
Lockers.....	33
Lost & Found.....	33
Medication at School.....	33
Non-Discrimination.....	33
Parking, Driving, Drop off, Transportation.....	34
Public Display of Affection (PDA).....	36
Request for Homework.....	36
Schedule Change policy.....	36
School Dances & Functions.....	36
Search and Seizure.....	37
Student deliveries.....	37
Substitute Teachers.....	37
Surveillance.....	37
Suspension.....	38

Testing.....	39
Theft.....	39
Vandalism.....	39
Visitors	39
Vulgar or profane Language, Pictures, and Gestures.....	39
Weapons.....	39
MPA Student Code of Conduct.....	41
Student Conduct Contract.....	42
Student and Parent Acknowledgement.....	43

Welcome to the 2023–2024 school year!

MPA Nation,

Welcome to the 2023–2024 school year at Merit Preparatory Academy (MPA). We hope you will browse through our pages to learn more about what makes up Merit Preparatory Academy Knight Pride and what services we offer for our student body. A significant amount of information has been posted, and we hope you will find answers and forms of communications for any of your questions.

Our students, faculty, support staff, and administration strive to create a positive school climate by demonstrating mutual respect for everyone that enters our building. MPA has a talented staff that cares deeply about students and student learning. Our goal and mission is to provide an outstanding educational experience designed to instill excellence, build a love of learning and service, and create principled leaders who will engage in real world challenges and opportunities.

Students are constantly encouraged to make educated decisions that will have a positive impact on their future. Students are asked to explore personal interests and to get involved at school. By making good choices and setting goals in their learning and in their personal lives, our students will succeed and excel both in the classroom and in their extra-curricular activities.

MPA is a community-based charter serving 7th–12th grade students. We value the support of our parents, community members, and local businesses. Parents please take the time to review our student handbook and talk to your student often about his/her course schedule, classes, and assignments. We welcome your input and appreciate your continuing support and commitment in providing the best educational experience for our students. Please don't hesitate to be involved and share in that Knight Pride.

Sincerely,

Mr. Condie, Director

	5

Contact Information

meritprepacademy.org

1440 West Center Street
Springville, Utah 84663

Telephone: (801) 491-7600

Fax: (801) 491-4092

Aspire Gradebook: merit.usoe-dcs.org

Canvas (Online Course Access): meritacademy.instructure.com

SafeUT (Anonymous Tip Line): safeut.med.utah.edu

The SafeUT Crisis Chat and Tip Line is a statewide service that provides real-time crisis intervention to youth through live chat and a confidential tip program.

If you have questions, please contact the school or the following individuals directly through email:

Director	Mike Condie	mike.condie@meritacademy.org
Assistant Director	Jessica Sitton	jessica.sitton@meritacademy.org
Athletic Director	Chaunci Villalpando	chaunci.villalpando@meritacademy.org
Counselors	Ryan Chavez (student's last name A–I)	ryan.chavez@meritacademy.org
	Scott Jenkins (student's last name J–Z)	scott.jenkins@meritacademy.org
Lunch Accounts	Audrey Merighe	audrey.merighe@meritacademy.org
Admin Secretary	JoAnna Rothe	joanna.rothe@meritacademy.org
Attendance Secretary	Amy Evans	amy.evans@meritacademy.org
Finance	Rylie Lazaga	rylie.lazaga@meritacademy.org
Registrar	Amy Monroy	amy.monroy@meritacademy.org

	6

School Calendar



ACADEMIC CALENDAR
2023-2024

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 TDD	11 TDD	12
13	14 TDD	15 TDD	16 W FIRST DAY	17 T	18 W	19
20	21 W	22 T	23 W	24 T	25 T	26
27	28 W	29 T	30 W	31 T		

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 W	2
3	4 LABOR DAY	5 T	6 W	7 T	8 W	9
10	11 W	12 T	13 W	14 T	15 T	16
17	18 W	19 T	20 W	21 T	22 W	23
24	25 W	26 T	27 W	28 T	29 T	30

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2 W	3 T	4 W	5 T	6 W	7
8	9 W	10 T	11 W	12 T	13 T TERM 1 ENDS	14
15	16 W TERM 2 BEGINS	17 T	18 W	19 FALL	20 BREAK	21
22	23 PC COMP	24 T	25 W	26 T	27 W	28
29	30 W	31 T				

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1 W	2 T	3 T	4
5	6 W	7 T	8 W	9 T	10 W	11
12	13 W	14 T	15 W	16 T	17 T	18
19	20 W	21 T	22 PC COMP	23 THANKS GIVING	24 BREAK	25
26	27 W	28 T	29 W	30 T		

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 W	2
3	4 W	5 T	6 W	7 T	8 T	9
10	11 W	12 T	13 W	14 T	15 W	16
17	18 W	19 T TERM 2 ENDS	20 CHRIST MAS	21 BREAK	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4 T TERM 3 BEGINS	5 W	6
7	8 W	9 T	10 W	11 T	12 T	13
14	15 MLK JR. DAY	16 T	17 W	18 T	19 W	20
21	22 W	23 T	24 W	25 T	26 T	27
28	29 W	30 T	31 W			

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1 T	2 W	3
4	5 W	6 T	7 W	8 T	9 T	10
11	12 W	13 T	14 W	15 T	16 PC COMP	17
18	19 PRES DAY	20 T	21 W	22 T	23 W	24
25	26 W	27 T	28 W	29 T		

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1 T	2
3	4 W	5 T	6 W	7 T	8 W TERM 3 ENDS	9
10	11 SNOW MAKE-UP	12 ACT JUNIORS ONLY	13 W TERM 4 BEGINS	14 T	15 W	16
17	18 W	19 T	20 W	21 T	22 T	23
24/31	25 W	26 T	27 W	28 T	29 W	30

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3 SPRING	4 BREAK	5	6
7	8 W	9 T	10 W	11 T	12 T	13
14	15 W	16 T	17 W	18 T	19 W	20
21	22 W	23 T	24 W	25 T	26 T	27
28	29 W	30 T				

MAY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1 W	2 T	3 W	4
5	6 W	7 T	8 W	9 T	10 T	11
12	13 W	14 T	15 W	16 T	17 W	18
19	20 W	21 T TERM 4 ENDS	22 KNIGHTING YEARBOOK CHECK-OUT	23 LAST DAY HALF DAY CHECK-OUT GRADUATION	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

No School

Teacher Development Day (TDD)

First / Last Day of School

Term Changes

Parent Conference Comp

Only Juniors Taking ACT

Term 1

Term 2

Term 3

Term 4

August 16 – October 13

October 16 – December 19

January 4 – March 8

March 13 – May 21

NO SCHOOL DAYS	
Labor Day	September 4
Fall Break	October 19–23
Thanksgiving Break	November 22–24
Christmas Break	Dec. 20–Jan. 3
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 15
PC Comp / President's Day	February 16–19
No School (Snow Make-Up)	March 11
ACT Test Day (Juniors Only)	March 12
Spring Break	April 1–5

Bell Schedule

Monday - Thursday

8:30	-	9:00	Quest Time (Homeroom)
9:05	-	10:25	W/T 1 st
10:30	-	11:50	W/T 2 nd
11:50	-	12:25	1 st Lunch
12:30	-	1:50	W/T 3 rd OR
11:55	-	1:15	W/T 3 rd
1:15	-	1:50	2 nd Lunch
1:55	-	3:15	W/T 4 th

Friday

8:30	-	9:30	Quest Time (Homeroom)
9:35	-	10:25	W/T 1 st
10:30	-	11:20	W/T 2 nd
11:20	-	11:55	1 st Lunch
12:00	-	12:50	W/T 3 rd OR
11:25	-	12:15	W/T 3 rd
12:15	-	12:50	2 nd Lunch
12:55	-	1:45	W/T 4 th

	8

Merit Preparatory Academy Mission Statement

Merit Preparatory Academy provides an outstanding educational experience designed to instill excellence, build a love of learning and service, and create principled leaders who will engage in real world challenges and opportunities.

MPA vision statements:

- We believe all students can learn and learning is a lifelong process.
- Students learn best when they are actively involved and engaged.
- Each student is a valuable individual with unique educational, social, and emotional needs.
- Individual strengths should be encouraged and developed.
- A climate that encourages community and parent involvement is essential to quality education.
- Our school must be a place of mutual respect where students can feel physically and emotionally safe.
- Teachers are lifelong learners who strive to promote individual student growth.

The future success of our society depends on the development of a deep sense of social and civic responsibility with strong leadership qualities in today's students.

No background or circumstances should prevent any student from reaching high levels of educational and social achievement.

Behavioral Management Philosophy

MPA believes that each student has the opportunity for success and the right to an education free from disruptive actions and behaviors. The school will be operated in a caring and responsible manner with both requirements and regulations being attainable, reasonable, and understandable. A reasonable workload will be established for all students. During the 2023–2024 school year, MPA will utilize several systems of Student Behavior Management. Merit expects each student to be responsible and personally accountable for his/her behavior. For a successful educational experience, all students must self-manage their behaviors, both academically and socially, and make appropriate choices.

Student Responsibilities:

- To be informed of and adhere to reasonable rules and regulations established by the Board of Trustees, School Administrators, and Teachers. This Student Handbook, and the Behavior Management Plan are the major references with which students should be familiar.
- To respect the rights and individuality of fellow students, teachers, administrators, and all other personnel involved in the school community.
- To refrain from libel, slander, and obscenities in verbal and written/electronic expression.
- To dress and groom oneself in a manner that meets reasonable standards of health, cleanliness, and safety (refer to the Dress Code section of the handbook and behavior plan).
- To be punctual and present in the regular or assigned school program.
- To strive to meet one's potential.
- To respect the reasonable actions and decisions of the authority of school administrators and teachers in maintaining discipline in the school and at school-sponsored activities and events.

	9

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, copying of another’s work, or any unauthorized communication for gaining advantage during an examination or on an assignment is prohibited. Plagiarism includes copying text and graphics from the internet without proper citation. Any student who plagiarizes all or a portion of an assignment will lose credit for that assignment and/or the entire class, at the discretion of the teacher.

Students accused of academic dishonesty will be given a chance to defend their work with the accusing faculty member. The student also has the option of appealing a teacher’s accusation of academic dishonesty with the administration. If it is determined that a student has violated this policy, that student will be subject to consequences that may involve loss of credit for the assignment/test up to disciplinary action from the administration.

Activity Eligibility

There are many opportunities for students to develop their talents in various activities offered at MPA. To participate in school-sponsored activities, students must meet the criteria of eligibility published by the Utah High School Activities Association (UHSAA). To participate in sports and activities, students must be officially enrolled at MPA, cannot fail more than one subject in the preceding grading period, AND must have obtained a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 for the preceding grading period. During the season, participants are required to have no F’s. Grade checks will be run every other week. No practice/travel/games until there are no F’s. Students must register with **Register My Athlete** and have all paperwork completed (including a physical) **BEFORE** tryouts. Teams and student organizations may have higher requirements for participation if approved by the administration.

In order to participate, students are expected to attend all classes on the day of a game or activity. For any extenuating circumstances, the student must contact the athletic director or advisor prior to activity participation. Students who have attendance issues may not miss school for extra-curricular activities until the student has corrected the issues with the Attendance Office.

Alternative Credit Options

Students should take responsibility for their grades and accomplishing their high school goals. If a student needs to make up credits, students should make up those credits as soon as possible. Students also have the option to replace grades on their transcript through various programs.

Please contact your counselor as soon as possible to develop a plan for credit recovery or graduation.

	10

Athletics & Activities

Merit Preparatory Academy Athletic and Activity organizations strive to ensure the fair play and sportsmanship of all student-athletes. Student-athletes are just that, students before they are athletes. Student-athletes are expected to strive for excellence beyond the competitive field and be a leader in their communities. Coaches and players are expected to represent MPA in a positive and honorable way, on and off the field or court.

Merit offers the following athletic opportunities:

Fall: XCountry, Baseball, Girls Volleyball, and 7th/8th grade Club Soccer

Winter: Basketball and Cheer (year round)

Spring: Soccer and Ultimate Frisbee (all grades)

Athlete Academic Standards for Eligibility:

- Attendance
 - Any sluff or unexcused absence = will serve after school detention same or next day
 - 4 tardies = will serve after school detention same or next day
 - *** additional consequences may be applied by coaching staff ***
- Eligibility - UHSAA eligibility rules apply for the term before the season
Previous Term:
 - No F's, minimum 2.0 GPA or higherDuring Season:
 - No F's, grade checks every other week
 - No practice/travel/games until there are no F's
 - Register with **Register My Athlete** and have all paperwork completed (including a physical) **BEFORE** tryouts

Season Fees: Students can receive their uniform, play games, travel, and sit with the team after their fees are paid in full. Sports fees are required and are used for travel, officials, league fees, uniforms, and awards. **If a team decides they want to purchase additional items (e.g., spirit packs, team warm-ups, etc.), they need to raise funds on top of season fees and their annual fundraiser; additional items are not covered by fee waivers.** If a student is eligible for a fee waiver, the form must be completed, approved, and filed with the office before practicing. If a student joins the team after the season begins, they may not receive a uniform, compete, travel, or practice until their fees are paid in full (some exceptions apply to fall sports). Once a student pays their fees, begins practicing, or competing with the team, but wants to leave the team or they get injured, their fees can be refunded by being prorated. Their fees will only be refunded in full if they do not have a fee balance with Merit. Please see our Finance Office if a payment plan is needed.

Registering & Tryouts:

All students must register on www.RegisterMyAthlete.com, complete a physical, and be cleared by the Athletic Director before they can try-out.

Uniforms

Merit students have the privilege of participating in school activities and sports. Unless otherwise written, uniforms, apparel, and equipment are owned by Merit Preparatory Academy. If items are lost,

	11

stolen, or damaged, the student will be financially responsible for replacing the item in full up to \$150. If athletes want to switch or borrow uniforms, they must contact the Athletic Director before doing so.

Fundraising

The purpose of fundraising is to improve the learning and educational opportunities for our students and should focus on benefiting all students in the organization. Athletic fundraising pays for new equipment, maintaining uniforms, and any unforeseen costs affecting the ability to continue the program. It is recommended that the team and coach work together to raise \$500 per team each season. As a member of the team, each player should participate. Any excess funds raised will go to the program.

Communication:

Direct general athletic questions to Athletic Director David Reichner david.reichner@meritacademy.org, 801-491-7600

Attendance

Merit's Attendance Policy:

- A student must first check out (with a parent/guardian's prior consent) before leaving campus; otherwise, it is a sluff. A student must then check back in at the Front Office upon returning to school.
- A sluff is a single period absence where the student was not properly checked out before leaving campus. These cannot be excused by a parent/guardian.
- All absences must be excused (parent/guardian sending a note or calling Attendance Secretary) within 5 school days.
- An unexcused absence is an absence without valid excuse or an absence where a parent fails to contact the school to excuse a valid absence.
- Students with habitual unexcused absences may be restricted from participating in sports for at least one week or until consequences are fulfilled.

Students are expected to attend class regularly to be in good standing to participate in sports. Athletes have to attend all their classes on game day to participate in the game unless they have a valid excused absence (doctor appointment, etc.). Any sluff or unexcused absence by an athlete will be treated like any other student. Athletes will attend detention or do service after school, which will likely mean they miss practices and games. If a student-athlete acquires 4 or more tardies in a class, they are referred to detention and may miss practices or games. Coaches may have additional attendance standards for their players and team.

Athletic Travel

Occasionally, the Merit buses are not available to transport athletes to and from competition. We appreciate any parental help we can get under such circumstances. Parents who transport students other than their own need to watch the State Required Defensive Driving video, take a short quiz, provide the school with a copy of their license and insurance, and complete a background check. Students are not to use their own vehicles to drive to and from Merit sponsored activities. Behavior on the bus is established at the school level and enforced by the driver and coaching staff. Drivers are instructed to return the team to the school if behavior is inappropriate to ensure the safety of all travelers.

	12

Clubs:

Merit Preparatory Academy allows students the opportunity to form clubs, within defined parameters. Students who wish to form a club must first find a teacher who will sponsor the club. The teacher must fill out a form in the Front Office and obtain approval from administration before formally organizing the club.

Clubs will be approved based on how the club fulfills the mission statement of the school, and how it incorporates the school's three foundational pillars. All activities sponsored by the club must be in keeping with the School Values. If not, the activity may be canceled by an administrator or teacher, and the club may be given a warning of disbanding, or may be disbanded at once, depending on the severity and/or frequency of the infraction.

Clubs will write by-laws outlining their purpose and practices, and how they fulfill the mission of the school as part of the approval process, and have them approved by a school administrator. Clubs may not meet during class time, but may meet before school, during lunch, after school, or whenever the sponsoring mentor can arrange meeting times at the school. The sponsoring mentor must be present each time the club meets. Students are reminded that they are free to form clubs out of school affiliation on their own.

School Wide Field Trips:

Since our program incorporates hands-on learning, students will have the opportunity to participate in field trips throughout the year, both in their individual classes or as part of a school-wide field trip. Often, our school-wide field trips are organized on a first-come first-served basis. We will inform parents about these trips through email and through the school website and calendar: www.meritprepacademy.org. Parents may be asked to help transport students on field trips. Parents who transport students other than their own need to watch the State Required Defensive Driving video, take a short quiz, provide the school with a copy of their license and insurance, and complete a background check. More information on this process can be found online through the school website. Students may not drive themselves or other student passengers to or from field trips. No student will be allowed to go on a field trip without a parent signature.

Parent Involvement/Volunteers:

Our view that the parents have the primary responsibility and privilege to educate their children requires and encourages strong parental involvement. This involvement is vital to the success of any student's education, and also the success of any charter school. Every family is strongly encouraged to volunteer at least 40 hours per year to help the school. Parent volunteer opportunities frequently go out in email, or you can call the school. Volunteer hours can include help from any family member, not only parents. Volunteer hours can be tracked and reported through the school website. While we prefer parent involvement through volunteering, we also appreciate monetary contributions to be donated in lieu of volunteer hours, \$15/hour.

Attendance Policy

Merit Academy believes that regular school attendance is necessary for academic achievement and is a shared responsibility between student, parent, and the school.

Studies have shown when students miss more than 10% of class time, learning and long-term educational outcomes decline sharply.

	13

Students bear a tremendous responsibility in the education process. Students need to be in their classes on time and come prepared to learn (homework completed, necessary books and supplies ready). Whenever students are absent, they have the responsibility to arrange with their teachers for make-up work. However, the classroom experience cannot be duplicated through make-up assignments.

Absenteeism also affects a student's classmates and places a burden on teachers. Teacher time and energy used for re-teaching and preparing make-up materials is taken away from students who attend regularly. Similarly, students who come to class late interrupt learning for those who arrive on time. Parents play an important role by determining which student absences are necessary.

Students may occasionally need to be absent or tardy because of illness, emergencies, funerals, etc. To allow for these unavoidable circumstances, four (4) parent-excused absences are allowed per term, per class, without penalty. Also, a student may be tardy four (4) times per class, per term, without penalty. Any attendance issues beyond this limit will result in no credit being issued in that class for the term until resolved.

Student Check-in/Check-out and Excusing Absences:

- Parents may check-in students and excuse absences by sending a note with their student, sending an email to attendance@meritknights.com or calling the attendance office at 801-491-7600 from 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- When excusing an absence with a note, email, or voice message, parents should include the date of the absence and parent phone number.
- Tardies will be excused if they occur on the same day as a pre-approved absence, or occur in conjunction with a school approved activity absence or an excused health appointment absence.
- To minimize classroom disruption, please arrange to check students out between class periods when possible.
- When students are checked out of a class early, if they have attended the majority of the class period, they are counted present for that class.
- Student check-out requests are discouraged during the last 20 minutes of the school day as they disrupt the process of the office and classrooms.
- Fraudulent excusing of absences by students will result in school discipline.
- All unexcused absences are considered trancies (sluffs).
- Failure to make-up absences, trancies, or tardies will result in a loss of credit for the class.
- Approved Absences/tardies do not count against the 4 absence/tardy term limit.

Approved Absences (Not Included in the 4 per term Limit):

Pre-approved Absence Requests: Students are strongly encouraged to obtain absence pre-approval for missed classes. This is available for family events such as vacations, funerals, weddings, etc. This requires a short form to be filled out with information from each of the student's teachers. The request will be reviewed by the Attendance Office for final approval. These forms are available in the Attendance Office and should be filled out and turned in at least one week prior to the absence(s). Pre-approved absences will still require all classroom work to be made up.

	14

School approved activity: School approved activity absences and tardies will be marked as approved absences, but work for the class(es) will need to be made up.

Health Appointments: Merit Academy strongly encourages guardians to make health appointments for their students outside of school hours whenever possible. However, we acknowledge that may not always be possible. Health appointment absences will be excused with a note from the health care professional.

Other Excused Absences/ Tardies (Included in the 4 per term Limit)

Excused Absence: Parents are encouraged to excuse absences within 10 school days. An unexcused absence will become a truancy if it is not parent excused within that 10 day limit. After the expiration of the initial 10-day period, parents will retain the ability to excuse their child's absence. However, the parent must excuse it in person with the attendance secretary.

Tardies: A student is tardy who arrives late to class within the first 10 minutes of class time. After 10 minutes the student is marked absent. Students who first arrive at school after the school day has started, must check in at the Attendance Office.

Each term, upon reaching the 4th parent-excused absence or 4th tardy, students and parents will receive notification of attendance issues. The 5th absence or tardy will result in an NC in the class or classes in which those absences or tardies have accumulated. Students who exceed 4 excused absences or accumulate more than 4 tardies are required to attend Attendance School or approved alternatives at the discretion of administration. This is necessary to have the "NC" designation removed and to obtain the academic grade and credit for the class.

Options to Resolve Attendance Issues:

Attendance at Approved Extracurricular Activities: With teacher approval and attendance office acceptance, a student may resolve an attendance issue by participating in an after/ before school activity or event. The student must get a signed note from the teacher approving the event the student plans to attend before the event or activity is held and then take that note to the attendance office after the event or activity has been completed. The attendance office will then excuse one absence or two tardies. The attendance office may limit the number of times a student can access this process for attendance make-up purposes.

Attendance School: Attendance school is set up to allow students the opportunity to make up assignments and time missed in class. At the teacher's discretion, students may make up attendance infractions in the classroom- outside of regular school hours- in lieu of going to organized attendance school. This allows for more specific instruction and learning recovery. Make-up credit for a given class period must be done with the approval of the teacher whose class time was missed and must be made up during the current term. Work to be completed is determined by the teacher. Additionally, a student may do make-up work with a different teacher, but the teacher whose class was missed must first approve that arrangement. It is the teacher whose

class was missed that must excuse the absence/ tardy with the attendance office. The student must take responsibility for this process. There is no in-classroom make-up after the end of the term.

Attendance school or approved alternatives make up absences, truanicies, and tardies on the following scale:

- 1-1/2 hour for every unexcused absence or truancy (sluff) in each class.
- 1 hour for an excused absence above 4 in each class.
- 1/2 hour for each tardy above 4 in each class.

Attendance School Schedule: Please check with the Attendance Office for the current schedule. Typically, it will be held Monday-Thursday after school from 3:20- 4:20 pm or during lunch hours. Students are responsible for arranging their schedules to attend make-up classes with teachers and for any transportation needs before or after school to participate in Attendance School.

Attendance School Costs: Attendance make-up after school will be offered free of charge during the term in which the excessive absences or tardies occurred. Attendance make-up for previous terms will cost \$10.00 per session. Students will not be allowed into paying sessions without their receipt. Students need to bring make-up work to Attendance School. No electronics, note passing, talking, sleeping, etc. will be allowed and will result in dismissal from the attendance session. All make-up done with a teacher in the classroom can only be completed in the current term and will be made-up free of charge during the term.

Truanicies (Sluff): Truancy (Sluff) is a confirmed absence from school without parent approval and is determined by the Attendance Office. Confirmed truanicies may not later be excused by a parent and will automatically result in an NC. Additionally, students who leave class early or miss class without first being properly checked-out by a parent or guardian, will be considered truant. Students with a truancy are required to go to Attendance School or approved alternatives at the discretion of administration. Multiple truanicies will result in students and/or parents being required to meet with the Administration and/or a school counselor. Efforts will be made to assess each individual situation and find positive ways to encourage the student’s attendance. Administrators, in collaboration with counselors, parents, and the student, have the flexibility to make plans, agreements and contracts to encourage student attendance. Repeat offenders can be referred to the school’s Alternative Learning Center (ALC), Out of School Suspension, Court, and/or Expulsion.

NC grades: A grade of NC will be given for any class with unresolved attendance issues (required Attendance School sessions not completed). If the NC is not restored by the end of the term, a student has only one week after the term ends before all NC’s are calculated into a student’s GPA. Once this occurs, students and their guardians must meet with the school counselor to resolve the issue and determine the best course of action.

Attendance Appeals Process: Students and parents may appeal, in writing, any necessary concessions. Appeals are reserved for unusual attendance problems (i.e., medically verifiable illness, etc.). Appeals should be submitted to the Administration as soon as possible.

Excessive Absences: A student may be referred to an administrator when he/she has excessive absences in a class. A meeting between administrators, counselors, parents/guardians and the student will be required. Unresolved, excessive absences will result in further discipline including; Alternative Learning Center (ALC), out of school suspension, referral to attendance court, referral to law enforcement, and/or expulsion from school. Absences in excess of 10 consecutive days require prior attendance office and administrator approval or the student will be withdrawn from Merit Preparatory Academy.

Parent Resources:

English:

- https://attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/AW_HS-flyer-1-pager.pdf
- https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/toosickforschool_REV.pdf
- [http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/RtP_Attendance\(2\).pdf](http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/RtP_Attendance(2).pdf)

Spanish:

- https://attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/AW_HS-flyer_Spanish.pdf
- https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/toosickforschoolspanish_REV.pdf
- http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/RtP_Attendance_Spanish.pdf

Continuing Enrollment Attendance Policy Addendum

Face-to-face program

Merit Academy will not count a student as eligible if they have unexcused absences during ten consecutive school days. If a student has unexcused absences for ten consecutive days, Merit will make reasonable efforts to contact the parents/guardians of the student and make appropriate arrangements to help the student return and continue attending school. If Merit is unable to contact the parents/guardians, school policy will be followed and the student will be withdrawn from Merit Preparatory Academy.

Nontraditional programs

Distance Learning

Merit will measure online attendance on a weekly basis in compliance with Utah Administrative Code R277-419 in the following way:

	17

- Student to teacher weekly meaningful dialogue either online, by email, or by parent text or parent phone (unless a student is on an extended leave of absence from the school), and / or
- Student demonstration of progress on assignments, coursework, assessments or progress toward academic goals during the course of the week.

If a student does not meet either of these, they will be marked absent for the week. If they are marked absent for ten days, and have not met the above criteria in any classes, Merit will make reasonable efforts to contact the parents/guardians of the student and make appropriate arrangements to help the student return and continue their learning. If Merit is unable to contact the parents/guardians, school policy will be followed and the student will be withdrawn from Merit Preparatory Academy.

Blended Learning

Continuing enrollment status for students enrolled in both online and face-to-face courses at Merit Academy will be based on the program for which they earn the majority of their membership days.

Quarantine and Sick Students

Face to face students who are required to quarantine due to exposure to Covid-19 or who are diagnosed with Covid-19 will be temporarily switched to distance learning and continuing enrollment will be tracked accordingly. Merit Preparatory Academy will make reasonable accommodations for students who are recovering from Covid-19.

Approved by Board of Trustees- October 12, 2023
Revised and Board Approved: 10/12/23

Cell Phone and Electronic Devices

Use of student devices shall be limited to the period between classes, before classes begin in the morning, during the student's lunch period, and after the student's last class in the afternoon.

Access to these devices is a privilege and not a right. Each student will be required to follow the Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy and the Internet Access Conduct Agreement. Students may only access the internet through the filtered school connection, regardless of whether they are using their personal device or a District-issued device. School staff will not provide software or technical assistance for student-owned devices.

The use of cameras in any type of electronic device is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms, and classrooms unless *a certified MPA employee authorizes the student to do otherwise*. Where students are allowed to use electronic devices, they are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph or video of any individual. Students must also obtain permission from any individual appearing in a photograph or video prior to posting on any social networking site or other internet site.

	18

Students may only use or have their electronic communication devices out when directed by a teacher. Students found to be disrupting the educational process by using any electronic communications device in any way that includes but is not limited to sending or receiving personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on any student assessment, project, or assignment shall be subject to discipline and the device shall be confiscated and not returned until a parent conference has been held.

Students found to have their electronic communication device out or using their device without direct permission from the teacher will;

- **1st offense** — Have the phone confiscated and kept by the teacher until the end of the period.
- **2nd offense** — The student may pick it up at the end of their day from the Front Office.
- **3rd offense or more** — It must be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Blatant disregard for the above policy will result in disciplinary action by the administration.

The controls on electronic communication devices contained in this policy do not apply to special education or Section 504 students or students with an Individualized Education Plan when any of these or other such similar plans conflict with uses outlined herein.

The school administration reserves the right to suspend the use of all personal electronic devices at any time.

Computer & Technology Use

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:

We are pleased to offer students of MPA access to the district computer network for electronic mail and the Internet. To gain access to e-mail and the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission and must sign and return the appropriate form to the Front Office. Students 18 and over may sign their own forms.

Access to e-mail and the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries and databases while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. MPA will consistently maintain a filtering system to limit inappropriate access and use of the schools systems and computers.

We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately a partnership between parents/guardians of minors, students, and the school to responsibly set, convey, and maintain the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources is the goal. To that end, MPA supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to apply for access.

Closed Campus

Students can leave campus only:

	19

1. To purchase lunch during lunchtime (Only 10th thru 12th grades)
2. To attend a Release Time class
3. To attend classes at a community college or tech center
4. To go to work as part of a work release program
5. To return home or travel to a doctor's office after checking out with parent permission
6. To participate in a school-related, excused activity (e.g., athletic event, band performance, etc.).

Students who are off campus during school hours without school/parent permission are truant. Police officers who find these students off campus are required by law to return them to school. Students are expected to attend Quest Time and assemblies scheduled during school hours since they are part of the regular school program.

Concurrent Enrollment

MPA encourages students to take the opportunity to take advanced courses. One option for students is concurrent enrollment classes. Concurrent enrollment classes are offered through both Utah Valley University (UVU) and Snow College (SC). Students may only register for concurrent enrollment classes for which they meet the prerequisites. These prerequisites are set by both UVU and SC.

The grades earned in CE classes will be recorded on both a student's high school and college transcripts. Students taking concurrent enrollment courses must abide by all policies of UVU and SC, including enrollment and registration for courses. It is the student's responsibility to know these policies. Students should be especially aware of these grading policies and how grades earned in concurrent enrollment courses may affect a student's future ability to qualify for federal financial aid.

Credits

Merit Preparatory Academy Graduation Requirements

Language Arts - 4.0 - Three courses from the following Foundation Courses plus one CREDIT from the Applied and Advanced list	
Foundation Courses	Applied and Advanced Courses
English 9 or English 9 H English 10 or English 10 H English 11 or English 11 H English 12 or English 12 H AP Language and Composition**	Basic Reading Skills Creative Writing 1 & 2 Witches & Wizards Comic Book Writing Mythology Adolescent Adult Literature Debate and Speech World Languages 3, 4, or AP English 1010 (UVU CE)** English 2010 (UVU CE)**
Language Arts Notes: ** These courses can also be used for the one credit in Applied and Advanced.	
Mathematics - 3.0 - Secondary I, II, and III. Secondary III or Secondary IIIH can be replaced by an Applied or Advanced Course with written parent request. Math credits taken during grades 7 and 8 do not count towards High School graduation. We recommend 4 years of math in the Foundation Course sequences for college preparedness. Math Intervention: students who earn an F in a math class and/or receive a 1 or 2 on Rise or Aspire Plus testing and/or by teacher recommendation will be transferred into Math Intervention. This transfer will take place mid year or at the beginning of a new year. This course will take a student back to Pre-Algebra and fill in learning gaps so they can return to foundation courses.	

	20

Foundation Courses		Advanced Courses - require Secondary Math III as a prerequisite	
Secondary I	Secondary IH	AP Calculus AB	
Secondary II	Secondary IIH	College Prep	
Secondary III	Secondary IIH	Concurrent Enrollment* 1030 - Basic Quantitative Literacy, 1040 - Elementary Introduction to Statistical Reasoning, 1050 - College Algebra (like Secondary IIIH - or precalculus)	
College Prep	AP Calculus	Applied Courses: Computer Programming Introductory Statistics	
Science - 3.0 - A total of 2.0 credits from two of the five areas of science on the Foundation Courses (Biology is required) list plus 1.0 credit from the Foundation Courses list or Applied and Advanced Courses list			
Foundation Courses			
Earth Systems	Chemistry	Physics	
Earth systems	Chemistry AP Chemistry	Physics AP Physics	
Biological Science	Computer Science		
Biology	AP Computer Science+		
AP Biology	Computer Science Principles+		
Biology 1010 CE*	Computer Programming III+		
Applied or Advanced Courses			
Astronomy**		+CTE Courses	
Astronomy 1040 CE*		** Include Applied/Advanced CE Courses	
Geology 1700-Fundamentals of GPS/GIS Navigation CE*			
Engineering Principles + 1, 2			
Robotics + 1, 2			
Investigation Science			
Investigation Science Demo			
Marine Biology			
Wildlife Biology			
Zoology			
Social Studies - 3.0 from the following: 2.5 from the required course list (or their equivalent) and .5 elective from any course from the social studies area, which could include an additional half credit added to any of the required half-credit courses. Students must pass the Civics Exam to graduate from Merit.			
Foundation Courses			
World Civilization/Geography	US History 2 - 11th	U.S. Government and Citizenship - 12th	
Geography - 9th	US History 2	US Government and Citizenship	
World Civilization - 10th	HIST 2700	Political Science 1100 CE*	
	HIST 2710 CE*		

	21

Social Studies Elective Courses

Psychology
 Sociology
 Social Psychology
 Early World Wars
 Late World Wars and Terrorism
 Student Government
 Economics Elective CE*
 Geography 1300 Elective CE*
 History 1500 Elective CE*
 Political Science Elective CE*
 Sociology 1010 CE*

Fine Arts - 1.5 credits from the following:

Stagecraft Theater Performance Musical Performance Theater Foundations Dance Company Dance I, II, III Hip Hop Beginning Ballroom Dance I Ballroom Dance II Art 1010 CE* Theater 1010 CE* Theater 1013 CE* Theater 1023 CE* Music 1030 CE*	Beginning Orchestra Intermediate Orchestra Advanced Orchestra Ukulele I, II Guitar I, II, III Modern Piano Jazz Band Art Foundations I, II Drawing I, II Painting Ceramics I, II 3D Design Independent Art AP Art
--	--

Physical Education and Health Education - 2.0 credits from the following:

Participation Skills (.5 credit required) Health (.5 credit required)

Team Sports (.25 credit per season up to .5 maximum credit will fulfill participation skills or Individual Lifetime Activities)

Health 9th

Fitness for Life (.5 credit required)

Fitness for Life 10th

Individualized Lifetime Activities (.5 credit required)

Individual Lifetime Activities
 Team Sports (.25 credit per season up to .5 maximum credit will fulfill participation skills or Individual Lifetime Activities)
 Kickboxing
 Weights and Conditioning
 Ballroom Dance - per board approval
 Hip Hop Dance - per board approval
 Dance 1, 2, 3 - per board approval
 Dance Conditioning - per board approval

CTE (Career and Technical Education) - 1.0 credit from the following:																									
Woodshop Robotics I, II Keyboarding Programming I, II TV Broadcasting AP Computer Science Management 1250 CE*																									
Digital Studies - .5 credit from the following:																									
Exploring Computer Science Web Page Design																									
Financial Literacy - .5 credit from the following:																									
Financial Literacy Business 1210 CE*																									
General Electives - Need 8.5 credits																									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Ameritus Service Knights</td><td>Philosophy 205G CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>German I, II, III</td><td>Humanities 2010 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Spanish I, II, III</td><td>Humanities 1010 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mandarin Chinese I, II</td><td>Criminal Law 1330 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Student Government</td><td>Communications 1500 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Game Theory</td><td>Communications 2110 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Explore Lab</td><td>HFST 1500-Lifespan Development CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Entrepreneurship</td><td>Business 1600-Entrepreneurship Seminar CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Hip Hop</td><td>NURP 1000-Medical Terminology CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ballroom Dance</td><td>Aviation Science 1010 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>Social Media</td><td>Human Development 1500 CE*</td></tr> <tr> <td>T.V. Broadcasting</td><td>Psychology 1010 CE*</td></tr> </table>		Ameritus Service Knights	Philosophy 205G CE*	German I, II, III	Humanities 2010 CE*	Spanish I, II, III	Humanities 1010 CE*	Mandarin Chinese I, II	Criminal Law 1330 CE*	Student Government	Communications 1500 CE*	Game Theory	Communications 2110 CE*	Explore Lab	HFST 1500-Lifespan Development CE*	Entrepreneurship	Business 1600-Entrepreneurship Seminar CE*	Hip Hop	NURP 1000-Medical Terminology CE*	Ballroom Dance	Aviation Science 1010 CE*	Social Media	Human Development 1500 CE*	T.V. Broadcasting	Psychology 1010 CE*
Ameritus Service Knights	Philosophy 205G CE*																								
German I, II, III	Humanities 2010 CE*																								
Spanish I, II, III	Humanities 1010 CE*																								
Mandarin Chinese I, II	Criminal Law 1330 CE*																								
Student Government	Communications 1500 CE*																								
Game Theory	Communications 2110 CE*																								
Explore Lab	HFST 1500-Lifespan Development CE*																								
Entrepreneurship	Business 1600-Entrepreneurship Seminar CE*																								
Hip Hop	NURP 1000-Medical Terminology CE*																								
Ballroom Dance	Aviation Science 1010 CE*																								
Social Media	Human Development 1500 CE*																								
T.V. Broadcasting	Psychology 1010 CE*																								
Note: Any other credit bearing courses from any subject area not being used for a specific graduation requirement will count as electives.																									

Total Credits Required For Graduation: 27

College Bound Preparedness Recommendations:

Take 2 to 4 years consecutively of the same foreign language in grades 9-12.

Take 3 to 4 years of lab based science.

Take 4 years of progressive math.

Take 3.5 credits of social sciences.

Take AP courses and earn a B grade or higher.

Prepare for the ACT Test and strategize to get your best score.

Apply for scholarships.

Fill out your FAFSA form as soon as possible your senior year.

Online Classes:

	23

Students can take up to 6 credits each year online and still graduate through Merit.

F Grades:

When you earn an F grade in a class you may retake the class. Some F grades may be expunged and others will be averaged into the transcript.

Home School Transfer Credit:

Course work must show mastery of the curriculum and be evaluated by the curriculum committee to receive credit and grades; there may be additional examinations required beyond the coursework to show mastery. For a course to be evaluated by Merit it must be taught on campus by a faculty member currently employed at Merit or evaluated by a faculty member currently employed at Merit who has an endorsement in the course area. There will be a course evaluation fee. Final decision and grade award must be approved by administration.

Graduation Exceptions: Exceptions to the listed requirements must be approved by the counselors and administration or follows: Students must submit a petition, in writing, to the graduation committee for consideration. The petition must be submitted before May 1st of graduation year. Decisions of the graduation committee are final and will be returned to the applicant in written form. Approved exceptions to the prescribed graduation requirements will be the exception and not the rule.

At the discretion of the Board of Trustees and with the recommendation of school administration and school counselors, required graduation credits may be temporarily reduced to 24 credit hours during times of schoolwide extraordinary circumstances. This requirement is in compliance with the Utah State Board of Education.

Online Courses

For any online course completed through a provider (online school) other than those listed below, the parent/guardian will be required to provide the counseling office with the following:

- Name of provider
- Course name(s)
- Teacher credentials and CACTUS number (if the teacher has a CACTUS number)
- Completed coursework
- Transcript of final grade

Online Course Providers exempt from above requirements:

Academic Year:

- Canyons Virtual High School (CVHS)
- Leadership Academy of Utah
- Mountain Heights Academy
- Utah Connections Academy
- Utah Online School (UOS)
- Utah Virtual Academy (UTVA)
- Weber Online

Driver Education:

- Canyons Virtual High School (CVHS)
- Utah Online School (UOS)
- Weber Online

Summer:

- Canyons Virtual High School (CVHS)
- Mountain Heights Academy
- Utah Online School (UOS)

	24

- Weber Online

Online providers students have access to:

[Arizona State University \(ASU\) Prep Digital Powered by Juab School District](#)

ASU Prep Digital is Arizona State University's online high school that serves students around the world and now in the state of Utah through the Statewide Online Education Program. ASU equips students with the tools they need to succeed in college, careers, and beyond. This is an accredited program with courses that are approved by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

[Canyons Online](#)

Canyons Online, formerly Canyons Virtual High School, is an online learning program that serves thousands of students from across the state of Utah. Canyons Online 9–12 is a year-round, online program dedicated to serving students within the Canyons School District as well as other districts throughout the state of Utah. Students may earn credit which can be used toward graduation requirements at their school of record. We offer a wide variety of engaging and highly-interactive courses. All teachers are certified and highly-qualified in their subject area, and provide timely and personalized feedback as students work at their own pace. In addition, licensed school counselors and other support staff are readily available to help current and prospective students.

[Mountain Heights Academy](#)

Traditional brick and mortar schools just don't work for every student. Mountain Heights Academy understands that and was founded to provide a better solution. Our tuition-free, online courses for grades 7–12 allow students to customize their education, get the attention and flexibility they need, and find success.

[Success Academy Online](#)

At Success Academy we provide motivated, focused, and diligent students the opportunity to engage in Early College experiences. Upon successful completion of our course sequence students have the opportunity to earn credit toward an Associate's degree with an emphasis in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) and their high school diploma. We have many students who complete both their Associate degree and high school diploma!

- [SOEP Success Online Student Information](#)
Google Docs

[Utah Online School \(UOS\)](#)

UOS K–12 is part of the Washington County School District. We are a free public school. We are open to all students in grades K–12 living anywhere in the state of Utah. UOS currently has over 50 staff and faculty members serving more than 3,000 students. We are committed to providing quality educational services that encourage the personal progress of our students. We believe that by transforming traditional educational methods that we Champion Individual Growth.

[Utah Schools for the Deaf \(USD\) Online](#)

USD Online is a division of Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB). USD Online provides specially designed classes to meet the unique language needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. Any student with a documented hearing loss, regardless of their home district, has access to USD Online courses, and supports.

[Utah Virtual Academy \(UTVA\)](#)

You know that your kids have something special inside them. We know it, too. UTVA and Stride K12 ignite the minds of children like yours to bring learning and innate possibility alive. Together, we are helping Utah students in grades K–12 reach their true, personal potential.

	25

Disrespectful Behavior and Insubordination

Merit’s Discipline Policy focuses on the individual student and seeks to help the student become a better person. We emphasize restitution if possible, doing meaningful activities and lessons. When appropriate, students will be placed on remedial discipline plans. School personnel may use reasonable physical restraint, if necessary, to protect a person or property from physical injury or to remove a violent or excessively disruptive student.

We follow the Utah Model Policy on [Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Harassment](#).

We support teachers in the classroom when their students are disrupting the education of themselves or other students. We also focus on great teaching so student engagement is high and the need to discipline is low. We help students become better learners in the classroom.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION:

Students are guaranteed freedom of expression as long as they do not disrupt the educational process, are compliant with rules and expectations (dress code/offensive language) of MPA, or do not interfere with the property or the constitutional rights of others. Freedom of expression at MPA should be for the enhancement of learning and not actions that are harmful or inciting, profane or offensive, prejudice or lack of tolerance. Students should be respectful during all interactions with staff members. The refusal to follow a reasonable directive by a teacher, administrator, and/or other school personnel is considered insubordination and is prohibited. Such behavior is subject to disciplinary action and may be grounds for suspension.

Respect for Staff

In order to maintain a safe, orderly school environment, the authority of school staff members acting in their official capacity must be respected. For this reason, any form of verbal or physical abuse towards staff will be treated as a serious offense warranting suspension or expulsion. If concern about a staff member’s exercise of authority cannot be satisfied in direct, appropriate discussion with the individual, that concern should be brought to the attention of the administration.

Staff Authority

Teachers and staff have the responsibility and authority to correct the behavior of any student, especially if it is unsafe or of such nature as to bring discredit to the individual, the school, or the student body. Disrespect directed at staff will not be tolerated. Our substitutes play a vital role in our school and we appreciate their willingness to be here. Any student that is sent to the office by a substitute may spend the rest of the day plus the next day in ISS.

MPA’s response to student conduct varies depending on the nature and severity of the infraction, as behavior falls into the categories of Minor Infractions, Major Infractions, and Prohibited Infractions including Safe School Violations. Multiple supports and interventions will be employed by MPA administration to encourage self correction and skill development with the goal to make each student a responsible citizen of the MPA community.

Definitions of Minor/Major/Safe School Violations

Minor Infractions:

	26

Defined as infractions of rules that are usually handled by teachers in the classroom and include the following:

1. Willful disobedience
2. Public displays of affection
3. Inappropriate language and actions
4. Disruptive behavior including talk outs, chronic talking, and out of seat
5. Horseplay, running in the halls
6. Excessive time in the building away from class
7. Refusal to participate in classroom instructional activities

Major Infractions:

Defined as severe infractions of school rules or multiple minor infractions that result in immediate office discipline referrals to school administration. Major infractions include:

1. Refusal to comply with requirements of individually developed Behavior Plans after reasonable efforts to modify as appropriate
2. Chronic or excessive abusive language, truancy, and tardies
3. Plagiarism
4. Bullying and harassment (including, but not limited to, behavior intended to cause harm or distress in a relationship with an imbalance of power, especially if repeated over time)
5. Cyber-bullying
6. Physical aggression including fighting and throwing objects at a person
7. Acceptable Use of Electronics Networks Policy violation

Safe Schools Violation/Prohibited Infractions:

Defined as any serious violation that threatens or harms the school, school property, a person connected with school, or property associated with a person connected with school; a student WILL meet with the Board of Trustees and may be suspended from 45 school days up to 1 year for a safe school violation involving the following:

1. Assault, threats to kill/harm;
2. Possession, control, actual or threatened use of a real weapon, explosive, noxious, or flammable material;
3. Actual or threatened use of a look-alike weapon with intent to intimidate or cause disruption;
4. The sale, control, or distribution of a drug, controlled substance, and imitation controlled substance, tobacco, alcohol or drug paraphernalia, and sharing prescriptions.
5. Possessing, using, controlling, or being under the influence of alcohol, a drug, an imitation drug, drug paraphernalia, or misusing any substance;
6. Possessing, using, or distributing tobacco or tobacco substitutes such as an E-cigarette containing or not containing nicotine;
7. Using or threatening to use serious force;
8. Hazing, demeaning, or assaulting someone, or forcing someone to ingest a substance;
9. Sexual harassment;
10. Inappropriate exposure of body parts;
11. The commission of an act involving the use of force or the threatened use of force which if committed by an adult would be a felony or Class A misdemeanor;
12. Any criminal action occurring at school such as vandalism, fire setting, possession or use of combustibles, forgery, and theft;

	27

13. Gang related attire or activity.

Corrective Steps for Misconduct:

MPA commits to providing a supportive learning environment, including helping students and their families recognize when they are functioning below expectations socially and/or academically, to enable self-correction and enhance individual student responsibility. MPA will utilize a progressive discipline plan and will focus on positive reinforcement that fosters an environment of mutual respect and a culture of learning in the classroom. All efforts will be made to include restorative practices.

MPA believes that the initial interactions pertaining to discipline occur within the classroom. Good classroom management and structure have shown to minimize disruption in that setting. Teachers will be the first line of defense in using rapport and taking care of minor offenses. For repeat offenses, or major infractions, the teacher will send the student to the office and submit a discipline referral to the office.

Progressive Discipline:

1. 1st offense = Conference with Admin, Verbal Warning
2. 2nd = Conference, Lunch detention (LD)
3. 3rd = Conference, Parent contact, LD's, ISS, OSS or reverse suspension
4. Subsequent offenses will result in a conference with Admin and a parental contact with the possibility of ISS, OSS or reverse suspension
5. If student behavior has not improved after discipline interventions have been implemented, the student will be recommended for expulsion by the Board

*The Administration reserves the right to adjust or alter any discipline at any time

Dress Code

The Board of Trustees recognizes that student dress and grooming directly impacts the education of students. Experience and research have demonstrated that the learning atmosphere is improved when students dress and groom appropriately. Appropriate student dress and grooming promotes an effective learning environment free of unnecessary disruption and distraction. In addition, appropriate student dress and grooming helps increase school and student safety and security. Certain fads and extremes of dress and grooming tend to attract undue attention to an individual, and accordingly, interfere with or disrupt the educational process.

The Board of Trustees emphasizes the importance of cooperation among school officials, parents/guardians, and students to ensure appropriate dress and grooming (hygiene and cleanliness of self and clothing), and further recognizes that parents/guardians are primarily responsible for their students' dress and grooming. The Board of Trustees delegates to the school administration the responsibility to see that each student adheres to the dress and grooming standards set forth in this policy. A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individual students and others and results in a higher standard of behavior. It also prepares students for the dress

	28

code requirements of the workforce. Our dress code requirements indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days.

All students are expected to be in dress code at all times while on campus during school hours, during school events, and while doing fieldwork and other off-campus activities. MPA dress code is intended to be strict enough to support the educational goals, vision, and standards upheld by the school, yet not so restrictive that families will find it difficult to abide by.

Dress Code adherence will be checked daily by staff, faculty, and administrators. Students are expected to remain in Dress Code clothing at all times while on campus, including before school and after school unless other permission is obtained from an administrator.

Dress code policy can be found on our website under policies

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, & Vaping

The possession, sale, or use of alcohol, drugs, imitation drugs, tobacco, and vaping devices will result in immediate disciplinary action. This includes possessing any paraphernalia or being under the influence of any illegal substance on school property and at school activities. Any individual selling an illegal substance in or around the school will face an enhanced criminal code violation and will be prosecuted, which includes referral to law enforcement.

Alcohol or drug violations on or within 300 feet of school property, at school events, or at any time the student is subject to the school’s "good neighbor" initiative will result in disciplinary action by school officials, notification of parents, and possible involvement of police. This includes suspension and possible expulsion. Students will be subject to a suspension or possible expulsion for violation of this policy.

Fighting, Threatening, Assault, Intimidation

Fighting, threatening, intimidation, assault, verbal and physical bullying, and types of battery at school or at school-related activities are prohibited and will require disciplinary action. Injuries, damages, and medical costs associated with fighting are the responsibility of the involved students. Police may be involved based on the severity of the situation.

Fighting, defined as physical contact with another person intended to cause harm, is never appropriate on a school campus. This is distinguished from the type of play—especially that of younger students—in which participants may exceed the bounds of good judgment without intending to injure one another.

Intimidation, defined as the intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm to person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

Bullying (R277-613-1B) defined under the Harassment Section of the Student Handbook.

False Emergency or Hoax

Pulled fire alarms, threatened violence*, disruption, bomb threats, telephone 911 calls, hoaxes, jokes, pranks, etc., are considered false emergencies and are prohibited.

*Threatened violence: Students engaging in behavior or actions that threaten the safety or security of the campus will be disciplined accordingly. This includes any verbal statements, social media posts, written statements, or gestures that may be construed as threatening to the safety of the school. Students engaged in disruptive behavior that presents an imminent danger of bodily harm to themselves or others may be restrained or secluded to mitigate the danger to the safety and wellbeing of the educational environment. In the event that seclusion or restraint is used, parents will be notified within 24 hours.

Our priority is to ensure the safety of all students and staff at Merit Preparatory Academy, so all threats will be taken seriously. Any threat to harm the school, others, or self, regardless of the nature, will be treated as real until proven otherwise, after being investigated thoroughly by administration, and may result in disciplinary action involving suspension, expulsion, and/or law enforcement.

We rely on open communication with students and staff to help keep MPA safe. Students are encouraged to report any threat or perceived threat to a staff member, directly to law enforcement, or through the SafeUT app.

Fees & Fines

Like traditional public schools, charter schools may require parents and students to bear many of the expenses that are considered beyond the ordinary costs of education. Fees may be charged for conveniences such as clubs, travel, extracurricular activities, field trips, or materials and supplies needed for specific courses.

Students who have not paid a class fee within three weeks of school may be placed in a class which does not require a fee, or work something out with the Finance Office.

A Fee Waiver Application may be submitted for those students:

- Who are eligible for free school lunch
- Who are in state custody or foster care
- Whose families are receiving public assistance through FEP
- Who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Whose families are financially unable to pay because of exceptional financial burdens beyond the family’s control; these determinations are made on a case-by-case basis by school administrators.

If a fee waiver application is presented, the school will request verification of fee waiver eligibility. Fee waiver applications may be obtained from the Front Office or the website: www.meritprepacademy.org.

	30

Fines are not fees, and cannot be waived. Fines may be charged for damaged school property, library fines, and other such items. Refundable deposits may be charged to ensure the return or replacement of loaned tangible items. Charges for class rings, yearbooks, school pictures, monogrammed clothing, and similar items are not fees. They are optional purchases, and are not eligible for fee waivers. Charges for Concurrent Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses, and fees related specifically to college or post-secondary grades or credit are not subject to fee waivers.

The fee schedule and fee waiver information will be made available to students and parents on the designated school registration days and on the days in August leading up to the first week of school. Fee waiver applications are due on or before October 15 of each school year. All cases made after that date will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Merit Preparatory Academy Administration.

Graduation

Students who have completed the minimum requirements for graduation may participate in the school’s graduation ceremony held at the end of the year. Participation in graduation ceremonies is a privilege. Students not in good standing with the school may not participate in graduation ceremonies. Students with outstanding fees or fines may not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Students and parents considering early graduation must first meet with a school counselor at the start of their graduating year and there obtain an application for early graduation, discuss the application process, and review the student’s educational plan.

Students wanting to participate in graduation ceremonies will be required to procure the appropriate regalia through the school’s contracted provider. Students are responsible for covering the cost of obtaining graduation regalia. Graduating students are also expected to abide by expectations of the graduation committee, including the prescribed dress code and attending mandatory rehearsals.

Students not participating in the graduation ceremonies, but who are eligible for a diploma, may pick up their diploma at the school after graduation and during business hours.

Harassment & Bullying

To assist in achieving a safe, positive school environment, bullying or harassment, as defined by this policy, will not be tolerated. Students who harass or bully others, whether by word, gesture, or action will be disciplined accordingly, which may include suspension and expulsion.

Harassment & Bullying Policy

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual’s education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This may include but is not limited to:

- verbal, written/graphic harassment, or abuse

- subtle pressure for sexual activity
- intentional brushing against the individual's body
- any unwelcome touching of a sexual nature

Sexual harassment or sexual abuse will result in disciplinary action and the possible referral to law enforcement.

Hate language directed at any group or individual whether for ethnic stereotypes, religious affiliations, or sexual preferences will be considered harassment. Students who feel they are being harassed by another student or adult should immediately report this action to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Hazing or Initiation

Hazing activities of any type are prohibited. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another to engage in any act of initiation that creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. Knowledge of hazing or planned hazing is to be reported immediately to school personnel.

Board Policy- Bullying and Hazing

Homework Policy

Homework is essential to success at Merit Preparatory Academy. Doing homework will help students develop many valuable skills such as good study habits, time management, responsibility, and perseverance. Teachers may assign homework that will foster individual learning and growth that is appropriate for the subject area. Homework is part of all student evaluations. It is the student's responsibility to complete and turn in homework on time. If the student or parent has questions about homework, immediately contact the teacher who assigned it.

Honor Roll

The honor roll and high honor roll recognition is awarded to those students who achieve a high measure of success in their course of study at MPA. Any student is eligible for the honor roll, providing he/she has obtained a 3.5 average or better GPA. Any student is eligible for the high honor roll, providing he/she has obtained a 3.8 average or better GPA. This recognition is based on quarter grades.

Illness During the School Day

A student who becomes ill during the school day should report to the Front Office. Sick students waiting for their parents will be supervised in the Front Office. To avoid being marked truant, students must adhere to the student check-out procedure.

In case of serious injury or life-threatening emergency, the school will call emergency services. The student's parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible.

	32

Lockers

Lockers are provided for storage of coats and books. The locker is only as safe as the student assigned that locker makes it. Use of a locker by more than one student is not advised. To permit other students access to that locker compromises the security of that locker.

Students are strongly advised not to place money or other valuables in their locker. The school does not accept responsibility for stolen or lost money, clothing, valuables, or other articles.

The lockers are the property of Merit Preparatory Academy. School authorities have the right and the obligation to check the lockers for the safety, welfare, and protection of students on school property at any time. Every student is responsible for the locker he/she is assigned as well as the content of the locker at all times. Merit Preparatory Academy is not responsible for any belongings left around, under, or on top of the lockers. Those areas will be cleaned out regularly.

Lost and Found

Students and staff are encouraged to leave valuables at home. Merit Preparatory Academy cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal items. Any valuables that are found should be turned in to the Front Office. Other items may be found in the lost and found bins. Unclaimed items will be cleaned out periodically.

Medication at School

In order to administer medication, the school needs permission from the student's parent or guardian. If your student needs medication periodically or consistently, please fill out the medication form found at the secretary's desk, and provide medication marked with the student's name and dosage instructions to be kept at the school.

Non-Discrimination

Merit Preparatory Academy is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. The board values diversity among its students and employees. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified person shall be excluded from participation in any activity, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to unlawful discrimination in any school program based on race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act), age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975), gender, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or Veteran status. These protections apply to students, employees, and other members of the public in the school's programs, services, policies, complaint processes, and program accessibility.

Civil rights compliance inquiries related to Merit Preparatory Academy may be directed to Administration, 1440 W Center Street, Springville, UT, 84663, 801-491-7600.

Parking & Driving, Student Drop Off, Transportation

All student and staff vehicles parking on campus will need to register at the front office and receive a parking permit. These permits will need to be hung on the rearview mirror of your vehicle. Cars must be parked in the

	33

stalls designated for student parking. If a student car becomes a distraction at school, or if the student violates any of the driving policies, parking privileges may be revoked immediately.

Bicycles and scooters need to be located in the designated spots and preferably locked up. They are not to come into the building.

Safety is of great concern to the administration at Merit Preparatory Academy. Please drive slowly (no more than 10 miles per hour), and carefully through the parking lot. At the start and end of school, please do not stop at the front of the school, as this significantly delays the flow of traffic. Follow the cones and signs to the end of the line (see School Parking Lot Traffic Flow below) and pull to the inside lane to drop off and pick up students, leaving the outside lane to drive through.

BUS CONDUCT:

It is important that proper discipline is maintained on buses for safety. All school rules and regulations apply to bus conduct. Misconduct may result in suspension of bus riding privileges. All school rules apply on the bus and at the bus stop. Any questions related to bus misconduct should be directed to the specific route bus driver and the Director of Operations. *MPA does not guarantee this service*

*Please review and be familiar with the following Expectations and Guidelines:

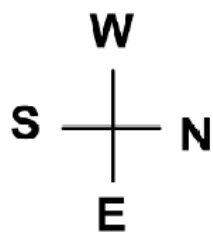
- Students are under the authority of the bus driver and must follow his/her rules.
- Students shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Students will not extend their arms, hands, head, feet, etc., through the bus windows.
- Students will converse in normal tones; loud or vulgar language is prohibited.
- Students will not open or close windows without permission of the bus driver.
- Students will help keep the bus clean.
- Each student must go directly to a seat upon entering the bus (drivers may assign seats).
- Students must not throw objects in the bus or out through the windows.
- The driver is to dismiss the students only at the school buildings or at their homes (exception: permission of parent or guardian).
- Food or drink should not be carried onto buses unless drivers/sponsors have given permission.
- Student insubordination to school bus drivers will not be tolerated and will result in loss of bus privileges for a period of time.

Bus route — The bus stop locations are based on demand and therefore may vary from year to year. Please visit our website www.meritprepacademy.org for the most current bus route info.

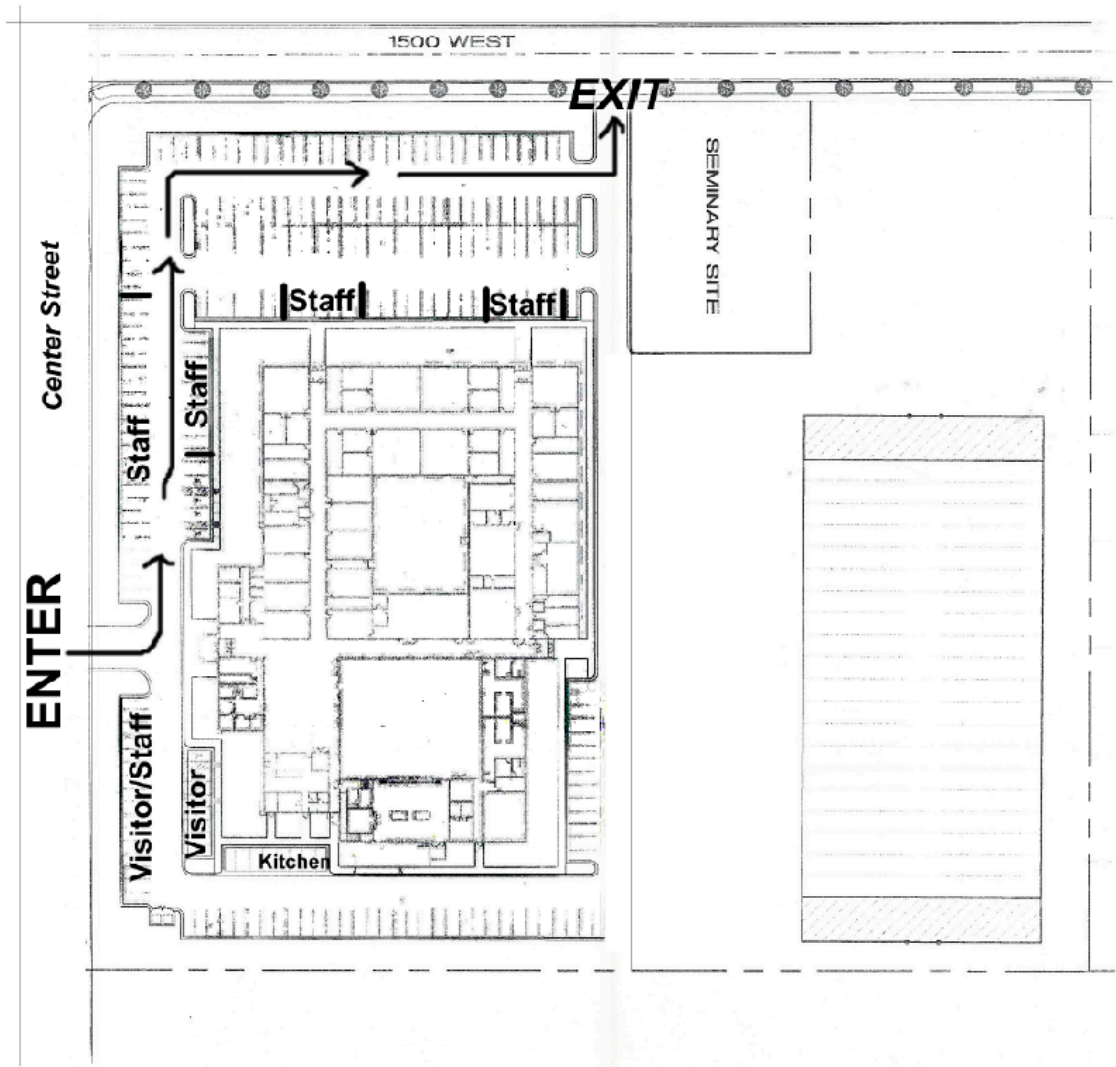
Fees — The monthly cost of the bus is as follows:
\$60 per student per semester and \$10 for each successive household rider.

	34

School Parking Lot Traffic Flow



When dropping off students please enter on Center Street, go toward the WEST parking lot and exit.



Public Display of Affection (PDA)

Intimate physical contact and public display of affection are not acceptable on school grounds, on school buses, or at school activities. Displays of affection for students on campus or at school activities will be limited to holding hands and a casual hug. Contact beyond this is considered excessive, and students will be required to stop. Further displays of affection may result in discipline. Kissing is not appropriate. PDA will result in earning progressive discipline as outlined in the Behavior Management Plan and parent/student conference.

Request for Homework

Students should first check their classes' Canvas pages for homework assignments. If more information is needed, the student should email teachers directly. The Front Office will handle homework requests for extenuating circumstances only.

Schedule Change Policy

Student schedules are a high priority for school counselors. The aim is to ensure each student is enrolled in the appropriate classes. If the school has made an error, your schedule will be fixed as soon as possible. If a student has made an error and requires a class for graduation or to meet college entrance requirements, we will do what we can to change your schedule as soon as possible.

Please see one of our counselors for further clarification on schedule changes.

School Dances & Functions

We expect students to apply principles of leadership and the School Values in the planning, organizing, and attending of school dances. Students are expected to attend school dances modestly dressed and in the prescribed dance attire for each specific dance (i.e., formal dress, semi-casual, etc.), according to the dress code policy. Students not dressed appropriately will be asked to leave the dance. Students will also be invited to leave dances for inappropriate, disrespectful, or insubordinate behavior.

Some dances are planned for Merit Preparatory Academy students only and their invited guest. Some are open to the public. For dances that allow the invitation of a guest (e.g., Prom), guests are required to read and sign a form which is considered a contract committing them to follow school rules and expectations. The form must be submitted to the Front Office prior to the dance. It is the responsibility of the enrolled student to ensure that the guest understands and accepts the School Values. If the standards are not kept at any point throughout the school dance, the guest and enrolled student may be required to leave the activity immediately. The form can be obtained online through the school's website: www.meritprepacademy.org, or from the Front Office.

Students should remember that they represent MPA when they attend events held off campus. Students are encouraged to enjoy sporting events but need to do so with good sportsmanship. The school's non-discrimination policies apply to students participating in all school functions. Negative chants and/or cheers may lead to disciplinary action and possible dismissal from future events.

	36

Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline at MPA, and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, their property, student use areas, student lockers, or student automobiles, and may seize any illegal, unsafe, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search based on reasonable suspicion.

The school’s administration shall attempt to obtain the freely-offered consent of the student to the inspection; however, provided there is reasonable suspicion, the administration may conduct the search without such consent.

Electronic devices may be confiscated and searched as part of the search and seizure process. Anything found in the course of a search which is evidence of a student violation of school rules or federal/state laws may be seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or expulsion proceedings. Items found in violation of school rules will not be returned to the student. Any illegal items found may also be turned over to law enforcement.

School officials have no obligation to contact parents before detaining and questioning students. Parents will be notified when a student has been questioned or searched as soon as reasonably possible. A student’s failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

Student Deliveries

Items will not be delivered to students during class. Students will not be able to leave class to accept deliveries. Parents who need to deliver necessary items (e.g., calculator, homework, lunch, etc.) can drop them off at the Front Office. An office aide may deliver the item to the student or the student may be called down to the office to retrieve the delivery. ***The Front Office will not accept deliveries of flowers, balloons, food items, etc., on behalf of students.***

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are considered staff members and should be treated as MPA faculty. Please refer above to the section on disrespectful behavior.

Surveillance

Merit Preparatory Academy uses video surveillance equipment in the building and the parking lots as one of many measures to promote the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors. The school makes every effort to balance the rights of personal privacy with the duty to provide a safe learning environment and to protect school facilities and property. Only school and law enforcement personnel are allowed to view video surveillance. The school complies with all applicable state and federal laws related to video recordings when such recordings are reviewed, used in investigations, or retained as part of a student’s record.

Video recording equipment is installed in visible, conspicuous areas throughout the building. The equipment will not monitor areas where the students, employees, and public have a reasonable expectation of privacy,

such as locker rooms or restrooms. The equipment is in operation 24 hours per day. Video recordings shall only be reviewed when there is a need to do so, either because an incident has been reported or is suspected to have occurred.

Staff and students are prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with, or otherwise interfering with video recordings and/or video camera equipment and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Suspension

Suspension is an action meant to correct unwanted behaviors and/or protect the students of MPA. Prior to expelling or suspending a student for repeated acts of willful disobedience, defiance of authority, or disruptive behavior which are not of such a violent or extreme nature that immediate removal is required, good faith efforts shall be made to implement a remediation discipline plan that would allow the student to remain in school.

In-School Suspension(s) (ISS) shall only be assigned by the school administration or its designee, and reserves the right for alterations or additions to the listed consequences dependent upon the specifics of a given situation. ISS is a disciplinary removal from class(s) with an offer of educational services. The decision to suspend the student or to discipline him/her in some other way is made at the discretion of the site administrator based on evidence uncovered in an investigation.

Out-of-School Suspension(s) (OSS) shall only be assigned by the school administration or its designee, and reserves the right for alterations or additions to the listed consequences dependent upon the specifics of a given situation. OSS is a disciplinary removal from school. The decision to suspend the student or to discipline him/her in some other way is made at the discretion of the site administrator based on evidence uncovered in an investigation.

Expulsion:

Expulsion is a disciplinary removal from the school permanently by the school board. Offenses justifying an expulsion are first reviewed and investigated by the school administrator within the first 10 days of the incident occurring. Following the investigation, the school administrator will come to a recommendation based on the evidence and guidelines outlined below. The administration will then submit a report to the Board of Trustees for a decision. An appeal to the decision can be made to the Board by the offending student but must be made within the first 10 days following the decision of expulsion by the board.

The type and length of discipline is based on factors such as previous violations, severity of conduct, and other relevant educational concerns. These will be taken into consideration when determining whether a suspension or an expulsion is appropriate:

A student who is suspended from school will be marked as such on Aspire. Students are expected to turn in missed assignments upon their return to class. Unless otherwise directed by administration, students on suspension are not allowed on MPA property or at MPA activities during the period of their suspension. MPA will cooperate with the Juvenile Court in providing other information as needed, including but not limited to attendance, grades, and behavioral reports.

Testing

MPA provides students with the opportunity to meet state-mandated testing requirements, measure academic progress, take preparatory and practice tests, and complete college admission exams. All students are encouraged to approach these assessments with fidelity to ensure accurate performance reporting.

Theft

The theft of any school or personal property is prohibited. All thefts will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken. Administration may refer individual cases to law enforcement.

Vandalism

The destruction or defacement of school or personal property at school is considered vandalism and will be investigated with appropriate action taken. Administration may refer individual cases to law enforcement. It is the responsibility of the offending student to pay for damages.

Visitors

During all school hours (including during lunch and assemblies), all visitors must report to the Front Office upon arrival to obtain permission to visit the school or students. Visitors will receive a badge to wear during their visit. These badges must be displayed for easy identification by students and staff members. Visitors must visit the office to check out as they leave the building. Any visitor, including a student of another school, who does not report to the office may be referred to the police for trespassing charges.

Vulgar or Profane Language, Pictures, and Gestures

Students are asked to respect the educational environment and those around them. Any vulgar or profane language, pictures, and gestures, or associated actions are inappropriate for any school environment and are prohibited. Students should consider those around them that may be offended by vulgar or profane language and actions. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to take appropriate disciplinary action for each occurrence. Repeated violations of this policy may lead to suspension or expulsion.

Weapons

MPA prohibits any student or visitor from possessing, storing, or using weapons, knives, firearms, explosive devices, and/or other dangerous instruments on school premises, including any school building, grounds, recreation area, athletic field, vehicle, or any other property that MPA owns, uses, or operates.

Weapons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any device that (a) is designed as a weapon and capable of causing bodily harm, or (b) in the manner it is used or intended to be used, is calculated or likely to produce bodily harm. Such devices include, but are not limited to, martial arts instruments, instruments similar to martial arts instruments, knuckles, instruments similar to knuckles, razors, switchblades, knives, chains, clubs, and pepper spray;
- Any BB, paintball, pellet-firing, dart, or any other air gun that expels a projectile through the force of air pressure or expanding gasses;

- Any electric weapon (i.e., any device that is designed, redesigned, used or intended to be used, offensively or defensively, to immobilize or incapacitate persons by the use of electric current);
- Look-alike weapons, including, but not limited to, toy guns, water guns, replica non-guns, and air-soft guns firing nonmetallic projectiles.

Firearms loaded or unloaded, including, but not limited to:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant.

Explosive Devices include, but are not limited to:

- Any destructive device, including, but not limited to, explosive, incendiary, or poison-gas devices (i.e., bombs, grenades, or similar devices)
- Fireworks of any kind

Students or staff members should report any violation to administration immediately. Students may also report any violation of this policy through the SafeUT app.

Any student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action, including long-term suspension and possible expulsion. Administrators will determine the appropriate disciplinary action to take against a student who violates this policy by possessing, storing, or using a weapon, knife, explosive device, and/or other dangerous instrument.

****In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, Administration will consider various factors, including, but not limited to, the age and developmental stage of the student, the nature of the violation, the type of weapon possessed, the student's disciplinary history, and whether the student used the weapon, knife, explosive device, and/or other dangerous instrument to harm or threaten harm toward another person.**

If a student possesses a firearm on school premises and/or at activities sponsored by Merit Preparatory Academy, the administration will suspend the student for up to nine (9) days and consider long-term suspension or expulsion. MPA will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding the discipline of students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

	40

MPA Student Code of Conduct

On school property:

- Uphold the official school policies. These are listed on the school website and include the dress code, the alcohol and drug policy, etc.
- Abstain from violence and aggression. Do not cause physical or emotional harm to others through willful or careless actions or words. Stand up for others who are in danger or feeling threatened.
- Respect school property. Do not damage, alter, defoul, decorate without permission, or leave litter on school buildings or grounds, including any building surfaces, fixtures, appliances, decor, or posters. Take the responsibility to clean up messes you make, and report to staff anything you can't fix yourself.
- Respect personal property. Do not damage, move, take, or mess with another person's personal or creative property, including schoolwork.
- Speak considerately. Refrain from using foul, crude, offensive, or derogatory language.
- Wait your turn. Do not push, shove, roughly bump into, or cut in front of others.
- Be where you're supposed to be. Remain on school property during school hours, except for your scheduled lunch (10th - 12th grades only), or when checked out through the Front Office. If you are tardy, check in at the office for a pass. If you are scheduled to be in a class, don't be anywhere else without an official pass or note. Limit hall pass use to 5 minutes, one student at a time, no more than once per class period.

Inside the school:

- Leave nature outdoors. Do not bring in natural materials from outside, and make every reasonable effort to remove them from your shoes and clothing before entering. This includes snow, ice, dirt, rocks, plant material, insects, etc.
- Put sporting equipment away. If it won't fit in your backpack or locker, check it in at the office.
- We all walk. Don't run, skip, or roll.
- Refrain from throwing things.
- Respect learning time. Do not disturb classes that are in session.

Inside the classroom:

- Enter the room calmly. Don't slam doors open or shut. Use an indoor voice. If class is already in session, be especially quiet and move directly to your seat.
- Keep electronic devices silent and put away. Except with specific permission.
- Be considerate of others and their learning. Refrain from distracting others during work or lessons by your speech, behavior, movements, or objects.
- Comply with your teacher's expectations. Be respectful at all times.
- Clean up after yourself. Do your part to keep classroom materials and work areas clean and organized. Straighten your desk and push in your chair before leaving.
- Do your own thinking. Don't copy, steal, or turn in other people's work as your own, whether from a classmate or a published source.
- Turn in work/homework on time. Be prepared!

	41

Student Conduct Contract



MPA Student Conduct Contract

Because all students and parents/guardians have elected to attend Merit Preparatory Academy, we anticipate that all students will not only accept their rights as members of our school community, but also their responsibilities to other members of that community. We ask that parents and students carefully read over and sign the student contract on this page. As the school year unfolds, students must do their best to behave in ways that will enhance their own and others' ability to learn.

Student Contract

As a student of Merit Preparatory Academy, I will do my best to do the following:

- I will show consideration for the rights and feelings of others, being careful not to hurt them physically or make them feel bad.
- I will speak to others respectfully, not using profanity or uncomplimentary names.
- I will show respect for all people working or helping in the school.
- I will show careful regard for both my property and the property of others.
- I will always ask permission before I borrow other people's things, and I will return them promptly and in good condition when I am finished.
- I will attend school regularly.
- I will be in class on time with all necessary materials.
- I will make good use of class time and complete and turn in assignments on time.
- I understand that I must make up assignments I missed because of an absence.
- I will remain on campus during school time. I will not leave school grounds, during school hours, without permission.
- I will do my best in my schoolwork, and I will let others do their best.
- I will ask for help if I do not understand.
- I will not bring any contraband items to school.
- I will keep the school building and grounds clean and tidy.
- I will walk in the halls.
- I will follow the dress code policy and arrive at school in dress code.
- I will not participate in any behavior banned by the school.

Student name

Signature

Date

Parent/guardian name

Signature

Date

	42

Student and Parent Acknowledgment

Merit Preparatory Academy Student Handbook Awareness Statement 2023–2024

Enrollment at MPA requires that each student become familiar with ALL information contained in the Student Handbook. The school has provided each student and his/her parent(s) a link to the Student Handbook, which can be found on the schools webpage. Additional Board policies may be found on the website as well.

The instructional staff, under the direction of administration, has discussed school policy and procedures with the students. Specific information reviewed with the total student population includes:

- Attendance Expectations student initials: _____ date: _____
- Activities Eligibility student initials: _____ date: _____
- Student Dress Code student initials: _____ date: _____
- Weapons Policy student initials: _____ date: _____
- Cell Phone (electronic devices)
 - Any use of an electronic device that disrupts the educational process, invades personal privacy, or compromises the integrity of the educational environment is strictly prohibited.
Inappropriate cell phone use will result in the cell phone being confiscated by the teacher and turned in to the office. *Confiscated electronic equipment will only be returned to the parent/guardian.* student initials: _____ date: _____
- Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping student initials: _____ date: _____

My signature acknowledges that I have reviewed the Student Handbook, and that I am aware it is my individual responsibility, as a student at Merit Preparatory Academy, to abide by its contents.

PLEASE PRINT STUDENT NAME: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

My signature acknowledges that I have received the link to the Student Handbook, and that I am aware it is my individual responsibility, as a parent of a student at Merit Preparatory Academy, to have reviewed the handbook and to support my student in abiding by its contents.

PLEASE PRINT PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

	43