



MINDFUL
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK

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FOREWORD

TO ALL STUDENTS

Mindful Community School's Board of Directors, and administrative and academic staff warmly welcome you to a new school year; hoping it will be an enriching and rewarding one.

This handbook is based on school policies, and has the purpose of acquainting you with our school's rules and procedures, as well as your rights and responsibilities as members of our educational community.

Our priority is to collaborate with you so you may reach your full academic and personal potential, and offer you all the necessary support for a successful school year. We expect you to read this handbook thoroughly, and to internalize its content.

TO ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Mindful Community School is an institution that pursues the holistic development of every student, and guides them towards excellence. We hope the time your child attends Mindful Community School is full of excitement, enriching learning experiences and growth.

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the rules that govern our school life and activities, and to offer information concerning the wellbeing of your child, the school and its policies. The Board of Directors and administrative and academic staff expect students to conduct themselves in an adequate manner according to their age and maturity, showing respect and consideration for the rights of others.

Please discuss the content of this handbook thoroughly with your child. Sign and return the letter of agreement. We firmly believe that your involvement is essential to maximize the potential of your child. At the beginning of every school year, our teaching staff will discuss the handbook's content with students using age-appropriate language.

Join us in our mission to help our students accomplish their academic and personal goals. We look forward to working together with you!

Mindful Community School

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School Hours

Administration: 7:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Academic Offices: 7:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Cashier / Accounting: 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Library: 7:30 a.m. -- 4:00 p.m.

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CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL INFORMATION

Article 1: Vision Statement

We envision an evolving learning environment that reflects its international community, upholds values that promote effective relationships and maximizes the use of all possible resources to enhance the emotional, intellectual, social, aesthetic and physical development of its stakeholders.

Article 2: Mission Statement

Mindful Community School strives to create lifelong learners who acquire the skills, values, confidence and knowledge to live in a changing, multicultural society.

Article 3: School Values

- Integrity
- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Empathy
- Citizenship

Article 4: School Mascot

The Griffin is a legendary mythical creature half lion (king of beasts) and half eagle (king of birds). The Griffin is powerful and majestic and represents leadership, strength, and courage. Throughout history, the Griffin is the guardian of monarchies' priceless possessions and treasures.

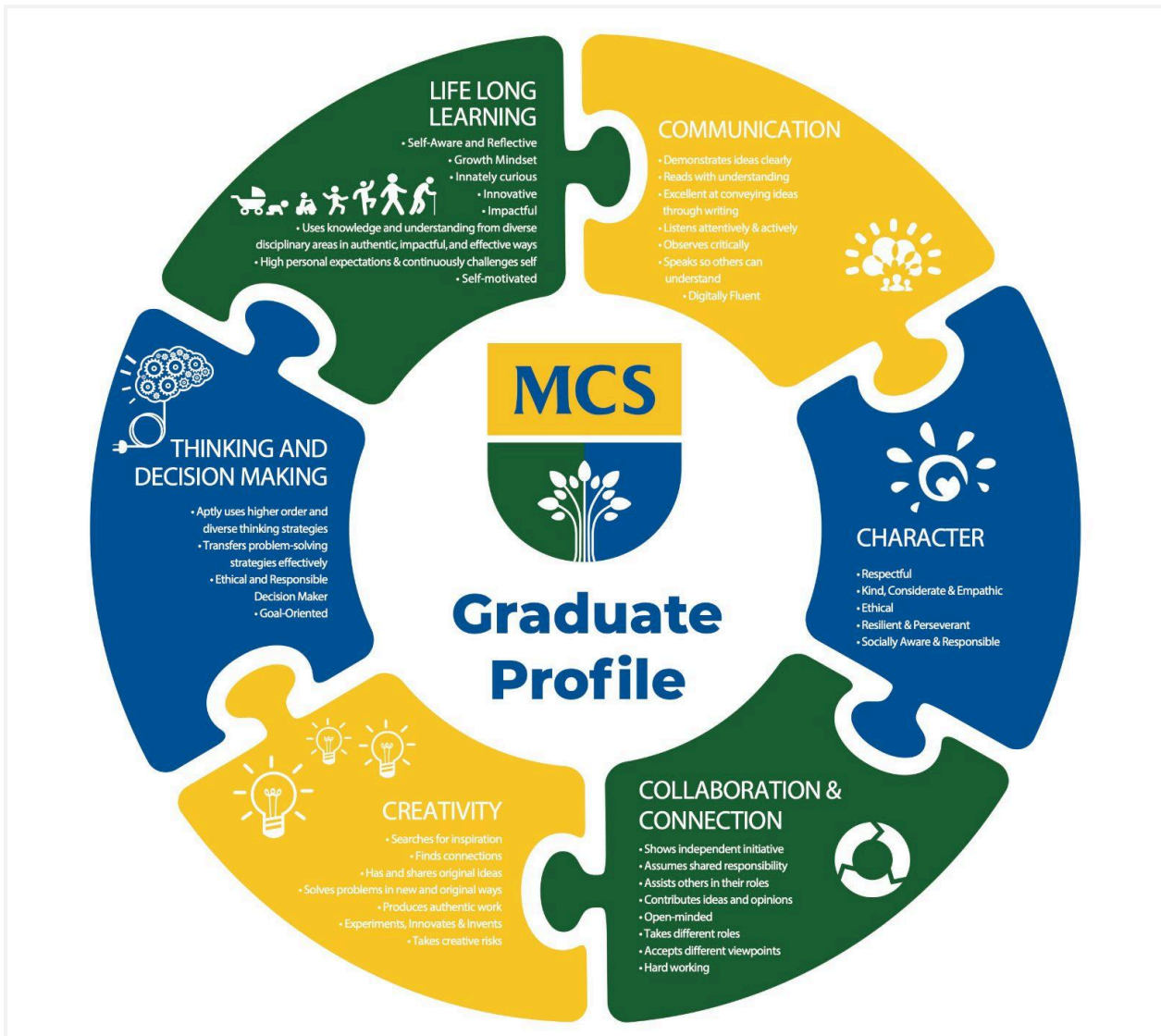
The Griffin aptly symbolizes our students. The lion's strength and the eagle's vision suggest the union of strength with intelligence, while simultaneously thriving in a rigorous academic program.

Article 5: Expected Outcomes

Develop competencies in:

- language usage and communication
- use of technology and information
- use of critical thinking and research skills
- arts and culture
- social / personal responsibility
- learning to learn

Article 6: Graduate Profile



Article 7: Institutional Profile

Mindful Community School is a private institution administered by a Board of Directors, which is in charge of supervising the overall functioning of the school, formulating school policies, and long-term planning and supervision of financial resources. The Board of Directors makes decisions about situations not covered in the institutional policies. The Head of School is responsible for carrying out the policies and regulations dictated by the Board of Directors, and of guaranteeing the implementation of an academic program that reflects the institutional philosophy and purpose.

Article 8: Recognition, Accreditations & Memberships

Mindful Community School is recognized by the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic to operate at the Preschool, Primary and Secondary levels. Additionally, Mindful Community School is accredited by **Cognia**, the largest accrediting organization of schools and universities in the world. This accreditation guarantees our students receive high quality education by complying with its multiple standards of excellence. In addition, it facilitates the easy transfer to other accredited schools, prep schools and universities in the US, Canada and throughout the world.

We are affiliated with the Association of Colombian and Caribbean American Schools (ACCAS), Asociación de Instituciones Educativas Privadas (AINEP) and Tri-Association.

CHAPTER 2: MCS FAMILY PROFILE & RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1: Family Profile

A meaningful educational experience is one in which the family and school work together in order to achieve success. The school expects its families to support and promote a successful partnership with the purpose of developing well-rounded individuals. In order to accomplish this goal, families at MCS should:

- a. Assume an active role in the teaching/learning process of their child.
- b. Strengthen the values that are taught and promoted by the school.
- c. Trust in the recommendations and decisions of the administrative and teaching staff.
- d. Offer constructive criticism and solutions for the well-being of the school community.
- e. Be a role model for the school community.
- f. Recognize and accept that each student is a unique individual.
- g. Communicate constantly with school leaders and academic staff.
- h. Demonstrate pride, trust and respect for the institution, its policies and its educational pursuit.
- i. Agree with all school policies and procedures stated in this handbook.
- j. Actively participate in academic and informative activities, such as: parent-teacher conferences, project presentations, workshops, conferences, among others.

Article 2: Family Expectations

MCS has the following expectations for all its families, which are aligned with what is established in the “Normas de Convivencia del Sistema Educativo Dominicano”:

1. Know, accept, respect and unconditionally apply the policies and procedures established in the Student-Family Handbook, and guide their child to abide by the rules of the school.
2. Actively engage in their child’s educational process.
3. Monitor and show interest in the academic, extracurricular and co-curricular activities in which their child participates in.

4. Attend school activities to which the school invites you, such as: appointments, meetings, school acts, including visits to the school to verify their learning progress.
5. Respect and comply with any measures taken by the school to guarantee the safety of their child, as well as the fulfillment of academic and disciplinary expectations.
6. Monitor and follow up with their child's attendance and punctuality.
7. Provide the necessary school supplies for learning.
8. Comply with all assumed financial obligations agreed upon at the moment of registration.

Article 3: Communication with Parents/Guardians

Maintaining communication with the school is very important in order to stay updated on the academic and socioemotional well-being of your child.

1. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to maintain updated documents in the school's Registrar's Department, which includes: medical forms, pick up authorization form, among others. Any new information should be immediately reported in writing to this department or updated in Gradelink for accurate and updated data in case the school needs to contact parents/guardians.
2. Parents/guardians should communicate with their child's teachers through the school's established communication system.
3. It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to return phone calls, written communications or emails from the school, as quickly as possible.

Article 4: Parent/Guardian Meetings

Parents/guardians are the primary source of information and the first educators in the lives of their child. It is necessary for them to meet with school personnel throughout the year to discuss their child's progress, as well as any situations that arise.

1. When school personnel requests a meeting with parents/guardians, it is important to:
 - a. Arrive on time to the meeting.
 - b. In case parents/guardians cannot attend the scheduled meeting, communicate with the school to cancel the meeting prior to the scheduled time and make a new appointment.
 - c. Parents/Guardians must bring all requested documents and information to the meeting.
2. When parents/guardians request a meeting with school personnel, it is important to:
 - a. Take into consideration that the teacher is the first point of contact when you wish to discuss any concerns related to your child.
 - b. Contact the child's teacher or the area administrative assistant via email or phone call to schedule an appointment.
 - c. Be aware that it is not possible for you to meet with the teacher during instructional time.

- d. If you are still unsatisfied with the result of the meeting held with the teacher, you may request a meeting with the area's Principal.
- e. If you are still unsatisfied with the results of the meeting with the area's Principal, you may request a meeting with the Academic Director and/or Head of School.
- f. If you are still unsatisfied with the result of the meeting with the Head of School, you may send a letter to the Board of Directors through the Head of School.

Article 5: Behavior of Parents/Guardians

MCS expects parents/guardians to address school authorities, teachers, psychologists, support staff (maintenance, security), other parents/guardians of the rest of the students, students, their own children and school visitors in an adequate and respectful manner at all times.

1. The school reserves the right to deny access to school grounds and participation in any school-related events or activities to any parent/guardian who does not behave adequately, according to the expectations established in this handbook.
2. Parents/guardians should refrain from directly intervening in conflicts and situations involving minors or in which their child is involved in school. Any doubts, questions or concerns regarding incidents between students should be addressed to the school administration. Principals/Directors are responsible for handling conflicts between students and helping solve situations that arise from them. Minors are protected by law.
3. Parents/guardians and guests should dress appropriately when in school grounds or at school events and activities, avoiding the use of revealing or suggestive clothing.
4. The school reserves the right to request any family to seek admission at another educational institution that is a better fit for their values and expectations when they incur in the following circumstances:
 - Interfering with the proper functioning of the school
 - Failing to comply with policies and procedures established by the school
 - Not collaborating in the the educational process of their child
 - Failing to comply with recommendations or conditions established by the school
 - Not contributing adequately with the physical and emotional wellbeing of our student body

Article 6: Comments and Suggestions

In case you wish to provide an idea or suggestion about the school, we invite you to schedule an appointment during school hours with a school authority. As always, confidentiality is maintained, and all conversations must be handled respectfully using appropriate language when addressing our staff.

We exhort all members of our educational community to communicate with school staff regarding any situation that deserves to be reported and that is known to you so it may be investigated and actions may be taken. **Whatsapp is not a proper channel to discuss issues or situations about the school, teachers or students.**

Article 7: Confidential Information

Parents/guardians are the only ones authorized by the school to discuss any situation pertaining to a child. Parents/guardians should refrain from mentioning or discussing student-related issues in Whatsapp and/or any form of social media or communication. Minors have a right to privacy as established in law 136-06.

Article 8: Legal Proceedings between Parents

In case a student's parents are divorced and if legal custody is granted to one of the parents or a legal guardian, MCS must be notified, and all legal documents certifying the custody must be provided to school officials.

The school cannot provide any personal information or student documentation to any other student or parent without prior written authorization from the primary parent/guardian. In case of a legal dispute or any other inconvenience among parents that has not been notified in writing with the necessary legal documents, the school will suppose there is no difference between the rights of the parents in regards to their child.

Article 9: Withdrawing Students before the End of School Year

Parents/guardians who decide to withdraw their child before the end of the school year must:

- comply with all policies and procedures stated in the school consent signed during registration
- send a written communication to the school administration stating the reasons for the withdrawal
- request all required documents to the Registrar's Office
- formalize the withdrawal with the school administration

All documentation submitted at the time of registration will not be returned.

Article 10: Student Documentation

In case a family needs documentation from the school (visa letter, financial standing, among others), they must request it at least three (3) days in advance and must pick up the documents in the stated time.

To obtain official documentation, it is essential that, prior to its request, parents/guardians are up to date with the corresponding tuition fees.

Note: Documents requested for studying abroad must be validated by the Ministry of Education, so they must be requested 2 weeks in advance.

Article 11: Corrections to Documents

In case of an error in a school document, MCS will notify parents/guardians for the document to be returned to the Registrar. Once corrections have been made, the Registrar will notify the interested party.

Article 12: Purchase of Uniforms & School Supplies

At the end of each school year, a list of school supplies for the next grade will be provided. You may obtain these through our website or from the area secretaries or the Registrar’s Office. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child with the necessary supplies by the first day of school.

Uniform polo shirts and t-shirts can be purchased at the school's Cashier. Sports uniform pants can be acquired at Tienda Topito (Avenida Rómulo Betancourt #1258, Bella Vista). Regular pants can be purchased at any store, as long as they are classic khakis and comply with the school’s uniform criteria ([Chapter 4 - Article 11](#)).

Article 13: Textbooks

MCS provides English textbooks to its students on a loan basis at the beginning of the school year. Parents/guardians are responsible for checking out the textbooks in the designated place. The assigned textbooks are the responsibility of the student and parents/guardians, and must be returned at the end of the school year in the same conditions in which they were delivered.

Books must be suitably covered with a non-adhesive, transparent cover that can be easily removed before they are returned. Lost or damaged books must be replaced or the cost covered as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| a) New | 100% of the actual cost |
| b) 1 to 2 years of use | 80% of the actual cost |
| c) 3 to 4 years of use | 60% of the actual cost |
| d) 5 or more years of use | 30% of the actual cost |

Note: Not all grades will receive physical textbooks, some may receive digital learning resources.

CHAPTER 3: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MCS strives to create an academic program that is rigorous and interactive, where all students engage in hands-on activities, and are provided with learning opportunities to become critical thinkers and eloquent communicators. Our curricular design promotes student-centered learning environments, where teachers facilitate engaging learning activities, and students work collaboratively to find solutions to problems and establish connections.

Article 1: Evaluation System

Evaluation of student learning in MCS is ongoing, and follows the criteria established by the dispositions of the Dominican Ministry of Education and the Cognia accreditation agency standards.

Article 2: Assessment

Assessment in MCS is linked to the standards and benchmarks outlined in the school's curriculum. Knowledge and skills are assessed separately from attitudes and conduct.

Paragraph 1 - Early Childhood to 2nd Grade:

The evaluation system from Early Childhood to 2nd grade is designed to diagnose and measure the academic development of the student within the expectations of each grade level. Students in these grade levels are assessed through flexible and dynamic age-appropriate techniques.

Paragraph 2 - 3rd to 12th Grade:

From 3rd to 12th grade, assessments are based on a student's progress according to their academic performance and personal and social adjustment. Evaluation of student learning is based on: classwork, group work, test results, class participation, as well as other activities, skills and abilities used to apply acquired knowledge.

Parents/guardians and 3rd to 12th grade students have access to the Student Management System, Gradelink, through the app or its website, thus being able to monitor their academic progress.

Article 3: Evaluation Periods

The school year is divided into 3 trimesters for Early Childhood, and 4 quarters for Elementary School (1st to 6th Grade) and Secondary School (7th to 12th Grade). Each quarter consists of approximately 8 - 9 weeks, depending on the school calendar. At the end of each period, parents/guardians will receive student's grades. The 4 quarter grades are averaged to obtain the final grade for Elementary and High School.

Article 4: Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards/progress reports will be issued at the end of each academic period (trimester/quarter). These are intended to report on the individual progress of each student and not for the purpose of making comparisons between students. If questions arise regarding the grade earned by a student, please discuss the situation with your child first and then with the teacher, before meeting with school administrators. On occasion, reports are delivered to parents/guardians during parent-teacher conferences and/or student-led conferences that are carried out on the dates established in the school calendar. If parents/guardians cannot attend, they must notify the area secretary.

- Early Childhood students (Nido-Kinder) receive progress reports after each trimester (3 per year).

- Students from 1st to 12th grade receive their progress reports/report cards after each quarter (4 per year).

In some cases, report cards are sent in a digital format to parents/guardians or delivered to High School students. Parents/guardians have the duty to follow up on these and coordinate a meeting with the teachers if so warranted.

NOTE: Parents/guardians with outstanding debts, overdue library books, or unfinished school business need to meet with the Head of School before receiving any official documents.

Article 5: Grade Appeal Process

To appeal a grade, the student and/or parents/guardians should submit a written request to the Principal. Consequently, a meeting with the teacher and Principal will be scheduled to discuss the appeal. This request must be made within 3 school days of receiving the report cards.

Article 6: Homework Policy

Homework is assigned to guarantee student's development of responsibility and study habits, as well as to reinforce and complement learning that took place in the classroom. Teachers will evaluate homework based on proposed objectives, the curriculum and quality of student's work.

Homework is not a punitive measure, rather an opportunity to complete, investigate, practice or extend skills and abilities acquired in the classroom. If teachers require certain homework to be signed by parents, we exhort you to comply with this measure.

Homework will not be assigned to hand in on Mondays or after a holiday.

Article 7: Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty includes: plagiarism, copying, using artificial intelligence, receiving or sharing assignments or homework from others; exchanging information through any means of communication before or during quizzes, tests, projects or homework; use of unauthorized materials or notes during a test; document theft; helping another student commit an act of academic dishonesty; lying to protect another student that has committed an act of academic dishonesty. You may find a more extensive list of possible violations in the Academic Honesty Policy.

Plagiarism means to portray the ideas or words of another as one's own, without crediting the source through citations, and presenting as new or original an idea or product derived from an existing source (www.plagiarism.org).

Any student who violates the Academic Honesty Policy will receive a 0% on the assignment (with no possibility of making up the work), and appropriate disciplinary action will be implemented, which includes, but is not limited to: suspension and evaluation of facts by the Leadership Team. Subsequent offenses may result in an annotation placed on the student's permanent academic transcript. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to familiarize themselves with this policy, and direct any questions to teachers or school administrators. At the beginning of each school year starting in 6th grade, parents/guardians and students will sign the Academic Honesty Policy, that should be respected during their permanence in the school.

Article 8: Exams and Make-Up Exams

All students have the duty to be present on campus to take exams and quizzes on the dates established by the school. If a student is absent on any exam day, the school will give the student an opportunity to take a make-up exam, only if the absence was due to health issues (duly certified) or other reasons found valid by the school administration. The student and/or their parents/guardians must contact the teacher within 3 school days after the exam date and agree on the make-up date.

Paragraph 1 - Test-Taking Norms:

When testing, students should:

1. Show adequate behavior at all times.
2. Have all necessary materials when taking the exam.
3. Drink water and use the restroom before taking the exam.
4. Maintain silence during the exam, and refrain from any conversations.
5. Work responsibly and independently.
6. Review the exam before handing it to the teacher.

Students who do not comply with one or more of the above stated conditions are at risk of losing all or partial credit, depending on the severity of the infraction.

Article 9: Standardized Tests

MCS administers standardized tests to students in order to analyze and evaluate their progress, and identify areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of each student to take these tests seriously, accurately demonstrating acquired knowledge. The school makes decisions to place students in advanced classes and/or intervention or support groups based on the results of these tests.

Article 10: Dominican National Exams (Pruebas Nacionales)/Diagnostic Tests

The Dominican Ministry of Education (MINERD) requires 12th grade students to take the National Exams (Pruebas Nacionales). These exams assess students' acquired knowledge in the areas of Spanish Language, Math, Social Studies and Science, and are administered in Spanish.

These exams are worth 30% of the student's final High School grade. They are compulsory, as they are a requirement for obtaining the Dominican High School Diploma from the Ministry of Education. It is indispensable to hand in required documents to participate in these exams in the established dates to the Registrar's Office and MINERD.

Diagnostic Tests are a group of exams administered by MINERD to assess the implementation of the official national curriculum. It is compulsory to administer these exams in the grades determined by MINERD, when the ministry suggests so.

Article 11: Advanced Classes (AP)

The school provides students with the opportunity to take advanced college-level classes through College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) program starting in the 10th grade. The High School leadership team, along with the grade level teachers, will select which students will be invited to participate in this program.

The student selection criteria is:

- Obtain a final grade of 90 or higher in the prerequisite subject
- Obtain a final grade of 85 or more in subjects in the areas of English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Lengua Española and Social Studies
- Obtain scores that are above the grade-level norm on standardized tests
- Not having academic and/or behavioral conditionality in their Secondary School years

If invited to participate, the student and their parents/guardians must make the decision whether or not to take the advanced subject; because once the student, with the endorsement of their parents/guardians, commits to taking the subject, they must maintain enrollment in this class until the end of the school year and abide by the rules and policies of the program.

These courses are validated by some local and international universities according to the score obtained by the student in the end-of-year exam and the university policies.

Article 12: Student Academic Status

A student's performance and behavior throughout the academic year will determine their status for the following school year. Students may fall into one of the following categories:

- Regular re-admission
- Conditional re-admission (Behavioral - academic)
- No re-admission

Article 13: Academic Honors Recognitions

Students in 3rd through 12th grades are eligible to earn one of the following academic recognitions each quarter of the academic year:

Director's Honor Roll: Students with an overall quarter average of 95% or above, no grade lower than 95%, marked with a very good (4) or outstanding (5) conduct in all subjects and in the Personal Adjustment Rubric will receive this recognition.

High Honor Roll: Students with an overall quarter average of 95% or above, no grade lower than 90%, marked with a very good (4) or outstanding (5) conduct in all subjects and in the Personal Adjustment Rubric will receive this award.

Honor Roll: Students with an overall quarter average of 90% or above, no grade lower than 85%, marked with a very good (4) or outstanding conduct (5) in all subjects and in the personal adjustment rubric receive this merit.

Article 14: Academic Probation Period

Students in 1st and 2nd grade who fail to acquire more than 30% of the expected competencies of the different curricular areas by the end of the school year will be placed on academic probation and must receive pedagogical recovery classes.

Elementary School students (3rd to 6th grade) will be placed on academic probation if they fail to maintain a minimum average grade of 70% in each subject area per quarter.

Students in Middle and High School (7th to 12th grade) will be placed on academic probation if they fail to maintain a minimum average grade of 75% in each subject area per quarter.

Students on academic probation may lose the privilege of participating in any extracurricular activity sponsored by the school, and could be required to attend pedagogical recovery classes after school. The school reserves the right to not readmit students who have been on academic probation on 3 or more subjects during the academic year.

Article 15: Grade Promotion Requirements

The student who has met the academic requirements and standards of the grade and complied with the rules of the school will be automatically promoted to the next grade.

MCS students must meet a minimum of requirements in order to be promoted to the next school grade, as established by the Ministry of Education.

Paragraph 1 - 3rd to 6th Grade:

3rd to 6th Grade students must obtain a final average of 65% or more in each of the subjects taken in order to be promoted to the next grade. At the end of the school year, students who do not meet the minimum average must attend pedagogical recovery. The student who, after the final pedagogical recovery process, does not pass four or more subjects, repeats the grade, according to the Ordenanza 04-2023 of the MINERD.

Paragraph 2 - 7th to 12th Grade:

7th to 12th Grade students must obtain a final average of 70% in each of the subjects taken in order to be promoted to the next grade. At the end of the school year, students who obtain 69% or less in any subject, must meet the following requirements, according to MINERD's Ordenanza 04-2023:

- a) Take a Compleitive Exam on the date established in the MINERD calendar. The exam is worth 50%; the average of the grades obtained throughout the school year represents the remaining 50%. After averaging the exam, students who obtain a final grade equal to or above 70% approve the subject and obtain its credits.
- b) Students who take Compleitive Exams and do not obtain a final average equal to or above 70% in 1 or 2 classes must take an Extraordinary Exam worth 70% of the final grade; the average of the grades obtained throughout the school year represents the remaining 30%. After averaging the exam, students who obtain a final grade equal to or

above 70% approve the subject, obtain its credits and are promoted to the following grade.

- c) The student who, after taking Extraordinary Tests, does not achieve a final average equal to or greater than 70% in three or more subjects repeats the grade.
- d) Students who take Extraordinary Exams and do not obtain a final average equal to or above 70% must take a Special Exam worth 100% of the final grade on the dates established by the Ministry of Education.

Students who fail the Special Exams with a grade below 70%, fail the grade according to what is established by the Ministry of Education.

1. Students who do not approve the Extraordinary Exams and have Special Exams pending in subjects of the North American program must take a pedagogical recovery program in the summer and pass this program with a grade equal to or greater than 70%. Our counselor will provide the options for said recovery program.
2. The student who transfers to another educational center and has Extraordinary and Special Exams pending, must attend the school to take them on the exam dates established in the official calendar of the Ministry of Education.

Article 16: Repetition of Grade Level

Nido - 2nd grade students are automatically promoted to the next grade level. In exceptional cases, the 2nd Grade may be repeated (only once) in a collegiate decision between the leadership team, director, area principal, psychologist/counselor, teacher and the student's family, when, after analyzing the student's development process and learning, it is determined that it is most convenient for the student due to a condition that has prevented him/her from achieving minimal progress. This measure of exceptionality will only be taken once it has been demonstrated that the appropriate interventions have been carried out and in consensus with the aforementioned actors, in order to ensure that this decision is the most beneficial for the student and their future development.

According to what is established by the Ministry of Education, from 3rd to 6th grade, the student who, after the final pedagogical recovery, does not pass four or more subjects, repeats the grade.

From 7th to 12th grade, the student who, after taking Extraordinary Tests, does not achieve a final average equal to or greater than 70% in three or more subjects, repeats the grade. Likewise, students who fail the Special Exams with a grade of less than 70% fail the grade.

Paragraph 1 - Repetition of Grade Level at MCS:

It is a policy at Mindful Community School that 3rd through 6th Grade students can only repeat the same grade level once in MCS for academic and socio-emotional reasons. Parents/guardians may request that their child's case be re-assessed by the Mediation Council, who will make a recommendation to the school administration of whether or not the student should be allowed to repeat the grade in the school a second time.

The school reserves the right to readmit students who, at the end of the school year, fail the grade level. If parents/guardians have registered the student for the following school year, the school will reimburse their investment.

Article 17: Graduation Requirements

Graduation is celebrated at the end of High School for students who successfully meet all school requirements to participate in it. The MCS High School program is based on a credit system, which is recognized by and is consistent with the American educational system. It is an essential requirement to participate in this ceremony to have taken and completed all the credits required for the completion of the high school program, as well as to have accumulated 60 hours of community service.

Parents/guardians and students must previously attend an orientation meeting to obtain basic information about the graduation. Students must attend graduation complying with guidelines established in the orientation meeting: dress code, appearance, schedule, order of the event, among others.

Article 18: Graduation Awards and Recognitions

Only students who have completed all 4 years of high school at MCS are eligible to receive these awards.

Valedictorian: The student from the graduating class who obtains the highest GPA during the 4 years of High School will be chosen as the Valedictorian.

Salutatorian: The student of the graduating class who obtains the second highest GPA during the 4 years of High School will be chosen as Salutatorian.

Student of the Year Award: MCS recognizes the student that through their commitment and dedication displays MCS' alumni profile, as a "life-long learner with the skills, values, confidence and knowledge to live in a changing multicultural society". The school presents this award to the student who embodies the qualities and values MCS promotes in its student body and who has developed academically.

CHAPTER 4: POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

The success of the educational program at MCS relies on all members of the school community responsibly assuming their role in following the established policies and procedures.

Article 1: School Calendar

The school calendar contains important dates and information. Generally, the school abides by the calendar; however, dates are subject to change and will be notified in a timely manner. The school calendar is available on the school website.

Article 2: Attendance & Absences

MCS requires students to attend school every day, in accordance with the school calendar. Parents/guardians must notify the school when the student will be absent, via email or other forms of written communication or via phone. Students must meet a minimum of 80% school attendance, as established by the Ministry of Education; failure to meet this requirement will result in the student having to repeat the affected subjects or the grade.

MCS requests that parents/guardians schedule medical, dental, eye or other types of appointments after school hours. Students are responsible for making up all missing assignments as a result of an excused or unexcused absence. Failure to make up work will detrimentally affect a student's grade.

Paragraph 1 - Excused Absences:

MCS will excuse absences due to illnesses, deaths in the family, religious holidays, emergencies or other causes of force majeure, considered valid by the Administration. In case of a prolonged illness, parents/guardians must submit a medical certificate to justify the student's absence. Students in this situation will have the same number of days they were absent to turn in any pending assignments. Participation points will not be recovered. Parents/guardians must validate the excuse of a student's absence within 2 school days, otherwise it will be considered unexcused. Even if it is an excused absence, it is stated on the report card as an absence.

Paragraph 2 - Unexcused Absences:

It is considered an unexcused absence when students are absent for unjustified reasons or as a matter of convenience for parents/guardians, such as family vacations, trips, events and/or recreational activities. Students with unexcused absences are responsible for assignments during their absence. The area principal will determine the due date of pending assignments. Participation points are not recoverable.

Article 3: Class Cancellation and Emergency Closing

If the school or any government institution considers it necessary to suspend classes, an email will be sent to parents/guardians and/or it will be announced in one of the institution's social media. We encourage you to review our social media for updates. If doubts arise whether the school is open or not, parents/guardians should contact the school's administrative offices.

In case of a pandemic or another event of force majeure, the school will abide by the dispositions of the government bodies that govern it.

Article 4: School Entrance and Tardiness

Students must enter the school through their area's designated door. The entrance schedule for students in the different levels is the following: 7:45 a.m. for students in Early Childhood and 7:35 a.m. for Elementary and Secondary students. Participation in the civic act/flag ceremony and in the morning setting period is essential.

Elementary and Secondary students who arrive at their classroom after 7:35 a.m. will be marked tardy and must report to their area office to get a late pass. Excessive tardiness will be handled as a disciplinary issue and parents/guardians will be contacted for a meeting with the corresponding area Principal.

Article 5: Flag Ceremony

During the week, students participate in a flag ceremony where they learn to value the importance of patriotism and citizenship. It is required that we model respect for our national symbols, stopping to listen to the anthem, taking off caps and hats, and remaining silent while the anthem plays. Actions speak louder than words. We ask parents to support us to instill respect for patriotic values. It is mandatory to attend the flag ceremony.

This important act takes place on the following days:

- **Early Childhood:** Tuesdays and Thursdays - 7:45 a.m.
- **1st & 2nd Grade:** Thursdays - 7:45 a.m.
- **3rd to 6th Grade:** Wednesdays - 7:35 a.m.
- **7th to 12th grade:** Mondays - 7:35 a.m.

Article 6: School Dismissal

Dismissal times per grade are as follows:

- Nido – Nursery: 12:00 p.m.
- Pre-Kinder: 1:00 p.m.
- Kindergarten: 2:00 p.m.
- 1st - 6th Grade: 2:35 p.m.
- 7th - 12th Grade: 2:50 p.m.

It is important that the person authorized to pick up students is on time to ensure that students are supervised by an adult. Teachers have work commitments to meet after student dismissal time.

Early Childhood students will wait with their teachers to be picked up in the corresponding area. The cut-off time for picking up children from this level is half an hour after the official dismissal time.

Parents/guardians are responsible for their child, therefore they must assume responsibility for any conflict or situation that arises in case they cannot pick up their child at the specified dismissal time.

Schedules may vary if students are enrolled in extracurricular activities or the extended day program. 12th Grade students receiving test preparation classes for Pruebas Nacionales will be dismissed at 4:00 p.m. on established days.

It is important that parents/guardians are punctual when picking up students who participate in extracurricular activities, the Academic Support Program or any activity that takes place in the afternoon. In the event that they are not picked up on time, a meeting will be called with parents/guardians and a member of the administrative staff and if the situation persists, the student runs the risk of losing the privilege to participate in them.

Article 7: Authorization to Leave School Grounds

At the end of the school day, students must leave school with adults previously authorized by their parents/guardians on the authorization form; this form is filled out during the registration process. Students are not authorized to leave campus with people not registered on this form.

After the start of the school year, parents/guardians who wish to authorize another person to pick up their child must update the form at the Registrar's Office. In the event that the parent/guardian decides to remove a person from the list of people authorized to pick up the student, they must notify the center in writing.

In the event that the parent/guardian or one of the authorized people is not the person who will pick up the student, the parent/guardian must contact school authorities and send a written authorization with the name and ID of the person in question. Said person must present their ID, and wait for the student in the office or wait in their vehicle for the student to be taken there. Authorizations via telephone are not allowed; written authorizations through some digital medium will be accepted and must have a copy of the ID of the person authorized to pick up the student.

The parent/guardian who authorizes their child to leave the center on foot or in their own vehicle must complete and deliver a signed authorization form to the Registrar's Office with a copy of the minor's driver's license to file in the student file. Students are not authorized to leave the school campus using their own means of transportation or walking under any circumstances before the end of the school day, without the proper authorization of their parents/guardians.

MCS is not responsible for those students whose parents/guardians have authorized them to wait outside the campus facilities or to travel by their own means to and from the school.

Article 8: Early Dismissal

If your child must be withdrawn from school before the stipulated time, parents/guardians must notify said departure in writing or by email or go to the corresponding area office and fill out an exit permit indicating the time and the adult responsible for picking up your child, so that their teachers are informed about it. The area secretary will make the necessary arrangements and the student will wait in the office in which they will be picked up. The adult must present the exit permit to school security personnel upon departure. Students are not allowed to leave campus without an authorized adult.

If your child is sick or is going through a situation to consider, the doctor on duty or a school authority will notify you of the situation and will authorize the student's pick-up, if necessary.

In the event that you receive a call, email or text message from your child during school hours to ask you to pick them up for various reasons and without prior authorization from a school authority, we recommend that you contact the area principal before picking them up from school. Said early dismissal will be considered an unexcused absence and your child will lose the right to make up the lost assignments.

To pick up your child, you must follow the visitors policy.

Article 9: Visitors Policy

In order to guarantee the security of our students, we have policies with regards to visitors' access to school.

Protocol for school visitors and parents/guardians who enter the school after 8:15 a.m.:

- All parents/guardians and visitors must make their way to the entrance in the Gustavo Mejía Ricart or Pedro Albizu Campos street and present an ID to school security personnel.
- They will be given a visitor's badge which should be used in a visible area during their stay on campus. This badge gives visitors access to the reception, academic offices, and cashier; not to the classrooms or other areas of the school.
- Once leaving the school, visitors should return the badge to the school's security personnel and retrieve their ID.

In order to protect instructional time and to avoid unnecessary disruptions, all parents/guardians and visitors must adhere to the following norms:

- a. Once instruction has started, parents/guardians or any adult may not enter the classroom in order to avoid interruptions.
- b. If a parent/guardian needs to leave something to be delivered to a student, they must go to the school reception, and request that it be delivered to the student.
- c. Parents/guardians that wish to visit the classroom must make the necessary arrangements with the teacher and the area Principal.
- d. Parents/guardians interested in participating as volunteers in school activities must address the area Principal.
- e. All visitors must sign a visitors' registry and leave an ID with the school's security personnel at the school entrance.

Article 10: Transportation to and from School

MCS is not responsible for any accidents or inconveniences that may occur to students and/or their parents/guardians while on their way to and from the school. MCS is only responsible for the well-being of its students during the hours of class, as long as they are within the school grounds and/or participating in school-related activities. This does NOT include the objects they possess.

Paragraph 1 - Students in their own means of transportation:

In the case of students who arrive at school via their own means of transportation (car, bicycle, motorcycle, or any other means of transportation), MCS is not responsible for any damages to the mean of transportation used by the student or lost items within the vehicle due to theft around school property and its surrounding area. The institution does not have assigned personnel to watch over these means of transportation. Students that drive to school must hand in to school authorities a written authorization by their parents/guardians stating that they are legally allowed to drive, submit a copy of their driver's license, valid vehicle insurance, and specify the vehicle's license plate number and make and model.

Paragraph 2 - Private school transportation service:

This service is offered by various private companies and is at the sole discretion of the parent/guardian, therefore, the contracting or management of it is at their own expense. MCS does not hold any type of relationship, responsibility or ties with any of the providers of school transportation services.

Article 11: Dress Code and Appearance

The Board of Directors and the MCS administration consider that appropriate clothing, personal care and good manners are essential for the proper academic performance of our students. Students must be presentable at all times, this includes: personal hygiene, hair style and color. The institution reserves the right to decide what is or is not allowed in relation to appearance, the dress code and uniform policy at any school activity.

MCS requires students to wear school uniforms every day on campus and on field trips, unless otherwise authorized by the administration. Students are to wear the designated uniform exclusively. Students must remain properly uniformed throughout the school day. MCS encourages that uniforms be pressed and clean. Pants must be hemmed to an appropriate length to prevent them from dragging on the ground. Students are prohibited from wearing worn, torn, tight-fitting, or excessively baggy uniforms.

Every time the student arrives at school without the regular uniform, parents/guardians will be contacted in order to send them the corresponding uniform. Only one uniform pass will be issued per month after parent/guardian notification.

Students are expected to demonstrate school pride during activities or events planned by MCS that do not require them to wear uniform, and to maintain appropriate appearance within social parameters that reflect school integrity appropriate to the occasion. On days when clothing other than the uniform is permitted or for school activities, students are forbidden to use very short clothing, plunging necklines, as well as any article of clothing that exposes, advertises, or incites consumption of alcohol, drugs or tobacco, as well as sexual connotations or any meaning that violates morality and good customs.

Parents/guardians will be contacted at the time these rules are violated. The persistent violation of these rules will be considered a disciplinary problem and the corresponding corrective measures will be applied.

Paragraph 1 - Regular Uniform:

- Khaki pants according to the criteria stated above
- Polo shirt with school logo (sold at school)
- Closed shoes in solid colors (blue, brown or black) or sneakers (sandals or Crocs-type shoes are not allowed)
- Socks (Essential to wear)

Paragraph 2 - Physical Education Uniform:

The physical education program is designed so that all students participate in sports and games. Students' participation in this class is mandatory and the following uniform is required:

- T-shirt with school logo (sold at school)
- Navy blue pants with school colors (sold at Topito Store)
- Athletic shoes (loafers, Converse and click shoes are not allowed)
- Socks (Essential to wear)

Paragraph 3 - Friday Uniform:

As a means of creating unity and promoting school spirit, students are allowed to wear the Friday shirt (sold at school), appropriate long, blue jeans (not ripped or torn) and sneakers or closed shoes (no sandals or Crocs-type shoes are permitted). Students who choose not to wear this must come to school in the regular or physical education uniform, accordingly. The Friday uniform is a student privilege, and the school reserves the right to take away this privilege from any student at any time deemed necessary.

Paragraph 4 - Dyes, Makeup, Hair style and Accessories:

Although we cannot prohibit existing tattoos or piercings, obtaining additional visible piercings and tattoos during the student's tenure at MCS is forbidden. The administration reserves the right to determine what is considered appropriate or inappropriate in relation to the appearance and personal care of its student body.

The use of excessive makeup, extravagant jewelry and unnatural hair colors (pink, blue or purple, among others), streaks or designs in the hair, mohawk style haircuts, as well as the use of inappropriate decorations and accessories, is prohibited. MCS is not responsible for jewelry lost at school.

The following are items/accessories not allowed at school: nose rings, tongue accessories, piercings on parts of the body that are visible, and long or large earrings. In addition, students are prohibited from wearing exaggerated fashions or styles at school, such as: four or more earrings in each ear or on any other part of the body; boys with earrings, pony tails and long hair that exceeds the base of the neck, caps, necklaces, among others.

Article 12: Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities

Participation in school and school-related activities allows students to develop talents and abilities, enhance other areas of development, and build strong relationships with other students. Participation in these activities is a privilege granted by MCS to students who wish to participate and who agree to comply with the rules and regulations established for said activity. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations of the institution will lead to appropriate corrective measures, including the loss of the privilege to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

Students have the opportunity to participate in 2 extracurricular activities per year. Those interested in the activities will be registered by order of registration. If the class reaches capacity, the class will be closed and students will be placed on a waiting list.

Students who attend the Academic Support Program will have to adapt to the assigned schedule, even if this requires substituting one of the extracurricular activities.

Students may be withdrawn from extracurricular and co-curricular activities for the following reasons:

- Low academic performance
- Constant inappropriate behavior in school or in the activity
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Late pick-up of students by parents/guardians on repeated occasions
- Constant absence at events or tournaments related to the activity

There are days in which extracurricular activities may be canceled due to early dismissal, weather or school events, such as: parent-teacher conferences, teacher training, or other previously informed situations.

Siblings who are not participating in extracurricular activities are not permitted to remain on campus until their brother or sister completes their activity; if this is recurrent, it may lead to the withdrawal of the brother or sister from the activity.

Paragraph 1 - Student Organizations:

As part of the co-curricular activities offered at MCS, students may elected to or apply to participate in the following student-led organizations:

National Junior Honor Society / National Honor Society: NJHS and NHS are well-known, prestigious organizations which recognize and encourage academic scholarship, and develop essential academic and personal characteristics. They lead among organizations and societies that promote recognition for high school students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership and service; NJHS also recognizes students who show outstanding citizenship. The NHS Chapter was established in September 2006, under the latin name of EXCELLENTIA, which represents excellence. The NJHS chapter was established in September 2016, adopting the same name.

Student Council: Our Student Council provides a means for student expression and assistance by proposing actions to the school authorities, promoting the school's mission, identifying needs and offering proposals of alternatives and solutions to situations. Student leaders carry out activities that promote community service, relationship building, leadership and school spirit. Class representatives facilitate input of important matters concerning the institution. Students are also offered the opportunity to represent MCS in national and international events.

Eco Committee: The Eco Committee aims to raise awareness, train and educate the entire educational community about the importance of sustainable development, as well as identify needs and offer proposals for alternatives and solutions to environmental situations in the school and the community. Students who are part of the committee promote the active involvement of all stakeholders in activities that promote the implementation of environmental improvements, making them aware of the importance of caring for the environment.

Article 13: Student Support Team

MCS offers a variety of services in order to support the learning process of its students: Psychology, College Counseling, ESOL/SSL, Academic Intervention and Special Education. The role of the MCS Student Support Team is to collaborate with students, teachers, parents/guardians, and staff to strengthen competency development in the following areas: academic, social-emotional, and vocational.

Paragraph 1 - Student Referrals:

Students may be referred to any support program based on their needs. The Student Support Team will complete an internal evaluation for decision-making and to notify parents/guardians regarding actions to take based on the results.

In the event that the school requires that parents/guardians submit an evaluation carried out by an external specialist, they must commit to comply with this request, as soon as possible, continuously follow up on the specialist's recommendations and provide the school with a copy of the results with the purpose of supporting the student in their educational process.

Paragraph 2 - Academic Support:

If a student confronts academic difficulties in any subject, the teachers will recommend his/her participation in the Academic Support program, which takes place immediately after the end of the school day. In case parents/guardians consider that their child would benefit from participating in the program, they can request the teacher to include him/her. Students can also request to participate in a support session to clarify doubts or receive additional support from the teacher.

Paragraph 3 - Academic Intervention Program / Learning Lab:

Offered to Kindergarten through 7th grade students as an intervention plan to strengthen their skills in the areas of Reading and Mathematics. Students receive individualized instruction through a dynamic and interactive digital curriculum.

Paragraph 4 - Special Education Program:

The Special Education Program provides assistance to students with moderate learning needs, such as: speech delays, writing difficulties, dyslexia, reading fluency, among others. To participate in this program, it is necessary to comply with the referral process established by the school.

Paragraph 5 - ESOL and SSL Programs:

These are intervention programs which are offered to students who speak other languages, with the purpose of strengthening their vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, language structure and/or skills in English and/or Spanish. These programs support the full integration of the student in our regular English/Spanish programs.

Paragraph 6 - Social-Emotional Development Program:

This program focuses on the social-emotional development of students from Nido to 10th grade. Psychologists lead this program and carry out the most complete session of the week in a classroom called Happy, with an environment specially crafted for it. The teachers continue to work on this program in their classrooms through daily sessions of about 10 minutes. This program focuses on mindfulness and from there we work on self-control, self-care, meaningful relationships, generosity, gratitude, empathy, growth mindset and self-motivation. It is represented with different characters, which guide students in the development and acquisition of these attributes through various activities that invite reflection, concentration, emotional regulation, resilience, among others.

Additionally, in the classrooms, teachers from Prekindergarten to 8th grade implement the *Second Step* social-emotional development program. This program fosters self-management, conflict resolution, interpersonal relationships, empathy, emotional management, and learning skills. It also has a complimentary bullying prevention unit (Kindergarten to 8th grade) and child protection unit (Prekindergarten to 5th grade).

Paragraph 7 - Tutoring:

In the event that a student requires additional academic support to meet grade-level expectations, beyond the previously mentioned programs, he/she might be referred to receive external tutoring services. Parents/guardians may request a list of tutors and/or specialists suggested by the area psychologist; however, the school is not responsible for any situation that may arise with the tutor, teacher or other professional on the provided list.

Teachers are not authorized to recommend tutoring to their students without the authorization of the principal and/or psychologist of the area. Teachers cannot tutor their own students or provide tutoring services on school grounds.

Article 14: Field Trips

The school promotes the organization of field trips in order to establish connections with the world outside of school and provide direct experiences that enrich the curriculum. After approval from school administration, teachers will work with the Activities Coordinator on planning the trip and parents/guardians are informed of the details.

Each student requires written permission signed by parents/guardians, as well as the appropriate uniform in order to attend field trips. Generally, we request the support and collaboration of parents/guardians for field trips. Parents/guardians who wish to accompany their child's class on a field trip must contact the teacher in charge to make the necessary arrangements. Nido through Pre-Kinder students must be accompanied by an adult during field trips.

In case your child is not authorized to attend a field trip, the parent/guardian must communicate with the teacher. The student will remain in an area designated by their coordinator until their class returns to school and/or will remain home that day.

Article 15: Student Behavior in School

While in school, students should maintain order at all times, demonstrate appropriate behavior, and be respectful to all members of the educational community. Above all, students and parents/guardians should be respectful of themselves and of others, of others' belongings and to all school's property. Any act of disrespect or violation of any policies in the Student-Family Handbook will be sanctioned with the appropriate consequence(s).

The school reserves the right to apply any sanction it deems appropriate, which may be, but is not limited to, the denial of participation in school activities, the removal from school property and the denial of registration for the following school year.

Article 16: Student Behavior Outside of School

Students represent the image of the school, both on and off campus. Any unacceptable behavior, whether at a school event or an event sponsored by MCS, may lead to disciplinary consequences, including the denial of registration for the following school year.

Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: posting images, photographs, videos, texts, or information that affect the physical, moral, or emotional development of another student; any situation that damages their reputation, or leads to legal proceedings in their personal life; disorderly conduct, or any situation that could stigmatize their conduct or behavior and the image of the school. Any of the behaviors mentioned above are considered very serious offenses and therefore carry disciplinary consequences.

Students participating in school sponsored events are required to wear the required uniform and comply with all school rules and regulations while representing MCS. For school events in which the use of the uniform is not required, students have the responsibility of representing the school and taking care of its image, showing integrity in their actions and behaviors. They must dress appropriately, refraining from excessively short, suggestive clothing or clothing that is offensive to others. The use of alcohol, drugs or any prohibited substance, as well as the participation in acts of inappropriate sexual conduct are strictly prohibited.

Article 17: Damages to School Property

Parents/guardians are responsible to replace or repair any item or equipment owned by the school or by any other community member that has been destroyed or damaged by their child; this includes all materials, equipment and textbooks. School administration is responsible for informing the parent/guardian of the incident and the process to replace or repair the affected item or equipment. The replacement or repair of the item must be made within 10 school days, after the information was received.

Article 18: Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

All students and parents/guardians are required to sign the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy at the beginning of each academic year. With their signature, students agree to use all technology and technological devices appropriately. The school reserves the right to revoke a student's privilege to use technology within the school if any part of the policy has been violated.

Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring their children's use of social media and all forms of communication outside of the school's schedule. Students should always respect and comply with national and international norms, as well as adhere to the MCS Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.

Article 19: Use of School Name, Logo, Image and Information

It is prohibited to use the school name and logo in photos or videos or other forms of media that reveal the school's identity on any promotional or informational materials, social media sites, or any other means without prior written authorization from the school administration. Unless the school grants a written and sealed permission allowing its use, the school reserves the right to take legal measures it deems necessary if this rule is broken.

It is prohibited to publish, distribute or divulge images, photographs, videos, data or information via any means (email, chat, Whatsapp, etc.) that might stigmatize and/or affect the reputation and the psychological, physical, moral or intellectual development of any member of the school community, or that might result in legal proceedings that impact their personal life.

Any of the aforementioned behaviors are considered very serious violations and can bring about disciplinary and/or legal consequences. Parents/guardians will be fully responsible for any legal consequences as a result of such action. Students who violate this policy will be subject to consequences decided by the school administration.

It is forbidden for celebrations or activities out of school grounds to use the "MCS" name and/or divulge videos, photos or emails that mention "MCS" and/or show the logo or school uniform without prior authorization from the administration.

The name of the graduating class is linked to the school, therefore families or students are not authorized to use it without school administration authorization. It is forbidden to use the graduating class name in any social activity that promotes or distributes alcoholic beverages or any activity that is illegal for minors during the school year.

Article 20: Lost and Found

Misplaced items will be in the area designated as lost and found. Parents/guardians must label their child's belongings, including: lunchboxes, containers, backpacks, caps, clothing items, school supplies, amongst others. Any items that are not claimed by the end of each quarter will be donated to a local charity.

Article 21: Lockers

Lockers are assigned to students to store their belongings. Students are responsible for remembering the assigned password, not sharing it with their classmates, and keeping their locker in good condition. Disciplinary measures may be imposed in case of damage, graffiti or other writing on the lockers. All belongings, devices, valuables and books must be kept in the locker. The school is not responsible for items that are lost, damaged, or left outside the supervision of their owner.

The lockers belong to the school. Therefore, MCS reserves the right to review them in cases that may warrant it. Said search will be carried out only if there is a reasonable suspicion that a substance harmful to health, a weapon, an object of school property or any illegal article may be found in it.

Article 22: Objects Not Allowed in School

Students must not under any circumstances keep or have in their possession or inside their lockers items prohibited by Dominican law or any of the following objects:

- illegal substances
- alcohol or substances harmful to health
- weapons
- vapes or Juuls
- electronic games (example: Nintendo Switch)
- sticker albums
- reading materials with content deemed inappropriate for the educational environment
- objects that are meant to be sold or exchanged
- objects that represent a danger to the safety, health and/or the wellbeing of any member of the school community
- medication with or without authorization by parents/guardians
- any material that interferes with the development of school activities

Students who bring unauthorized items to school will be subject to disciplinary action and these will be confiscated for up to 3 days.

Article 23: Library

MCS promotes a culture of reading, both at school and at home. Students visit the library as part of their class schedule at least once a week, and are encouraged to select specific books, magazines, and/or newspapers, as well as to use electronic resources.

The library is available for use by students and parents/guardians during the same hours of operation as the school. We expect all members of the educational community to respect the rules and regulations of the library during their visits to it.

Article 24: School Pictures

School pictures will be taken by a professional photographer in the fall of each year. If any parent/guardian is interested in acquiring them, they must pay for them before the agreed date of taking the photos. Detailed information in this regard will be sent prior to said date.

Article 25: Birthday Celebration Policy

For a birthday celebration at the institution, parents/guardians must notify the area coordination one week in advance. Once approved, they must follow the following rules:

- The celebration will take place exclusively during recess or snack period.
- Clowns or elaborate decorations are not allowed.
- Drinks will consist of juice or any healthy beverage.

Birthday celebrations are a privilege; therefore, the application may be denied if it coincides with an academic event or activity. If the birthday will be celebrated off campus and parents/guardians wish to send the invitations through the school, they can do so as long as **all** students in the class are invited.

Article 26: Fundraising

Clubs, student organizations, classes and/or the Parent-Teacher Association are allowed to lead fundraising activities approved by the Head of School. The request is submitted to the area principal, and then to the Head of School for approval; it must include details of the activity, such as: proposed date, participating groups, budget, materials and/or any other information necessary for the approval of the activity.

Paragraph 1 - Management of Funds Raised:

It is the responsibility of each graduating class to assign two treasurers who will keep records of all income and expenditure of funds raised by their class. Treasurers must present a semiannual report to members of the class and parents/guardians. These funds must be kept in a bank account in the name of two parents/guardians of students.

Paragraph 2 - Use of Funds Raised:

The funds raised by the graduating class will be allocated specifically for the graduation party and/or trip. If parents/guardians and students agree to use these funds for name reveal expenses, they may do so.

It is forbidden to use the funds raised for parties and/or fundraising activities that distribute alcoholic beverages or in which any illegal substance is used by minors throughout the course of the school year.

CHAPTER 5: STUDENT HEALTH AND SECURITY

Article 1: Medical Staff

MCS counts with a full time medical staff; said staff is responsible for contacting parents/guardians in case of health situations, applying first aid in case of minor injuries and conducting medical evaluations. The recommendations of the school doctors do not supersede the guidelines of the student's pediatrician. In case the doctors consider that a student should not remain in school grounds due to health reasons, they will contact the parents/guardians to withdraw the student. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to pick up the student as soon as possible.

Students are **not** authorized to contact their parents/guardians to report they are sick or to ask to be picked up without authorization from the medical staff or their area principal. Failure to comply with this rule by students may result in the application of disciplinary measures. We strongly request parents/guardians to collaborate with the compliance of this rule.

Article 2: Medical Exams

When formalizing registration for the following school year, parents/guardians must present the Student Physical Examination Form duly completed and indicating, if necessary, if the student suffers from any health condition. It is the duty of the parents/guardians to inform the school in written form of any condition that requires special care or any change in their child's health of which the school should be aware.

Article 3: Illnesses

We recommend parents/guardians leave their child home if he/she presents symptoms of a contagious disease. The student must remain home and comply with the quarantine time required according to the health condition, to be feverless for at least 24 hours or until the doctor considers prudent for the student to return to school.

After suffering from a contagious or serious illness, the student may return to school as long as he or she does not pose a risk of contagion to others and/or his or her health is not at risk. The school may ask the student to present a medical certificate indicating that he or she can return to school; this certificate must indicate which activities the student must refrain from participating in and the care that we, as an educational center, must take. If parents/guardians do not inform about the restrictions or care required by their child, the school is not responsible for any inconveniences that may arise.

Paragraph 1 - Symptoms of Illness in School:

If a student presents symptoms of illness while at school, the medical staff will communicate with the parent/guardian. When contacted, the parent/guardian must respond to their requirements as soon as possible.

Paragraph 2 - Special Conditions:

In case a student presents any special condition (habit breakers, orthopedic devices, among others) or is recovering from procedures, illness, accidents, the parent/guardian must inform the school doctors in written form of the follow up the student requires.

PD: Parents/guardians should be aware that their child interacts with other students and that it is practically impossible to restrain their physical activity, thus they are inevitably exposed to getting hurt or being hurt by others. Therefore, it is strongly recommended for the student to return to school when fully recovered, in case the aforementioned may affect their condition.

Article 4: Medications

In case a student requires medication during school hours, the parent/guardian must provide the medicine labeled with the student's name to the infirmary, indicating the dose and time it should be administered. Medications may only be dispensed by the school's medical staff. Parents/guardians must pick up the medicine at the end of the day, otherwise it will remain in the infirmary until an adult picks it up.

Students are not allowed to bring any medication to school without a medical prescription or written authorization from their parents/guardians.

Article 5: Allergies

Parents/guardians must notify the institution at the beginning of the school year if their child suffers from allergies. In case your child develops any type of allergies throughout the school year, parents/guardians must notify the school doctors in written form. MCS is not responsible for medical situations related to unknown allergies during the school year.

Article 6: Accidents or Emergencies in School

Accidents are very likely to occur on school grounds. MCS provides first aid in case of minor accidents, such as: falls, scratches, bruises, among others.

In case of major accidents or emergencies, the student will be transferred to the nearest clinic or hospital, where they will receive first aid. The parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

It is common knowledge that emergency units at clinics or hospitals are staffed by general practitioners. If a specialist is required, the parent/guardian will be the person in charge of taking the student to the place where they can receive specialized care.

Article 7: Emergency Drills

The school organizes drills throughout the school year with the purpose of training students on adequate procedures to follow in case of an emergency. If an event occurs at school, the educational community will be notified after relocating students and staff to a safe area.

It is important that parents/guardians refrain from going to school in these circumstances and/or interfering with our established evacuation procedures to ensure the safety of each student and staff.

CHAPTER 6: CODE OF DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT

MCS promotes for its student body to assume the rights and responsibilities of a good citizen in a multicultural, changing society. Students must display appropriate behavior in all areas of their lives. It is our goal that they demonstrate discipline, morals and ethics, and internalize the importance of following the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook. Self-discipline, manners, and assertively assuming duties are principles that MCS instills in its students and believes that discipline should be positive and effective.

Our discipline code is intended to hold students accountable for inappropriate actions and applies disciplinary measures that lead students to reflect on the achievement of positive goals. It takes into consideration that each student is the protagonist of the teaching-learning process at MCS. We exhort parents/guardians to actively support the school in promoting self-discipline, through dialogue and disciplinary actions.

Article 1: Students' Rights and Responsibilities

MCS acknowledges that students have rights and responsibilities, and when confronting a situation, the school will respect their individual dignity. MCS staff have the responsibility to create and maintain an environment conducive to learning, and are authorized to promote the compliance of school rules. Students may respectfully address questions and concerns to the administrative or teaching staff. The *Derechos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes* (Law 136-03) and the *Normas del Sistema Educativo Dominicano para la Convivencia Armoniosa en los Centros Educativos Públicos y Privados* rectified in MINERD's *Ordenanza 05-2023* constitute the rights and duties that a student assumes when joining MCS.

Article 2: Disciplinary Policy

MCS adopts the school discipline regulations emanated by the MCS Board of Directors, which are aligned to the *Normas del Sistema Educativo Dominicano para la Convivencia Armoniosa en los Centros Educativos Públicos y Privados* rectified in MINERD's *Ordenanza 05-2023*. Students must abide by disciplinary rules during the school day, at school-related events (on and off campus), and in situations that may affect their safety and/or of another member of our educational community.

In case parents/guardians disagree with the imposed disciplinary consequence and confront difficulties solving the situation with the authority, they should then proceed to meet with the area Principal; if an agreement is still not reached after this meeting, parents/guardians have the option of appealing the decision through the Mediation Team.

A misconduct consists of non-compliance with the rules and responsibilities established in MCS, for example: disrespect, actions that directly or indirectly affect the health, physical or psychological integrity or safety of any member of the educational community, or that interfere with the learning environment.

Misconduct (minor, serious, very serious) generates disciplinary actions, which can affect the student's academic performance, conduct grade and personal record. Each disciplinary consequence is aimed to achieve expected behavior and the effective development of the school.

<u>Misconducts</u>	<u>Disciplinary Measures</u>
<p>Level One - Minor Misconducts: Actions that negatively influence the coexistence of students, the fulfillment of their responsibilities and all activities carried out inside and outside the context of the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interruptions to classroom or school work, as long as they do not correspond to a health or special condition of the student. ● Arriving late without prior notice. The minute the student is tardy, parents/guardians are obliged to inform the school of the reason for student tardiness through the pertinent channels. If the situation persists, the school will investigate the cause and meet with the family to find alternative solutions. ● Bother others with comments or jokes that ridicule classmates, teachers and other members of the educational community, as long as it does not involve repeated behavior. ● Using verbal and/or non-verbal language in an offensive tone. ● Attending school without the established uniform. If a student shows up to school without being properly uniformed, the reasons why the student has broken this rule will be investigated and a 	<p>Educational and disciplinary measures for minor misconducts: The teacher can apply these measures in the event of minor misconducts, as warranted by each case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflective dialogues with the student from a solution-focused support perspective. ● Giving a verbal reprimand in private and/or encouraging an apology, if applicable. ● Assigning occupational and/or reflective tasks that are related to the offense committed. ● Retention of distracting objects (cell phones, electronic tablets, others) until the activity or school day ends. Computers, tablets and other electronic devices may be used for academic activities in the classroom, only when authorized by the teacher. Otherwise, they must remain stored. Students will only be able to freely use their cell phones and other electronic devices as provided by school regulations. These measures also apply to activities inside and outside of school grounds, such as: field trips, retreats and other

<p>conversation will be had with the family to remind them of their role in ensuring that their children attend school properly uniformed, to prevent interference in the educational process of the student and the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving the classroom without justification during instructional time. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students are involved in educational activities in the classroom. However, all staff must report the presence of students outside the classroom to the school administration, if they do not carry a pass or are not authorized by the teacher, especially if they are carrying out any disciplinary infraction or any action that poses a risk to themselves or another person. • Use of electronic devices at school without authorization, such as cell phones, tablets, computers, headphones, among others. • Staying in classrooms or unauthorized areas during recess. • Throwing garbage, waste and littering any area of the school. Littering refers to minor damage caused to school facilities, which includes, but is not limited to, writing, scribbling or drawing on school property. • Accusing another person of some minor offense without having proper evidence. 	<p>co-curricular and extracurricular activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing written agreements and/or commitments with the student, following up on what was agreed upon and recognizing achievements. • Written and/or verbal communication with the family to implement support strategies for students to achieve positive behavioral change. • Analyzing and discussing reflectively with the group of students support measures for healthy coexistence and strengthening of their learning process. Sharing the agreements with families.
<p>Level Two - Severe Misconducts: Voluntary actions that interrupt the harmonious coexistence and the integral development of pedagogical process of the members of the educational community.</p>	<p>Disciplinary measures for severe misconducts: The Leadership Team can apply these measures in the event of severe misconducts, as warranted by each case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All measures established for minor misconducts.

- Failure to comply with the established rules in the execution of evaluations, tests or exams.
- Employing actions, such as confrontation, physical and/or verbal aggression, threatening attitudes and lack of respect towards classmates and/or authorities.
- Being irreverent verbally and non-verbally towards national symbols and any representation that is related to the country.
- Discriminating and stigmatizing members of the educational community based on race, nationality, religion, disability, sex, socioeconomic level, among other differences.
- Posting content on social networks related to any member of our educational community without their consent.
- Damaging, staining or deteriorating school furniture, equipment and/or facilities. The term deteriorate refers to the extent to which school furniture, equipment or facilities are damaged.
- Leaving different school areas with or without permission to with the intention of causing harm or carrying out an act of misconduct.
- Leaving classes and/or school grounds without proper authorization.
- Behaving in a manner contrary to established norms in curricular activities inside or outside of school.
- Entering different areas of the school without authorization, after school hours.
- Accusing another person of some serious offense without having proper evidence.
- Committing plagiarism or copying works, projects and/or exams. Using Chat GPT or other artificial intelligence for non-educational purposes or without prior

- Sending the student to an alternate space where he/she is supervised, previously agreed upon by the Leadership Team for a maximum time of one (1) day. If the situation requires more time, it must be consulted with the Guidance and Psychology staff of the corresponding MINERD educational district, guaranteeing, to this extent, the continuity of the teaching-learning process, the agreements and monitoring according to each case and informing the family.
- Drafting written reflection assignments, related to the offense committed and aimed at the integral development of the student.
- Giving oral and/or written public or private apologies. The Psychology Department will create an intervention and follow-up plan for the student and monitor him/her. This measure is part of the set of actions previously agreed upon with the students involved.
- Having conversations with parents/guardians to establish commitments with students and guarantee positive monitoring of the process, while documenting and evidencing such process.
- Written communications to parents/guardians in which the situation presented is described, the measures and deadlines established by the school for the students involved, and follow-up with their families.
- Canceling tests, exams, projects and/or individual/group assignments that are copied, plagiarized or stolen. Applying the corresponding loss of points to the subject and issuing a written warning to the person who carried out the infraction

<p>knowledge and/or authorization from teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking own or classmates' school supplies. • Recurrence of minor offenses that have not been overcome, even with the monitoring and support of the school in coordination with families. The school must show sustained evidence of having addressed the behavior or reason for the student's misconduct. 	<p>and to the person who provided the information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning special occupational tasks related to the nature of the misconduct. These must provoke critical and deep reflection that leads to behavioral change. If the case warrants it, refer to a behavioral professional and inform the family. • Prohibition of electronic devices due to repeated inappropriate use. School policies must define the rules for the use of devices. • Replacement of damaged or destroyed furniture, facilities or equipment. When a sanction includes the repair of physical damage, this must be discussed with the families and agreements must be established with them regarding replacement. They must also dialogue alternatives that favor a change in student behavior.
<p>Level Three - Very Severe Misconducts: Actions that involve danger and/or damage to students, any person or the school facilities. Also, those that cause moral damage to students, authorities and the institution itself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying, as defined in this handbook. • Bringing, trafficking or consuming psychoactive substances of any nature to school and/or in educational activities. • To appropriate or take ownership of objects or school supplies without the permission or consent of the owner, within the school or school context or in any school-related activity, individually or in complicity. • Altering academic and/or administrative documents of the school, for personal or group benefit. 	<p>Disciplinary measures for severe misconducts: The Leadership Team may apply these measures in the event of serious misconduct, as warranted by each case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of very serious offenses, all disciplinary educational measures established for serious offenses apply. • Sending the student to an alternate space where they are supervised, previously agreed upon by the Leadership Team, for a maximum of two days. The student will be assigned specific tasks and will commit to making progress every day under the supervision of the teacher and family. Parents/guardians must review and sign tasks assigned to students.

- Incurring in actions against the integrity of other people, such as confrontation, physical aggression and threatening attitudes.
- Bringing or using dangerous objects that cause harm to any member of the school, such as: sharp objects, knives, firearms, among others.
- Recurrence of serious offenses that have not been overcome, even with the monitoring and support of the school, in coordination with the families. The school must show sustained evidence of having addressed the behavior or reason for the student's misconduct.
- Carrying out practices that threaten health and the environment (electronic cigarette, hookah, vaper, homemade bombs, among others).
- Falsely accusing another person of a very serious offense without having proper evidence.
- Attacking and offending privately or publicly educational authority in the person of: directors, teachers and other members of the school.
- Posting offensive messages on social networks, memes, videos or photographs, without the consent of the school, classmates, teachers and any other member of the educational community and that violates morality and dignity.
- Violating the privacy of social media accounts (hacking, identity theft, digital scam, etc.) of any member of the educational community.
- Creating accounts on social networks that involve the name of the school and members of its community, without the authorization of the school.

- Suspension of participation in curricular activities outside the school. The suspension cannot be longer than one month, during which time the student's behavior will be assessed. If the event occurred in an extracurricular activity, the student will not participate in the next activity.
- Suspension of the student's participation in activities within the school, for a determined time proportional to the offense committed, as determined by the Leadership Team, and as long as these activities are not part of the mandatory curriculum.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking money from members of the educational community and items from the school without proper authorization or consent. • Having intimate sexual relations within school grounds. 	
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****Important Note: This list of actions does not present all disciplinary situations that may arise. The school administration reserves the right to consider whether the student's behavior is appropriate or not, or if it goes against the mission and vision of MCS, and/or the civil or criminal code of the Dominican Republic.***

Article 3: MCS School Bullying Policy

MCS considers all forms of bullying to be very serious. According to the *Normas del Sistema Educativo Dominicano para la Convivencia Armoniosa en los Centros Educativos Públicos y Privados* rectified in the Ordenanza 05-203 of MINERD, bullying is defined as any form of psychological, physical, verbal or social abuse that a student receives repeatedly from another student or from a group of students whose objective is to subdue or scare him/her. It must have the following characteristics:

- a) Teasing, threats, physical aggressions, systematic isolation, harassment, damage to belongings, etc.
- b) It must be prolonged for a certain time.
- c) It is usually provoked by a student, supported by a group, against a defenseless victim.
- d) It is behavior of a clearly aggressive nature that is intended to harm.
- e) The relationship established between the aggressor and the victim is characterized by an imbalance or asymmetry of power; students who suffer bullying present some disadvantages compared to their aggressor. These disadvantages may be due to age, physical strength, social skills, disability, socioeconomic status, among others.
- f) It occurs among students; the difference in age, sex, or grade level does not matter.
- g) The victim develops fear and rejection of the context in which he/she suffer violence; loss of confidence in self and others and decline in school performance.
- h) The aggressor's capacity for moral understanding and empathy decreases, while a violent style of interaction is reinforced.
- i) The quality of life of the environment in which it occurs is reduced: difficulty in achieving goals and increased problems and tensions.

Students will receive a verbal or written warning upon committing the first action. Disciplinary measures will be applied immediately after a second offense, considering this a very severe misconduct. Our policy is designed to create a safe school environment for all members of the school community, consequently bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

Article 4: Appeal of Disciplinary Sanctions

Students and parents/guardians have the right to appeal disciplinary action for negative

behavior or very severe misconduct. The appeal must be made in written form the day after the disciplinary measure has been officially notified and directed to the Mediation Team via the Head of School. Once the communication is received, the committee will meet and review the appeal. Parents/Guardians and students will be informed of the final decision.

In case parents/guardians disagree with the decision, they can appeal within 48 hours to the Leadership Team. Once the communication is received, the team will meet and review the appeal. Parents/Guardians and students will be informed of the final decision.

If the parents/guardians continue to disagree with the decision, they must appeal to the Comité Distrital de Revisión de Medidas of the MINERD educational district.

Paragraph 1 - Integration of the Mediation Team:

The team is made up of the area principal, a teacher, the school counselor or school psychologist, and two members of the student council.

Article 5: Application of Disciplinary Measures

Minor infractions will be determined by the teacher. The corresponding sanctions will be applied immediately, without the need for any subsequent consultation process.

Serious and very serious infractions will be determined by the Leadership Team and authorized by the School Director. The team will evaluate and make appropriate decisions regarding infractions. Also, parents/guardians will be informed of any decisions made regarding their child.

Article 6: Search and Seizure

MCS reserves the right to interview any student and/or search their belongings when the safety or rights of any member of the educational community have been violated.

Likewise, the school is the owner of any article assigned to students, as a result it reserves the right to inspect them in case it is deemed necessary. Items determined to be a threat to the safety of others, or to interfere with the educational process, may be seized. In the event an investigation is necessary, a minimum of two school staff members will be present.

Article 7: Public Displays of Affection

MCS recognizes that loving feelings can exist between students, and that cultural greeting practices include cheek kisses and brief hugs. Students must refrain from inappropriate behavior such as intimate hugging and kissing at school and/or at MCS related activities.

Article 8: Sexual Behavior

Any sexual conduct, including but not limited to: indecent exposure, harassment, abuse, and any other sexual act is completely prohibited at MCS or at any school activity off campus, and will be considered a very severe offense in violation of the school discipline code. The MCS Leadership Team will meet to make decisions about the appropriate disciplinary action.

In the event that a student is suspected of engaging in any type of inappropriate sexual behavior at school or at any school event off campus, it must be thoroughly investigated before any

consequences are applied. We ask family members who might be involved in any situation described above, to maintain confidentiality in this regard, in order to protect the integrity and emotional wellbeing of all students involved.

Article 9: Use of School Technology

Students have the opportunity to use the technologies available at school, including classroom computers, personal laptops or tablets, and the Internet. Staff will monitor the use of these technologies. Students who use technology in an inappropriate manner or without following the directions of the teacher are in violation of school policy and are subject to disciplinary action as a result. Consequences for inappropriate use of technology are as follows:

First offense: Verbal or written warning.

Second offense: Loss of privilege to use any type of technology for 1 week.

Third offense: Loss of privilege to use any type of technology for 1 month, meeting with parents/guardians and Leadership Team.

All students must sign the Technology Acceptable Use Policy at the beginning of each school year. This document describes the policies for the appropriate use of technology in the school. ([See Chapter 4, Article 18](#))

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINDFUL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Mindful Community School IS NOT RESPONSIBLE for any act or situation in which its students are involved inside or outside school grounds, or after established school hours, regardless of the place in which the act or situation occurs.

Mindful Community School IS NOT RESPONSIBLE for any act carried out by a student that may harm another classmate, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, inside or outside the school campus.

Mindful Community School IS NOT RESPONSIBLE for the acts and/or conduct of any student, due to the fact that they are the responsibility of their parents/guardians.

Mindful Community School IS NOT RESPONSIBLE for any act or situation that violates the law, morality and good manners in which its students, parents/guardians or school personnel may involve themselves outside the school campus.

Mindful Community School IS NOT RESPONSIBLE for any type of interpersonal communication off campus held by the student, whether in person, digital, via telephone or cell phone, or any other mode of communication, with any member of the school staff, administration, peers, or families and friends of their peers, understanding that supervision of the student is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

RECOMMENDATION

Parents/guardians must read this Student-Family Handbook with their children and make them aware of the importance of complying with it.

During the school year, teachers will discuss these regulations with students. Teachers who work in the first grades will give students the relevant explanations, using appropriate language so that the children understand the regulations.