

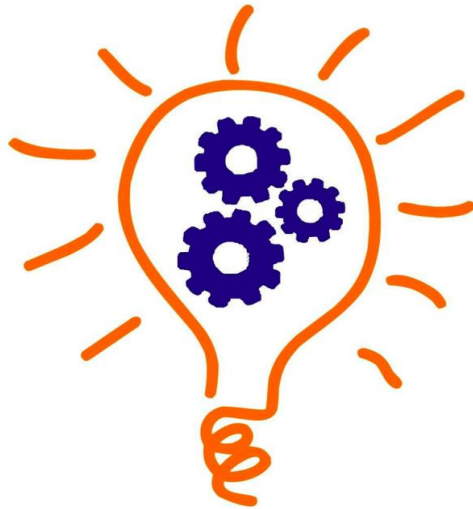


# Menlo Park Academy

Developing the Potential of Gifted Children

# Parent/Student Handbook

2023-24 School Year



2149 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, Cleveland, OH 44102 [www.MenloParkAcademy.com](http://www.MenloParkAcademy.com)

**Updated Fall 2023**

This handbook is subject to change. Visit our website for current information.

*Menlo Park Academy provides equal educational opportunities to all its students. MPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national and ethnic origin, ancestry, religion, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social or economic background, or other legally protected class in its programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Board has designated the School Director and the administrative directors to handle inquiries and investigate complaints.*

## **Board of Directors**

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Ray Birch, Executive Assistant  
Kaitlyn Old, Executive Assistant

## **Social/Emotional Service Consultants**

Dr. Sylvia Rimm, Ph.D., Consulting Psychologist  
Dr. Christine Brewer, Ph.D., Consulting Psychologist

## **Administrators & Administrative Professionals**

### **Operations and Front Office**

Deborah Zeffren, Director of Operations  
Dave Pannell, Facilities Coordinator  
Carl Wagner, Operations Manager  
Carla Reale, Front Office Coordinator  
Rita Nelson, Front Office Coordinator

### **Communications, Enrollment, Advancement, and Parent Engagement**

Clari Chiclowe, Enrollment Coordinator  
Renee Dornan, Volunteer and Events Coordinator  
Jerry Kest, Communications and Development Coordinator

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## Menlo Park Academy Mission and Core Values

Menlo Park Academy is a public school that nurtures gifted children through an exemplary program of rewarding experiences which develop the whole child.

To understand our mission, we focus on each of the following concepts individually:

- **Public School** – We are a public community school with open enrollment and no tuition charges.
- **Gifted Children** – Our school is designed for those students identified as intellectually gifted according to the rules of the state of Ohio.
- **Exemplary** – We offer a curriculum as unique as our students with the appropriate pace, acceleration, and differentiation options to address the varied needs of our students.
- **Rewarding** – We build our students’ self-confidence and enjoyment so they maintain their love of learning.
- **Experiences** – We believe that true learning comes from experiences. Students dive deeply into topics via in-school activities and outside events.
- **Whole Child** – We create a school environment that provides an understanding of the unique qualities of gifted children and frequently asynchronous development of their emotional, physical, and academic abilities.

## Core Values

### Student Focused

In everything we do, we strive to ignite sparks of interest and passion as well as excite a self-directed love of learning at an accelerated pace. Our mission is to offer an exemplary, vibrant, and unique program that will enable our intellectually exceptional children to identify and maximize their talents, while achieving academic, emotional, and social success.

### Community Centered

A strong partnership begins with trust, respect, and commitment. Our relationship with our most valued resource – a community of parents, students, staff, and board – is thoughtful, transparent, and collaborative. Our foundation is strengthened by relationships with vested partners and neighbors.

### Integrity Driven

Our goals and decisions are courageous and bold and always transparent, ethical and compassionate. We are committed to providing a unique and challenging environment for the gifted child where they may collaborate and learn with their intellectual peers.

### Empowered

We offer a nurturing learning environment where each child grows in confidence while experimenting, thinking independently and working cooperatively. We balance challenge and rigor with support, encouragement, and accountability.

## **Handbook Authorization**

By enrolling and attending Menlo Park Academy, students and parents/guardians are agreeing to the policies and procedures contained within the Student-Parent Handbook.

Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students or parents/guardians from rules and procedures described herein. Personal factors, illness, or contradictory advice from any source are not acceptable grounds for seeking exemption from these rules and procedures.



## General Information

### School Profile

#### Name and Contact Information

Menlo Park Academy, 2149 West 53<sup>rd</sup> St., Cleveland, OH 44102

Office number: 440.925.6365	Email: mpa.frontoffice@menloparkacademy.com
Fax number: 216.453.0157	Website: www.MenloParkAcademy.com

**Grades served:** Kindergarten through Eighth Info@MenloParkAcademy.com

**First Floor:** Primary Multi-Grade K-1

**Second Floor:** Intermediate Multi-Grade 2-3

**Third Floor:** Multi-Grade 4-5

**Fourth Floors:** Middle School Multi-Grade 6-8

**Maximum instructional grouping size for in-person learning:** 24 students (Grades K-4); 26 students (Grades 5-8)

**Teacher-Student Ratio:** 1:18

**Unique:** MPA serves the needs of children with high cognitive ability. Students are required to qualify as gifted using an instrument approved by The Ohio Department of Education in order to be admitted to our school.

**Educational Philosophy:** Our overall educational philosophy focuses on gifted children thriving. We believe in a whole-child approach to learning, and have implemented programs to address each child's academic, social and emotional needs. We also ensure that students aren't held back in their learning, but are encouraged to soar. Instruction is differentiated and flexible grouping strategies are used to address each learner's needs. We believe that children learn best by doing, so we provide a hands-on approach via cross-curricular projects and assignments. We know that our students don't need as much in-class seat time, so content repetition is not emphasized. We plan several experiences and activities to provide a deeper understanding of instructional topics.

**Student Assessments:** As a public school, MPA administers the AIR tests each year as required by the Ohio Department of Education. We also provide additional assessments at different grade levels, such as the MAP tests. Individual assessments are given by teachers in various subjects to assist with appropriate student placement. Acceleration tests are also administered when needed.

**Non-discrimination Policy:** MPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national and ethnic origin, ancestry, religion, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, disability, social or economic background, or other legally protected class in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Deborah Zeffren, Director of Operations, 2149 W. 53<sup>rd</sup> St., Cleveland, Ohio 44102, (440) 925-6365.

**Student Behavior Philosophy:** MPA fosters positive scholarly behavior through a wide range of supports (Responsive Classroom, Executive Functioning, Mindfulness, counseling programs for the gifted, etc.). We are a school for young children and believe that part of a child's learning process includes making and learning from mistakes. Children sometimes make bad choices, and it is our job as educators to help them learn how to make better choices. Towards that end, we implement associated consequences for poor behaviors instead of

punishments. We set clear expectations for student behavior that they are a part of creating and encourage children to hold each other accountable to meeting those expectations.

**Before and After Care:** The Edison Club is MPA's before- and after-care program. The program is designed to assist our working families. It allows our students to be in their school environment with their peers. Please see the section entitled "Edison Club" for more information.

**Parent Involvement:** Parent involvement at MPA is a critical piece to our success. Our school was founded by parents. Each family is asked to give at least five (5) hours of volunteer time each month, or a total of 45 hours during the school year. These efforts help to decrease staff expenditures while building engagement in our community. Volunteers are needed to help with basic school activities, such as lunch and recess monitors, car line as well as items that take more skill, such as minor facility needs and legal contract reviews.

**Why the name?** Thomas Edison's famous "Invention Factory" was located in Menlo Park, N.J. Thomas grew up in Milan, Ohio, just a short trip west of Cleveland. In school, his teacher thought he was "slow," so his mother home-schooled him. Mrs. Edison didn't have another school option for her gifted child, who are too often overlooked in education. At Menlo Park Academy, we provide a creative, stimulating environment for gifted children, like the Invention Factory did for Edison and his peers.

### **Brief History of Menlo Park Academy**

After the community school their children attended closed in June of 2008, several determined and motivated parents reached out to other families to ask for their support in evaluating options to serve their children's educational needs. There was significant interest and the group quickly grew.

The team spent countless hours that summer researching, debating, and discussing all of the details of creating and opening a school, such as finding a location, choosing a name, selecting a Board of Directors, and hiring staff.

After the Board of the Lucas County ESC (now the ESC of Lake Erie West, MPA's sponsor) approved the charter transfer, Menlo Park Academy officially opened on September 23, 2008, with 38 students in grades K-6 and four teachers. Growing the school to a sustainable size became the new focus, and MPA ended that year with 66 students. When we grew too large to effectively function in our former space, we sought to establish a campus that would allow gifted children to have a place to call their own and flourish for decades to come. After years of negotiations and with the partnership of many, we successfully renovated one of Cleveland's historic structures, the former Joseph & Feiss warehouse building and kicked off our 10th year in 2017 by welcoming students to our seven acre campus. This fall, MPA begins its 15th year with more than 400 students enrolled in grades K-8.

The story of MPA's founding is one of perseverance and dedication. While we are still a relatively new entity, we are proud of our many accomplishments since that summer. We're thrilled to have your family with us on this journey.

### **Governance**

MPA is organized as an Ohio Non-Profit Corporation and has been granted recognition as a tax-exempt public charity, as described in Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

All charter schools have a governing body. For MPA, this is the Board of Directors (aka the Board). They act as the policy-making entity that holds the school's charter and is therefore ultimately responsible for all school operations as well as fiduciary, legal, regulatory, and compliance issues. The Board provides valuable leadership to the school and is composed of volunteers who do not receive any compensation for their service. The members are charged with setting educational expectations and goals, and establishing policies for the school based on state laws and our school's charter. They are responsible for the long-term strategic planning and leadership of the school. The Board speaks and acts as a single entity on all matters, and no one member has the

authority or power to make any decisions on their own. Their primary function is holding and perpetuating the mission and vision of the school.

The main duties of the Board are to:

- Determine the mission and purpose of MPA and keep it clearly in focus.
- Determine, monitor, and strengthen the school's programs and services in accordance with the mission and the charter.
- Select, direct, support, and evaluate the performance of school leaders.
- Ensure effective strategic and organizational planning.
- Make policies, and conduct planning, monitoring, and evaluation to further the school's mission, core values, and strategic objectives.
- Ensure adequate resources and manage them effectively (oversee and approve annual budget, fundraising plans, and ensure the school is an effective steward of public funds).
- Authorize the entry into any contracts on behalf of the school.
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity, and maintain accountability by establishing policies to guide the school's board members and staff, and adhere to bylaws, articles of incorporation, and laws and regulations that apply to the school.
- Serve as advocates for the student body as a whole.
- Serve as a focus group and bring stakeholder concerns to the management team.
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess Board performance.

The exact rules under which the Board operates are described in the organization's bylaws. The Board has a regular meeting once each month. All Board meeting dates are posted at the school's main office and on the website. All decisions are made in public at open board meetings. Parents, faculty, and community members may make comments at the meetings at the time designated on the agenda. Executive sessions, typically held to discuss legal and personnel issues, are closed. Board meeting dates and minutes of Board meetings can be found on the school website.

A well-rounded Board of Directors seeks to include members with a varied range of expertise, including non-profit management, education, law, marketing, human resources, development, and finance. The school administrators regularly attend the meetings.

The Board makes use of committees that are chaired by a board member who brings the results of the committee's work back to the Board meeting for discussion and voting. Committees may have advisory members that include parents, faculty, and community members, as elected by the board. Only board members may vote on board matters.

## **Policies, Procedures and Protocols**

### **Access to School Premises and Events**

Visitors are always welcome at Menlo Park Academy as we want to share our mission and vision with others. The primary responsibilities of school officials and teachers are to educate the students and to provide for the safety and security of students and employees of MPA. Accordingly, proper procedures must be in place to enable MPA to achieve these responsibilities. To that end, the board has adopted a policy regarding access to school property and events. Here are some highlights on that policy:

- All visitors must sign in at the office, presenting a valid driver's license or ID, and wear a provided badge.
- All visitors will be screened using Raptor Integrated School Security software
- Volunteers may never use physical force when dealing with a student.

- Parents may have lunch at school with their child with prior permission from the School Principal
- Parents may bring in a treat to their child's class for their birthday or other special occasion as permitted by the teacher, and guided by important dietary restrictions shared via the teacher.

The Principal, or designated building administrator, is authorized to prohibit the entry of any person or expel any person when there is reason to believe their presence is detrimental to the good order of the school, events, or programs.

You can view the full policy on our website.

### **Allergies (Peanut or Other Foods)**

Menlo Park Academy recognizes that food allergies, in some instances, may be severe and even life-threatening. Parents of students with life threatening food allergies must provide the school with emergency medications, complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form and cooperate with the school to formulate a food Allergy Action Plan and complete the Food Allergy Notification Form. The Emergency Medical Authorization Form and the Food Allergy Notification Form are found in the registration/back to school forms or a copy can be obtained from the school.

### **Asthma or Anaphylaxis: Use of Inhaler or Epinephrine Autoinjector**

A student may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or a dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms, or before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms, only if the Asthma Action Plan for School form is completed. For the student to possess an epinephrine autoinjector to treat anaphylaxis at school, the Authorization for Student Possession and Use of Epinephrine Autoinjector form must be completed. Both forms can be obtained from the school.

### **Attendance/Absence/Tardy Procedures**

**Rationale.** Students enrolled in the school must attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the state of Ohio. Learning activities that take place in the class are a vital part of the teaching and learning process. Attendance affects student academic success. Thus, attendance each day and/or at class is very important. Therefore, every parent is expected to ensure that their child attends school every day, arrives on time, and arrives ready to learn.

**State requirements.** Ohio report card standards require schools to average an attendance rate of 95% or better. In order to meet this standard, students of MPA are allocated the minute/hourly equivalent of a sick bank of 10 days per year. Any time a student is tardy or leaves school early, even for an excused purpose, those minutes accrue across the school and affect the attendance standard on the school's yearly report card. According to Ohio law, any student who is absent from school for 30 or more consecutive school hours, 42 or more hours in one school month, or 72 or more hours in a school year is considered to be "habitually truant" and the school is required to intervene.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each day. Students who arrive after 8 a.m. are considered tardy. Students will not be marked tardy if they have a note from a doctor, dentist, counselor, psychologist, etc.

**Report absences.** Please contact the school no later than 8 a.m. each and every day a child is absent.

In the event such notification is not made, the school is required to contact parents within 2 hours of the start of the school day. The Operations team will:

1. Contact the parent by telephone; or
2. Contact the person designated on school records; notify them of the student's absence; or
3. Provide written notification to the parent/guardian in the event the school is unable to reach either the parent or other contact person.

## Excused Absences

- Personal illness and/or medical appointments
- Death in the family
- Religious observances
- Parent requests, such as family vacations:
  - Parental requests for family vacations need to be approved by the School Principal and should be submitted at least one week in advance of the proposed absence. Please use the Advanced Absence Request Form that can be obtained from the office.
  - If approved, the student is responsible for obtaining assignments to be completed during their absence. Those assignments may be the same as those given in class, or the teacher may choose to give alternative assignments, especially if they can turn the trip itself into a unique learning opportunity.
  - The parent assumes responsibility for seeing that their children complete their assignments. These assignments will be accepted by teachers for grading upon the student's return to school.

## When Must a Child Stay Home?

Students with communicable illnesses, such as conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice, or a suspicious rash, should not attend school. Students should also stay home if they have vomited or have had a fever above 100 within the last 24 hours. Please see Student Illness and Communicable Disease Information for Parents/Guardians and Return to School Requirements on the [MPA website](#).

## COVID: When Must a Child Stay Home?

Menlo Park Academy will follow ODH guidance for COVID-19 isolation and quarantine. A suspected outbreak of COVID-19 will be reported to the community and local health department.

## Before and After School Care: Edison Club

Menlo Park Academy offers a before- and after-school care program (Edison Club), operated by Overtime Athletics. It is designed to be an affordable option for those families needing child care on a regular basis, without the additional worry and expense of transporting their children to alternative daycare providers. We meet the needs of working parents with both consistent and irregular schedules. Monthly statements will be provided to all families for tax purposes.

Edison Club is available school days from 7-7:30 a.m. and from 3:15-6 p.m. Parents are asked to designate a specific timeframe for both drop-off and pick-up of their children. The morning club includes quiet activities and games. The afternoon club includes snack time, homework time, and other educational yet fun activities: crafts; recreational activities; special events; special presentations; computer time; movies and more.

Children benefit from playing with friends of all ages, and parents are at ease knowing that their child(ren) can stay in the same caring place before and after school. Policies and procedures in effect throughout the school day remain in effect during Edison Club. More information is available on our website.

## Bus Rules and Regulations

Some nearby home school districts offer bus transportation to and from MPA. Check with your local district to inquire about this service. If your school does not, it may offer a transportation voucher. Pupils who ride the bus are under the same disciplinary rules that they are in classes. MPA's behavior expectations are expected on buses at all times, as well as rules set out by each busing district. Failure to obey may result in losing the privilege of bus transportation.

## Cell Phone and Other Electronic Devices

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones and other electronic devices to school. However, if they do bring them to school, they must remain silent and in backpacks, unless directed by a staff member that they are allowed to use these devices for educational or recreational purposes in class. Should these items be seen or

heard at times not approved by a staff member, they will be confiscated and held in the office until the parent picks up the item. The school is not responsible for investigating or paying for lost or stolen property brought to school by a student.

Please remember that the bus is an extension of the learning environment and the cell phone policy remains in effect.

### **Cameras and Other Recording Devices**

Students may not use cell phones or personal cameras to take pictures at school unless they are given direct permission by a faculty member. In addition, students may not take pictures of members of the school community, nor may they publicly display pictures. Students may not make audio or video recordings in school except with teacher consent and supervision.

### **Electronic Readers**

Use of electronic readers, such as those on iPods, Nooks, Kindles, and iPad, may be used at the discretion of the individual teacher. Students who use these items for unauthorized purposes, such as visiting the Internet, may have the device confiscated by the faculty.

### **Change of Address**

Parents are to report to the office all changes of address or changes in telephone numbers or email addresses in writing so that school records can be updated. Any change in address will require immediate completion of a new proof of residency. The school must report all addresses to the state for funding.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Due to various communicable diseases, it may be necessary to take specific measures to ensure the health and safety of our children. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease. For more information, please review the [Communicable Disease Information document](#) located on Menlo's website.

### **Computer and Technology Policy: Acceptable Use and Internet Safety (AUP)**

MPA has a 1:1 student to computer ratio, providing a Chromebook device for each student to use throughout the school year. Technology is used at our school under adult supervision for age-appropriate educational purposes. The school retains the ownership of all data, hardware, and software. The school reserves the right to inspect, copy, and/or delete all files and records created or stored on school-owned computers.

**Students must observe all guidelines outlined in Board Policy 232 — Technology and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy.** Failure to observe guidelines will result in penalties as determined by Board policy. This policy can be found on the school website.

### **Computers and Internet Usage**

Menlo Park Academy's faculty, in their sole discretion, shall determine whether a student may use a computer, or any other electronic technology, in class or during the school day. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, depending upon how well an individual student is able to complete school work while having access to electronic technology.

Students may be given access to, and use of, a variety of technology and other equipment, including laptop computers (Chromebooks) that are the property of MPA. This equipment is to be used only for school purposes, and must be operated in accordance with the operating guidelines of the equipment's manufacturers, applicable laws, and good sense.

Any damage to school property that results from negligence or intentional conduct will be charged to a student's parent(s).



Because access to online services provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents of users who are under 18 years old) must understand that neither the school nor the district can control the content of the information available on these systems. Some of the information available is controversial and sometimes offensive. The Board does not condone the use of such materials. As a result of the Children's Internet Protection Act of December 21, 2000, all school computers used by students will be monitored with special filtering devices in place intended to restrict access to undesirable locations.

If a student happens across objectionable materials, the student must report it to the teacher. Failure to do so will imply that the objectionable site was intentionally found with disregard to the rules for acceptable use of the Internet.

## **Conferences**

Menlo Park Academy believes it is important to meet with parents to discuss student progress. The school schedules two official conferences during the year. These are timed to allow for adjustments in student performance, not just to report on past performance. Work samples and personal goals help to focus this important communication.

Students are expected to attend and lead these meetings. Even in the younger grades, we feel it is important for the child to be aware of their progress and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Additional conferences may also be scheduled. Your child's teacher(s) will contact you about setting a mutually convenient time. You may also initiate a conference by contacting teachers directly.

## **Credit Flexibility**

Ohio's "Credit Flex" plan shifts focus from evaluating student learning based on "seat time" to assessing a student's demonstrated academic and skill level or performance. The plan does not eliminate Carnegie units or "seat time" requirements altogether for secondary students. Rather, it retains seat time as one option and expands the number of options for earning credit by adding demonstration of subject area competency and structures that support it irrespective of any time requirements.

Credit Flex:

- Offers learning opportunities not found in the one-size-fits-all factory process model.
- Focuses on performance, not counting seats and hours.
- Acknowledges and addresses students' different learning styles, paces, and interests.
- Offers student opportunities to demonstrate creativity, explore academic and career interests, and practice critical thinking.
- Recognizes that measures of engagement and ownership are as important for achievement as measures of attendance and access.

## **Custody Documents**

Custody papers must be provided to the school by the custodial parent (residential parent for school purposes) as soon as they are provided to the parent by the court. The school also needs to be immediately provided with court documentation of any changes in custody. An official court seal needs to be stamped on the document with the appropriate judge's signature.

## **Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but all individuals who have access to the school's programs and facilities.

MPA provides a variety of Special Education programs and services for students identified as having a disability defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and Section 504. The school is responsible to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities. If you know of a child with a disability who is not currently enrolled in a Special Education program, please contact the School Principal, counselor, or intervention specialist.

## **Disciplinary Expectations and Procedures**

Students attend MPA by choice and can expect to participate in its gifted educational program in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment where students can learn and teachers can teach. Appropriate student behavior is an essential part of achieving this goal and thus students are expected to act, speak, and behave as model young citizens. It is the desire of MPA that discipline be a learning experience rather than a punitive experience, and that the development of effective self-discipline be encouraged through instruction, guidance, and counseling.

To this end, we have formulated specific rules, regulations, policies, and procedures to provide guidance to:

1. Students, so that there will be no ambiguity as to what is expected.
2. Staff, so that when it is necessary to discipline a student, it will be done fairly and respectfully.

Students and Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must receive a copy of, and review, the Parent/Student Handbook and acknowledge that they have done so by returning the form (located on the last page).

The expectations for all of our students are as follows:

- Students will respect authority and adhere to the school code of conduct.
- Students will be respectful of one another, and all other people in the school.
- Students will respect the rights and property of others, including students, teachers, staff, all other people in the school, and the school.
- Students will understand that nonviolence, peace, and concern for others are the foundation of all school activity.
- Students will recognize that each person possesses unique gifts that should be recognized and accepted.
- Students will attend school every day, be on time, be prepared for classes, and be willing to participate and learn.
- Students will wear the appropriate uniform or attire that adheres to the dress code and will present a neat and clean appearance.
- Students will exercise self-discipline and self-control in all aspects of school activities.
- Students will assist in maintaining a safe, orderly, and clean school environment.

**All students are expected to conform to the Code of Conduct and are subject to the school's disciplinary process.**

### **Lunch/Recess Behaviors**

Lunch should be a pleasant experience for everyone — students, teachers, and staff. Students must display decent table manners, courteous conversation, appropriate noise level, help with cleanup, and cooperate with fellow students, teachers, staff, and volunteers. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Leaving without permission.
- Eating food outside the designated area or room, without permission.
- Littering or deliberately making a mess.
- Failure to clean up after yourself.
- Discourteous behavior toward others.
- Rowdy or noisy behavior.



## Social Behavior

Students will conduct themselves according to MPA's core values, positive character traits, and expected behavior taught at the school. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating, stealing, lying, using coarse language.
- Lack of courtesy and respect (talking back, name-calling etc.).
- Any use of physical force or violence at any time, anywhere on school property, or at a school-related activity/event either on or off school property.
- Harassment of others.
- Disrespect toward any person in authority, other adult, fellow student, or visitor.

## Learning Space Policies

Each learning space has its own characteristics and expectations. Teachers may establish certain rules and expectations in order to provide for a pleasant atmosphere, positive learning environment, and good class management, e.g. Responsive Classroom. These specific rules are in addition to those listed in the Student Discipline and Code of Conduct Policy, Suspension, Expulsion, and Due Process Policy, and Parent/Student Handbook, and failure of a student to adhere to these room rules and policies may be the basis for disciplinary action.

## Dress Code

Adherence to the dress code is expected from the first day of school to the last. Students must wear MPA-approved clothing. The School Principal or teachers will notify students and parents/guardians of specific dress-down days (e.g. Dress-down Fridays, Spirit Weeks, field trips, or dress-down rewards).

All students are expected to wear neat, clean clothing that is appropriate for an educational environment. The School Principal may require students to change any attire deemed inappropriate. In this situation, the School Principal will provide the student with an article of clothing to cover/replace the offending article of clothing, or contact the student's parent(s) or guardian to bring different clothing to the school so that the student may change, or ask that the student be removed from the premises.

The school dress code policy can be found on the website.

## Homework

The majority of our learning is done in class. Therefore, we limit the amount of homework given to students. There are exceptions, such as students who take high school classes or those who do not complete course assignments. Homework assignments are an extension of, and reinforce, class work. Assignments are also to help individuals strengthen weak subject areas, and may be assigned at the discretion of the faculty. The amount of homework and the time required for completion will depend upon the grade level of the student and the type of skill or content being developed. All homework must be completed in a timely manner, as determined by the faculty, and as communicated by the subject teacher. Repeated failure to complete or submit homework on time may result in appropriate disciplinary measures.

## Transportation

Riding the school bus, or other transportation provided for use by MPA, is a privilege. MPA will support the applicable guidelines, rules, and policies established by the school district or transportation company providing busing service. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Standing or moving about the bus when it is in motion.
- Sitting in a seat that has not been assigned to the student, unless the driver gives specific permission.
- Eating or drinking on the bus.
- Disrespectful, bullying, or violent behavior toward the driver or other students.
- Constant yelling or screaming.
- Fighting, roughhousing, or abusive language.

- Damage or vandalism to the bus and its fixtures.

### **Toys, Play Objects, and Electronic Devices**

School is a place of learning. Distractions cause students to be inattentive. Therefore, students are to keep all electronic devices, toys, or play objects at home unless the faculty or School Principal gives special permission, designates a specific day when these items may be brought to school, or allows these items for use during recess only. Teachers, faculty, staff, and the School Principal may confiscate these items at any time if they are causing a distraction.

### **General Policy: Suspension, Exclusion, and Removal**

The dismissal and disciplinary policies of MPA will comply with **Ohio Revised Code § 3313.66, § 3313.661, and § 3313.662.**

Consequences for infractions will be adjusted to the individual student at the discretion of the teacher and the School Principal. The intention of the consequence is to help the student understand why the behavior is unacceptable and to be motivated to do the right thing. Our objective is to empower the student to make good choices. MPA uses progressive discipline.

The dismissal and disciplinary policies of Menlo Park Academy (MPA) comply with **Ohio Revised Code § 3313.66, § 3313.661, and § 3313.662.** For complete information, please reference **Board Policies: 271 — Student Code of Conduct; , 272 — Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies, 273 — Expulsion and Suspension Policies, 274 — Permanent Exclusion of Non-Disabled Students, 275.1 — Disciplining a 504 Student, 276 — Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Seclusion, and Restraint.**

### **Search and Seizure Policy**

The School recognizes that the privacy of students may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no student be searched without reason or in an unreasonable manner. For more information please see **Board Policy 268 — Search and Seizure.**

### **Drug-free, Smoke-free Policy**

Menlo Park Academy is a drug-free environment. This includes no smoking, no vaping, no drug use of any kind. Please see **Board Policy 266** for more information.

### **Emergency Closing Procedures**

Menlo Park Academy will sometimes close due to inclement weather, or for other reasons. If the Cleveland Metropolitan School District schools are closed, Menlo Park Academy will be closed. We may also close at other times if the School Principal and School Leadership Team deems it necessary. You can visit ParentSquare or our website for the most up-to-date school closing policy.

Menlo Park Academy utilizes ParentSquare Smart Alerts to alert the MPA community of late-breaking news, school cancellations, and worthy school information. To update your information, please visit [www.parentsquare.com](http://www.parentsquare.com) and log into your account.

In addition, you can monitor iAlert on [www.wkyc.com](http://www.wkyc.com) (Channel 3), [www.news5cleveland.com](http://www.news5cleveland.com) (Channel 5), or [www.Fox8.com](http://www.Fox8.com) (Channel 8) for school closings.

### **Emergency Forms**

Families must submit an up-to-date emergency form for each child before the first day of school. No child will be admitted if an emergency form has not been completed and turned in. Throughout the year, all information on the emergency form must be kept current.

## Entering/Exiting the Building

### Building Security

All visitors are to enter the building via the main entrance (nearest the flag poles). Visitors must sign in with the front office and wear the badge that is issued. Doors are never to be propped or held open.

### Car Line

During arrival and dismissal, safety and security is our top priority. Parents are to follow these guidelines to keep Car Line moving along quickly:

- Car line staff will be in the loading/unloading zone to open and close car doors and guide students.
- When you approach the drop-off zone, **have your doors unlocked and your student(s) ready to exit the vehicle**. They should be unbuckled with everything in hand and ready to go.
- **Stay in your car**. If you need additional time to help a child un-buckle or buckle, load/unload many students and/or larger items, or just need a bit more time, please pull forward to the delay area so cars behind you may keep moving.
- **Follow traffic directions**. Please pull forward when the car in front of you does and stay as close to bumper-to-bumper as possible to keep cars off the street. Please do not pull out of your lane and around other cars. If it is necessary for the line to advance around a parked car, staff will direct you.
- **Display student name sign**. When picking up students, each vehicle must display a current Menlo-issued student name sign for each student.

Detailed information and instructions about Car Line are available in the Car Line Guide on the website.

### What if My Student is Going Home with Someone Else?

We may only release students to people that are on your release form. If your child is going home with another student, the school requires a pink note from you or you may send a note through our Let's Talk app. The note should be signed by the parent or guardian, authorizing the student to go with the other student and naming who will be driving. If that person is not on your release form, then we reserve the right to ask for that person's identification. We may accept emailed permission slips, but you cannot assume that we receive the email in time to facilitate the arrangement. Please phone us with permission only in case of an emergency.

### Signing Students In and Out

When students need to leave school during the official school day, parents are required to sign out their children at the school office. Upon their return to school, or if arriving late (after 8 a.m.), parents must sign in their children. Parents must let the school know of any early pick-up ahead of time. If no doctor's note is provided, the child will receive a tardy for arriving late or leaving early. You may notify the front office through our Let's Talk app. We do not allow early pick up after 2:15 p.m. unless it is an emergency situation.

### Fees

The required annual Material, Activity and Technology (MAT) fee is \$625. The fees are established to cover consumables, school activities, and technology devices. Payment details for the fees are designated on the enrollment application. Fees are subject to change. Please contact the billing department with any questions about MAT fees.

## Fundraising

### What Money Does the School Receive, and Where Does it Go?

**State Allotment.** Menlo Park Academy is a public community school. The state of Ohio provides approximately \$8,700 per pupil each year. Our essential expenses are summarized below.

Main Expenses	% of Income
Wages and benefits	51%
Purchased services, rent, utilities	36%
Materials and supplies, administrative costs	13%

**Materials and Activities Fee.** The student fee pays for consumable instructional materials and activities, software leases, workbooks, art materials, paper, instructional magazine subscriptions, instructional technology, local field trip admission costs, and transportation.

**The Gap.** To ensure that we are offering the best educational experience we can, Menlo spends well above the state provided \$8,700 per student per year. This does not include capital expenditures, expanded technology offerings, and added experiences and materials that our students need to ensure the best experience. To cover the gap we rely on volunteers and fundraising.

**Volunteerism.** A key to MPA's success over the years is our volunteerism. Parents, extended family members, and others dedicate their time and expertise to our school. We depend upon our volunteer family to provide a wealth of resources to the school that would otherwise incur a cost. They help us to bridge the gap between our state funding and what we need to spend to provide the essentials.

**Fundraising.** Fundraising broadens the school's source of money to beyond our own families, to our neighbors, colleagues, and distant relatives, as well as to businesses and foundations. It also enables those who can give more, often with tax advantages for themselves. Our focus is always on participation, which allows us to show the commitment of our own families as we seek additional funding from outside sources. The school is a 501(c)(3) organization, so donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### What are the Difference Fundraisers?

**Annual Appeal.** Schools everywhere conduct annual appeals to cover the costs of annual expenses that are not covered by revenue alone; whether that revenue is state funding, as is the case with community schools, or whether it is tuition, as is the case with private education.

Annual fund donations do not necessarily have a single glamorous incentive in mind; rather, they fund the vital operational needs of the school. They help the school to exist. We ask that all our families support this appeal to the extent they can in whatever amount is comfortable for their family. Our goal is to achieve 100% participation from our parents.

The usual donor sources for annual funds are those who are most committed to the mission of the school: the families and alumni. In addition, vendors who have a vested interest in the sustainability of the school find the annual fund serves their own interests as well.

**Fund-A-Need (Winter Benefit).** Sometimes we launch a "Fund-a-Need" extension of our Annual Appeal for a specific need. Donations count toward the family's Annual Appeal donation, but are targeted for a specific need.

**Sales and Event-Based Fundraisers.** One of the intentions of sales- and event-based fundraisers is to expand fundraising to include MPA's extended family and friends.

At MPA, we usually have several event-based fundraisers each year. They usually include a fall and/or spring event, a Walk-a-Thon at the school (in which students get sponsors), and raffles/auctions at student performances.

We have minimized and streamlined the sales-based fundraisers, and usually offer one or two each year. Sometimes these have a target in mind, such as playground equipment, teacher-training funds, a large field trip, or expanded technology.

## Grading Practices

MPA's grading practices focus on learning and providing meaningful feedback to students and their parents. The practice considers the relevance and use of both summative and formative assessments.

Non-academic items are communicated separately from the student's academic achievement. These include items such as attendance, punctuality, attitude, class participation, and homework (if it is based solely on completion). These items have a place in the evaluation of a student, but are not a measure of the student's academic achievement. Letter grades follow a standard 4.0 grading scale. Our youngest learners receive different indicators of achievement on their report cards that allow for an opportunity for more descriptive information on student progress.

## Grading Scale

Our grading scale is intended to communicate student progress and achievement in accomplishing goals and learning material.

Parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool or Google Classroom frequently to stay informed of your child's work in school. **All assignments, homework, and pertinent documents will be posted on those platforms.**

If you are experiencing difficulties finding information about assignments or class process, questions should be directed to your child's homebase or advisory teacher, or directly to the teacher of the subject in question.

## Grades for Kindergarten through 3rd

In grades Kindergarten through 3rd, a standards-based report card is used. This format allows parents to see which standards are being addressed during each trimester. A non-graded, progress-based scale is used to show growth for the individual standards over the course of the year.

This scale of progress is reflected as:

<b>L:</b> Limited Progress	<b>M:</b> Mastery of Standards
<b>E:</b> Exceeding Expectations	<b>P:</b> Progressing

The scale is used for all content areas, as well as encore classes such as music, art, STEM, world cultures and physical education.

## Encore Grades for 4th to 8th Grades

Encore grades are assigned letter grades to assess student progress and commitment to excelling. However, these grades are only indicators of performance and are not figured into the student's Grade Point Average.

**A:** Student demonstrates consistently excellent behavior, and a motivated, hard-working attitude. Student completes all assignments on time, showing effort and creativity.

**B:** Student demonstrates consistently good behavior, showing effort in their work. Students complete almost all of their assignments on time.

**C:** Student demonstrates inconsistent behavior and attitude, with missing assignments.

**D:** Student demonstrates poor behavior and attitude, has many missing assignments, and shows little effort to complete work.

**F:** Student demonstrates very poor behavior and attitude, and is missing most assignments. Student consistently shows little to no effort to complete work.

### GPA Grades for 4th to 8th Grades

A traditional grading scale is used for students in grades 4-8. All core classes, as well as Encore classes such as music, art, physical education, STEM, and world cultures are assigned a letter grade.

The grading scale is:

<b>A+</b> 98-100	<b>A</b> 93-97	<b>A-</b> 90-92
<b>B+</b> 87-89	<b>B</b> 83-86	<b>B-</b> 80-82
<b>C+</b> 77-79	<b>C</b> 73-76	<b>C-</b> 68-72
<b>D+</b> 67-69	<b>D</b> 63-66	<b>D-</b> 60-62
<b>F</b> 59-below		

In order to allow students the best opportunity for success, we provide mid-term reports for any student who is earning a “C” grade or lower in grades 4-8.

### High School Credit Courses and Weighted GPAs

Letter grades follow a standard 4.0 grading scale. Students taking high school credit course work will also receive a weighted GPA based on a 5.0 scale:

<b>A:</b> 5 points	<b>B:</b> 4 points	<b>C:</b> 3 points	<b>D:</b> 1 point	<b>F:</b> 0 points
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This will be reflected on their final transcript.

## Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

### Anti-Harassment Policy

The School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying (including cyber-bullying) of any student on school property or at school-sponsored events (any event conducted on or off school property, including school buses and other school-related vehicles, that is sponsored, recognized, or authorized by the Board). A safe and civil environment in the school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards.

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and the school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate bullying.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means either of the following: 1) any intentional, written, verbal, electronic, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and is

sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student; or 2) violence within a dating relationship. The definition of “harassment, intimidation, or bullying” also includes the above-described acts which are electronically generated, stored, or transmitted, sometimes called “cyber-bullying”.

Any inquiries or complaints regarding student harassment should be addressed to the School Principal, or any other school official, or via the Report Bullying and Threats topic in Let’s TalkFor more information, please see **Board Policy 264.1 — Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy**.

### **Hearing and Vision Screening Guidelines**

MPA performs hearing and vision screenings annually. Children to be screened for the 2023-24 school year include:

- Children in grades K, 2, 4, 6, 8
- Students in Special Education
- New students
- Students referred by a parent or teacher
- Students who were absent during screening last year
- Any student referred from the prior year with no follow-up from home

### **High School Shadowing**

Students in grade 8 are permitted to shadow at area high schools for a period of up to two days without being marked absent. Written notice must be given to the front office at least one day prior to the date requested for the shadowing experience. Students should also check with their teachers concerning the feasibility of shadowing dates. The front office will provide the student with a written permission slip that may be requested by the high school. Students are required to provide proof of the shadowing experience upon their return to school. Failure to provide the prior written notice and proof of the shadowing experience to the front office will result in an unexcused absence for the day and a zero for all assignments.

### **Immunizations**

Each student must have the immunizations required by law or have an authorized exempt form. If a student does not have the necessary shots or exemptions, the School Principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. A student will be excluded from school if immunizations are not up to date by the 15th day of school. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with state law. Any questions about immunizations or exemptions should be directed to the front office.

Please check with your child’s doctor to make sure he or she is properly immunized before school starts in the fall. The cost of the immunization is \$13 through the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. For more information, contact the Board of Health at 216-201-2041.

All immunizations are required before the first day of school in order to be enrolled. To view the latest immunization schedules, please see visit the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>

### **Intervention Assistance Team (IAT)**

An Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) that consists of administrators, teachers, other professionals, and parents provides intervention strategies, short-term consultation, resources, and continuous support for students experiencing academic, social, or behavioral challenges. The team’s goal is to develop the best possible plan to assist the referred student to achieve academically or behaviorally. The focus is always on what can be done to assist the student to be more successful. Students may be referred to the IAT by an individual teacher, parent, counselors, or School Principal.



## Lunch

Students can bring a healthy lunch from home to enjoy, or they can order a hot lunch, if available. If your child has a food allergy, please indicate it on the student registration form. Every effort will be made to ensure your child is not in close proximity to those foods during meal time. Students are expected to interact with one another and the supervising adults with dignity and respect.

## Medication Policy/Clinic Procedures

Menlo Park Academy has adopted a policy regarding the administration of medicine at school. We encourage parents to administer medication before and after school; however, if a student must bring medication to school, the following requirements are to be met. A request form must be completed by the parent and the child's physician BEFORE medication can be given to your child at school. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide the school with the completed paperwork. It is NOT the responsibility of school personnel to fax or mail these forms to any physician. The *Medication Policy* and the *Provider and Parent Request for the Administration of Medication Form by School Personnel* forms can be accessed through the front office, on the school's website, and ParentSquare.com.

If your child needs any medication during school hours, please follow these procedures:

1. Use the **Administration of Medication Form** available from the front office.
2. Both over-the-counter and prescription medication require that a physician sign the **Administration of Medication Form**.
3. New forms must be submitted for any change in type of medication, dosage, or frequency.
4. The medication must be in its original container.
5. The parent, not the child, must deliver the medicine to the school office.

Students may not carry or take medications without a form. This includes over-the-counter medicines like Tylenol or cough syrup/drops. Possession of medicines without a form will result in notification of the parent and possible disciplinary action.

Student Services and other school personnel are permitted to administer minor first aid. However, if a child becomes ill at school, parents will be contacted and requested to take the child home. If the child has a serious accident or illness, Cleveland EMS will be contacted and parent(s) notified. Additional care plans and medicine forms can be found in the school clinic for chronic conditions (allergy, seizure, asthma, diabetes, etc.).

## Outdoor Recess

Recess is an important part of the school day. All children are expected to go outside for recess unless they have a note from a doctor stating that they cannot go outside due to a medical condition. During the winter season, it is important to dress your child appropriately for the weather. The School Principal, or a delegated staff member, may cancel outdoor recess and/or restrict the use of play space and equipment due to inclement weather or a temperature below 25 degrees (apparent temperature). Indoor recess is held in the learning spaces with teacher-guided activities.

## Parent Partnerships

Since the inception of the school, parents have been an integral part of our creation and growth. MPA would not exist, let alone thrive, without the commitment of our parent community. MPA was created by parent volunteers and considers engaged parents to be a cornerstone of student success. We are pleased to welcome volunteers and value their willingness and commitment to the success of our students and school. Each volunteer, be it parents, grandparents, family members, or interested community members, has something unique to contribute. They have devoted innumerable amounts of time, energy, and passion to our school, and we would not be the success we are without their continued commitment.



A productive parent relationship with our faculty builds community and allows our children to thrive in a way that no one can accomplish alone. We welcome parents' talents, skills, and energies in helping us continue our path of excellence.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Menlo Park Academy expects that each family volunteer 45 hours throughout the school year (an average of five (5) hours each month). We encourage more contributions from those who can provide them. A current list of our volunteer opportunities can be found in each month's Volunteer Request posts on ParentSquare.

### **Pets**

Animals are not to be brought to school without permission from both the individual teacher and the School Principal.

### **Photo/Image Use**

Menlo Park Academy considers student photos/videos as directory information under our Board policy. Student photos and/or video captured while students participate in athletics and other school activities may be used in any news and or marketing media created by MPA.

Permission to use the media will be considered valid unless indicated in each school years' enrollment forms.

### **Physical Education**

Physical education is an important part of the school curriculum. A doctor's note is required if it is necessary for a child to be excused from two (2) or more consecutive physical education classes. For safety reasons, students must have a pair of tennis shoes in order to participate. Please refer to the dress code section for appropriate attire for physical education.

### **Promotions, Placements and Retentions**

Promotions, placements, and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering a placement or retention are: (a) indifference or lack of effort on the part of a capable student; (b) physical or social immaturity; and (c) frequent or long absences. Parents/Guardians can assume their child will be promoted unless the alternative of either placement or retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents/Guardians will be included in any retention decision. Formal, written documentation regarding the child's progress during the current school year and the decision regarding placement or retention will be sent home on the last day via the child to the parent/guardian. A copy of this documentation will be filed in the student's cumulative school record.

### **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):
  - a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
  - b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  - c. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - e. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - f. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  - g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  - h. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- a. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - b. Any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  - c. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
- a. Protected information surveys of students;
  - b. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  - c. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law. The school will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

The school will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The school will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The school will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and are provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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

### **Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

If an MPA employee has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect, they are immediately obligated to make an oral report to the Department of Children and Family Services at 216-696-KIDS and/or the local law enforcement agency in which the child resides or in which the suspected abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred.

### **Safety**

The safety and security of everyone is a top priority at MPA. The Operations Director has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program. Periodically, employees receive

information and participate in workplace safety training. Training sessions cover potential safety and health hazards and safe work practices and procedures to eliminate or minimize hazards. Everyone is expected to obey safety rules. Accidents should be reported immediately to the Operations Director or teacher.

### **Fire and Tornado Drills**

Menlo Park Academy has a written security plan for evacuating the building in case of fire and seeking safety areas inside the building in the event of a tornado. Emergency exits and tornado safety areas are posted within each learning environment and area of the school building. Drills are conducted regularly throughout the year as required by law. Students are required to exhibit exemplary behavior during these emergency drills.

### **School Colors and Mascot**

Our school colors are blue and orange. Our mascot is a Wizard.

### **School Culture**

#### **Classroom Management Model**

As a part of MPA's whole child approach to learning, the school presents a class management style that integrates the student's social and academic learning.

Social learning is as important to student success as academic learning. The highest levels of cognitive growth occur through exploration and discovery, as well as social interactions with peers. Our teachers are not just instructors or presenters of knowledge, but guides and partners on the student's journey to acquire and apply knowledge.

### **School Pictures**

Individual student pictures will be taken for all students.

### **Sexual Harassment**

All students and employees of the school have the right to attend school and work in an environment free of unlawful discrimination, which encompasses freedom from sexual harassment. No employee or student, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual conduct in any form — verbal or physical.

#### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individuals.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Repeated unwanted and/or offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions.
2. Repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Graphic or degrading verbal or written comments about an individual, the individual's appearance, or the individual's sexual orientation, or the display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or the display of the same through other media.
4. The implication or threat that an employee's or applicant's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, career development, or other condition of employment or a student's educational

opportunities and/or development will depend on the employee/applicant's or student's submission to sexual harassment in any form.

5. Any offensive, abusive, or unwanted physical contact.

### Complaint/Reporting Procedure

Any employee or student who believes that he/she has been the subject of sexual harassment, and/or any employee or student who has witnessed an incident or incidents of sexual harassment, should report the matter(s) to the School Principal immediately. If the School Principal is the subject of the complaint, the employee or student should report to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

1. The employee or student alleging sexual harassment should provide the following in writing:
  - a. The employee's/student's name.
  - b. The name of the subject of the complaint.
  - c. The alleged act(s) committed.
  - d. The date(s) of the act(s).
  - e. Any witness to the alleged acts.
  - f. Any remedy sought.
2. If the employee or student alleging sexual harassment is unwilling to complete the complaint, the matter should still be addressed, and a written report completed by the person to whom the verbal complaint was made.
3. After the written report has been received, the complaint will promptly be investigated by the School Principal.
4. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt action will be taken to end the harassment immediately.

### Social-Emotional Learning Services

MPA's Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Services program provides opportunities to assist students in better understanding themselves. The program focuses on helping children to develop a positive self-image and to improve their problem-solving skills.

The SEL team offers individual and group counseling for children, and works closely with parents and school personnel. They also provide information about surrounding high school admission requirements.

### Student Information System (PowerSchool)

Menlo Park Academy uses PowerSchool for its Student Information System (SIS) to support the learning of our students. Through the PowerSchool platform, parents can access student schedules, grades, attendance and more.

#### Accessing PowerSchool

PowerSchool is accessible from a web browser (such as Chrome, Safari or Firefox), or from the PowerSchool Mobile app, available for iOS and Android devices.

From a desktop browser, parents can login at **acceloh.powerschool.com** or via the links on the Menlo Park Academy website.

From the PowerSchool Mobile app, use the district code to login: **CZMQ**

#### Parent Portal

After logging in, the available information within the Parent Portal includes:

- **Grades and Attendance:** The student's current schedule, grades, and attendance for the current term and the entire school year.
- **Teacher Comments:** Review comments entered by a teacher for the final grade of each trimester.

- **Email Notifications:** Specify a preference to receive email notifications concerning grades or attendance changes.

For questions about a specific class or grade, the school suggests contacting the appropriate teacher.

For specific questions regarding a parent's PowerSchool account, please contact the Operations Director, or contact the school via the Let's Talk app.

## Student Records

Parents have a right to inspect their child's records (Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.321 and the Education Rights and Privacy Acts of 1974-FERPA). Under FERPA, parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") have certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are as follows:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the School Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel), or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. Should you request that your child's records be sent to other agencies, you must sign a form for the release of information. School personnel will not release personally identifiable information of student records without a signed release.

In addition to other exceptions, use of records in a missing child investigation may be accessed by a law enforcement officer who has indicated to school officials that an investigation is being conducted as the student may be a missing child as defined in the Ohio Revised Code. This information may be used by law enforcement agency personnel in any manner appropriate to solving the case.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

Parents requesting personal copies of school records will be provided with the following at no cost: grade cards, test records, birth certificate, immunization records, IEPs, 504s, and attendance reports for the current school year. Those parents requesting additional information or copies will be charged the current copy rate (paper and lease charge).

### **Student Verification**

A request for student verification must be completed in writing. The verification request must be signed by the parent/guardian and should include the following information:

- Current date
- Student name
- Student social security number
- Student address
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) name(s)
- Reason for request
- Name and address of person to whom the letter should be addressed

Your student verification will be ready for you within 24 hours of your request.

### **Weapons**

Any visitor found possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm on school premises or on property being used by the school for school purposes may be charged with a felony. This restriction applies to visitors licensed to possess firearms unless serving as an authorized security officer or unless the governing authority has provided them with written authorization to convey or possess deadly weapons or dangerous ordnance in(to) the school safety zone. This policy does not apply to law enforcement personnel or state or federal officers, agents, or employees who are authorized to carry a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance and are acting within the official duties of such a position. The School Principal or his/her designee shall ensure that any visitor possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency. A weapon may be brought on school property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the School Principal or his/her designee. 20 USC 7151; R.C. 2923.122. Please see School Board Policy 421.

### **Withdrawals**

If you are considering leaving MPA, please reach out to our Admissions team first to have a conversation. We want our families to be happy and are eager to problem-solve issues.

Should you decide to leave, a Withdrawal Form and brief exit survey should be completed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who is withdrawing during or after the school year. We will need the name and address of the school that the child will enter once withdrawn from our school so student records can be forwarded to the new school. Teachers and staff will summarize the student's progress and prepare the student's file for forwarding to their next school of enrollment. Please notify the school at least two (2) days in advance of your child's withdrawal from our school. All books and school-issued equipment must be collected from the

student before they leave. **School records will not be forwarded if there are any outstanding fees or unreturned books and/or school-issued equipment.**





# Menlo Park Academy

Developing the Potential of Gifted Children

## Handbook Acknowledgement Form

**2023-24 Parent/Student Handbook.** I acknowledge receipt of the 2023-24 Menlo Park Academy Parent/Student Handbook. I have read the important information contained in this handbook, including details about expected student behavior. I understand the rights and responsibilities pertaining to student behavior and agree to support and abide by the rules of the school.

Student Signature:
Student Name (Printed):

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:
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**Anti-Bullying Pledge.** I acknowledge that whether I am being bullied or see someone being bullied, if I don't report the bullying and allow it to continue without providing or getting help, I will be considered to be contributing to the problem.

Student Signature:
Student Name (Printed):

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:
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**MPA Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** on page 14. Please sign below to acknowledge that you have read and agree to the terms described in the policy.

Student Signature:
Student Name (Printed):

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:
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