



Mastery Charter Schools
Excellence. No Excuses.

STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017

www.MasteryCharter.org

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Welcome!

You are now part of a very special group of students, parents, guardians, and professional educators – the Mastery family. Together, we are dedicated to providing an outstanding education to the over 12,000 students in 22 Mastery schools across Philadelphia and Camden.

Our vision is: “***Mastery schools are joyful, authentic communities where students learn how to think critically and act independently so that they are truly prepared for post-secondary success.***”

Mastery believes in high expectations for every student. There is a caring, loving community of staff ready to help you. We believe in you and know that you can achieve whatever you put your mind to!

These pages include our key policies -- some required by public school law and some particular to Mastery. But to understand what binds the Mastery family together and what underlies these policies, simply read the Mastery Vision and Code. You will see that all members of the Mastery community are pledged to work together so that every student learns the academic and personal skills they need to fulfill their dreams.

As a member of the Mastery community, you are now part of that collective pledge.

Welcome.

Scott Gordon
Chief Executive Officer
Mastery Charter Network of Schools



THE VISION

Mastery schools are joyful, authentic communities where students learn how to think critically and act independently so that they are truly prepared for post-secondary success.



THE CODE OF CONDUCT

*I choose to be here.
I am here to learn and achieve.
I am responsible for my actions.
I contribute to a safe, respectful, and cooperative community.
I come with a clear mind and healthy body.
This is my school...I make it shine.*



VISITOR POLICY

Mastery welcomes and encourages parents/guardians to visit.

To visit your child, you need to:

- a) check in with the school's front desk to register before proceeding to your destination in the building;
- b) show the front desk staff a state ID or driver's license; and
- c) be escorted to your destination by a school employee.

You are welcome to visit and observe your child in his/her classroom. Please call or email us ahead of time so that we know you are coming.

Please note that some days are not appropriate for visits (e.g., testing days). For this reason, Mastery reserves the right to deny visit requests.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Should a Mastery school close for any reason (e.g., inclement weather), we will communicate closing information on our website (www.masterycharter.org), and you will receive an automated phone message. In the event of a school closing, you can also tune in to 6ABC, Fox29, CBS3, and KYW Radio 1060 for information. Mastery's KYW school code is 205.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

The School District of Philadelphia is responsible for the transportation of your child to and from school. According to the District's policy, students who reside more than 1.5 miles from their respective school buildings will receive yellow bus or SEPTA transportation. Students who qualify for SEPTA transportation will receive SEPTA transpasses.

For additional information regarding the School District of Philadelphia's transpass policy, please visit the transportation page on the School District of Philadelphia's website (<http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/offices/t/transportation>) or call 215-400-4350 and ask to be transferred to the contact person who handles transpasses.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT & CUSTODY

Please fill out a parent/guardian location form and a medical/health insurance form at the beginning of the school year so that we can keep you informed of your child's progress and contact you quickly in case of an emergency.

Should your mailing address change during the course of the school year, please provide us with a new proof of address.

Mastery also requires the submission of a copy of any Court Order or agreement affecting the custodial rights of parents/guardians. It is important that Mastery understand custodial arrangements in order to determine who is eligible to pick your child up from school and communicate with school staff.

RE-ENROLLMENT POLICIES

In the second semester of the school year, all students who plan to return for the following school year are required to submit a re-enrollment packet. If this packet is not completed, the student could forfeit his/her seat in his/her Mastery school for the following school year.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN SUMMER PROGRAM

Some Mastery Charter Schools may offer a summer program for enrolled students entering kindergarten for the next school year. The goal of this program is to prepare incoming kindergarteners for the expectations and rigor of school. It focuses on the development of early reading, math, and literacy skills.

Students may participate in this program only if they have enrolled at a Mastery school for the upcoming school year. Students are considered enrolled if their parents/guardians have returned the following documents to the school prior to the beginning of the summer pre-kindergarten program:

- a) completed enrollment packet,
- b) proof of birth (e.g., birth certificate),
- c) proof of residency (e.g., utility bill), and
- d) immunization record.

HEALTH POLICIES

The School Nurse

The school nurse maintains medical records for each student. Parents/guardians must inform the nurse promptly of any special health problems and should contact the nurse if they have questions or would like to schedule a confidential appointment. The school nurse must have the following information on record, or the student will be excluded from school: **Medical Emergency Contact Form** and the student's **Immunization History**.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student will be given immediate attention. Students should not personally call home if they feel ill; they should report to the school nurse. Parents/guardians will be notified if their child is too ill to return to class.

School Administration of Medication

Mastery will permit the school nurse to administer medication to students provided that:

- a) parents/guardians provide to the school nurse a completed medication administration form from the student's physician;
- b) parents/guardians submit a new medication administration form following any changes to the student's medication;
- c) the parents/guardians or student provide to the school nurse the medication in the original container, and this container is clearly labeled with the student's name, physician's name, medication name, dosage, and frequency of administration; and
- d) parents/guardians submit a new medication authorization form each school year.

At the end of the school year, it is the parents' or guardians' responsibility to pick up any unused medications from the nurse's office. Medication remaining in the nurse's office following the end of the school year will be properly disposed of in accordance with school policy.

Student Administration of Medication

Mastery will permit the self-administration of medication by a student for asthma or other potentially life-threatening illnesses or a life-threatening allergic reaction provided that:

- a) parents/guardians provide to the school nurse written authorization for the self-administration of medication;
- b) parents/guardians provide to the school nurse written certification from the physician of the student stating that the student has asthma or another potentially life-threatening illness or is subject to a life-threatening allergic reaction and is capable of, and has been instructed in, the proper method of self-administration of medication;
- c) the student notifies the school nurse following each self-administration of the medication; and
- d) the permission is effective for the school year for which it is granted and is renewed for each subsequent school year upon fulfillment of the requirements in paragraphs (a) through (c) of this subsection.

THE MASTERY ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Elementary Program (Kindergarten through Grade 6)

The following courses are offered as part of the elementary program.

K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Mastery • Guided Reading and Word Study • Reader's Workshop/Independent Reading • Interactive Read Aloud • Writer's Workshop 			Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader's Workshop (Guided & Independent Reading) • Text Study • Interactive Read Aloud 			
Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writer's Workshop 			Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writer's Workshop 			
Math <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Stories • Fluency Games and Routines • enVision Math Class 			Math <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Stories • Fluency Games and Routines • enVision Math Class 			
Social & Emotional Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Meeting • Second Step • Recess • Cooperative Play 			Social & Emotional Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Meeting • Second Step • Recess 			
Science/Social Studies Up to Half Year for Each Subject				Science	Social Studies	Science
Enrichment Health and Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts (Dance, Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts), Spanish						

Secondary Program (Grades 7 through 12)

The courses, listed below, are offered as part of the secondary program. Please note that this list is a general overview of Mastery course offerings, and course offerings vary slightly across campuses.

Middle Grades (7 and 8)

English	Math	Social Studies	Science	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature 7 & 8 Composition 7 & 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Math 7 General Math 8 Algebra 1 Math Lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient World History Geography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science 7 Science 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual and Performing Arts (Dance, Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts) Health and Physical Education Technology 8 Reading or Math Support Various Electives & Clubs

High School (9-12)

English	Math	Social Studies	Science	Enrichment & Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature 9 Composition 9 Literature 10 Literature 11 Literature 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra 1 or Algebra 1A, 1B Math Lab Geometry Algebra 2 Pre-Calculus Calculus Business Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American History Modern World History US History Government & Economics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Science Biology Chemistry Physics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship College Advisory Spanish 1 & 2 Art Music Physical Education Technology Reading/Math Support Various Electives & Clubs

Advanced Placement (AP) options vary slightly from school to school and year to year. Generally, AP courses are offered to students in grades 10 to 12. AP course offerings across campuses include AP Language, AP Literature, AP Calculus, AP US History, AP Government, and AP Chemistry.

GRADING & PROMOTION

The fundamental basis of our grading and promotion system is the concept of **mastery**. We believe that students need to demonstrate mastery of coursework before they move on to the next level or grade. By using this system, we maintain high expectations of our students and ensure that all students have a solid academic foundation as they progress through their coursework.

Elementary (Kindergarten through Grade 6)

For each report period, students in grades kindergarten through six are evaluated on skill mastery in reading, writing, math, science or social studies, and enrichment.

Report cards for kindergarten through second grade include a list of competencies for each subject, and for each competency, students receive a grade of M (Mastery), D (Developing), or B (Below). Kindergarten through second grade report cards also include students' social-emotional skill grades for each of the five core values, Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) reading levels, numbers of sight words known, and math benchmark scores.

Report cards for grades three through six include each student's F&P reading level, if tested, and percentage grades for reading comprehension, text study, math, writing, science or social studies, and enrichment.

Secondary (Grade 7 through 12)

The Mastery school year is divided into four report periods. Each report period grade is its own independent, non-cumulative grade. At the end of the school year, a cumulative course grade is determined by averaging the grades students earned each report period. This course grade is reported on the student's transcript (grades nine through twelve only).

Instead of a traditional A-F grading system, Mastery utilizes an 'M' and 'I' system. Please see the example below.

An 'M' represents course mastery (76% or above). For courses in which students receive an 'M,' they will receive one (1) course credit.

An 'I' represents incomplete mastery (75% or less) and is equivalent to a failure. Students will not receive credit for courses in which they have received an 'I.'

Report Period 1 68 (I)	Report Period 2 72 (I)	Report Period 3 79 (M)	Report Period 4 81 (M)
Final Course Grade = 75 (I) This student will not receive course credit.			

Summer School & Promotion Policy for Secondary Students

Middle School

Middle School students (grades 7-8 or grades 6-8 in a 6-12 school or stand-alone middle school) are now required to attend summer school if they receive failing grades in two (2) or fewer courses (equivalent to 2 course credits). Students who receive failing grades in more than two (2) courses will be retained and required to repeat their current grade level courses the following school year. If your child is at risk of failing one (1) or more courses, you will receive a letter stating the reason(s) why your child is at risk.

High School (9-12)

High school students must earn 5.5 credits in a single school year, including all core classes, to advance to the next grade level. If a student does not earn enough credits to advance to the next grade, s/he will be retained in his/her current grade and must retake *at least* all core classes. Core classes include math, literature, composition, science, and history. Students may recover up to two (2) failed credits during summer school. If your child is at risk of failing one (1) or more courses, you will receive a letter stating the reason(s) why your child is at risk.

Report Cards for Secondary Students

Report cards are distributed via mail or during Parent-Teacher Conference Nights. To ensure that schools work in partnership with students and their families, parents/guardians are expected to attend parent-teacher conferences. If you cannot attend a conference, please call us, and we will try to arrange another time to meet.

Grade Point Average (for High School Students Only)

For students in grades nine through twelve, grade point average (GPA) is used to measure and represent academic achievement at the end of each marking period and course. All credited courses count towards the GPA. The Career GPA (also known as the cumulative GPA) is the total average GPA of the student while at Mastery and is only computed at the end of each course. The Career GPA is one metric that colleges and other post-secondary institutions use to determine program eligibility. For this reason, Mastery emphasizes the importance of maintaining a strong GPA.

GPA is calculated by multiplying the course points earned in the chart below by credits attempted. Honors and AP courses have a different GPA scale to account for their level of rigor. Summer school grades are on the same GPA scale as classes during the school year and affect the student's Career GPA. The Mastery GPA Chart below details GPA point values at Mastery.

Percentage Points	General Course GPA Value	Honors and AP Course GPA Value
93-100	4	5
90-92	3.66	4.66
87-89	3.33	4.33
83-86	3	4
80-82	2.66	3.66
77-79	2.33	3.33
76	2	3
75-0	0	0

Honor Roll for Secondary Students

Middle and high school students can be eligible for Honor Roll at the end of each marking period of the regular school year. School staff base Honor Roll eligibility decisions on student achievement in courses taken during each report period. Please note that **(a)** students cannot be eligible for Honor Roll based on summer school achievement, and **(b)** middle school students only earn a GPA for the purpose of determining Honor Roll eligibility. This middle school course GPA does not count towards the cumulative GPA found in high school transcripts.

To be eligible for Honor Roll, a student must pass all of his/her classes. Mastery recognizes students who excel academically with the following designations.

Honor Roll Chart	
Achievement	GPA Range
Distinguished Honors	≥3.75
High Honors	3.5-3.74
Honors	3.25-3.49

High School Credit and Course Requirements

The credit and course requirements below align with Pennsylvania state requirements. To graduate, students must receive the credits listed below in each content area.

Content	Credits	Mandatory Courses
Math	4.0	Algebra 1 or Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B, Geometry, Algebra 2
Literature	4.0	Literature 9, Literature 10, Literature 11 or AP Language, Literature 12 or AP Literature
Composition	1.0	Composition 9
Science	3.0	Biology, Chemistry
History	4.0	African American History, Modern World History, Government/Economics, or AP versions of these courses
Foreign Language	2.0	Spanish 1, Spanish 2
Enrichment/Electives	1.5	
Health and Physical Education	0.5	
SEL	2.0	Internship (1 credit), Senior Seminar (.5 credits)

Crediting for High School Enrichment, Elective, & Club Courses

In order to earn enrichment/elective credits to meet the above requirement, students must take **credited enrichment courses** and/or **credited elective courses**. Students may also participate in **uncredited club courses** during the school day, but those courses do not count towards students' GPAs or the above course requirements.

Credited Enrichment Courses: Credited enrichment courses are uniform nonacademic courses in which all students participate and include art, music, and technology. These courses are taught by certified teachers and will appear on students' transcripts. Students will receive numerical grades, which will count towards their GPAs. Enrichment course offerings vary by campus.

Credited Elective Courses: Credited elective courses are courses that some students opt in to and are taught by teachers with certifications in relevant content areas. Credited elective courses will appear on students' transcripts. In these elective courses, students will receive numerical grades, which will count towards their GPAs.

Uncredited Club Courses: Uncredited club courses are courses that some students opt in to and may be taught by uncertified teachers. Uncredited club courses can include classes that have no concrete academic or learning outcomes, such as Study Hall (Mastery Class) and Advisory. Uncredited club courses will not appear on students' transcripts. Additionally, these courses will be graded as pass/fail and not count towards students' GPAs. Club course offerings vary by campus.

High School Graduation Requirements

In order to receive a diploma from Mastery, all students must meet the following requirements:

- earn 22 credits in the content areas outlined above;
- complete the Senior Project; and
- complete an Internship Practicum (12-20 weeks).

Starting with the class of 2019, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will require scores of Proficient or Advanced on Literature, Algebra, and Biology Keystone exams for regular education students. If students do

not meet these requirements, they will be required to complete a state-developed Project Based Assessment (PBA). Students will be provided with the necessary time, space, and support to complete the PBA.

Students with disabilities who satisfactorily complete a special education program developed by their Individualized Education Program team shall be granted a regular high school diploma.

SPECIAL EDUCATION OVERVIEW

Mastery believes that all students can and must have an opportunity to reach their potential. It is our intent to take the necessary measures (i.e., specialized programming, services, and support) to meet the needs of individual students and to ensure that they receive a world-class educational experience regardless of disability. To this end, we have certified special education faculty, counselors, social workers, related service providers, and psychologists to provide on-going support to students who have been identified as needing special education services. Our special education program complies with federal and state special education laws.

Step 1: Identification

Mastery identifies and refers students who might be eligible for special education services for evaluation. Screening and referral processes include initial admissions academic placement tests, standardized reading and mathematics assessments, classroom performance, benchmark examinations, vision and hearing screenings, and the Student Assistance Program (SAP). Whenever a student is referred by the SAP Team for a multi-disciplinary team evaluation, Mastery must obtain written consent from a parent/guardian before the evaluation can be conducted. Please note that, if you consent to the evaluation of your student, you are agreeing to an evaluation of your student's eligibility for services, not special education services.

If you think that your child might be eligible for special education services, please contact the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services to request a multi-disciplinary evaluation for your child. When you make a request for an evaluation, the school will provide you with an evaluation request form to complete within ten (10) calendar days. Upon receiving the evaluation request form, the school will issue a formal Permission to Evaluate. The multi-disciplinary evaluation will occur within sixty (60) calendar days after receiving the signed Permission to Evaluate form. Once the multi-disciplinary evaluation is completed, the school psychologist and the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services will meet with the parent/guardian to review the findings of the evaluation.

Students are eligible for special education, assistive technology, and related services if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical and/or mental disabilities: autism; deaf-blindness; deafness; emotional disturbance; a hearing impairment; an intellectual disability; multiple disabilities; an orthopedic impairment; other health impairment(s) (e.g., ADD or ADHD); a speech or language impairment; a traumatic brain injury; a visual impairment; and a specific learning disability in the following areas: basic reading skills, reading comprehension, math calculations, math reasoning, listening comprehension, written expression, and oral expression.

Step 2: Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process

If your child is identified as needing special education services, the next step in the process is to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This document describes your child's needs and explains the specific services that Mastery will provide to your son or daughter to assist him/her in achieving academic and/or social-emotional progress in school. The IEP details the special education, related services, specially designed instruction, accommodations/modifications, and other supports the child needs to maintain steady and ongoing progress. The IEP is a living document and can be amended at any time in order to consistently reflect the needs

of the child. Either a parent or the school staff can initiate the process for reconvening the IEP team to amend the service plan.

The IEP is written by a team of qualified professionals, and parents/guardians are critical members of the team. As a parent/guardian, you are invited to all IEP meetings. We value parent/guardian and student input during these meetings; input allows the team to devise an IEP that will meet your child's individual academic and/or social-emotional needs. When your son or daughter turns 14 years of age within an IEP term, s/he will be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss post-secondary goals and transition needs.

After the IEP is written, parents/guardians will be asked to sign a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP). By signing this document, you indicate your approval of the proposed program and services included in the IEP. Services will commence once the NOREP is signed by the parents/guardians. Please note that parents/guardians are not required to sign the NOREP at the IEP meeting. Mastery staff members encourage families to think deeply about the proposed services before signing the NOREP. We request that parents indicate their approval of services or present clarifying questions and/or changes to the IEP/NOREP within 48 hours of the IEP meeting.

Step 3: Start Services and Progress Monitoring

After the NOREP is signed, indicating approval of proposed services, your child will begin receiving the services outlined in the IEP. Mastery uses data to monitor the academic and social-emotional/behavioral growth of all students in order to determine progress towards meeting the goals outlined in their IEP. Progress monitoring reports are sent home along with report cards.

Step 4: Transition Services

Mastery wants to ensure that all students are able to transition from Mastery into valuable post-secondary opportunities. Consideration of transition needs is required annually for all students once they reach 14 years of age. Mastery provides transition services to all special education students. This may include linking students to outside agencies and supporting students and families with the identification of post-secondary opportunities for students. When a student graduates or "ages out" of Mastery's special education programming, the student and his/her family will receive a copy of the student's *Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance*. The purpose of this document is to provide the student and his/her family with information regarding his/her academic achievement/functional performance and recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his/her post-secondary goals.

For more information on Mastery's available special education services, programs, processes, and policies, please visit <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>.

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

504 Plan

If appropriate, the 504 Plan team, of which the parent/guardian is a member, will create and implement a 504 Plan. The 504 Plan will specify the appropriate accommodations or modifications needed to ensure student access to the learning environment. These services and protections for protected students with a disability are separate and apart from those services and protections applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

Mastery will provide English Language Learners (ELLs) with English language instruction and cultural orientation. The goal of the ELL program is the attainment of English language proficiency so that students will be successful in their classes.

Families who are new to Mastery will be asked to complete a Home Language Survey as part of the registration process. Information from the survey will be used as a first-level screening to determine whether a student should take a language proficiency assessment. The results of this assessment will be used to determine a student's eligibility for ELL services. In accordance with Pennsylvania state ELL regulations, once a student is found to be an English Language learner through Mastery's multiple criteria for English proficiency, parents/guardians have the right to opt out of English language only in the limited circumstance where this instruction is in conflict with their religious beliefs.

In addition to providing ELL services to students, Mastery will provide interpreters for parent/teacher conferences and other school-related activities.

For more information on Mastery's ELL program, please contact the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services. You can review Mastery's ELL policy on our website (http://masterycharter.org/uploads/school_files/MCS%20LEP%20Program.pdf) or request a copy from the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services.

The Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is one of the mechanisms by which Mastery provides student support. SAP is designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues, such as social concerns; medical problems; psychological issues; and alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problems, which pose a barrier to a student's learning and school success. At some Mastery schools, the SAP team also serves to identify students who may require additional academic supports. The primary goal of SAP is to link students with the help they need in order to overcome these barriers so that they can remain in school, succeed academically, and work towards graduation and post-secondary success. Mastery SAP team members do not diagnose or treat students. However, SAP teams may make referrals to outside or community agencies and may also refer students for an assessment for treatment to the SAP Assessor (who works for a community agency). These types of referrals take place when the team determines that the supports needed by the student are beyond the scope of services that Mastery provides. It is the parents' or guardians' right to be involved in the SAP process.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION & ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Extra-Curricular Participation

Mastery provides extra-curricular opportunities at each campus through a variety of clubs, activities, and comprehensive athletic programs. In order to participate in any of these opportunities, students and their parents/guardians must first complete and submit an *Extra-Curricular Participation Waiver*. This form may be obtained from and returned to the campus Extra-Curricular Supervisor or Athletic Director. Students who participate on interscholastic sports teams at Mastery are also required to complete and submit additional documentation, as detailed below under “Athletic Eligibility.”

Participation in extra-curricular clubs, activities, and team sports is a privilege open to all, but students are expected to be in good academic standing and must meet the behavioral expectations for all Mastery students in order to remain active participants. The Academic and Culture Teams at each campus may remove a student from extra-curricular programming if s/he has not met established academic requirements or behavioral expectations, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Additional expectations for Athletic Eligibility are outlined below. Any student who is removed from participation will be given clear, achievable goals to be met in order to rejoin their preferred extra-curricular activities.

Athletic Eligibility

Mastery students who participate in Interscholastic Athletic Competitions, and the campuses that sponsor them, must comply with the Policies and Bi-Laws set forth by the governing league. All Mastery high schools participate as members of the *Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)*. A comprehensive handbook may be found on their website, www.PIAA.org.

Mastery provides additional guidelines that are aligned with Network-wide values and expectations. All campuses that sponsor interscholastic sports must uniformly enforce the Mastery Athletic Eligibility Policy. Athletic Eligibility at Mastery Charter Schools is determined by a student’s ability to meet the expectations set forth in the following categories. An overview of each is provided below, and full details will be provided to participating students by the campus Athletic Director.

- a) **Attendance:** Any student who is late or absent on the day of a competition or practice will not be allowed to travel/participate in that day’s competition or practice unless the lateness/absence has been excused and approved by the campus attendance coordinator.
- b) **Documentation:** Prior to participating in any practice or competition, students must submit completed EC Participation Waiver, PIAA Physical, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest forms.
- c) **Academic Standing:** Students who do not maintain a 76% or higher in each of their classes will be subject to participation restrictions, as outlined by the Mastery Athletic Eligibility Policy.
- d) **Behavioral Standing:** Students who commit Level II/III infractions will be subject to participation restrictions, as outlined by the Mastery Athletic Eligibility Policy.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The Board of Trustees requires equal educational opportunity for all students enrolled in the educational programs of the school, including, but not limited to course offerings, athletic programs, guidance and

counseling, and tests and procedures, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, social or economic status, parenthood, marital status, or disability.

Similarly, students shall respect the rights of other students to receive an education in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and free from discriminatory practices. No student, therefore, shall have the right to abridge another student's rights.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance and Promptness Matter!

Students are expected to be in school and on time every day. Mastery has a legal and moral obligation to ensure that all students attend school every day.

Pennsylvania's Compulsory School Attendance Law mandates that all children under the age of 17 attend school. Every parent/guardian of a school-aged child is responsible for the child's attendance at school. Failure of a child to attend school has certain legal consequences for parents and, possibly, for the student.

In Pennsylvania, truancy is defined as when a child of compulsory school age is absent from school for three (3) or more days without a valid excuse. Absences without a valid excuse are considered "illegal" absences. If a child is found to be truant, his/her parent/guardian can be convicted and incarcerated for the crimes of Corrupting the Morals of a Minor and/or Endangering the Welfare of a Child.

In addition, a child who is found to be truant can have his/her driver's license suspended for up to ninety (90) days for the first conviction of truancy and six (6) months for any other convictions of truancy. If the child does not have a license, the chance to apply for one can be suspended for ninety (90) days for the first offense and six (6) months for additional offenses.

Absence Notification

If a student is ill and unable to attend school, the parent/guardian must call the school no later than 8:00 a.m. If a phone call has not been received, Mastery will notify the parent/guardian via an automated or personal call.

If the student is ill with a communicable disease (e.g., chicken pox, measles), the parent/guardian should notify the school nurse.

Categories of Absences

There are three (3) categories of absences at Mastery.

Absent – "Excused": Mastery may excuse the absences of students under certain circumstances with original documentation. Those circumstances only include emergency (non-routine) doctors' appointments, court subpoenas, or funeral notices. Please note that routine medical and dental appointments are to be made outside of school hours. Students will also be excused if they are involved with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) or the juvenile probation office and are required to leave school for the purposes of attending court hearings related to their involvement with these agencies.

Absent – "Parent Note": Parents/guardians and students are required to submit a written explanation of the reason(s) for an absence within three (3) calendar days of the absence. If they provide a written excuse within three (3) days of the absence, the absence will not be counted as "illegal."

Absent – “Illegal”: All absences are treated as illegal until Mastery receives a written explanation of the reason(s) for an absence. If parents/guardians and students fail to provide a written explanation within three (3) days of the absence, the absence is permanently counted as “illegal.”

Consequences for Excessive Absences

OCCURRENCES / YEAR	ABSENCES (ILLEGAL OR FOLLOWING SUBMISSION OF PARENT NOTE)
1	Automated Phone Call Home (Repeat for each additional absence)
3	Letter
7	Group Attendance Meeting
10	District Attorney (DA) Prosecution Warning Letter
15	DA Group Attendance Meeting
20	Individual Meeting with DA and Referral to DHS
25	DA Pre-Trial Meeting (at District Attorney’s Office)
30	Regional Court Referral (citation with upcoming court date sent to the family)

After ten (10) consecutive “illegal” absences, students will be dropped from Mastery’s enrollment.

Early Dismissal

Requests by parents/guardians for early dismissal of students during school hours may be made in cases of emergency. Emergencies include crises within the family that cannot be managed without the student’s presence. Early dismissals for private instruction in such activities as music, dancing, gymnastics, or dramatics are not granted. In addition, early dismissals for religious instruction are not granted, except on a very limited basis, as set out in state regulations.

Please make routine medical and dental appointments after school hours. Ordinary household or personal matters involving students are also to be handled outside regular school hours. When students must have an early dismissal for medical/dental appointments, and the pupil is out of school for only part of the session, the student is required to provide a follow-up note from the physician or dentist indicating that the appointment was kept.

All requests for early dismissals must be in writing, signed by a parent/guardian. The reason for the request and the time of dismissal must be noted and signed by a parent/guardian. Mastery will call the parent to authenticate the request. Telephone requests will not be honored except in cases of emergency. Students must hand in their early dismissal requests during morning entry; their requests will be forwarded to the Attendance Coordinator.

You can pick up your child from school if you are listed as a parent/guardian or emergency contact. To pick up your child, stop by the front desk. You will be asked to present a state ID or driver’s license to ensure the safety of your child.

“Illegal” early dismissals may result in a Level II Misbehavior for cutting class. See “Level II Misbehaviors.”

Temporary Excusals

Principals may choose to grant temporary excusals from attendance in truly exceptional cases. To request the principal’s approval of temporary excusals, parents/guardians need to provide written evidence of a severe mental/physical condition or other urgent reason prior to the accumulation of absences.

UNIFORM POLICY

All Mastery students must be in uniform during all school hours. The uniform must be displayed neatly, cleanly, proudly, and without exception.

NOTE: Each school has a specific uniform policy that is included in the Parent Guide. Please see your school's website or front desk staff for a copy of the Parent Guide and uniform requirements.

SCHOOL CULTURE

Non-Violent Community

Safety is an absolute priority and necessity at Mastery. Students are not to use violence for any reason whatsoever at Mastery, while representing Mastery, or with any members of the Mastery community. Students are officially under the jurisdiction of the school from the time that they leave home in the morning until they reach home in the afternoon. Any student involved in a fight, regardless of whether s/he claims to be "right" or "wrong" or whether s/he claims to have acted in "self-defense," will be suspended, and a Disciplinary Hearing will be held. Mastery will follow mandated due process procedures and determine whether the violent incident meets the definition of a Level III Misbehavior.

Restorative Practices

At Mastery, we believe that true learning comes from understanding one's responsibility to oneself and to the community. Therefore, Mastery fully embraces a Restorative Practices approach. This school-wide culture system is built around strengthening and repairing respectful and trusting relationships both in the classroom and across the community. Students and staff are expected to demonstrate positive behavior, pro-social thinking, and social-emotional competencies. Students who violate our community's Code of Conduct will, at the discretion of the administration, be granted the opportunity to give back to the community they violated and repair relationships they have damaged. This concept of honoring the community and the relationships within our community is a foundation of our program and our Code.

Kindergarten through Grade 3 Rewards and Consequences

The culture system in lower elementary is structured to encourage students to make great choices. A color-coded choice chart helps students see how their choices are impacting themselves and their community. Students always start the day on "Blue-Good Day" and strive towards "Green-Wow! Great Day!"

The chart below creates a uniform language for teachers as well as a clear visual cue for students to track their progress throughout the day. The following visual cue categories are listed in order from high to low performance.

Green-Wow! Great Day! → Blue-Good Day → Purple-Official Warning → Yellow-Loss of Privilege → Red-Phone Call Home

Grades 4 through 12 Merit System

The Merit System tracks exemplary behavior/actions. Each student is assigned a merit card and carries the card in his/her ID badge holder. When a staff member observes exemplary behavior, s/he will ask for the merit card and provide a "merit." Students who meet merit goals receive rewards. In the event that a student loses a merit

card, the card will be replaced with a new merit card. Merits that were recorded on the lost merit card will be considered “lost.” Students who solicit merits will not be accommodated.

Grades 4 through 12 Demerit System

The Demerit System tracks minor misbehaviors. Each report period, students receive a new demerit card (a “clean slate”). If a student receives enough demerits to fill one card, the issuing staff member will take the student’s demerit card and give the card to the Dean. The student will then be required to attend a detention. The student will receive another demerit card for the remainder of the month.

Mastery Charter Discipline System

The Mastery Charter Discipline System is designed to create a safe, respectful, and cooperative community. There are three types of misbehaviors: Level I, Level II, and Level III.

Level I Misbehaviors:

Level I Misbehaviors are actions that negatively impact Mastery’s high achievement culture and community of safety, respect, and cooperation. Level I Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to, the following list.

Level I Misbehavior	Description
Late	Arrival after the bell rings for the start of any class or after school activity.
Uniform	This includes, but is not limited to unapproved clothing, un-tucked shirts, or not having merit/demerit cards on hand.
Language	Mastery is committed to establishing a professional learning community and believes that the use of profanity is not appropriate in any capacity.
Contraband	Gum chewing is prohibited in the building. There is no eating and/or drinking allowed in class (except water). Students may eat lunch in their teacher’s classroom provided that they have permission from their teacher.
Environment	Mastery is committed to maintaining a professional and healthy environment. Students are required to maintain a clean school environment by picking up after themselves at lunch, disposing of paper in the classroom/hallway, retrieving lost/unwanted personal items, and respecting all school property.
Electronics	Students are not permitted to use mobile phones, iPods or music devices, video game devices, laser pointers, etc. in the classroom or hallways. All devices shall be completely turned off (not in vibration mode) and secured in the student’s locker during school hours. Such devices should not be visible within the classroom or in hallways. If observed by staff member, the item(s) may be confiscated. Confiscated items are only returned to the parent/guardian during an appointment or routine time dedicated to such matters. <i>Mastery does not accept any responsibility for the loss of students’ electronic equipment due to theft or other loss. In addition, Mastery will <u>not</u> be responsible for damage to or the loss of a nuisance device that is confiscated by staff.</i>
Minor Misbehavior	Students are expected to follow the rules that individual teachers have established for student conduct in their classrooms. No student’s behavior can be permitted to disrupt the learning of others. Misbehaviors include disruptive outbursts, talking while others are talking, throwing objects, and inappropriate gestures and sounds.
Consequences	Consequences may include, but are not limited, to in-class consequences and/or demerits.

Level II Misbehaviors:

Level II Misbehaviors involve actions that **significantly** impact Mastery’s high achievement culture and community of safety, respect, and cooperation. Level II Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to, the following list.

Level II Misbehavior	Description
Physical Aggression	Physical contact (e.g., pushing, shoving, hitting, and slapping) involving one or more offenders where no student is injured. The incident is immediately stopped due to staff physical intervention and does not elevate to a Level III Misbehavior (e.g., fighting, simple assault).
Pre-fight	Threatening words or actions intended to provoke a violent reaction, including posturing, “getting in his/her face,” or violating personal space, where staff physical intervention is necessary to de-escalate the situation.
Provocation	Argumentative words, not actions, intended to provoke a violent reaction where staff members are able to de-escalate the situation without the use of a physical presence.
Inciting Violence	Watching, encouraging, or instigating a pre-fight/fight before, during, or after school or through the use of any form of social media is prohibited. It is our belief that bystanders play a role in escalating violence; therefore, anyone watching a fight has an obligation to de-escalate the situation by staying calm, remaining nonpartisan, and seeking help.
Inappropriate Behavior towards Students	Harassing another member of the community through the use of profanity, name calling, or any other disrespectful language or gestures without the intent to provoke a violent reaction.
Inappropriate Behavior towards Staff	This includes, but is not limited to, any nonthreatening words and/or actions that are directed towards a staff member in either an overtly loud, profane, or demonstrative manner (e.g., “cursing out” a staff member, screaming about extreme disdain for class or school, and using obscene hand gestures).
Insubordination	This includes ignoring any and all redirection, walking/running away from staff, and refusing to cooperate in any manner with multiple staff members’ requests.
Disruptive Behavior	Behavior that continually disrupts the learning environment of a class. The actions have been addressed multiple times over an extended period of time, and the student has exhausted multiple interventions attempted by the staff member.
Plagiarism, Forgery, Cheating	Plagiarism is using, without permission, the ideas and writings of another, either word for word or in substance, and representing such as one’s own. Forgery is the signing of a document in another’s name. Cheating includes deceit, fraud, or deception (e.g., copying another’s assignments, assisting another to cheat by lending one’s own work, and giving or receiving aid during a testing period).
Cutting Class	Cutting includes skipping all scheduled or rostered activities as well as leaving the building without permission (see “Attendance” section).
Damaging or Stealing (Misdemeanor)	Damage to or stealing of any property valued at \$50.00 or less.
Contraband Possession	Possession of any flammable paraphernalia without the intent to use (e.g., lighters, matches, stink bombs, poppers, etc.).

Misuse of Technology	Execution of any prohibited activity, as specified in detail under the “Student Technology Policy” section, such as viewing or transmitting profanity, vulgarities or other inappropriate language, or images; entering online chat rooms; or changing proxy, automatic configuration, or messaging settings.
Inappropriate Sexual Behavior	Consensual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature on school property.
Gambling	Gambling includes betting or wagering for money, favors, or fun. <i>The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction and could include expulsion from school. Repeated or serious misbehaviors may also result in the filing of criminal charges as deemed appropriate by the school.</i>
Consequences	Consequences may include, but are not limited, to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restorative action; • in-class consequence; • detention; • loss of privilege; • in-school suspension; • out-of-school suspension; and • parent/guardian meeting (restorative conference, circle, collaborative problem solving, or family group decision-making).

Level III Misbehaviors

Level III Misbehaviors involve actions that are very serious infractions of our Code of Conduct and/or are criminal violations of Pennsylvania law. When a Level III Misbehavior occurs, Mastery is required to report the incident to the State, and it will become part of the student’s permanent record. Level III Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to, the following list.

Level III Misbehavior	Description
Firearm, Weapon or Dangerous Instrument	Any person found or observed on school property or at a school-sponsored event in possession of a firearm, weapon, or dangerous instrument (e.g., BB gun, bullet, pistol, rifle, gun, disguised gun, dagger, switchblade, knife, box cutter, paintball gun, dart gun, pepper spray or other noxious sprays, explosive or incendiary bomb or other instrument, material or device that can cause physical injury, etc.) must immediately be reported to the principal. Law enforcement officials shall be informed.
Terroristic Threats/Acts	Terroristic threats, communications, and/or acts intended to commit violence, terrorize, evacuate the building, cause a serious public inconvenience, or pose a safety risk. Depending on the nature of the incident, law enforcement officials may be informed.
Drug, Alcohol, or Tobacco Possession, Use, or Illicit Activity	<u>Drug Possession</u> : Illegal/inappropriate possession of drugs (i.e., illegal substances), use, or illicit activity (i.e., the intent to use, distribute in any form or for any reason, store, or purchase illegal substances and paraphernalia) on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event is absolutely prohibited. <u>Tobacco Policy</u> : Students may not possess or use any product containing tobacco while on school property or at a school-sponsored event. The use of tobacco is defined as the possession and/or use of cigarette, pipe, cigar,

	<p>chewing tobacco, snuff or a related tobacco/vapor product, and paraphernalia.</p> <p><u>Misbehaviors:</u> This misbehavior includes drug, alcohol, or tobacco possession, the use of these substances, or illicit activity on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event. Illicit activity refers to the intent to use, sell, store, or purchase illegal substances and paraphernalia. School administrators will report the incident to the police and provide all information concerning the matter to law enforcement authorities.</p>
Theft	Theft refers to the withholding, taking, or removal of personal or school property (including tests) without the owner’s consent. Depending on the nature of the incident, law enforcement officials may be informed.
Arson and/or Possession of Fireworks and Other Explosive Devices	Arson refers to the malicious burning of another’s property. Students may not possess or use fireworks or the paraphernalia needed to explode them on school grounds or during a school activity. Depending on the nature of the incident, law enforcement officials may be informed.
Vandalism	Vandalism includes intentional or reckless damage to, or an attempt to damage, the property of another or the causing of damage while committing an act contrary to this code or to the law. Depending on the nature of the incident, law enforcement officials may be informed.
Bullying/Cyberbullying	Intentional electronic, written, verbal/physical act, or a series of acts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) directed at another student or students; (2) which occurs in a school setting (i.e., the school; on school grounds; in school vehicles; at a designated bus stop; or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school); (3) that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and (4) that has the effect of doing any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i.) substantially interfering with a student's education; (ii.) creating a threatening environment; or (iii.) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
Disorderly Conduct	Reckless behavior that could cause injury, including throwing objects (e.g., tables, chairs), pulling fire alarms, etc.
Threatening Staff Member	The use of a physical, verbal, written, electronic threat or intimidation intended to unlawfully place another person in fear of bodily harm, without displaying a weapon or subjecting the person to actual physical attack. This also includes stalking (i.e., secretly or stealthily pursuing another and/or spying on or watching another person, with or without the intent to harm, frighten, or coerce).
Fighting	Physical aggression between two or more students that escalates into punching, wrestling, knocking down, and/or damaging/destroying property. This form of physical aggression typically lasts more than a few seconds and is not easily broken up.
Assault	An unlawful physical attack by one person upon another.
Sexual Harassment	Mastery recognizes that harassment on the basis of sex is a misbehavior of federal and state discrimination laws and that these laws apply to students and employees. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission to such conduct is made a condition of a student’s status in a course or academic program; • such conduct interferes with an individual’s academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; and/or • submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions. <p>Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs; • sexually-oriented sounds or remarks; • uninvited, unnecessary, or offensive touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another person’s body, or impeding/blocking movement; and • derogatory or offensive pictures, posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, or gestures. <p><i>The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction and could include expulsion from school. Repeated or serious misbehaviors may also result in the filing of criminal charges as deemed appropriate by the school.</i></p>
Sexual Misconduct	<p>Attempting or carrying out a sexual act with oneself or another person, whether it is consensual or non-consensual. Depending on the nature of the incident, law enforcement officials may be informed.</p>
Consequences	<p>If a Level III incident occurs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the parent/guardian will be notified; • the student will be removed immediately from school during the school investigation; • the student will face an out-of-school suspension lasting one (1) to ten (10) days; • and the student will face a disciplinary hearing. <p>Possible Outcomes of a Disciplinary Hearing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the return to the community; • the return to the community under contract; • a disciplinary transfer to an alternative placement; and • a recommendation for an expulsion hearing (A Board Hearing Officer makes recommendations for expulsion. The Board of Trustees retains the sole discretion and authority to make final decisions regarding expulsion.).

Students who have been identified as eligible for special education services and/or Section 504 services may have additional protections within the student discipline process.

DUE PROCESS: DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary Hearings

Disciplinary hearings serve as Mastery’s “informal hearings” as described in Pennsylvania’s School Code. Disciplinary hearings are designed to bring forth all relevant information regarding disciplinary and academic problems facing the student. Disciplinary hearings also provide an opportunity for students, their parents/guardians, and school officials to discuss the incident involving the student and strategies for avoiding future problems.

The outcomes of such a hearing may include:

- an invitation to rejoin the community without any disciplinary or academic intervention;
- an invitation to rejoin the community with mandatory or voluntary disciplinary and/or academic intervention;
- a transfer to a disciplinary placement or alternative placement; and
- a recommendation to the Board for expulsion, which would result in the mandatory attendance of the student and parent/guardian at a formal expulsion hearing. See “Expulsion” below for further information.

Steps to ensure due process include:

- notifying parents/guardians in writing regarding the reasons for the hearing;
- providing parents/guardians with sufficient notice of time and place for the hearing;
- providing a student with the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing and to produce witnesses on his/her own behalf; and
- allowing for the review of teacher narratives, grades, attendance, and disciplinary records during the hearing.

Suspensions

A suspension is a student’s exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to no more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Suspensions may be assigned by a member of the Culture Team. Students have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while suspended and shall be permitted to complete assignments within Board-determined guidelines. Due process includes the following steps.

- Prior to a suspension, the student must be informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond, with the exception of circumstances which pose a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of the school community.
- When the student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified immediately in writing.
- When the suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity to participate in an informal hearing (“disciplinary hearing”) consistent with Pennsylvania law. The school shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five (5) days of the suspension, and notice of the hearing will be given to the parent/guardian.
 - Disciplinary hearings enable the student to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why s/he should not be suspended. All relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended will be presented, and the school and parents/guardians will discuss strategies for avoiding future offenses. At the hearing, the student has the right to question any witnesses present and to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.

In-School Suspensions

Students may be assigned in-school suspensions as a result of disciplinary action. Due process includes the following steps.

- Students will be informed of the reasons for the in-school suspension and given an opportunity to respond before the in-school suspension becomes effective.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the in-school suspension.
- When the in-school suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive school days, a disciplinary hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parents/guardians prior to the eleventh school day.

Expulsions

An expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board of Trustees for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may result in permanent expulsion from the school rolls. Since education is a statutory right, students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. A Board decision is required to expel a student. To ensure a fair Board hearing, Mastery's Board of Trustees has designated Board Hearing Examiners to represent the Board in discipline matters. Hearing Examiners make a recommendation to the Board. The Board ultimately decides whether a student will be expelled. Due process includes the following steps.

- Expulsions require a prior formal hearing (see below).
- Students shall be suspended from school prior to the hearing and decision of the Board for a period of up to ten (10) days. The student shall be placed in his/her regular class after the ten (10) days except if it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his regular class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension.
- A student may not be excluded from school for longer than fifteen (15) school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

Expulsion Hearing Requirements

A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. The hearing is conducted by a Hearing Examiner who is appointed by the Board. The Hearing Examiner solicits evidence from the school, the student, and parents/guardians to gather the facts surrounding each incident. Based on these facts, the Hearing Examiner writes a report. The report states whether the student has violated this Code of Conduct and recommends a disciplinary outcome for the student, ranging from a dismissal of the case to a permanent expulsion.

The report is presented to the student, parents/guardians, and the Board of Trustees at its next meeting. The Board has the power to adopt, modify, or reject the report made by the Hearing Examiner. A majority vote of the Board confirming the recommendation of the Expulsion Hearing is required to expel a student.

Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the Hearing Examiner's report for their student. Parents/guardians will also be notified once the Board has made its decision, informed of the legal right to appeal at that time, and informed of any timelines governing such appeal.

The following due process requirements shall be observed.

- Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians by certified mail.
- At least three days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, including hearing procedures and notice that legal counsel may represent the student, shall be included with the notice. The student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when s/he demonstrates good cause for an extension.

- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parents/guardians request a public hearing.
- The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents/guardians, and may request that parents/guardians attend the hearing.
- The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses. The student also has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined. Additionally, the student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
- The proceeding shall be held within fifteen (15) school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
 - laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies;
 - evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act; and
 - delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim in court cases involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

If Expelled: Students who are under 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law following an expulsion and shall be provided an education. The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents/guardians through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the principal. Within thirty (30) days of action by the governing board, the parents/guardians shall submit to Mastery written evidence that the required education is being provided as described above or that they are unable to do so. If the parents/guardians are unable to provide the required education, Mastery shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the notification, make a provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In the case of non-compliance with the approved educational program, Mastery may take action in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Drug and alcohol abuse prevents students from achieving their potential. For this reason, Mastery has a Student Assistance Program (SAP) for students experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol. SAP personnel will provide appropriate referrals to counseling/support services for students.

Any student at Mastery exhibiting behavioral symptoms indicating alcohol and substance abuse will be given a drug/alcohol test (parents/guardians will be notified whenever a test is issued). Symptoms may include intoxication, slurred speech, an unsteady walk, impaired coordination, slowed reflexes, an odor, a physical expression, brief intense euphoria, repetitive physical mannerisms (e.g., lip chewing, constant grinding of teeth, and constant scratching), violence, a blank expression, sexual promiscuity, nausea, and an elevated heart rate.

If a student tests positive, the counselor will refer the student to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) for counseling/supportive services. Parents/guardians are responsible for seeking outside treatment for their child. Mastery must receive a treatment plan and regular updates from the outside treatment agency. To ensure Mastery's receipt of regular updates from the outside treatment agency, parents/guardians must sign a limited

release of information form. The SAP coordinator or school social worker can provide the release/exchange of information form.

The student will be re-tested sixty (60) days from the day of the initial testing date. If the student's test comes back negative, s/he will adhere to treatment recommended by the SAP team and outside treatment center. If the student tests positive for the second chemical analysis, s/he will be scheduled for a disciplinary hearing and potentially assigned to an alternative placement program.

LOCKER USE POLICY

Lockers are provided for the use of students but remain the property of the school. Students may not use a locker to store a substance or object which is prohibited or which constitutes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the occupants of the school building or the building itself.

Students are required to:

- keep their lockers locked at all times;
- avoid sharing lockers, switching lockers, or using any locker other than the one assigned to them; and
- notify the administration when a lock is lost or a locker is malfunctioning.

SEARCH POLICY

Mastery holds the right to search any and all lockers, bags, and clothing. Prior to a locker and/or bag search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present, unless school officials have reason to suspect that the locker and/or bag contain/possess materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and/or safety of students and staff.

Parents/guardians and students should be aware of the following.

- The school maintains a record of every locker number and every lock combination.
- The school assumes no responsibility for loss of students' personal property.
- Random "locker sweeps" and bag searches are conducted periodically throughout the year.
- Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding. At least two (2) staff members will be present when searching a student's locker, bag, or person.
- Person searches will be limited to shoes, outerwear, pockets, and pat-downs, unless performed by the police. Some campuses may require all students, staff, and visitors to enter through a metal detector and pass all personal belongings and bags through a scanner.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Technology and Business Equipment

All Mastery technology devices and business equipment are to be used in a manner that protects the information on the equipment and the equipment itself. Mastery students are fully responsible for Mastery technology and business equipment when taken off campus.

Students are responsible for taking appropriate precautions to prevent loss, theft, or damage to Mastery equipment. In the event that Mastery's property is stolen, damaged, or misplaced, students will be responsible for reporting the loss to their school immediately.

In the event of damage to Mastery technology or business equipment, students will be responsible for all or part of the repair or replacement cost and may be subject to discipline in the event of negligence.

Mastery will retain ownership of all technology and equipment issued to students, including but not limited to computers, phones, and tablets, and all technology and equipment must be returned to Mastery at the end of the class or project for which the technology was issued.

Laptops and Desktops

Use of Mastery-issued laptops and desktops must conform to all use and etiquette policies, and use is restricted to authorized Mastery students. Use of Mastery-issued laptops and desktops for personal purposes should be within the standards of good judgment and common sense and as required through the terms and conditions of applicable software license agreements.

Care for Mastery-issued laptops and desktops (i.e., taking appropriate precautions to prevent loss, theft, or damage) is the student's responsibility. Loss, theft, or damage of a laptop or desktop must be reported to the school as soon as it is discovered. Students will be responsible for all or part of the repair or replacement cost.

Limited Rights of Use

Use of Mastery technology and business equipment is a privilege, not a right. When necessary to protect and ensure the operability, integrity, security, and reliability of Mastery's resources, students may be denied access to Mastery's technology or network.

Materials created by students using Mastery's technology are the property of Mastery, and Mastery retains the right to review, edit, and/or delete any material created by students.

No Expectation of Privacy

Any issued equipment is not for personal use. Students have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to any communication or access made through Mastery's technology, regardless of whether that use is for school-related or personal purposes, other than as specifically provided by law. Mastery may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use or access of Mastery technology (including reviewing files, e-mails, voicemail messages, and other materials) at any time. By using or accessing Mastery's technology, students agree to such access, monitoring, and/or recording of their use.

Monitoring will be limited to student use of Mastery technology and the technology itself. At no point will students be viewed or recorded using the technology via remote video or image capture.

Internet and E-mail Etiquette

- Mastery students shall ensure that all communication through Mastery's technology is conducted in a professional and courteous manner. The use of suggestive, vulgar, or obscene language is prohibited.
- Mastery students shall not reveal private or personal information of their own, other Mastery students, or their families through school e-mail or technology without clear and specific approval from their school.

- Students should share messages and documents only to those students with a specific need to know.
- Students should avoid sending e-mail to large groups and e-mail distribution lists.
- Students should avoid sending messages with large file attachments (attachments larger than 5.0 MB).
- E-mail and document privacy cannot be guaranteed. For security reasons, messages and documents transmitted through the Mastery system or network infrastructure are the property of Mastery and are subject to inspection. Students should also be aware that deleted messages and documents can and will be inspected, if deemed necessary.

Computer, Device, and Internet Use

- Mastery students who identify or perceive an actual or suspected security problem shall immediately alert their schools.
- Mastery students shall not reveal their account passwords to others or allow any other person to use their accounts. Similarly, students shall not use other students' accounts.
- Any and all use of technology assets is subject to monitoring by Mastery, and access to the Mastery network shall be revoked for any student with a history of security problems.
- All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to all students of Mastery. Any student violating these policies or applicable local, state, or federal laws while using the Mastery network shall be subject to loss of network privileges and any other disciplinary actions deemed appropriate.

Responsibility for Use and/or Misuse

Mastery is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged (including being rendered unavailable) by use or access of Mastery's technology or business equipment, including the Internet and e-mail.

Mastery denies any liability or responsibility for communications made by any student of Mastery's technology or business equipment.

Please also note that Internet communications can be a source of entry and computer system corruption by malware, computer viruses, or hackers seeking to modify, destroy, or gain access to data. This is something to take seriously, as it poses a threat to students' personal information, Mastery records, confidential records and data, and the integrity of our computer systems.

Digital Citizenship

Students must follow the six (6) principles of being a good digital citizen:

- **Respect Yourself.** I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate. I will use caution with the information, images, and other media that I post online. I will carefully consider what personal information about my life, experiences, or relationships I post. I will not be obscene. I will act with integrity.
- **Protect Yourself.** I will ensure that the information, images, and materials I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details, or a schedule of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at me while online. I will protect passwords, accounts, and resources.
- **Respect Others.** I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to antagonize, bully, harass, or stalk people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites. I will

not visit sites that are degrading to others, pornographic, racist, or inappropriate. I will not enter other people's private spaces or areas.

- **Protect Others.** I will protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. I will avoid unacceptable materials and conversations.
- **Respect Intellectual Property.** I will request permission to use copyrighted or otherwise protected materials. I will suitably cite all use of websites, books, media, and other sources. I will acknowledge all primary sources. I will validate information. I will use and abide by the fair use rules.
- **Protect Intellectual Property.** I will request the use of software and media that others produce. I will purchase, license, and register all software or use available free and open source alternatives rather than pirating software. I will purchase my music and media and refrain from distributing these materials in a manner that violates their licenses.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO PERMISSION

From time to time, photographs or videos may be taken of your child for Mastery public relations publications, professional development of staff, or other school-related purposes. Additionally, your child's school-related work may be displayed in a school building in conjunction with displays of other students' work. These photographs, videos, and school-related work (which are not considered student records) will be used/displayed in a manner designed to ensure that confidential information about your child's educational program will not be revealed. If you object to the use of your child's photograph, the videotaping of your child for our professional development program, the posting of your child's name or image on our district website, and/or the display of your child's work by the district in any manner, please contact your child's principal.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS, POLICIES, & PROCEDURES

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY

Summary: All Mastery employees are mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to report suspected child abuse. They are required to make a report when they have reason to suspect that a student is being physically abused, emotionally abused, neglected, or sexually abused. When teachers suspect child abuse, they are required to notify the Commonwealth's child abuse hotline, either via telephone or online. Following the report, staff members are required to notify the school social worker, who is the Mastery staff member responsible for following up on child abuse reports. After a call to Childline is made, the school social worker may choose to alert the parents/guardians that a report was made or may choose to *not* alert them, depending on the circumstances. There is no law requiring parental notification of reports of suspected child abuse. All school staff members are mandated to keep confidential any discussions regarding suspected child abuse; however, the school social worker may share some information with staff members on a need-to-know basis only if this information will benefit the student, the employees, and the institution.

Contact: School Social Worker

Information: You may contact your child's school to request additional information regarding Mastery's child abuse reporting procedure.

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTHS

Summary: Mastery shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001.

Contact: School Social Worker

Information: The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act can help provide school stability for your child if you **(1)** do not have a permanent home and are staying with friends or family because you lost housing; **(2)** are living in a shelter, including transitional programs; **(3)** are staying in motels because you cannot get your own home; and **(4)** are living on streets, in a car, van, tent or other nonpermanent structure. You may contact your child's school to request additional information regarding Mastery's procedures for homelessness.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The grievance procedure, described below, is available to parents/guardians or students who are dissatisfied with an action of a Mastery employee or school policy.

Grievance Procedure Steps
1. Address the issue directly to the party concerned.
2. If the matter is not resolved, address the concern to the principal. The principal will direct academic issues to the Assistant Principal of Instruction or Specialized Services and disciplinary issues to the Director/Assistant Principal of School Culture. The Principal is the final decision maker regarding concerns or grievances related to the grading of individual assignments.
3. If the matter is still not resolved, the concern can be addressed to the Regional Schools Officer. Depending on the nature of the matter, the Regional Schools Officer may ask the Executive Chief of Schools to decide the matter. The Regional Schools Officer will respond within ten (10) school days.
4. If the matter is still not resolved, the concern can be addressed to the CEO. The CEO will respond within ten (10) school days.

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

Summary: Parents/guardians can refuse to have their student participate in certain types of surveys and physical examinations. Mastery lets parents/guardians know when their children are scheduled to participate in surveys or physical examinations. To request that their student opt out of surveys or non-emergency physical exams, parents/guardians must contact the principal.

Contact: Principal

Information: Federal law affords Mastery students and their parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection, use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. Please visit <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html> for more information regarding the specific rights, or request a copy of the policy at the front desk.

Parents' and Students' Privacy Rights to Student Information and Education Records

Summary: Mastery usually has to seek permission in order to release student records. However, there are times when Mastery is allowed to release student records without students' or parents'/guardians' permission. Parents/guardians who do not want the release of their student's records must contact the principal.

Contact: Principal

Information: Mastery is generally required to obtain parents'/guardians' permission or consent before we may release any information from the student's education record. Under federal law, a student receives this right when the student reaches the age of 18. This includes access to a student's records by others, as well as the right to deny parental access to his/her records. However, information from a student's education record may be released, **without** consent, to certain parties, including the military, school officials, and state and local authorities. Visit our website <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html> for a full list of parties.

Additionally, Mastery can release directory information **without** consent such as a **student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance**. However, Mastery must tell students about directory information and allow students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them.

If you want to request that Mastery NOT disclose your directory information, please write and sign a letter to the school including the statement below.

I have read this statement of my privacy rights to information in my education record and request that Mastery NOT disclose any personally-identifiable information from my student's education records, including what is called "directory information," without my prior written consent to any outside person or organization except where the disclosure is to the financial funders and supporters of Mastery. I recognize that Mastery relies on the financial funding and support provided by outside organizations for the operation of the school.

PUPIL PRIVACY RIGHTS

Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information

Summary: Mastery protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. Parents/guardians are allowed to review their child's permanent record or other educational records upon request. See the policy below regarding disclosure of personal information.

Contact: Principal

Information: Mastery's full confidentiality policy can be accessed at http://masterycharter.org/uploads/school_files/MCS%20Confidential%20Information%20Notice.pdf. Parents/guardians can also request a copy at the front desk of their student's school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Summary: Mastery complies with all applicable special education laws. Mastery will provide each protected student with a disability, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

In order to qualify as a protected student with a disability, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits a major life activity or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of Mastery's school program.

School Contact: Assistant Principal of Specialized Services

Information: Mastery’s overview of Special Education services can be found on our website and can be accessed at <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>, or you can request a copy at the front desk of your child’s school.

- Please visit Mastery’s website, http://masterycharter.org/uploads/school_files/MCS%20Special%20Education%20Notice.pdf, for more information on Mastery’s available special education services and programs, including the following: Child Find (a provision of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act known as IDEA); how to request those services and programs; and systematic screening activities that lead to identification, location, and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in Mastery Charter Schools. Parents/guardians of special education students may also request the notice from the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services.
- More information about the special education process can be found in the *Procedural Safeguard Notice*. This notice informs parents/guardians of their rights related to their child with a disability and is provided annually. Parents/guardians will receive this document when they meet with the Assistant Principal of Specialized Services. The *Procedural Safeguard Notice* can be found here: <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>.
- Mastery’s program complies with the portion of federal law known as Section 504, which ensures that eligible students receive services regardless of their disability. The Section 504 notice can be found here: <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>.

STUDENTS & STUDENT SERVICES – PA SCHOOL CODE

Summary: Chapter 12 of the PA School Code refers to specific services that students are entitled to receive as well as policies regarding students in school. Examples of items included in Chapter 12 are attendance, student responsibilities, school rules, student hearings, and confidential communications. Mastery’s handbook includes the majority of the Chapter 12 provisions.

Contact: Director of Compliance, 5700 Wayne Ave, Philadelphia PA, 19144, (215) 866-9000.

Information: To review Mastery’s policies that are not addressed in the handbook (including corporal punishment and freedom of expression), please visit <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html> or request a copy at the front desk.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Summary: Parents/guardians have the right to know the qualifications of the teachers instructing their child. You have the right to request the following information about each of your child’s classroom teachers:

- whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subject s/he teaches;
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances;
- the teacher’s college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline for the certification or degree; and
- whether paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if so, their qualifications.

Contact: Director of Human Resources, 5700 Wayne Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19144, (215) 866-9000.

Information: Mastery’s full Teacher Qualification Policy can be accessed at <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>, or you can request a copy at the front desk of your child’s school. You will receive a copy of this policy at Back to School Night.

TITLE I: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Summary: Title I is a federal program designed to provide a high-quality education to all students. One goal of Title I is to increase parental involvement within schools. Mastery provides a variety of activities and venues for parents/guardians to become involved in the school.

Contact: Director of Compliance, 5700 Wayne Ave, Philadelphia PA, 19144, (215) 866-9000.

Information: Examples of parental involvement activities include the following.

- Back to School Night (held in September)
- School Carnivals or Block Party – Schools host events for families at the beginning of the school year.
- Parent Association Meetings – The Parent Association provides parents/guardians with the opportunity to support their school by planning and raising funds for student celebrations, academic support, and community pride-related activities.
- Parent Action Team – Mastery’s Parent Action Team organizes and prepares parents/guardians to advocate for broader school reform. Parent representatives from each Mastery campus meet monthly.
- Parent Teacher Conferences – Twice a year, parents/guardians meet with their children’s teachers to review report cards and discuss their children’s academic progress.
- School Improvement Plan Parent Review – Parent leaders work with school leaders to develop the Annual School Improvement Plan and Annual Report.
- College and Career Preparation Meetings.

Additionally, parents/guardians sign the “Whatever It Takes Pledge,” which serves as a compact among parents/guardians, students, and Mastery Charter Schools. For a copy of the full parental involvement policy, please visit <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html> or request a copy at the front desk. You will receive a copy of this policy at Back to School Night.

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING YOUTH POLICY

Summary: When a student or a student’s parent or guardian, as appropriate, notifies the school administration that the student will assert a gender identity that differs from previous representations or records, the school will begin treating the student consistent with the student’s gender identity.

Contact: Principal

Information: For further details, please visit <http://masterycharter.org/about/notice-of-rights.html>.

WHATEVER IT TAKES PLEDGE

SCHOOL PLEDGES

- **Do Whatever It Takes** to support each student's achievement.
- **High Expectations** for every student. Expect the best of each student because we believe s/he can succeed.
- **Be A Community that is Safe, Orderly, and Positive** – an environment that promotes student success.
- **Provide High Support** for all students, especially those who are falling behind or struggling emotionally.
- **Communicate** frequently with parents/guardians about their child's successes and struggles.
- **Partner with Parents/Guardians** to ensure that every student succeeds and reaches their highest potential.

STUDENT PLEDGES

Whatever It Takes:

- I will do whatever it takes to be successful.

Choose To Be Here:

- I will attend school every day on time and prepared.

Work Hard:

- I will work hard and remain focused on my academic achievement.
- I will complete all homework nightly.
- I will ask for help when I need support, don't understand, or feel I am falling behind.
- I will attend academic support during and after school hours when I am requested to do so.

Be A Citizen & Leader of The School Community:

- I will abide by the Code of Conduct.
- I will be an active member of the school community and support my peers.
- I will follow our school community's rules outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook.
- I will celebrate success.
- I will accept the consequences of my actions.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PLEDGES

Whatever It Takes:

- I will do whatever it takes to ensure my child's success.
- I will communicate regularly with my child's teachers and attend parent-teacher conferences. I will notify Mastery when my address, telephone, or email contact information changes.
- I will ensure that my child attends school every day on time and prepared to learn.

High Expectations:

- I will hold my child to the highest expectations because I know that s/he can succeed at the highest levels.
- I will ensure that my child completes his/her schoolwork and homework nightly.
- I will support and encourage my student to seek out and attend academic support programming during and after school hours.

School Community:

- I recognize that I am an important member of the Mastery school community and will participate in and support the community as we collectively work to support our children's success.
- I will support the school community's rules outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook. When my child struggles, I will work in partnership with the school to reinforce the community's rules and Code and support my child's personal growth and development.
- I will celebrate our children's success.

