

Midwestern Christian Academy

A Ministry of Midwest Bible Church

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Parent/Student Handbook

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COVID-19 information can be found in a special document prepared for this purpose.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for enrolling your child(ren) at Midwestern Christian Academy this fall. We believe that you were directed here by God, regardless of the reason why you chose to partner with us for your children's education. We would ask you to join us in prayer as we unite together for a common ministry under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, as we teach these young people and help them prepare for the life you have planned, and the service to which you will call them.

The most important aspect of our school, what makes us unique, is that we are a Christian school and we teach students based on a Christian philosophy of education that is based on the Bible.

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 ESV

Our school does an excellent job of instructing students in the knowledge and skills that an education is expected to provide. The academic quality of our school, by all available measurements, is excellent. But we go beyond that, to helping our students connect the knowledge and skills they learn in math, language arts and reading, social studies and science to a Christian worldview and to their personal faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior. We support and undergird the values and beliefs of your home with instruction in Biblical truth, teaching the whole child, mind, body and soul. Only a Christian school does this.

Our commitment to providing a Christ centered education to students is as strong as it ever has been in more than 60 years of service in Northwest Chicago. This past summer, a \$325,000 renovation was finally completed on our elementary school building. MCA was fully accredited by the Commission of the Central Region of ACSI in January of 2022. This is a step beyond Illinois Recognition. Accredited schools are excellent schools and excellent schools seek accreditation.

Midwestern Christian Academy is an excellent school. Thank you for being here.

Statement of Faith

- WE BELIEVE in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." – 2 Timothy 3:16 (see also: 2 Peter 1:21)
- WE BELIEVE in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." -1 John 5:7 (see also: Gen. 3:22; Psalm 2:7-8; Psalm 110:1)
- WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and is true God and true man. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." –Isaiah 7:14 (see also: John 1:1, 14; 8:58)
- WE BELIEVE that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, fell from that sinless and happy state. In consequence of this, all mankind are now sinners both by nature and by choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." – Romans 5:12 (see also: Gen. 1:27, 31; 3:6-24; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 5:13-19; Galatians 3:22)
- WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all that believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood and resurrection. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." –Romans 4:25 (see also: 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 1:7; Acts 13:39; 1 Peter 2:24)
- WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and in his present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate. "And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." – 1 Cor. 15:4 (see also: Heb. 4:14; 1 John 2:1)
- WE BELIEVE in "that blessed hope," the personal, pre-millennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." – Titus 2:13 (see also: Phil. 3:30)

- WE BELIEVE that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. “But as many as received him, to them he gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” – John 1:12 (see also: Acts 20:21)
- WE BELIEVE in separation from all worldly practices and in wholehearted devotion to the Person and Cause of Christ as the only scriptural basis for a happy and useful Christian life. We believe a Christian should avoid every practice which injures his fellowship with God and his testimony before his fellow-men; therefore, we oppose indulgence in every kind of worldly amusement which is inconsistent with godliness, whether privately or publicly. We believe any alliance, whether personal or ecclesiastical, which causes a believer in Christ to lose his identity as a Christian is wrong. It is contrary to the clear teaching of God’s Word for a Christian to marry a non-Christian, or be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever in any way. Not only does Christian separation involve withdrawal from worldly practices, but we believe it demands that the fruit of the Holy Spirit be seen in our daily lives, “and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” – Ephesians 4:24 (see also: 1 John 2:15-17; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rom.13:12-14; Col. 3:1-17)
- WE BELIEVE in the bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust, in the everlasting blessed happy contentment of the saved, and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, until the resurrection of damnation.” – John 5:28-29
- WE BELIEVE that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and our death to sin, and resurrection to a new life in Christ Jesus. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” – Romans 6:4 (see: Col. 2:12)
- WE BELIEVE that the Lord’s Supper is a memorial service and is the setting forth in a sacred and symbolic manner the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf. We do not believe that the elements of the Communion Service are either literally or spiritually the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, but simply symbols of his broken body and shed blood. The service is for believers only and is to be observed with thanksgiving for the sacrifice of

our Lord for us and in anticipation of His coming again. Each observance should be preceded by the believer's personal self-examination. "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.' After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (see also 1 Cor. 11: 27-34)

Educational Philosophy

We believe that education is the process by which students learn to discover and apply truth. We believe that all truth is ultimately centered in God and may be known through natural and divine revelation. The work and will of God are revealed to us primarily in God's Word, the Bible. While other books and materials are utilized, the Bible is our fundamental source of authority (Colossians 2:3, Psalm 19:1, 7).

Our educational philosophy includes the following convictions:

- That the major theme of the Scriptures is redemption through the atoning work of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2).
- That education should be geared to meet the needs of the total person, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social (Luke 2:25).
- That the school should work together with the home and the church in bringing up children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).
- That the individual is responsible for his attitudes and actions toward divinely appointed authority (parental, governmental, educational, and others) (Romans 13:1-2).
- That each individual is created by God with unique characteristics and abilities and that God has a specific design for each one. (Ephesians 2:10).
- That the educational program should be structured to provide opportunities for the practical application in daily life of classroom knowledge gained (Proverbs 3:5-6, Deuteronomy 6:7-9). That knowledge will be connected to a student's Christian worldview.

- That the teacher plays a significant role in setting a proper example or model for students in moral, social, and spiritual conduct (Philippians 3:17: 4:9).
- That our body is meant to be the temple of the Holy Spirit and our responsibility is to develop a wholesome respect for our physical well-being through physical development and avoidance of tobacco, alcohol, and addictive drugs (I Corinthians 6:19-20).
- That the earth was created by God for the benefit of mankind and that we are meant to be careful stewards of its resources (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 24:1).

A Christian school is not a public school. We are not imitating or replicating the curriculum, instructional methods, and minimum standards of achievement or any aspect of the educational philosophy of the public education system. We value a measure of independence and autonomy which has allowed us to pursue offering a high quality academic experience to our students that is completely integrated with a system of individual values discerned from our interpretation of the Bible.

The “school culture” we promote within the community made up of students, parents, faculty members and staff is Biblically based and distinctively Christian. The operation and administration of the school is based on a foundation of prayer, believing this to be our greatest resource in providing direction and discernment leading the school to achieve its mission and purpose. We believe the educational process includes the development of skills and knowledge leading to success but we believe that process is completed when our students learn how to connect those things to a Christian worldview.

We are in friendly cooperation with other Christian schools which operate under a similar philosophy of education and which share a similar mission and purpose. We are members of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) which provides us with curriculum resources, legal and legislative guidance and help, scholarship funding and continuing education resources for our faculty and staff. We are a founding member of the Bright Promise Foundation, a scholarship organization made up of the Christian schools in the City of Chicago and the Chicago Christian Urban Educators (CCUE) which provides administrative support and encouragement.

We maintain a friendly relationship with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) which provides us with information helpful to us in interpreting any state policy or law which applies to “non-public” schools, and with resources for professional

development. We voluntarily participate in ISBE's recognition program for non-public schools.

Expected School Wide Outcomes

A. Spiritual Development

Midwestern Christian Academy provides an educational environment that contributes to the Christian discipleship of its students, expecting that their enrollment at MCA will result in these outcomes.

1. Students who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ in every setting of their school day, and respond by committing to a personal relationship with Christ, along with a commitment to being his disciple.
2. Students who are able to give personal testimony to their faith experience and are able to lead others to experience spiritual conviction, repentance, faith in Christ, salvation from sin and restoration to their Creator.
3. Students who practice spiritual disciplines such as daily reading and meditating on the Scriptures, prayer and seeking to interact and be led by the Holy Spirit.
4. Students who understand and are able to articulate and defend a Christian worldview to which they are personally committed.
5. Students who understand that being part of a local church is a necessary and essential part of the Christian life and who understand that they have been given spiritual gifts to use in ministry as a member of their local church.
6. Students who depend on the leadership of the Holy Spirit to make life choices in further educational steps, marriage and family and career and vocational calling.

B. Academic Preparation

MCA desires to prepare its students for the next step in their academic experience, to be able to thrive and accomplish their goals in any kind of educational environment.

1. Students who are academically prepared in all areas including English/Language Arts, mathematics, history, geography and civics, biological, chemical and environmental sciences and in the practical use of technology.
2. Students who have an appreciation for and are able to express themselves creatively through the arts, as well as have an appreciation for artistic expression and creativity of others.
3. Students who are able to adapt to a new educational environment as they transition to high school, whether that is a charter school, public school, selective enrollment academy, vocational school or another Christian school.
4. Students who are articulate and able to communicate well via the written or spoken word.

5. Students who are industrious, who act on their own initiative rather than having to wait for someone to instruct them.
6. Students who accept responsibility for their own actions.
7. Students who have a visible love for learning and whose experience in our school helped turn them into a lifelong learner.

C. Social Preparation

MCA desires to see its students become contributors to their community, to be encouragers in their personal relationships and to fulfill their calling.

1. Students who are able to consider the needs of others ahead of their own.
2. Students who make choices based on biblical principles, setting an example for their family and friends.
3. Students who use technology in a way that builds others up and is encouraging to their personal growth.
4. Students who create and maintain strong family relationships.
5. Students who seek ways to improve the lives of others who live and work around them.
6. Students whose word and actions are trustworthy.

School Covenant Agreement for Parents Midwestern Christian Academy

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6 ESV

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things but is himself to be judged by no one. “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 ESV

When parents enroll their children in a Christian school, they are entering into a covenant with the school’s staff, including their child’s teachers, to assist them in providing the education that their children need to be trained in the way they should go in God’s divine will for their life. The public education provided in our culture doesn’t acknowledge Christian discipleship as one of its expected outcomes but the Bible doesn’t separate knowledge of things that are “spiritually discerned” from the life skills and knowledge that children need to be prepared for having a career and raising their own family.

In a Christian school, we teach the “whole child”. We provide a high quality academic experience that prepares students with the career and life skills they will need and we nurture, encourage and help students develop a mature Christian faith, moving from “milk to solid food” and instilling the disciplines of

prayer, Bible study and church membership, leading them to a discerning connection to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

A Christian school education is only capable of achieving the expected outcome of equipping students to live in the world and serve their Lord by using the spiritual gifts he has given them if parents work together with those who have been called to serve in the Christian school where their children are enrolled. The teachers and staff at a Christian school are believers in Christ who are called by God to serve this way and who have spiritual gifts in addition to professional training to give to their students. They are providing a ministry to the parents who are fulfilling their God-given responsibility to educate and disciple their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). It is a spiritual partnership that is governed by Biblical principles in a covenant relationship.

This covenant agreement will define the partnership between parents and the Midwestern Christian Academy.

Social Media and Parents

MCA operates a school website at mca.school. The website contains school information such as the calendar, menu, information about the staff, events, tuition and fees, enrollment information and links to the school's newsletter blog. It also operates a Facebook and Instagram page which it uses to promote the school and school events.

Part of the covenant agreement contained elsewhere in this handbook, which defines the partnership between the school and the parents who enroll their children here, is that parents will always speak well of the school in which their children are enrolled. If there is something which causes a parent to change their perspective of the school, or which they feel has not been properly addressed by the school's chain of authority, they are requested to follow Biblical principles in addressing such issues with the school administration, rather than taking their grievance public.

This request includes not posting any grievances or complaints on social media outlets at any time. Aside from legal liabilities that would be part of any critical postings about the school, our commitment to following Biblical principles in our operation and in the conduct of our business supports this request. The model of resolving difficulties between believers in Christ, found in Matthew 18:15-17 is the basis of our policy on handling parent complaints and concerns.

MCA may not post anything on social media regarding any of its students without parent permission. As part of our covenant agreement with our parents, we

reserve the right to request that parents not make posts which are critical of or unfavorable to the school on social media and that any such complaints be addressed in a Biblical, Christian manner.

In providing for the education of the children in its care, the school agrees to the following conditions as its part of the covenant and partnership with parents.

1. The school is committed to maintaining an identity that is distinctively Christian in all aspects of its operation. It has a statement of faith which defines and affirms all aspects of Biblically-based Christianity, including the foundational beliefs in the existence of a God whose power created the universe, in Jesus his son who is our Savior from sin and in his active presence among us through the Holy Spirit. The school is committed to undergirding and supporting these same Christian values held by the parents of our students.
2. The school directs instruction toward the “whole child.” Basic instruction in skills and knowledge accepts the principle that knowledge is revealed by God, so classroom objectives are connected to a Christian worldview based on Biblical truth. Students are also provided with Bible teaching and the opportunity for corporate worship and prayer which is not only a vital part of each day’s experience, but is also the starting point for the resolution of problems.
3. The school will provide students with a competent teaching staff. All teachers will be fully qualified, having credentials stating that they have achieved the training and educational requirements for the position they hold. Teachers and staff are expected to be Christian role models for their students having professed a personal faith in Jesus as their savior and being active and involved members of a local church in which the doctrine and practice of faith are compatible with that of the school.
4. The school will provide students with a safe learning environment in buildings that are well maintained to provide for their comfort. Curriculum materials will be provided which support the classroom instruction objectives of the school’s curriculum guides. Technology that supports the development of student skills will be provided and upgraded as resources are available to do so.
5. As Christian role models, the school’s staff is committed to loving each child the way Jesus would love them and to demonstrating their love for their students. Each teacher expresses this love as an individual and in their own way. They will build relationships with their students that are the foundation for mutual respect and which contribute to the ability of students to learn from them.

6. *“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son whom he receives.” Hebrews 12:5-6, ESV.* Discipline will be part of the student’s learning experience at MCA. School staff members will make every effort to be fair and consider disciplinary action prayerfully. There are standards based on Biblical principles and consequences given for failing to follow them which leads to student understanding of these principles and their willingness to follow them.

7. The school commits to faithful stewardship of its financial resources, realizing that parents are making sacrifices to enable the enrollment of their children. The school’s budget is carefully calculated to address only those things which are necessary for the accomplishment of the school’s mission and purpose. The school is not a “money making” operation, does not seek to operate at a profit and is not an income source for the sponsoring church.

8. Teachers and staff will keep their conversations professional and avoid gossip. Teachers will not be involved in social media posting about their students or parents and will not be connected with their students on social media outlets. All contacts and relationships between teachers and students will be professional and appropriate, realizing that teachers have a responsibility to build up, and to give grace to those who hear their words.

By enrolling their children at Midwestern Christian Academy and trusting the school with their education, parents agree to the following conditions as part of their covenant relationship with the school’s teachers and staff.

1. Parents will respect the school’s staff as professionals with a spiritual calling to their work. Parents acknowledge both the professional qualifications and the spiritual maturity of the teachers and staff of the school. Each teacher brings a unique set of skills and qualities to their instruction, whether it is a strong hand of discipline, a serious, “no-nonsense” attitude about achievement or a quiet but firm disposition. In learning how to adapt to each teacher’s style and personality, students benefit from all of them.

2. Parents are committed to the Biblical mandate of always giving a good report. When such a report is not possible, parents agree not to take their disagreements or problems with the school to social media, personal website accounts, email, or to discuss their problems or issues with other individuals whether they are associated with the school or not. There is no integrity in doing something like this, such behavior is only a selfish act to get one’s own way.

3. Parents agree to follow the school's written guidelines for having their grievances and problems addressed. They acknowledge Biblical principles for doing this and agree not to make attempts to appeal to other authority, or try to "go over someone's head" to have a problem resolved. Doing so is considered unethical and does not demonstrate a Christ-like spirit or demeanor.

4. Understanding that this is a financial commitment, parents who opt for a tuition payment plan will make their payments on time, in order to ensure that the school is able to pay its obligations on time as well. Parents also recognize that they have a responsibility and commitment to give to the school out of any abundance with which they have been blessed.

5. While it is not a requirement for parents or school families to be members of, or regular in their attendance in church, parents have an understanding that the education provided at MCA is distinctive in its adherence to Christian beliefs and practice and agree to respect decisions that are made prayerfully by the administration, MCA School Board and Midwest Bible Church Elder Board. The school has a statement of faith which represents its interpretation of those doctrines and practices it sees as essential to its identity as a Christian institution and to unity among the school community. *Parents recognize the school as a ministry which supports and undergirds the work of the local church.*

6. Parents agree to prayerfully support the school.

7. A Christian school is a ministry community. In addition to tuition and fees, resources to operate MCA come from Midwest Bible Church, alumni and friends of the school. Teachers and staff have accepted salaries below those of their counterparts in the public school system because they have a sense of spiritual calling to this ministry and this helps keep parent costs low. Parents will honor the sacrifices that are made on behalf of their children and acknowledge their gratitude for this blessing they are receiving.

8. Parents acknowledge that the school's policy regarding its operations and instruction have been carefully put together in order to be consistent with Biblical principles. **Parents agree to read the Parent-Student Handbook which contains the written policies and practices of school operation and understand that these policies are the basis for all decisions that are made within the school.**

ROLE OF TEACHERS AT MCA

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who do teach will be judged with greater strictness. James 3:1 ESV

A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. Matthew 10:24 ESV

All of the teachers at Midwestern Christian Academy are those who have confessed that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh and is their savior and Lord. They have given evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, including spiritual giftedness for teaching, are students of the Bible and active members of a local church which trusts and follows the Bible as the rule for its expression of faith.

Teachers at Midwestern Christian Academy are considered servants of Christ's church. We believe that teaching is a spiritual calling. Teachers are called by God to the profession, gifted by the Holy Spirit and are held accountable to a higher standard. The Bible requires them to be the recipients of respect given the seriousness and importance of the job they perform on behalf of their students.

All of the teachers on our staff working with students in Kindergarten through Eighth grade have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in the discipline where they are assigned to teach. Several of our staff are either in the process of earning their master's degree, or have earned one in order to improve their skills as a teacher to better serve your children. All teachers regularly participate in professional development and are committed to use their training and experience in evaluating "best practices" which engage students in learning and which are effectively measured in student achievement.

In addition to academic requirements, all of our teachers are required to personally testify to having experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit leading to a personal relationship with Jesus as their Lord and savior. They are active members of a local church whose teaching and doctrinal views are compatible with those of the school and its sponsoring church. They are equipped to teach academic objectives and to be spiritual counselors to their students.

The parents of our students should understand that each teacher brings their own unique personality to this position. Each teacher is different and the combination of skills which exist on our staff is one of the rich benefits our students enjoy as they learn. Differences in style are not distinctions of teaching ability and it is a fact, supported by educational research, that teachers who are more demanding when it comes to standards of achievement and behavior are actually more effective in achieving their goals.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

MCA is open for students at 7:00 AM. Parents who drop off students before 8:30 AM are responsible to see that students physically enter the school.

Before 8:15 AM, students are to go directly to the lunchroom where they will be supervised while they study, read, play table games, or socialize until the bell rings. At 8:20 AM, teachers will pick up students and take them to class. Classes begin promptly at 8:30 AM.

Students will be dismissed from their classrooms at the end of the day at 3:30 PM. Students who are not picked up by 3:45 PM will go to the After Care Program. Students must wait in the After School Program to be picked up by a parent or an adult guardian.

Students may only be picked up by their parents and individuals who have been authorized to pick up their children. Parents are responsible to provide a list of individuals who are approved to pick up their child/children. **This is for the safety of your children.**

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is important for the smooth operation of the school and the academic progress of the student.

Absences will be excused for the following:

- Student illness;
- Observance of religious holidays;
- Inclement weather or unexpected emergencies which would make it unsafe or unhealthy for a child to attend; or
- Accident or unavoidable circumstances.

****Parents are urged not to take children out of school unless it is necessary for one of the above reasons. You are encouraged to plan family vacations in accordance with the school's calendar.**

An **Excused Absence** is recorded as an absence, but the student is allowed to make up any missed work without penalty within the number of days commensurate with the absence. All other absences will be marked **Unexcused** and students may not be eligible to make up missed work.

Any student with fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences will be required to attend summer school or do additional assignments and pass a placement test to be eligible for promotion.

Under the state of Illinois compulsory school attendance laws, students must be present for at least 90% of the scheduled session days in order to receive credit for the school year. The state requires 180 days per session and roughly 90 days per semester, so students may only miss 9 days in any semester, or a total of 18 days during the school year. **The school's definition of excused or unexcused has no bearing on the state requirement.** If a student is absent more than 18 days in a school year, excused or unexcused, they must be granted a waiver by their school board or oversight authority or they must repeat the grade in which they are currently enrolled *regardless of their grades.*

Please notify the school in writing or by telephone when a child is absent from school. If the school is not notified, we will try to verify absence by calling a parent at home or work. Parents should make every effort to have the children at school on time. Parents should aim to have children at school by 8:15 AM to enable them to be in class ready to work at 8:30 AM.

Students who arrive after 8:35 AM must report to the office for a tardy admit slip. Parents will be notified when a student reaches three (3) tardies in a quarter. Each set of five (5) tardies in one quarter will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence and will be recorded on the report card. **Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)** who arrive after 8:35 may be dropped off at the entrance to their classrooms (Entrance C) and report to class. Their teachers will report the tardy to the office via Gradelink.

TARDY POLICY

The first bell rings at 8:20 and students are expected to be in their classrooms for prayer, pledges and announcements at 8:30. Instructional time begins at 8:40. In most classes, and on most grade levels, important objectives in core subjects are taught at the beginning of each class. Students who are consistently late to school, arriving after 8:40 a.m., are missing instruction that is essential to their learning experience.

Since MCA tracks its instructional time by annual number of hours, students who are consistently tardy, arriving at school after 8:40 a.m. may be required to remain

for additional instruction after school at the tutoring rate in order to receive credit for the course.

Kindergarten Students will be subject to the same attendance policies as other students. Kindergarten students must meet a specific set of objectives in order to be promoted to first grade and attendance at school is a major factor in their ability to meet these objectives and expectations. School attendance is critical in their ability to achieve these objectives. We reserve the right to retain kindergarten students who accumulate excessive absences.

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

MCA provides Bibles, textbooks, work texts and workbooks that students use throughout the year. If a Bible or book becomes lost or damaged during the year, parents will be assessed a replacement fee.

All textbooks are the property of MCA. They should remain at school unless specifically directed by a teacher to bring home. At the end of the year, MCA will inventory all textbooks. If textbooks are lost or damaged, parents will be assessed a replacement fee.

The only books that students can keep at the end of the year are work texts and workbooks. All other Bibles and books must remain at the school.

All students in grades 3-8 are issued a chrome book for their classroom use. In some middle school grades, textbooks are uploaded on the chrome book. Multiple learning activities are designed with the use of the chrome books in mind. The school has a board approved *Technology Policy* which all parents will receive. There are specific guidelines for the use of the chrome book included in the technology policy.

Students in grades K-2 have the use of a tablet, or Kindle, for activities in several subject areas.

All students at MCA, Kindergarten through eighth grade, are able to access the internet through the school's Google education platform. Each student has their own email account. Parents should keep their child's account information on hand so that students can access their files from their own computer equipment. Students must use their own email account to access the internet at school and may not use personal email accounts. Our platform is protected by a firewall, and the email addresses are held in a secure account.

Students are not permitted to access any social media or commercial websites using their school email or school computer equipment.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast is **\$1.50/day** and Lunch is **\$4.50/day**. Lunches are made on-site daily. Student accounts will be billed each month for breakfasts and lunches purchased. A monthly meal ticket can be purchased for \$70/month billed from August through May

Before School Supervision

~~Students arriving from 6:30 – 7:00 AM = **\$7.00** / student~~ unless we have enough students to open doors at 6:30am

Students arriving from 7:00 – 7:30 AM = **\$6.00** / student

Students arriving from 7:30 – 8:00 AM = **\$4.00** / student

Students arriving from 8:00 – 8:15 AM = **No Charge**

8:20 AM ► Students enter the building

8:30 AM ► Class Begins

After School Supervision

Students leaving between 3:45 – 4:00 PM = **\$4.00** / student

Students leaving between 4:00 – 4:30 PM = **\$6.00** / student

Students leaving between 4:30 – 5:00 PM = **\$7.00** / student

Students leaving between 5:00 – 5:15 PM = **\$8.00** / student

Students leaving between 5:15 – 5:30 PM = **\$10.00** / student

After 5:30 PM – Late Fee Charge **\$10.00** and **\$5.00** for each additional **5 minutes**

Please Note:

After School Programs are different than After School Supervision. If students are not picked within 10 minutes after their After School Program ends, they will be walked to the After School Supervision, where their account will be charged the above rate.

Billing for Breakfast, Lunch and Before and After School Care Program:

Lunch, before school (BSP) and after school billing (ASP) covers the previous month's expenses, running from the 26th of the month to the 25th of the following month.

Tuition Payment Plan Options

MCA offers two payment plan options:

1. Pay in full by August 1ST (\$250 discount for 1st child, \$350 for family of 2 or more.
2. 10 Month Payment Plan – August through May
3. 11 Month Payment Plan – July through May
3. 12 Month Payment Plan – July through June (not available after July 31st)

Pay Schedule:

1. Payment is due by the 1st of each month.
2. If payment is not received by the 5th of each month, a late fee of \$35 per student is applied.
3. Balance due after the 20th of the month will get a warning and student will be suspended from school after 60 days of overdue balance.

Midwestern Christian Academy offers the following discounts:

- Member in good standing of Midwest Bible Church: 15% off tuition
- Full-time pastor and chaplain discount: 40% off tuition
- New family discount: \$500 off total tuition for full day students per family
- New Family discount: \$250 off total tuition for half day students per family
- Referral discount: \$400 per family referred. Amount is credited when the referred family has enrolled, attended and paid tuition for one month. Referral discount will be posted for September.
- Tuition Paid-in-Full discount: \$250 off for the first student and \$350 for a family of 2 or more
-

Financial Aid: Financial Aid applications are available upon request. You must be registered in order to receive a financial aid application. Please see the Financial Aid Policy for more information. (Limited funds available, no guaranties)

*If a family qualifies for multiple discounts, they may choose only one, except the referral discount.

Additional Expenses

- School and gym uniforms (prices vary)
- Music instrument rental – varies per instrument
- Team sports - \$175 per student, per sport Sports Jersey extra
- After School Programs, Clubs - \$75 per student, per semester - After School Care - see extra-curricular activities sheet for hourly rate
- School Lunches - \$4.50 each, billed at the end of each month

Payment Options

- Cash, check, Zelle pay, or automatic bill payment through your online banking. There is a \$25 fee for returned checks.
- Credit/debit cards – MCA gladly accepts most credit and debit cards, but there is a processing fee of 3.25% for each transaction. To make this payment go to school website: mca.school

Tuition Notes:

- The 1st Child rate is the student in the class with the highest rate. The 2nd Child rate is the student in the class with the second highest rate.
- Student accounts must be current in order to register for the following year or to receive transcripts.

Billing Statements:

Parents will receive statements from the school via email every 5 to 7 business days. If you do not receive a statement please contact the MCA office.

Past due Tuition Policy

As a private, Christian school, MCA depends on tuition and fees to cover the majority of its operational expenses. Parents share in this ministry through their financial support, which is calculated to provide a balance of the cost of providing educational services to its students along with contributions made by donors to support the school's financial aid program, and the sacrifices made by teachers and staff who work at a lower salary in order to provide affordable Christian education to the students.

The school calculates its budget requirements based on enrollment numbers. The actual cost per student is incurred by the school when a student enrolls. As a courtesy to parents, the school offers monthly payment plans as a convenient means of paying their children's tuition and fees. The school also has monthly financial obligations that it must meet, including paying its teachers and staff. Since the tuition is calculated to meet expenses, not generate a profit, when tuition accounts go unpaid, it becomes difficult for the school to meet its financial obligations.

Notification of Past Due Amounts

Parents receive regular notification regarding the status of their tuition account. When a tuition account becomes 60 days past due, students will no longer be considered enrolled at MCA. Parents must resolve the past due balance, or make prior approved arrangements, **before** the 60 day past due date. At least 30 days prior notice will be given before enrollment is terminated. The notice will specifically state that the account is past due and the balance must be brought up to date, and the specific date for termination of enrollment will be given.

Students whose enrollment is terminated will not be permitted to retrieve books or other classroom materials. All personal possessions will be brought to the office, placed in a bag with a label so that the student or their parents may pick them up. Transcripts and records will be held until the balance is paid in full.

Adopted March 20, 2023

Refund Policy

The registration fees are **non-refundable**. Families who have paid tuition in advance may receive a refund for the portion of the tuition payment that covers the period of school days that student will not attend class.

If a student withdraws at any point in the school year, tuition is pro-rated up to the last day of the student's attendance. No refund is given for the remainder of a month if withdrawal is after the 10th of the month. All withdrawals from MCA must be made in writing.

Withdrawal Fee

Enrollment at MCA is based on a covenant agreement between the school and the parents of our students. The school does not earn a profit from tuition and fees, and calculates the tuition based solely on the expenses that it incurs as a result of operation. Parents benefit from the school's use of a facility that is debt-free and rent-free to the school which translates into a substantial amount of savings. As part of its ministry support, Midwest Bible Church provided the funds for the complete renovation of the building in the summer of 2018.

The willingness of our teachers to work for wages below the "market rate" for educational professionals also makes the cost of attending school at MCA affordable. The "value" of what our teachers contribute by their sacrifice comes out to nearly \$2,000 annually per student.

The value of these contributions, which keeps tuition costs low, is significant. A year of public school education in the Chicago public schools costs the taxpayers over \$14,000, and the average tuition at a private school in the Chicago area is also over \$14,000. The average suburban Christian school parent pays \$16,000 per student per year.

Bullying

Midwest Christian Academy believes that bullying has no place in a Christian school. It has a negative effect on our school's social and educational environment. It fosters fear and anxiety among our students, prohibits students from learning and performing to the best of their ability, and can cause serious emotional trauma.

There is a difference between bullying, and typical teasing, horseplay or territory testing between children. **Bullying is defined as behavior exhibited by an individual toward another that includes creating an advantage for personal gain, or getting a sense of gratification or satisfaction from behavior that intentionally intimidates another, and which is aimed at controlling their behavior, limiting their contact with others and interfering with, or attempting to end another relationship**

Bullying may be both verbal and/or physical. It could involve but is not limited to a pattern of teasing or name calling, belittling, threats or physical harm, intimidation through gestures, words, and actions, harassment of any kind, confrontation, stalking, social exclusion, insulting or harassing e-mails, text messages, social media comments, or any other abusive behavior perpetrated against another student. Students need to understand that this kind of behavior is unacceptable and may be illegal as well. MCA will not tolerate such behavior and will cooperate with authorities in prosecuting those involved. Such behavior conflicts with our school's Statements of Faith, Philosophy, Discipline, and Non-Discrimination policies.

Any student who engages in such behavior will be subject to serious school disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the school administration. Based on the child's age, attitude, the circumstances of the incident, and prior disciplinary action, consequences may include, but are not limited to require pastoral or professional counseling with regular reports, detention, suspension or dismissal.

Students should report any attempted intimidation or bullying to their teacher.

Reports which may lead to disciplinary action against another student must be corroborated by eyewitness testimony or clear evidence of bullying activity taking place following administrative investigation. Parents will be notified when such behavior is identified and will be expected to cooperate with corrective action. Lack of cooperation from parents and failure to cooperate with an investigation into bullying activity will result in the expulsion of the student from school.

Parents should realize that there are standards with which the school must comply in order to substantiate a charge of "bullying." While an accusation may alert the administration to a situation which exists, it may not establish that the situation

is “bullying” by the definition of the term. Since the school does not have a guidance counselor on staff, the administration will determine whether or not a student’s behavior constitutes bullying. This decision is final and is expected to be accompanied by remedial action on the part of the parents.

Cell Phone Policy

MCA strongly discourages students from bringing cell phones or electronic devices of any kind to school. If you bring a cell phone or electronic device, you are responsible for its safe keeping. It must be **turned off** and placed in either the locker, or in a backpack or purse where it cannot be seen. **Students may not access their phone during the day.** Teachers who see students using a cell phone, have been instructed to confiscate the phone and turn it into the office.

Phones that are left turned on cause problems with the school’s Wi-Fi signal. It should also be noted that phones have a GPS device and the location of your child can be determined using their phone signal. Having a cell phone turned on at school becomes a safety issue for other students, therefore, we ask that students leave their phone off and stored in their backpack or locker during the school day.

When a phone or electronic device is confiscated for the first time, it will be held by the principal until a parent comes to pick it up. After the first confiscation, the administration reserves the right to keep the phone and remove the SIM card. After the removal of the card, the student loses the privilege of bringing their phone to school. MCA does not accept responsibility and will not become involved in any situation related to the loss of or damage to any personal phones or electronic devices that a student brings to school.

When necessary, the school will make school phones available to a student for emergency purposes or give permission to students to use their cell phone.

Car Pool Lines and Student Drop-off and Pick Up

During the morning drop off, there will be one line marked out for vehicles to drive through and drop off their students. Students should exit the vehicle either on the right hand side, or walk around behind the car after exiting. Parents should not leave the vehicle in the car pool line at any time, even to open the door for their child. Do not allow your child to exit the vehicle in a manner which requires them to walk through cars in the line. Pedestrians should always use the cross walk.

If you assist your child in exiting the vehicle, requiring you to leave the driver's seat, please park in one of the spaces facing the main school entrance and walk them to the building using the designated cross-walk.

Pre-K Parents should park in one of the spaces in the middle row of the parking lot and walk with their child through the designated cross walk before heading to the Pre-K building. Do not cross the car pool line anywhere except at the cross walk.

During the afternoon pick up, there will be two lines in the parking lot and one line at the gate on Cornelia St. If your child's last name begins with the letters of the alphabet A through F, please pick them up at the gate on Cornelia St. Cornelia is a one-way street heading west toward Cicero Ave. There is a designated, short-term parking area along the curb beside the school where you can pick up your child.

Century Club

The Century Club, founded in 1964, is an organization of individuals interested in helping to support the ministry of Midwestern Christian Academy. Through their financial donations, the Century Club members provide funds for special projects beyond the scope of our budget. This enables MCA to hold down the cost of tuition and maintain a quality Christian education program for the students. All parents and friends are invited to become members.

Classroom Assignment and Student Placement

There may be times when the number of students enrolled requires us to create a second classroom on the same grade level. Early registration and enrollment helps us plan in advance for larger classes. When this happens, the administration, in consultation with the current and future grade level teachers, will decide on student placements.

We ask that parents not request a specific teacher for their child if there are two classes available. Our qualifications and requirements for teachers means that all of those whom we hire for Kindergarten through eighth grade have the required B. A. from an accredited college or university and have certification from either ACSI or an Illinois State teaching license. Part of the student's educational experience is adapting to the various teaching styles and personalities of teachers who are, by our evaluation and standards, equally professional and competent. Therefore, our policy is not to accept parent requests for specific teachers.

CURRICULUM

Academics

All students at MCA receive regular instruction in Bible, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and computer/technology skills. We seek to use developmentally appropriate practice with all students. This allows us to tailor instruction to each grade and group of students.

We believe that the curriculum is more than a book or a worksheet. Curriculum is both the means and the materials that are used to promote learning in the classroom. It includes what we teach, how we teach it and what we want to accomplish. As such, there will be days that students work and practice from a book. There will also be days when students are using manipulatives, art, projects, and play to learn. In keeping with this hands-on approach, we provide access to technology for all of our students in their classroom with chrome books. Students in grades K-3 have access to a Kindle tablet. If you would like to see some of the books we do use, please stop by the office, or you can ask your student's teacher.

In addition to the core content areas, MCA also offers supplemental courses in art, physical education, health, Spanish, music/chorus and band. Students in 4th-8th grades are able to choose between general music and choir or band and orchestra (starting in September). We also offer Art, Spanish and Computer Applications as elective courses for junior high school students.

The curriculum objectives at MCA are intended to challenge students to achieve a level of accomplishment that represents their *best effort* and which is based on *best practices in Christian education*. State mandated standards and curriculum requirements that are consistent with our Christian perspective are considered *minimum* standards and may not necessarily meet MCA's expected student outcomes.

Sports

MCA offers sports and extracurricular activities based on the level of student interest. In the past, we have been able to offer volleyball, soccer and basketball for boys and girls. We will offer the sports and activities that students want to pursue, and for which there are coaches available. There is a sports fee of \$155 per sport plus the cost of a sports jersey. The principal and athletic director are working to increase the sports that we offer. When we do, we will be sure to send home information in a timely manner.

To be eligible to participate in sports, students must be passing all academic subjects and have a cumulative average of at least a "C."

Discipline Policy

Grades 1-5

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Obey all school policies
2. Follow classroom rules
3. Cooperate with school supervisors
4. Complete all classroom assignments
5. Maintain self-control
6. Respect other persons and property
7. Maintain a positive attitude

SUGGESTED ORDER FOR DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

1. Positive Framing
2. Verbal Warning
3. Phone Call Home
4. Parent/Teacher Conference

GRADES 6 – 8

CARELESS OFFENSES: Minor acts of thoughtless, rude, and/or disrespectful words, actions, or attitudes toward others.

- Chewing gum or eating candy in class
- Snack or food in class
- Interrupting, talking, noises or disruptive behavior, first time
- Dress code violation, first offense

Initial warning but repeated offenses will be considered as minor offenses.

MINOR OFFENSES: Deliberate acts of disobedience or disrespect toward other students, teachers, supervisors, or other school authorities. Repeated minor offenses will be considered serious offenses. Minor offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Disrespectful attitude toward a teacher or school staff member
- Repeated offense after being warned
- Disrupting class with excessive talking or noises
- Refusing to follow directions given by teachers or staff; talking back or arguing with a teacher or staff member
- Cell phone out in classroom

- Use of cell phone at any time without permission from a teacher
- Dress code violation, second or more times

Violators will receive one (1) demerit.

SERIOUS OFFENSES: are serious acts of disobedience or disrespect toward other students, teachers, supervisors, or other school authorities. Serious offenses include

- Being disrespectful, talking back or having a rude attitude toward a teacher or school staff member
- Use of inappropriate language
- Any damage or disrespect of school property including textbooks and workbooks provided for student use. Books should be treated with respect, not slammed around, thrown in lockers, covers torn off pages torn out. Any workbook or textbook that is evaluated as being damaged must be replaced at cost to its previous owner.
- Violations of the computer use policy, including opening game sites and unauthorized websites while using school owned computers
- Rude or disrespectful behavior toward another student, such as name calling, pushing, shoving, taking others' belongings
- Cheating
- Dishonesty, lying

Violators will receive two (2) demerits. Demerits are cumulative and repeated offenses will result in further disciplinary action, including a parent conference, after a certain number of demerits are earned.

MAJOR OFFENSES: are willful and defiant acts that are inconsistent with Christian standards and unacceptable at MCA. This includes, but are not limited to:

- Bullying or threatening behavior toward another student
- Name calling, including the use of racist names or terms known to be offensive to any specific race or ethnicity.
- Making any kind of statement involving language suggesting shooting, killing, the use of guns, knives or other weapons. Threatening to shoot, stab, or injure another person.
- The possession of anything considered to be a deadly weapon on campus, including a gun, knife, or other potentially deadly objects. The possession of cigarette lighters, cigarettes, matches, any illicit or illegal controlled substance, fireworks, alcohol, or vaping devices.
- Use of any sexually suggestive language or terminology, terms that apply to sexual orientation or gender identity, or saying something with an inside, hidden sexual meaning or agenda.
- Opening websites on school computer equipment for any purpose other than completing an assignment. This includes game sites, electronic sales, social media sites or any website not directly related to the assignment on

which the student is working. Note that doing so, and getting caught, constitutes a major violation on the **first offense**.

- Damage or destruction of school property. This includes doing any damage to anything in the hallway, bathrooms or classroom. If caught, the student will receive the consequences of the violation, and the cost of replacing whatever they damaged will be added to their tuition balance.

Consequences for major offenses include receiving 3 demerits, home suspension for up to 3 school days and any other consequence, such as reporting an incident to the police and requiring a parent conference, deemed necessary at the principal's discretion. The nature of some major violations will require the principal's discretionary ruling as to whether a student may remain enrolled at MCA.

Violators will receive 3 demerits, a home suspension up to 3 days, or dismissal from school at school's discretion.

Students are subject to the following consequences for accumulated demerits: (Demerits accumulate by semester)

- 1 demerit warning to student
- 2 demerits written notification to parent via email
- 3 demerits written notification to parent and parent conference
Student serves lunch detention
- 4 demerits parent/teacher conference + 2 *detentions*
- 5 demerits In-school or home suspension of up to 2 days
- 6 demerits in-school or home suspension up to 3 days, conference with parent, student on disciplinary probation
- 7 demerits home suspension of up to 3 days and possible dismissal from school.

Each subsequent detention will require the student serving a Saturday detention along with having their parent notified of each write-up. Repeated offenses will result in the student's dismissal from the school.

DETENTIONS: The school will implement a system of student detention at a time when staff members are available for supervision. Detention includes remedial written work during which a student will reflect on their behavior, and will have the opportunity while doing so to demonstrate a repentant attitude.

Lunch Detention for students in 4th through 8th grade will be served during the lunch period at a separate table. Lunch detention is considered half an hour, so students who have been assigned an hour of detention will serve on two separate days.

Morning Detention, if offered, will take place from 7:15 to 8:15a.m. Students will complete a remedial activity during morning detention and the activity must be complete before the student is dismissed. Parents will be assessed a \$25 fee for each time their student serves a morning detention to cover the cost of supervision.

Saturday Detention, if offered, will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the designated Saturday morning. The doors will be locked at 8:00 so students who do not arrive on time will be assigned an additional detention for missing. Parents will be assessed a \$50 fee to cover supervision during Saturday detention times.

In all matters of discipline, the judgment of the teachers or principal must be respected and followed. Penalties listed on this sheet DO NOT exclude the possibility of other consequences.

Part of the disciplinary process in a Christian school is helping students to understand Biblical concepts like mercy, grace, repentance and forgiveness. There is an expected measure of mercy and grace which is already written into the discipline policy, and which is expected of teachers as they spend time with students each day.

Students should understand that repentance is an expected part of every disciplinary incident, and that it is more than just making an apology. An apology is sincerely expressed by a change in the student's behavior that is immediate and visible. While it is not possible to take back the actions leading to discipline, students can repair their reputation by a visible change of attitude and by encouraging other students to do the right thing.

Forgiveness does not necessarily imply that consequences for improper behavior will not be given. We believe that it is a student's responsibility to understand why their action or behavior resulted in the administration of discipline.

Students who have been dismissed from the school may have the opportunity to return if certain conditions are met indicating their repentant attitude.

1. They must make restitution in an appropriate manner to the individual or teacher to whom their actions were directed.
2. They must remain suspended from school for the full remaining term of the semester in which they were suspended.
3. They must have participated in a personal counseling session regarding their behavior with their pastor, or a recognized church leader.
4. They and their parents must submit a letter requesting re-admission to the school, expressing an understanding of the student behavior that

caused the dismissal, and agreeing to a probationary status set in place by the principal.

Approved May 8, 2023

FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

In keeping tuition costs as low as possible, MCA depends on contributions and donations from multiple sources, including from our school families, to provide things for our students that are not part of the tuition-funded budget. The recent renovation of the gym, the art room, the addition of playground equipment, the resurfacing of the parking lot, and the remodeling of the main building, are all recent improvements made as a result of contributions to the school.

In the past, the school held a candy sale in the fall to provide for some of these projects which benefit our students. Many families felt that this was a lot of work and time devoted for a small return which included the candy company's profits. Last year, it was recommended that we set a fundraising goal of \$250 per family, and put that in the tuition account, along with providing a tax receipt for the contribution. In spite of the needs which were presented to the school family, including adding the playground equipment, only \$1,400 was raised.

MCA families benefit from one of the lowest rates for tuition and fees of any private, Christian or religious-based school in the city of Chicago. We are able to keep the rate low because we use a facility that is debt free, on which we pay no lease or rental, and because our teachers and staff make a sacrifice in accepting a salary that balances the budget and makes this possible. It is also because generous donors, from outside the school community itself, are committed to supporting Christian education. MCA has benefitted from over \$500,000 in contributions made to the school over the past five years from people who are committed to Christian school education.

We believe our parents are also committed to Christian education. Most of what we purchase with money that is contributed to the school are things that our parents suggest to us they would like to have at their child's school. So we are asking that our parent community raise, by their contributions, an annual amount of \$35,000. This represents a \$25 per month contribution, a \$250 annual donation, which, unlike tuition and fees, is tax deductible. This is actually less than what we have observed to be the "fund raising fee" assessed by religious-based schools in our neighborhood. Billing for the fundraising fee will be done on the 1st of each month from August 1st through May 1st.

Doing this will help us in several ways. Many of those from outside our school community, especially businesses and foundations, base their support on what they see being given from within the school community. If they see that the school community thinks the school is a worthy cause, above and beyond their tuition, they are more inclined to give. These funds generally provide for needs that the parents have asked the school to provide for their students.

Cash donations are always accepted and will be applied in accordance with the school's specific needs and discretion. Before making any material donations, please check with the teacher or the office to see if it is an item that is needed.

Emergency Form

Each year as part of the registration process, parents are asked to fill out an emergency information form for each student. This form contains vital information in case an emergency occurs at school. Parents are reminded during the year to update the information whenever there is a change of address or phone number.

Only people on the emergency form will be allowed to pick up students. The only exception to this is if a parent/guardian emails the school and notifies the office who will be picking up the student. That person will then need to provide picture identification. Authorized persons must be 18 years or older.

Enrollment Policy and Procedures

The application process begins with the completion of the Application (online or paper copy), reading and signing the Statement of Cooperation; and submitting copies of previous school grades and test scores. Students enrolling in school must provide a copy of their birth certificate.

- Children entering PreK3 must be 3 years old before September 15th.
- Children entering PreK4 must be 4 years old before September 15th.
- Children entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old before September 15th.

Completed application forms and school records will be reviewed by the school administration. Applicants will be notified normally within two (2) business days if they are accepted, not accepted, or on the waiting list.

If accepted, applicants must respond by completing and returning the *Registration Form*, paying the Registration Fee and signing the *Financial Commitment Form* and *Medical Consent Form* within two weeks of notification to be added to the enrollment list.

Those on the waiting list will be notified as openings become available for possible enrollment. Student enrollment is on a first-come/first-serve basis.

Grading Policy

It is our goal to ensure that the parents and the students are continually informed about students' progress. One way to do that is through grades. MCA will send home progress reports every four weeks and a report card at the end of each quarter.

Our current grading criteria is as follows:

- A – Superior (90%-100%)
- B – Excellent (80%-89%)
- C – Good (70%-79%)
- D – Needs improvement (60%-69%)
- F – Not meeting expectations (< 60%)

Our current effort criteria is as follows:

- 1 – Is working to ability
- 2 – Needs improvement
- 3 – Not meeting expectations

Grievance Policy

Policy: Midwestern Christian Academy is committed to helpful communication during the process of resolving concerns, complaints, or disputes within the school community. Prompt effective resolution of grievances in a Christ-like manner is central to this commitment. Grievances will be treated with seriousness and resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. The school will provide processes to resolve grievances that are fair and just. Decisions will be made with impartiality and due care and at all times confidentiality will be respected.

Rationale: Midwestern Christian Academy is composed of many people and from time to time concerns may occur. Practically stated, when a concern occurs, both parties should meet prayerfully, humbly, honestly and seek the Lord's guidance. If handled in this manner, almost all problems will be solved on a one-on-one level.

Biblical Support: Midwestern Christian Academy is committed to follow Biblical direction in the resolution of grievances and issues among the school

community. The Biblical basis for this practice is found in the following verses of scripture: Matthew 18:15-21 & I John 4:17-18

Scope: These guidelines are to be followed whenever there is a dispute or grievance between two parties connected in a direct way to Midwestern Christian Academy. This includes students, parents, staff, volunteers, administration, the school board and the elder board of Midwest Bible Church. It is understood that if any disputes arise which are not covered by this policy, the chairman of the school board will decide what procedures to follow based on those procedures established by this policy.

Definition: A grievance is an unresolved problem. More specifically it would be a formal objection or complaint made on the basis of something believed to be wrong, unfair, misleading, unlawful, or of poor quality.

Goal: The aim of a grievance procedure is to produce a solution. Not all resolutions will satisfy those concerned, but the grievance procedure will ensure that the concern is addressed and that a clear response is provided at each stage of the process. The procedure involves both informal and formal components.

Role of the Principal or Board Chairperson in Resolving Disputes Involving Staff Members: With the expectation that parents and staff members have attempted to reach a resolution to a problem first, the role of those charged with resolving the disputes that come to them is to be an advocate for the school staff member, student or volunteer serving the school, to whom the original grievance is addressed.

1. If it has been determined that the school staff member violated a policy or did not follow correct procedure, the matter should be handled privately with the staff member, and the resolution of the grievance should be focused on reconciliation of the relationship. Whatever direction is given to the member of the staff is confidential.
2. If the school staff member followed policy, acting within the authority and autonomy of their classroom or work space, then the principal or board chair should seek to resolve the relationship, and affirm the decision made by the employee.
3. No resolution of a grievance brought by a parent or student involving a staff member can be considered in evaluating the staff member's job performance or determining their eligibility for a contract (see staff handbook for personnel policy related to grievances and the teacher and staff contracts).

General Guidelines:

- If the complaint is a matter of concern that involves a staff member, the individual making the complaint should be directed to approach the staff member and resolve the matter. Unless a resolution has been attempted between the student or parent and the staff member involved, the parent or student is not entitled to file a grievance with the principal or the school board.
- If the complaint or matter of concern is about school policies or decisions, first speak directly to the member of staff responsible for the implementation of the policy. Seek clarification from the principal or chairman of the school board if you are unsure of the person to whom you should address your concern or complaint.
- Matters of complaint about a student or students should NOT be addressed directly to a child but should be directed to a member of staff, such as the appropriate class teacher or principal for management of the process of investigation, communication, and resolution.
- Decisions by the elder board of Midwest Bible Church are final. No further appeal will be granted.

Grievance Resolution Process:

Students/Parents to Teachers:

1. All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parent(s), or if the student is mature enough, by the student her/himself. A respectful demeanor is required at all times. The staff member should document the complaint, along with their proposed resolution.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parent(s) or student may bring the concern to the principal. Complaints at this level and above are documented by the principal. The resolution is discerned prayerfully and in accordance with school policy by the principal.
3. If the problem is not resolved to the student's/parent's satisfaction, the parent(s) should appeal the decision to the chairperson of the school board in writing. The chairperson of the school board will speak with parties involved, investigate as appropriate and make a final determination to resolve the matter, observing principles of procedural fairness and timeliness and in accordance with the school's written policy. The final determination, including reasons for the decision, will be communicated in writing. The school board must be in consensus agreement with the resolution provided by the board chairperson.
4. If the resolution is still unsatisfactory, parties may lodge a written appeal to the elder board of the Midwest Bible Church within two weeks of the chairman of the school board's determination. The appeal should be submitted to the chairman of the school board and principal who will

submit it to the elders. The elder board will not entertain requests until step 1, 2, & 3 have been completed.

Parents, PTF Members and School Donors

1. If parents, PTF members, or donors have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms), they should bring their concerns to the principal. The principal will provide a resolution based on the school's written policy.
2. If the complaint does not involve a specific written school policy or operational procedure, the grievance will be handled by the principal who will inform the party making the complaint that there is no basis for a grievance, based on policy.
3. If the problem does state a specific school policy, and is not resolved by the principal, the party should present their concerns in writing to the chairman of the school board. Complaints at this level and above are documented by the chairman of the school board to assist the school in identifying and rectifying problems that are recurring or to identify systemic issues that require attention. The chairman of the school board will speak with parties involved, investigate as appropriate, and make a final determination to resolve the matter, observing principles of procedural fairness and timeliness. The final determination, including reasons for the decision will be communicated in writing and must be consistent with the school's written policies and procedures.
4. If there is no satisfactory resolution, parties may lodge a written appeal to the elder board of Midwest Bible Church within two weeks of the chairman of the school board's determination requesting a review of the school's determination. The appeal should be submitted to the chairman of the school board and principal. The elder board will not entertain requests until step 1 & 2 have been completed.
5. This procedure applies to board members who are acting in their capacity as parents, association members, or donors and not as representatives of the board.

Students with Special Needs, IEPs or 504 Plans

Many students who have special educational or behavioral needs can be enrolled and succeed at Midwestern Christian Academy. We will consider admission and enrollments of special needs students on a case by case basis. We do provide Title 1 services for students in Language Arts/Reading and Mathematics for those who qualify. We do not provide additional learning support.

1. Students who apply for admission and who have a diagnosis and an IEP or 504 will be considered for admission provided they do not require additional services beyond Title 1. We can recommend after school tutoring services based on availability. We will evaluate the IEP and make a determination of whether or not the student's teachers have the ability to implement the plan.
2. There is a limited number of students with IEPs that we can accept in any classroom and that number is dependent on the extent of modifications and accommodations recommended. It may not be possible to accept a student on a particular grade level due to capacity or near capacity enrollment.
3. MCA does not provide evaluation services. We will no longer provide any voluntary agreements based on a student's diagnosis without an approved IEP or 504.
4. MCA does not have learning support staff, and cannot provide additional learning support during the school day.

All parents enrolling students at MCA with IEPs or 504 plans do so voluntarily, understanding the limitations of the school and that the school is voluntarily agreeing to support the modifications and accommodations to the best of our ability to do so. The school will consult with the parents prior to making any decisions regarding any modification of the manner in which the plan is implemented and reserves the right to make such changes based on teacher observation and evaluation of student progress.

Parents will sign a waiver which states their agreement with this school policy and their acknowledgement of this as a voluntary arrangement.

Adopted January 9, 2023

Homework Policy

Homework assignments should have a purpose. They may remediate, reinforce, or enrich. Homework should not be used to review lessons from that day unless the students have mastered that content. Homework may not exceed 10% of a student's grade. Students work at different paces at home and school so a time requirement is not established for homework. The expectation is that students would have approximately one hour of homework four nights a week.

Honor Roll

At the end of each quarter, students in grades 3-10 who achieve the following academic standards will be recognized for the HONOR ROLL.

In order for a student to achieve the "A" HONOR ROLL, they must receive a grade of no less than "A-" in all subject areas.

In order for a student to achieve the "B" HONOR ROLL, they must receive a grade of no less than "B-" in all subject areas.

Internet Access Policy

MCA has a technology policy which covers the use of school-owned devices used exclusively for school instruction and assignments. All parents and students should have a copy of the technology policy.

Access to the internet at school is a necessity for the educational process involving our students. However, as a result of the security problems presented by internet access, students are expected to be familiar with and fully compliant with all policies in the school's technology policy.

Students may only access the internet using their login and password that is in the Google account assigned to the school. They may not use any other login or password. Each student has a google education account that ends in mca.school and is assigned an email address with their account which they must use while at school. Students may not download apps or use any email or internet account other than the one assigned by the school.

Lockers

Most students will be assigned a locker or storage space to store personal belongings. Students are not allowed to change lockers without permission from the school office. Lockers are to be kept neat and orderly.

Since trust is a big part of the privilege of attending a Christian school, students do not have locks on their lockers. It is expected that all students will be able to put something in their locker and that they will find it there when they return to retrieve it. It is an honor and a blessing for students to attend a Christian school where locks on lockers are not a necessity.

Lost & Found

A Lost & Found locker is located in the hall on the first floor. Articles of clothing turned in can be claimed there. Keys, glasses, jewelry, money or other valuables turned in will be kept in the school office until claimed. At the end of each quarter, lost & found items will be displayed near the entrance for reclamation. Unclaimed articles will be donated or thrown away.

Lunch and Recess Volunteers

We are always grateful for parents who volunteer to supervise lunch or recess. This helps our teachers out very much. There are limited opportunities for parents to volunteer elsewhere, including for field trips. **All volunteers must have a valid background check on file!**

While parents may volunteer to supervise students in the cafeteria, we no longer allow parents to volunteer in the kitchen. We have paid staff who are qualified and have food handler's permits in order to work in the kitchen. There are labor department requirements and liabilities which prevent parents from volunteering in the kitchen.

Parents who want to volunteer in a classroom must check with the teacher and have the volunteer days approved in advance by the principal.

Medical

All students entering school for the first time in PreK, K, or 1st grade and upon entering 6th grade are required to have a physical examination by a licensed physician. Kindergarten, 2nd and 6th grade students must have a dental examination by a licensed dentist. An Illinois eye examination report is also required for Kindergarten.

The medical record also includes a medical history report, including documentation of illnesses and immunizations. Students who do not have adequate medical records by October 1st will be excluded from school until the necessary records are provided.

In the event that a student becomes ill or injured at school, emergency first aid will be given by the faculty until paramedical help can be obtained, or the student is taken to the hospital emergency room. For any questionable or serious injury or illness, the parent/guardian will be notified.

Minor bumps or scratches will be treated at school with cleaning, and/or bandaging. Parents will be notified of all incidents.

If a child has a contagious infection (rash, pink eye, head lice, strep throat, etc.) or a contagious disease (influenza, chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc.), the school should be notified immediately and the child kept at home until a medical doctor provides written permission for the child to return to school.

Chronic conditions, (asthma, epileptic seizures, heart, etc.) should be reported to the school so appropriate monitoring and precautionary action can be taken. Parents should be sure the school has current telephone numbers of where they can be reached during the school day in case of an emergency. In an emergency MCA will call 911. In cases of serious medical conditions where the health of a child or other children are at risk, it may be necessary to have a consultation with parents, medical advisors, and school administration to determine the safest environment for the child's education.

School personnel are not authorized to give medication or medical treatment beyond immediate first aid. Students who must take medication regularly in school must leave it in the school office. Parents must fill out a form authorizing self-medication with instructions as to amount & time for the medication. Students must come to the school office to take their medication.

Parent / Teacher Fellowship

Mission

The Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) will promote opportunities to enhance every student's spiritual and educational experience by bridging their home and school life through a collaborative partnership between families, staff and School Board. The PTF strives to utilize school service, educational and informational programs, fellowship events and fundraising projects to enhance the school community and its partners.

The Parent / Teacher Fellowship is an auxiliary part of the school and serves in various capacities to support and encourage the overall ministry of MCA. All families pay the \$15 dues as part of their enrollment at MCA. Throughout the year, the PTF conducts meetings, organizes activities, and does various projects to help promote and support the school. The president of the PTF is a member of the School Board and serves as a communication link for the parents. PTF officers are elected by the membership each spring for the following school year.

The PTF ministry operates to benefit parents by helping the school raise money and secure volunteers which help keep tuition costs low. The larger the number of parents who become involved in PTF, help with its activities, and volunteer to assist the school, the more money parents will be able to save on their tuition and fees.

Pick-up and Drop-off

MCA will have staff in the school parking lot beginning at 8:15 AM. The Cornelia Avenue gate will only be available in the afternoon. MCA staff will ensure that students enter the building safely.

Cones will be set up for pick-up beginning at 3:00 PM. Parking will be limited in order to ensure a smooth dismissal. Once afterschool programs begin in September, dismissal will be much less crowded.

Principal Availability

You are welcome to come and meet with the principal. To schedule a meeting with Mr. Saunders, please call the administrative assistant, Mrs. Stack, the finance director Mrs. Poenar, or email either lstack@mca.school or, danielap@mca.school.

Walk-in visits are also welcome, but may require a wait. Mr. Saunders is unavailable from 8:00-8:45 AM and also from 3:00-3:45 PM so that he can welcome and dismiss students.

Probation Period

Students in grades 3-8 who fall below an acceptable level of performance academically or behaviorally will be placed on probation. They will remain on probation until an acceptable level of performance is maintained for two (2) successive quarters.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Any student who receives more than one "F" on their report card or whose overall grade point average (GPA) falls below 1.5 for any quarter will be placed on probation. While on probation, a student must receive one to two (1 - 2) hours of tutoring each week or attend a summer school session over the summer. They must show at least a 10% improvement in their GPA each quarter. Failure to follow through with tutoring or summer school and showing at least 10% improvement in

GPA will result in a child being dropped from our enrollment. To be removed from academic probation a student must have no "F's" on their report card and have a GPA of 1.5 or more for two successive quarters.

BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

Any student in grades 6-8 who receives 6 or more demerits in a semester will be placed on behavioral probation. Students in grades 6-8 on behavioral probation will be allowed to receive no more than 5 demerits the following semester without being dismissed from school. To be removed from probation, they must receive no more than 3 demerits during a semester.

Any student in grades 3-5 who reaches the 3rd cycle on the misconduct policy will be placed on behavioral probation. Students in grades 3-5 who are on behavioral probation must receive no more than 10(√) during a semester. Probation (Academic or Behavioral) carries over from year to year until the student qualifies to be removed according to the standards described above.

This does not apply to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Prohibited Items

Any items considered illegal, dangerous, or distracting in the school setting will be confiscated and held until parents and/or police are notified. Students will be subject to disciplinary action appropriate to the circumstances which may include suspension, dismissal, and/or arrest. Items may include, but are not limited to, any kind of weapon; sharp objects; knives; any kind of explosive or firearm; illegal drugs; indecent, obscene, or immoral print matter; materials inconsistent with our Christian values; spray chemicals; vulgar, offensive or pornographic materials; and distracting electronic devices, etc.

Students are urged not to bring expensive or valuable personal items to school. The school does not take responsibility for personal items students bring to school.

Promotion Policy

Requirements for promotion and graduation at Midwestern Christian Academy (Grades 3-8):

1. Students must achieve an overall grade point average of 1.5 or better on a 4-point scale for all subjects. (A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0, F = 0.0)

2. Student must have a composite score of 40 percentile or better on the current year's standardized achievement test (or 0.8 below grade level expectancy).
3. Student must not have an "F" (failure grade) in any subjects for a final grade on their report card.
4. Student must score an average of 70% or better on all end of the year Comprehensive Review Tests.
5. Students must receive a favorable recommendation to be promoted by the homeroom teacher.

MCA students in grades 3-8 must achieve 3 of these 5 objectives to be considered eligible for promotion to the next grade level. However, it is mandatory that requirement #3 of these objectives be completed.

Students who receive an "F" as a final grade on any subject will be required to complete at least 20 hours of Summer School or tutoring for all subjects.

Registration Fees

Registration and enrollment fees at MCA secure the student's spot in the class in which they are enrolled. It is always possible that a class will fill and that room may not be available, so enrollment is done on a first come, first served basis, based on when the registration and enrollment fee was paid. Registration fees cover expenses not included in the tuition cost, including any replacement or new permanent, hard-cover textbooks purchased by the school, supplies such as paper, printing, and various classroom needs.

Registration is also a security deposit on the promise a family has made to enroll their student. Since staffing and employment decisions are made based on need, and we need an accurate count prior to the beginning of the school year, the school incurs unnecessary costs when families enroll, but decide at the last minute to back out. The registration helps us to recover some, but not all, of that cost.

Applications for financial aid are only considered after a family has applied and been accepted for enrollment, and has paid their registration fee. If you apply for financial aid through Children's Tuition Fund or Bright Promise Foundation, you will be placed at the back of the line if you have not enrolled and paid the fee.

Student Insurance

MCA provides a supplemental accident medical insurance policy for all students. This policy has limited coverage in case of accidents and is intended to supplement, not replace, a family's regular medical insurance. Coverage includes direct transit to and from school and all school-sponsored activities on or off the grounds, including sports practice and games. Parents should contact the office for claim forms or information when needed.

School Lunch

Students have the option of bringing a lunch from home or purchasing a school lunch. School lunch may be purchased daily for \$4.50. The account of each parent will be billed on a monthly basis. Monthly meal tickets can be purchased for the year for \$75 per month, billed from August through May. If students are signed up for monthly lunch, a lunch will be provided for field trips from the MCA lunchroom.

School lunches consist of a variety of nutritious hot meals and a menu is printed in the *School Bell* each month. Students who bring lunch from home must not bring carbonated beverages or items in glass containers. Parents are urged to provide nutritious and healthy lunches. Parents may not bring fast food lunches to students during their lunch time.

Parents who wish to celebrate a child's birthday should provide a dessert, cake or cupcakes. Birthday treats may be served in the lunchroom after the regular lunch. Birthday treats need to be pre-arranged with the office staff 7 days in advance. Once notified, the classroom teachers can assist with this, so long as advance notice is provided. Parents whose child has a food allergy should be sure the school office and the classroom teacher are notified in advance.

We are a nut-free school. Students may not bring any peanuts or nut products to school.

Student Testing

A standardized achievement test will be given each spring to all students in grades Senior Kindergarten through 8th Grade. Our standardized test will be the **Iowa Test of Basic Skills**. Results are shared with parents along with the final report card. Although we are not a test-driven school, we recognize the importance of monitoring student growth. An award ceremony on the last day

of school will allow MCA to recognize students who not only demonstrated high levels of achievement, but also those students who demonstrated high levels of improvement of the course of the year.

Many of our eighth graders who will be going to a selective enrollment high school will take the NWEA

Student Uniform Policy

MCA has a uniform policy approved by our school board. Our uniform policy is for all students in Grades 1 and above and can be ordered from:

www.frenchtoast.com MCA Code: QS45JPT

MCA Uniform Guidelines:

All MCA students are to dress for school according to the following guidelines.

The only exceptions are on days announced in advance by the principal. All uniform items are to be clean, neat, and modest in appearance. Any items that become torn, stained, frayed, faded, worn, too small, etc. are to be replaced.

BOYS & GIRLS 1ST—8TH GRADE

-
- Red polo shirt, long or short sleeve with MCA Logo
 - Uniform pant, black or navy blue

Gym Uniform

Grades 1st – 5th

- Sweat pants gray or black with no writing on it
- Gym short red, black or gray with MCA logo may be worn on gym days only.

Grades 6th – 8th

- Gym short – Red, black or gray with MCA logo
- Sweat pants black or gray (plain or with MCA logo)

Students grade 6th through 8th are not allowed to wear their gym short or sweat pant during regular class. They must change before gym class.

All grades must have an extra pair of gym shoes for gym class. Gym shoes can be stored in each child's locker.

Optional for Girls: Navy/Red Plaid Pattern or Navy Blue skort, skirt or jumper
Tights worn with a skirt must be one color, black or navy blue with no design of any kind.

Optional Clothing: Crew neck sweaters shirt, polar fleece jackets, pull over hoodie, zip up hoodie can be worn to school over uniform as long as they are black, Navy Blue or gray, one solid color and no writing on it. Only MCA logo or Phantom Ranch Logo clothing allowed.

While the Bible does not prescribe specific styles of dress, it does, we believe, give reasons and principles for proper dress:

Modesty – I Tim. 2:9; Attractiveness – I Peter 3:3-4; Cleanliness – Heb. 10:2; Respect for others – James 2:1-4; Reverence for God – Rom. 12:1-2; I Cor. 6:19-20; Col. 3:17

The purposes of the MCA dress code are:

- 1 – to provide a pleasant and positive learning atmosphere free from distractions of appearance
- 2 – to preserve the modesty and comfort of students
- 3 – to protect the health and safety of students as they participate in the school activities.

To help us achieve these purposes, MCA has established guidelines which include, but are not limited to, the following:

The approved school uniform is the accepted dress code of the school. Students are expected to be wearing approved uniform items at all times.

Students are expected to practice proper health habits and hygiene on a regular basis. Faces and hands should be washed, nails and hair kept clean and teeth brushed daily. Clothing is to be clean and worn properly. Outdoor clothing is not allowed in classrooms.

Students' hair should be a natural color and free of artificial coloring, dyeing, streaking, highlighting, etc. Boys' hair should be modestly styled and neatly trimmed, so it does not extend below the eyebrows, over the ears, or below the collar of the uniform shirt. Shaving or sculpturing of hair, other than simple tapering or trimming, is not allowed. Hair creams, sprays, or mousse must be moderately used to avoid any distraction and/or unnecessary attention and must not be brought to or applied at school. Girls' hair is to be conservatively styled, neatly cut and combed or braided in a moderate style. Hair sprays and other hair care or

aerosol spray products must not be brought to school. Facial cosmetics must be applied modestly so as not to attract attention by appearing unnatural or excessive.

Jewelry, if worn, must be limited in quantity, modest in fashion, and appropriately worn. No jewelry should be oversized or have sharp, rough, or jagged edges. Jewelry should not be likely to cause injury such as cutting, pinching, choking, scratching, puncturing, etc. No jewelry may be worn if it is immodest, immoral, offensive or distracting. Girls may wear modest earrings, but they must be limited to one per ear and not more than 1 inch in diameter or length. No other body piercing or body decorating is allowed. Necklaces are not recommended, but if worn, must not hang more than 4 inches (10cm) beyond the neck.

Tattoos must be covered by clothing at all times and are highly discouraged.

Finger nails are to be kept trimmed. **No acrylic nails.**

Head coverings (hats, caps, scarves, or athletic headbands, etc.) are not to be worn inside the school building.

Proper fitting, comfortable shoes are to be worn at all times. Soles of shoes must be flexible, non-marking, and no more than 1 inch thick. Heels must not be more than an inch and a half high or extend beyond the width of the shoe. Fashion boots, cowboy boots, military/work boots or similar styled boots are not allowed. Snow boots are allowed outside in the winter. Flip-flops, clogs, or similar shoes that could fall off or slip off easily are not allowed. Shoe straps, laces and/or buckles must be fastened not hanging loose. Shoes with wheels or other dangerous or distracting devices are not allowed.

Girl's skirts and boy's pants are to be worn with the waist above the hips. The hem of girl's skirts/jumpers should not be above the top of the knee. Boys' shirts and girls' blouses must be tucked into the waist. No bare shoulders, backs, or cleavage should be showing.

Our dress code is not intended to reflect the latest styles of fashions of the culture around us. When changing styles and fashions make it necessary, the school board/administration reserves the right to alter or amend our dress code accordingly.

On Jeans days, if students wear jeans with holes they must have black stockings or socks underneath so that no skin shows through. No capri pants are allowed.

The dress code applies to the regular school schedule and to all required school activities and programs unless otherwise stated. Students are expected to be in uniform from the time they arrive until the time they leave the school, not just during class times.

Violations of the dress code are considered a disciplinary matter and students will be subject to disciplinary procedures and consequences. Consequences may include, but are not limited to verbal warning, loss of privileges, notification of parents, exclusions from activities, suspensions, or dismissal from school. On special days or for special events, the school staff/administration may announce alternate dress guidelines which must be closely followed.

In all matters of dress, the school staff and administration reserve the right to make judgments on an individual basis as needed. Their judgments are to be respected and followed.

Dress Code for School Events and Activities

Most school events are held on the campus we share with Midwest Bible Church. Parents and students should respect the atmosphere of the campus as a gathering place where the expectations for dress reflect appropriate Christian modesty as determined by the school's board and administration. All those who attend this activity, including students, their parents, relatives or friends, understand that our focus is on bringing glory to God in all that we do, not attracting attention to ourselves.

Please exercise modesty when choosing the clothing you will wear to school events.

Snow Days and Bad Weather Cancellations

There are many factors which must be taken into consideration when the decision must be made to cancel school due to bad weather. Almost all of our students commute to school via private transportation and their safety, as well as that of their parents who drive them, is our primary consideration when deciding on school cancellations due to bad weather.

Of course, parents can determine, at any time, whether they feel that it is safe to drive their children to school. If you decide not to bring your child on a bad weather day, please let the office know as soon as possible.

If possible, decisions to cancel classes will be made as far in advance as possible, so that parents can make necessary arrangements for their students' care, even the night before if that is possible. Decisions to cancel classes will be made no later than 6:30 a.m. on the day of the cancellation and an email and text message will be sent out via Gradelink, so please make sure your contact information is accurate, and works. We also place a notice on WGN's Emergency Closings website.

MCA's school instructional calendar contains enough instructional hours to avoid having to reschedule a reasonable number of snow days. No E-learning will be provided on bad weather days.

Visitors

We are currently limiting the number of visitors allowed in the building. All visitors should be approved in advance to enter the building and sign in at the front office window.

Asbestos Building Materials

The renovation of the school building during the summer of 2018 included the removal of 98% of the building materials which may have contained asbestos. These materials were removed according to requirements. The school has personnel assigned to monitoring the limited areas where there may still be some asbestos, but these areas are secured according to the requirements, and pose no danger to students. Any alteration or removal of the material will be monitored, and will follow government code requirements to ensure that there is no danger to the students.

Fire, Disaster, and Lockdown Drill

Once a month during the school year, the Chicago Fire Department conducts a fire drill to familiarize students with the procedures to follow in order to protect themselves and evacuate the building safely in case of emergency. Signs and information are posted in each room of the school to give directions to the closest exit. All students and school personnel are expected to exit the building promptly and orderly when the fire alarm rings.

A disaster drill is held each year in early spring to familiarize students with precautions to take in the event of severe weather or other impending dangerous situations. When the school warning signal is given, all students and staff are expected to follow the signs/directions posted in each room and remain in the assigned areas until given an all-clear signal. Fire drill and disaster drill procedures are posted in each school room.

A lockdown drill is conducted annually in order to prepare for unexpected dangerous situations to our students, staff, and school. Although this may alarm the children, it is necessary to teach students on how to react to an emergency situation such as this.

All three drills are required by the Illinois State Board of Education in order for us to be fully recognized as an educational institution.

Non-Discrimination Statement

We believe that:

- All are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26);
- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23);
- All are loved unconditionally by God (John 3:16);
- All are invited to receive salvation through Christ (2 Peter 3:9); and that
- God is no respecter of persons (Ephesians 6:9).

As such, Midwestern Christian Academy provides equal opportunity in access to all educational programs for all who desire a Christian education, regardless of race, gender, or ethnic or national origin.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

As a nonpublic school, MCA is not bound by the rights of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Disclaimer

Policies and procedures described in this handbook reflect the current status and do not constitute an irrevocable commitment. MCA reserves the right to adjust and add or delete policies as circumstances change. Such changes will be published and distributed to all families as addendums to the handbook.

MCA operates under the principles and precepts of scripture, and considers the Bible, as the inerrant and infallible written word of God, to be the final authority over all matters of the Christian Faith. There is Biblical teaching found in the gospel

of Matthew, 18:15-20 that is our guide for resolving disputes which arise between members of the school community, including between the school and its authorities, and parents. Individuals who follow the school's written grievance policy can expect that the school will be committed to these Biblical instructions regarding the settling of disputes.

In addition to the Matthew passage, the school also acknowledges the authority of I Corinthians 6:11 in giving instructions not to go before the secular courts to settle disputes. MCA declares that in all matters regarding legal principles, it is to be considered as a religious-based institution appealing to its first amendment guarantees of religious liberty in all matters.

MCA recognizes the authority of all governments which have jurisdiction over the geographical area in which the school is located. We are in full compliance with all applicable laws, health and safety regulations, fire and building codes, staff requirements and qualifications and educational regulations and requirements. We are governed by the Biblical principles stated in scripture, in Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-17. In any dealings with elected officials, we intend to exhibit the spiritual virtues of the Christian faith as a testimony to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and as instructed by the Apostle Peter, give testimony to the hope that is within by expressions that demonstrate gentleness and respect.

When parents enroll their children at MCA, and sign the enrollment form and the handbook agreement, they are waiving their right to file a lawsuit against the school or any of its employees or agents, including Midwest Bible Church, for any reason. Parents are acknowledging a commitment to follow Biblical principles in resolving any and all disagreements and disputes with the school.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Computer and Technology Instruction and Integration Goals

Midwestern Christian Academy is in the process of developing a plan to fully integrate the use of technology in the classroom. We want to avoid the pressure created by a sense of being "behind the curve," and making decisions based on that perception, but have a plan which takes into consideration the needs of all of our students and incorporates the use of technology in the classroom in a manner which makes instruction more efficient and effective and which helps students develop skills for practical purposes.

With a limited budget to provide resources, MCA's plan will involve the development of strategies which will incorporate technological tools provided by the school with all of those that are available to students at home, including cell phones, tablets and other personal devices. Looking at what is available to us from a practical perspective, our general goals for use of technology in the classroom will include the following:

All students in grades 4-8 will have use of a chrome book in their classroom. Each teacher will provide assignments requiring the use of the chrome book for research and gathering information, using instructional applications, using their Google Classroom applications and for other assistance in completing assignments.

All students in Kindergarten through grade 3 will have access to a Kindle tablet in their classroom. Teachers will assign the use of applications for various learning activities using the tablet.

Teachers will have instructional technology in the classroom which facilitates the efficient operation of the classroom, enabling them to access applications which incorporate the use of technology into the learning experience, including access to video applications, writing tools, access to research and information sources and access to the student management software via Gradelink. They will have access to a classroom projector.

As the technology becomes available, students will access their textbooks via a Chromebook or tablet provided to them for this purpose.

Students in all grades, from Kindergarten through 8th will have at least two days per week in technology instruction that is grade-level appropriate. Students in grades 7 and 8 will have coursework which incorporates the state's Computer Application 1 objectives, meeting the requirements for the ninth grade level computer education course.

Students in grades K through 6 will have a designated computer/technology class for a minimum of 50 minutes at least two days a week as a special class along with art, music, PE and an elective.

Research-Based Best Practices

The use of electronic devices and access to the internet makes it easy for teachers to access an abundance of information for teaching, research and to put electronic tools to use in the classroom. However, our approach to the use of technology, access to the internet and the other uses provided by technological advances is subject to the overall academic and spiritual expected outcomes of our students.

First of all, in a Christian school, we have many parents who are very aware of the dangers and difficulties that are associated with over-exposure to technology and media. Their desire as parents is to limit their child's access to devices and through them, to influences they want to avoid. Having devices, even those provided by the school that are monitored and have limited access capability. Our school's philosophy is to partner with parents to provide a strong spiritual environment and excellent academics for their children.

Second, rather than take the approach that all technology is good technology and should be put to use everywhere and anywhere it can be done, we recognize that students spend hours using electronic devices outside of school hours, mostly for entertainment purposes. Most educational "best practices" do not directly involve the use of technology as a learning tool but only see it as a means of accessing information, doing research and as a presentation tool. There is research which shows that the over-use of technology can be detrimental to the learning process.

Therefore, we are adopting a conservative philosophy regarding the use of technology in the school that includes the following points:

We do not believe that students should have the right to access all of the technology which is available to them just because it is available.

We will teach students to be responsible for their electronic devices and accountable for their proper use.

Recognizing that most students own personal devices and spend several hours beyond school time using them for entertainment, we will limit the amount of technology time in school.

There is no educational research which connects the use of technology directly to student achievement. In fact, there is some research which is now showing up that indicates over-exposure to technology, especially visually-based electronics, can actually be detrimental to student achievement, both in time management as well as physically.

No applications or internet sources will be used as primary curriculum materials or sources unless approved in advance by an administrative committee designated for this specific purpose.

One-to-One

Our ultimate goal is to provide instruction utilizing a one-to-one integration of electronic devices, preferably chrome books or chrome tablets that are difficult

to change. We are currently utilizing chrome books with mathematics textbook access for students in seventh and eighth grade.

Students also use their chrome book for research projects and report writing in English and utilize the Google Classroom for social studies. We do not anticipate having a full one-to-one access for our upper grades (4-8) prior to the 2022-23 school year. Realistically, we would need to see increased enrollment and budget capacity to enable us to do that

There is no educational research or evidence-based research which indicates that the use of technology in the classroom improves student outcomes. It is noted that because students also spend a large amount of their own time using an electronic device, too much exposure can create "screen fatigue" and can actually be detrimental to their academic progress. Students can develop a dependence which impairs the development of essential skills. Our definition of "one-to-one" means that students have access to technology primarily for organization skills and research purposes.

We are currently satisfied with the level of technology integration we have and believe that it is accomplishing the goal of helping MCA students develop the necessary skills. The technology we have available for use is adequate for our current and immediate needs and provides a foundation for classroom organization and instruction.

Every student in the school has access to a computer or device.

Every grade level is making use of technology in the classroom. No requirement will be set for its minimum use, but limits will be set on how much use is permitted by students during the course of the day.

With these goals being met, we have a foundation to continue moving forward.

Use of School-Provided Technology and Internet Use Policy

MCA uses a Google Education platform to provide internet access and use for all students. The school assesses a technology fee for the purpose of providing the student with access to the platform and either a kindle or a chrome book for their use at school. The Google Education platform that we use is an in-house, closed system that protects its users from harmful internet predators and hackers. Each student is given an MCA account with an email address inside this closed system. Students are only allowed to login to their school-based Google account when using any of the school's computer equipment or when working on assignments for school. They may not use their school based account for any purposes other than projects, activities and assignments related to their school classes.

Students and their parents must sign the technology agreement on the last page of this policy. The signature indicates that parents have read the policy, understand what it provides and accept the terms and conditions of technology use at Midwestern Christian Academy.

Technology Fee

Students in grades K - 8 are assessed a \$30 technology fee at the beginning of the school year billed on September 1st. This fee covers the use of the school's computer equipment, including the chrome books or kindles, and the fees for any apps that teachers may use. It does **not** cover apps added by students or which must be removed from computer equipment because they were added by students, repairs to equipment as the result of damage caused by students or the loss of the equipment.

In order for students to be able to use computer equipment at school or borrow it to use at home, parents must agree to the terms of repair and replacement specified in this policy.

Policy for Student Use of School Computers

Students will treat the computer equipment with respect and care. Students are responsible for the computer while it is in their possession and their account will be charged to repair any damage caused while it is in their possession, including replacing it if it is damaged beyond repair.

Students will not upload any apps, drivers or devices to their computer while it is in their possession. A \$10 fee will be charged for each app or driver which must be removed after a student returns a school computer.

Use of the school computer is limited to school assignments and projects.

Students should store all of the work they have done on their school computer in their own Google drive. They should not leave any of their work in the files on the computer they are using. Students should be aware that files on the hard drive may be erased or accessed by other users so for safekeeping, should be uploaded into your google drive.

Use of a school-provided computer is a privilege. Students will receive a written warning for any violations of the policy.

Computer equipment and electronic devices belonging to the school may not be taken home unless approval is given by the office so that we know where the device is located. This includes both student and teacher devices, including laptops.

Internet Use Policy

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. I Corinthians 6:12. These words, from the Apostle Paul, are very applicable to the discernment and maturity that Christians must demonstrate as they engage with an information explosion that can be both extremely helpful and beneficial and at the same time, very dark, dangerous and addictive. One of the primary responsibilities we have as a school is teaching our students to be discerning and mature when it comes to their Christian faith. There is no area of life which students now encounter where discernment and maturity guided by the Bible's truth are more necessary than access to the internet and the fine line that runs between its benefits, including the enhancement of education, and the problems it can create.

While the internet provides a tool for enhancing a student educational experience and makes classroom operation more efficient, providing access to resources beyond the limits of what would otherwise be available, it also brings with it risks and dangers associated with identity theft, exposure of private information and access to an unknown and uncontrolled environment which may include the presence of individuals who are not trustworthy. Our internet use policy is written to protect our students from internet predators and security risks while they are using online access to enhance their educational experience.

Following the school's policy is a requirement for students who want to access the internet while at school for educational purposes. By signing the internet and computer use policy, parents are agreeing that both they and their children will follow the guidelines without reservation and accept the consequences of not doing so.

1. Students must use their school-provided Google Ed account to access the internet while using the school's wireless signal or school computer equipment. They may not be logged in on a personal account on school computer equipment or at any point during the school day while they are on campus. Students may not use their school-provided email address to create accounts and log into websites or social media platforms.

2. The school reserves the right to periodically monitor student MCA e-mail and internet accounts. School officials or teachers may search a student's MCA e-mail and internet account at any time.

3. All student internet access at school is monitored. Students may not be logged into message boards, gaming sites, social media or entertainment sites while at school during the school day, or at any time they are using a school-owned device. Not only do these things distract students from their assignments, they are portals which are liable to expose the student to danger from an internet

predator. Access to the internet via school equipment at school is for the exclusive purpose of completing work assigned by teachers for class.

4. **Students may not take photos or videos at school. They may not post any photos, videos or documents created for the completion of class assignments on any social media outlet. Any photos or videos taken with school computer equipment must be for the purpose of fulfilling a class assignment or course requirement and may only be uploaded onto a social media platform with the permission of the teacher. Students and parents should note that there are legal consequences for publishing unauthorized material on social media and posting photos, videos or documents which contain images of students or teachers, names or personal information carries serious penalties.**

5. Students are not permitted to use their school internet account or email for unauthorized communication. For example, they should not be communicating with their parents using their email while they are in class during the day. The school email account should be used only for school business and is considered a communication tool for facilitating class work.

6. Students may not use school-provided equipment to engage in any activity considered illegal or immoral.

7. Students must keep an up-to-date list of passwords and login information for all websites and apps used for school.

8. **As we increase the integration of technology into classroom instruction, it will become necessary for students to have access to devices in order to participate in instructional activities and assessments and meet the expected outcomes for classes. While removal of internet access and devices may seem to be a logical consequence of failure to follow the policies, it would be detrimental to a student's ability to succeed. Violations of school internet and acceptable use policy will follow the school's disciplinary procedures outlined in the Parent-Student Manual and the Staff Manual. If a student repeatedly violates the rules, it will be written up and handled progressively through the prescribed disciplinary action.**

9. Students must use their school-based Google account to store their work. They may not store work on the device itself, nor may they use their personal account since these locations may not always be accessible and they may not access a personal account using the school device.

10. Once a student is no longer enrolled at MCA their school-based Google account will be deleted. Any work that is stored in docs, slides or drive that the student wishes to keep should be transferred prior to the account being deleted.

Any work produced by the student using the school's computer equipment or while on-line using the school's wireless internet provider is subject to the control and discretion of the school and is considered the joint property of both the student and the school. This includes any written documents, photographs, email communication and attachments, music, or drawings. All such work will be considered as having been produced in order to fulfill the requirements for class assignments. Any rights to possession or publication of any student work produced for the purpose of meeting classroom requirements at Midwestern Christian Academy and may not be copyrighted or distributed without the full written consent of the school's agents or representatives.

Parents must sign the attached release of liability and permission slip prior to their child receiving any computer equipment from the school.

Adopted May 15, 2021