



Middle School Student & Family Handbook
2019-2020

Memphis Rise Academy Charter School

Our Mission

Memphis Rise Academy Charter School provides students in grades 6-12 with an excellent education, preparing them to pursue ambitious goals and succeed in college.

Responsibility, Excellence, Ambition, Commitment, Honesty

Our Core Values

Memphis Rise Academy holds members of the school community—staff, families, and students—to the highest standards. To provide the very best education for Memphis Rise Academy students, all of us must work together to create an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence. To create this environment, we must collectively and consistently ensure that Memphis Rise Academy students meet five basic, but critical, expectations:

- **Responsibility:** There is no greater responsibility of our staff, students, and families than coming to school prepared to succeed each day.
- **Excellence:** Our staff, families, and students are expected to demonstrate excellence in their behavior and interactions with all members of the school community.
- **Ambition:** Our staff, families, and students show the desire to be positive members of our school community through words, actions, and demonstration of our core values.
- **Commitment:** Even when it is difficult, staff, families, and students persist in making decisions which create a culture of positive character and academic excellence.
- **Honesty:** Our staff, families, and students must remain honest with themselves and their school community at all times.

These expectations, known collectively as the REACH values, form the basis of our school, and therefore inform many of the policies outlined in this manual.

Responsibility and Accountability

Students, Families, and Staff

The Memphis Rise Academy Agreement of Mutual Support represents some of the most important responsibilities of being a member of our school community. For students, the Agreement, and this handbook, provides an overview of what being a Memphis Rise Academy student is, and how and why it is different from other schools. For families, the Agreement and Handbook outline some specific expectations the school will hold you to in order to provide the best possible education for your student. In exchange for what students and families do, the staff of Memphis Rise Academy will work tirelessly to provide students with a safe and respectful environment in which they can achieve academic success. This Agreement is provided to families during our August orientation sessions to encourage this partnership for excellence and ensure our mutual expectations are clearly stated prior to the school year.

School Calendar, Schedule, and Attendance

Hours of Operation

Memphis Rise Academy has an extended school day and year. Monday through Friday, students are expected to arrive between 7:45 and 8:00 AM. Monday through Thursday, the school day lasts from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM; on Fridays, the school day is from 8:00 AM to 2:35 PM.

The school building will be open to students starting at 7:45 AM every day. All students must arrive by 8:00 AM in order to submit homework and participate in morning advisory. Families who need to drop their students off at school prior to 7:45 AM will be asked to sign and adhere to an Early Arrival Agreement, which outlines the expectations for students who come to school before the designated opening time. Students arriving after 8:00 AM will, unless otherwise notified by the school (in cases such as inclement weather), be marked as tardy. For information on this policy, see **Incomplete Days: Lateness and Early Dismissal**.

All students should be picked up from Memphis Rise Academy Middle School by 5:30 PM, unless they are staying for an after-school club, sport, or school event that ends later than 5:30 PM. While we are happy to make an effort to accommodate families who have circumstances in which they can not pick up a student immediately at 4:30 PM, we can not stay with or monitor students on a regular basis later than 5:30. If a family is consistently leaving a student with us later than 5:30 PM, our administration will request a family meeting to find a solution that works for our staff and the family. Please be mindful of this policy; school staff can be accommodating in the case of emergencies, but we ask that this allowance for leeway in emergency situations is not abused.

Attendance Policy

According to T.C.A § 49-6-3001, all students under 18 are expected to be in school. All students under the age of 18 will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow procedures set out in TCA § 49-6-3007 if the student does not comply with the law. In cases of truancy, the Head of School (or designee) will investigate the situation. Memphis Rise Academy operates in compliance with TCA § 49-6-3007 requirements, which can include mandated reporting of truancy to appropriate state agencies.

Given the fast pace and high rigor of our curriculum, any time missed at Memphis Rise Academy can be detrimental to a student's learning. Unequivocally, regular attendance is absolutely required for success.

Parents are expected to ensure that their child is in school every day possible; please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except in the case of a serious illness or a family emergency.

We ask that families not schedule vacations or non-emergency appointments during school time. This includes leaving early before our school's breaks, or leaving early for the summer before our final exams are complete. We encourage families to take advantage of our early Friday dismissal, as well as planned days off and breaks, to schedule appointments and travel.

An absence is defined as a school day in which the student is not present at the school at any time between 8:00 AM-4:30 PM (2:35 PM on Friday). In the past, Memphis Rise Academy did not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Given recent guidance from State policy, this now must change to an excused and unexcused absence policy.

Students absent for an excused purpose are required to provide documentation of their excused absence within two school days of when they return to school. Excused absences may include the following:

- Illness, injury, hospitalization, or inpatient therapy, with a note from a medical professional
- Death or serious injury/trauma within the student's family, accompanied with a note from a family member
- If a student is on a school-sponsored trip, college visit, or activity, in which case no documentation other than the permission of the family to attend is required
- Holidays for religious observance, accompanied with a note from a family member
- Court order, subpoena or legal summons, accompanied by documentation from the accompanying legal authority
- If a student's parent or legal guardian is a member of the active US Military or Military Reserves and is called to active duty—in this case, a meeting with the Principal will be held to determine appropriate suspension of student's enrollment status and attendance will be adjusted accordingly

Reasons for excused absence do not include:

- Family vacations or trips during the school year, even with prior notification to the school
- Absences for unauthorized extracurricular activities or sports not associated with Memphis Rise Academy
- Job-related or family work related absences that require a student to miss school because of their employment or the support of their family

Attendance Intervention Policies

Due to the aforementioned changes, Memphis Rise Academy will now follow the following policies for attendance intervention, at the benchmarks listed below:

At 5 unexcused absences, a family will receive a letter from Memphis Rise Academy requesting a SART (Student Attendance Review Team) meeting, to inform the family of the student's attendance and generate solutions to ensure attendance policy adherence moving forward and/or rectify any absences that were marked in error as unexcused. These solutions will be recorded in a PSAP (Parent/Student Action Plan).

At 10 unexcused absences, a student has now crossed the threshold of allowable unexcused absences by law, and will therefore be required to submit to a truancy review by the school's SARB (Student Attendance Review Board). At this time, the PSAP will be reviewed and amended, if necessary, by the Board to reflect goals and reasons for the truancy. More requirements, including but not limited to mandatory repetition of courses or the grade, or mandatory in-home intervention, may be determined as necessary by the SARB at this time. If a parent or legal guardian does not attend the SARB review, their reasons for violating compulsory attendance law are deemed inadequate by the SARB, or the PSAP is continuously violated after the SARB hearing, then the case will be referred to the Attorney General and Juvenile Court. A court summons will be sent to the parent or guardian, and a SARB representative will also be mandated to attend the hearing as a witness to the interventions the school has put into effect thus far.

Students who miss five or more consecutive days of school without notification to Memphis Rise Academy of a reason for absence, excused or unexcused, will be recorded as truant, and a letter will be mailed to the family notifying them that, if no contact is made within 3 days of receiving the notice, they will be referred to the Attorney General. Memphis Rise Academy will make at least one attempt to contact families this applies to proactively prior to recording the truancy. Students who miss ten consecutive days of school without notification will be withdrawn from Memphis Rise Academy.

Incomplete Days: Lateness and Early Dismissal

Memphis Rise Academy offers seven classes of core curriculum each day to every student. It is important that students are present for all seven core classes to ensure they are able to maximize their learning time. If a student does not complete a full school day, he/she is assigned an Incomplete Day. This includes tardiness after 8:15 AM, or early dismissal for medical appointments, family emergencies, traffic, etc.

Memphis Rise Academy excuses Incomplete Days in the case of court-mandated appearances upon the provision of proper documentation. Late students must check in at the main office in our main building and receive a tardy slip before reporting to class. Students leaving early must check out with the front desk in our main building before leaving.

Excessive Incomplete Days are a significant inhibitor to a student's academic success. In order to ensure that students show up on time and do not leave early unnecessarily, the school has clear consequences for tardiness and early dismissal.

- Every 3 Incomplete Days count as 1 absence within the attendance policy.
- At 10 Incomplete Days (or 5 within the first quarter), the Head of School and Dean of Students may require a meeting with the student's family and adviser, during which an Attendance Pledge and subsequent advisory goal will be established aimed at ensuring these patterns improve.
- At 15 Incomplete Days, each subsequent tardy or early dismissal may result in a student meeting with the Dean of Students or a phone call to the family.
- At 20 Incomplete Days, Memphis Rise Academy may require a second family meeting to discuss the previously established Attendance Pledge and, if applicable, the possibility of retention.

For their own safety, students must be picked up by a parent, guardian, or designated emergency contact person in order to be dismissed prior to 4:30 PM (2:35 PM on Friday). A note or phone call asking for the student to be dismissed on his/her own cannot be honored.

Additionally, due to the stretch of our staff during the late afternoon hours and the various placements of students, Memphis Rise Academy will limit or deny early dismissals between the hours of 3:50-4:30 Monday-Thursday and 2:00-2:35 on Fridays in non-emergency situations. Parents needing to check students out during these times are asked to notify the school by phone in advance so that we can be prepared to dismiss your student.

If a student needs to be sent home due to a behavioral infraction, a parent/guardian must come to the school, meet with the Head of School and/or Dean of Students, and remove the student from school grounds. Incomplete Day consequences apply in cases of suspension. Students being sent home for behavioral infractions will not be dismissed unless the parent/guardian has physically come to the school, unless certain rare exceptions apply.

School Closing Procedures

If Shelby County Schools closes for an emergency or inclement weather, Memphis Rise Academy will also close. Listen to the radio or television for announcements related to the closing of Shelby County Schools, as well as check our school Facebook page (if your family has access). We will also make every effort to confirm our closure with an automated phone call.

Transportation

Bus Transportation

Memphis Rise Academy will offer cost-free bus transportation from selected common pick-up and drop-off points, in the areas where the bulk of our families live. As seats are limited, bus transportation is available on a first-come, first-served basis for the 2019-2020 school year.

In the interest of student safety, it is of the utmost importance that families commit to bringing students to the bus stops only at the times indicated, and remaining with them until the bus arrives. Further, it is critical that families arrive at the bus stop by the indicated time in the afternoon to pick up their students. Failure to pick up students on time in the afternoon creates an incredibly dangerous situation, as bus stops are located in very public areas with no supervision from Memphis Rise Academy staff.

Providing busses to our families is a demonstration of our commitment to our families and communities, but our bus transportation cannot be abused or become unsafe. We expect that the culture of our busses mirror the expectations and culture of our school, and that students who ride our busses understand that they have a responsibility to act within the confines of those expectations and that culture. All families with students riding the bus to and/or from school will be asked to sign and adhere to a Bus Transportation Agreement, outlining expectations for student conduct on buses and at bus stops. Memphis Rise Academy reserves the right to temporarily suspend or permanently revoke student bus privilege if:

- There is, on the part of the family, a repeated lack of timeliness and commitment to honoring bus stop procedures and safety.
- There is any kind of behavioral infraction on the bus that jeopardizes student safety or violates school or bus expectations, with criteria determined by the Head of School.

Car Transportation

Families are always welcome to transport their students to/from school. Drop-off and pick-up will happen in the parking lot on the eastern side of the Agape Baptist Church. Families can drop their students off earlier than 7:45am; students will be held in a classroom or the Cafeteria prior to 7:45 and provided breakfast. We ask that no students are dropped off earlier than 7:00am without prior notice. Please make every effort to drop students off no later than 8:00 AM. For pick-up, families should plan to arrive at the school between 4:30-4:45 PM (Monday-Thursday) or 2:35-2:50 PM (Friday).

Please follow the guidelines established on the pick-up and drop-off information sheet, which is distributed at parent orientation, including respecting the right turn only policy for our parking lot during End of Day Dismissal.

For the purposes of student safety and operational efficiency, students being picked up by car will only be dismissed to the large parking lot on the East side of Agape Baptist Church. Students will never be permitted to be dismissed to cars waiting on Raleigh Lagrange Rd or on Chiswood St. Additionally, the small parking lot between Memphis Rise Academy and Agape Baptist Church is unavailable as a pick-up location during our dismissal window (4:30-4:45 PM on Monday-Thursday, and 2:35-2:50 PM on Friday).

Walkers

Students are permitted, if the family deems our school location proximal enough to their home, to walk to and from school each day, with the same criteria for arrival times and tardiness. Our walkers, if applicable, will exit the school and will be walked to either the corner of Chiswood/Raleigh Lagrange or the edge of the Agape Baptist Church property, depending on direction, by a staff member. We ask that families of walkers do make contact with the school if students are not at home/their walking destination within 10 minutes of their expected time. We also ask that, if students are patronizing local businesses on the walk home, that they do so with high character, as they directly represent our school while they are in uniform in our community.

Homework, Homework Club, and Make-up Policies

Homework and Homework Club

Homework is an essential component of Memphis Rise Academy's curriculum. Our students must display the commitment to extended practice in core subjects, especially literacy, in order to meet the expectations of our rigorous academic program. Students have three core responsibilities related to homework each day:

1. Write down all homework assignments in school planner.
2. Complete all homework assignments to the highest possible standard.
3. Read independently for 30 minutes per night.

All homework assignments are collected in morning advisory unless otherwise notified by the teacher. If a student has not satisfactorily completed any given homework, or homework is completed in an unsatisfactory way based on the teacher's evaluation, he or she will be required to attend Homework Club from 3:55-4:30 PM Monday through Thursday. Students who do not turn in homework on a Friday will complete this homework the following Monday in Homework Club.

Homework Club is a quiet, constructive place where students are able to complete their homework from the night before and then begin work on the next night's homework with the supervision of one or more instructional team members. We want our students to have every chance at success with homework, which is why this process is embedded within our school day. The goals of Homework Club include increasing completion rates, improving quality, and building academic confidence. Students may also opt into Homework Club instead of Enrichment on a day in which they would like further homework support.

Make-Up Work Policies

Students who are not in school miss critical academic assignments and assessments. Our school make-up policy is designed to hold students accountable for all missed assignments and assessments, as well as to support timely make-up work such that students do not fall behind academically.

- **Classwork.** If a student misses a class for any reason (absence, lateness, and/or early dismissal), the student's missed classwork will be compiled by the school, and distributed to the student the day s/he returns to Memphis Rise Academy during morning advisory. The classwork does not need to be turned in, although students are encouraged to review what they missed.
- **Assessments.** If a student misses a test or quiz when s/he was absent, he or she will take that assessment during advisory, focus, Homework Club, or other available time soon after s/he returns to Memphis Rise Academy. The Operations and Instructional Teams will coordinate the administration of the missed assessment. If a student is absent for an extended period of time and misses multiple assessments, the school will work with the student to arrange a mutually agreeable schedule to ensure the completion of all missed assessments in a timely fashion.

- **Homework.** If a student misses a day of school, the assignments due on the day he or she was absent are due the day he or she returns to school. Assignments given on the day he or she was absent are due during morning advisory the day after he or she returns. Students who are absent for multiple days will work with their advisors to establish a homework return schedule that is both urgent and realistic.

Uniform Policy

Dress Code

Memphis Rise Academy has a student uniform, which applies during all Monday through Friday school days. We have adopted our dress code to:

- foster a strong sense of school community
- ensure a focus on academic achievement
- prepare students for professional expectations of the adult academic and work world
- increase school safety by making the presence of visitors/outsideers more apparent
- reduce the cost of clothing for families and the need for continual shopping
- give our students the opportunity to show school pride in and out of the school building

Enforcement of Dress Code Policy

Like all school policies, our dress code is strictly and consistently enforced. Although it may seem like small exceptions should not be a problem, we cannot allow deviations from our dress code. If an exception is made for one student, it would then have to apply to all students, and the code would change. It is in everyone's best interest—school, student and family—if we keep our dress code consistent for all students. We want our policy to be clear; families who have any questions or concerns about our dress code should feel free to contact the school immediately for clarification. For these reasons, we want to enforce our dress code policies with some flexibility and commonality in mind, so that all families and students can achieve our dress code standard without a high degree of cost or detail each day.

Students who enter our building fully out of dress code are not allowed to attend class. Parents will be asked to bring the proper attire to the school to ensure that the student can enter the classroom. In addition, dressing inappropriately or changing out of dress code during the day may result in disciplinary consequences. In the event that a student has a minor dress code violation, interventions may be anything from a note home to correct the infraction to a potential detention for ongoing infractions.

Purchasing of Clothing

For every Memphis Rise Academy student, there are two possible school uniforms that may be worn and should be purchased: the Memphis Rise Academy Uniform and the PE Uniform. All students will wear the PE Uniform to school as the all-day uniform on days when they have PE. PE days will be communicated to families at Registration, once your student's Advisory, or homeroom, is assigned.

Families may order all Memphis Rise Academy-specific uniform items (polos, sweatshirts, sweaters, PE clothes) from Spikner, located at 1210 Madison Ave. Additionally, some replacement items will be available for purchase as needed at Memphis Rise Academy, and Memphis Rise Academy can coordinate the order of additional uniform items from Spikner, to be paid for in advance by families and delivered to the school.

School Dress Code Policy for Boys

- **Red or Black Memphis Rise Academy polo shirt**—each new student will receive one free of charge, and additional shirts may be ordered from Spikner
- **Long pants that are either solid black, solid khaki, solid gray, solid brown, or solid navy blue (no denim).** Pants are not provided by Memphis Rise Academy. They may be purchased at any traditional clothing retailer, provided they meet these guidelines. **All boys pants must be non-denim pants and must have belt loops—no shorts, drawstring pants, “joggers” without belt loops, elastic waistbands, or dark jeans will be allowed.**
- **Black or brown belt** (all black or brown aside from buckle; not oversized or distracting; no large belt buckles)

- **Closed-toed shoes.** Slip-ons are fine; laces or Velcro are also fine, but must be tied or fastened at all times. Students should not wear sandals, slides, open-toed shoes, slippers/"house shoes." Examples of acceptable shoes include flats or sneakers/athletic shoes. Memphis Rise Academy reserves the right to determine if a shoe follows our guidelines.
- **Solid colored socks** (no patterns or logos); socks, or any other uniform item, that depict inappropriate and/or illegal patterns will be grounds for an Out-of-School Suspension.
- **OPTIONAL:** Red, black, or gray crewneck sweatshirt with Memphis Rise Academy logo; black V-neck sweater with Memphis Rise Academy logo; red cardigan sweater with Memphis Rise Academy logo (7th and 8th grade only); black fleece jacket with Memphis Rise Academy logo (8th grade only); white button-up Oxford shirt (8th grade only)
 - We recommend all students purchase a cold-weather item from the list above; temperatures in class may fluctuate slightly, especially in colder months
 - Hooded sweatshirts are not allowed to be worn in school, but can be worn to and from school.
 - Other coats/jackets are not allowed in class and must be removed upon a student's entry to their classroom— please purchase one or more Memphis Rise Academy uniform items to suffice as a student's cold weather apparel. Memphis Rise Academy can assist in the ordering of these items at any time during the school year.
 - Even when wearing a Memphis Rise Academy outerwear item, students should still wear the Memphis Rise Academy polo underneath
- **OPTIONAL:** White, black, gray, or red undershirt (short or long sleeved)
 - All undershirts must be white, black, gray, or red and not be oversized.
 - All undershirts must be solid-colored; no words or patterns.
 - Short shirt sleeves should not show from under the uniform shirt.

School Dress Code Policy for Girls

- **Red or Black Memphis Rise Academy polo shirt**—each new student will receive one free of charge, and additional shirts may be ordered from Spikner
- **Long pants or a skirt that are either solid black, solid khaki, solid gray, solid brown, or solid navy blue (no denim, or pants that resemble dark jeans).** Pants and skirts are not provided by Memphis Rise Academy. They may be purchased at any traditional clothing retailer, provided they meet these guidelines. Skirts must reach a point two inches above the knee or lower. **If pants are worn, they must have belt loops—no shorts, spandex/yoga, or leggings-type pants are allowed in our dress code policies at any time.**
- Black or brown belt (all black or brown aside from buckle; not oversized or distracting; no large belt buckles)
- **Closed-toed shoes.** Slip-ons are fine; laces or Velcro are also fine, but must be tied or fastened at all times. Students should not wear sandals, slides, open-toed shoes, slippers/"house shoes." Examples of acceptable shoes include flats or sneakers/athletic shoes. Memphis Rise Academy reserves the right to determine if a shoe follows our guidelines.
- Solid colored socks (no patterns or logos); socks, or any other uniform item, that depict inappropriate and/or illegal patterns will be grounds for an Out-of-School Suspension.
- **OPTIONAL:** Red, black, or gray crewneck sweatshirt with Memphis Rise Academy logo; black V-neck sweater with Memphis Rise Academy logo; red cardigan sweater with Memphis Rise Academy logo (7th and 8th grade only); black fleece jacket with Memphis Rise Academy logo (8th grade only); white button-up Oxford shirt (8th grade only)
 - We recommend all students purchase a cold-weather item from the list above; temperatures in class may fluctuate slightly, especially in colder months
 - Hooded sweatshirts are never allowed.
 - Other coats/jackets are not allowed in class and must be removed upon a student's entry to their classroom— please purchase one or more Memphis Rise Academy uniform items to suffice as a student's cold weather apparel. Memphis Rise Academy can assist in the ordering of these items at any time during the school year.
 - Even when wearing a Memphis Rise Academy outerwear item, students should still wear the Memphis Rise Academy polo underneath
- **OPTIONAL:** White, black, gray, or red undershirt (short or long sleeved)
 - All undershirts must be white, black, gray, or red and not be oversized
 - All undershirts must be solid-colored; no words or patterns
 - Short shirt sleeves should not show from under the uniform shirt

Memphis Rise Academy PE Dress Code (all students)

- **Memphis Rise Academy PE T-Shirt or school-issued shirt (“Go Farther,” Ambition, Rise Like a Champion, or other) OR red Memphis Rise Academy crewneck sweatshirt OR Memphis Rise Academy black v-neck sweater**
 - PE shirts do not need to be tucked in, but must be an appropriate size/length for the student’s body (not too small or too large)
 - A PE t-shirt with the Memphis Rise Academy logo can be ordered from Spikner
- **Sneakers/athletic shoes** (must be tied at all times). Memphis Rise Academy reserves the right to place limits on the types of shoes that may be worn if needed.
- **Solid colored socks**; socks, or any other uniform item, that depict inappropriate and/or illegal patterns will be grounds for an Out-of-School Suspension.
- **Memphis Rise Academy athletic shorts or athletic sweatpants; or solid black athletic shorts or athletic sweatpants**
 - Shorts/sweatpants must be appropriately sized, remain at the waistline, and reach a student’s knees, not above or below, based on Memphis Rise Academy discretion.
 - Shorts that are deemed too short or tight, or shorts that are deemed too large to securely fasten around the waist, or any other reason they may be deemed not conducive to physical activity will not be allowed.
 - Sweatpants that are deemed too tight and/or not conducive to physical activity will not be allowed.
 - Students may elect to wear either shorts or sweatpants on PE days, but should choose appropriately for weather.
 - Tights, leggings, or yoga pants are not considered acceptable PE uniform bottoms

General Clothing Requirements

- Students may not wear clothing with logos other than the Memphis Rise Academy logo.
- Memphis Rise Academy polos, with the Memphis Rise Academy logo, are the only acceptable polo shirts to be worn with our uniform.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Shoelaces must be tied at all times. Velcro must be fastened at all times.
- Clothing must be sized appropriately to fit the student. Clothes may not be too big or too small.
- Students are encouraged to avoid completely dying hair an unnatural hair color (bright red, pink, purple, blue, orange, green, etc.) to wear to school. Low level highlights within natural hair will be permitted, but full, unnatural hair colors are strongly discouraged. The dividing line between low level highlights and unnatural hair dye is at the school’s discretion. When in doubt, do not pursue these hair color options.
- Students may not alter the Memphis Rise Academy uniform with writing, drawing, cutting, etc. No cuffs may be frayed.
- A second polo shirt worn under the shirt is not considered a uniform undershirt—only t-shirt, long sleeve t-shirts, or tank tops are allowed as undershirts.
- Students who consistently wear pants that are not in accordance to our dress code, primarily “joggers,” leggings, sweatpants or dark/colored jeans, no belt loops, will be first given a warning, then issued a daily detention, and can be suspended from school if the pants are not corrected.
- Once students enter the school building, the wearing of hats, headphones, bandanas, or jackets is not permitted unless it is in accordance with a religious observation and previously messaged to Memphis Rise Academy staff. Hats worn in the school building after entry will be confiscated. Dyed hair or distracting hairstyles, as determined by the school, are not permitted.
- Sunglasses/non-prescription glasses are not permitted inside the school.
- Students may not wear the following accessories which may disrupt learning or interfere with health/safety/cleanliness standards, as determined by the school:
 - Excessive jewelry
 - Piercings outside of the ears (tongue, eyebrow, etc.)—earrings must be no wider than one inch (the size of a quarter) and hang no longer than two inches below the ear lobe. Exceptions are not made for students who receive a piercing during the year and are directed to keep the opening filled. It is the family’s responsibility to provide a clear spacer for cases of this nature.
 - Glitter makeup/glitter body paint
 - Chains/necklaces on the outside of the shirt

- When students enter the school building, they must be in the proper uniform. Students should not be expected to be given an opportunity to change into uniform while in the school building.
- Students who wear the wrong uniform for a given day (i.e. wearing the PE Uniform on a day which they should be wearing the school uniform or vice versa) are considered out of uniform and may be asked to have these rectified before entering class. Consistent issues adhering to our uniform policies can subject students to consequences such as demerits, detention, or out of school suspension, depending upon severity of consistency.

Extracurricular Organization Uniform Additions

At the school's discretion, students may be permitted to wear items that are associated with a club or sports team of which they are actively a part. The school reserves the right to allow or disallow any item created by a club or sports team to become a part of the general uniform. Sports uniforms, eg jerseys, shorts, etc., cannot be worn as part of the general uniform, but may be allowed by school administration on the days of athletic events during the season.

Uniform Photo Policy

As we know some of the above uniform guidelines can be interpretive, we encourage all families to take advantage of our school's Uniform Photo Policy. If you are at a store and are concerned whether a uniform item is or is not within our uniform guidelines, please text a picture to Principal Gus Connelly (763-516-8222) or Dean of Students Alex Downes-Borowski (651-307-8943). We commit to replying to all photos as soon as possible with either a yes or no, allowing you confidence that what you purchase is or is not within our uniform guidelines.

Cell Phones

Because they are a distraction to learning, we advise that students do not bring cell phones to school. We do understand that many families prefer that their student has access to a cell phone. Therefore, we have put in place the following policies for the responsibility of cell phones at Memphis Rise Academy. Memphis Rise Academy is not liable for any missing items of value. Our policy is:

If a student chooses to bring a cell phone to school, it must be turned in to the student's advisor immediately upon entry into the classroom and placed in a labeled envelope. Cell phones will be collected by classroom teachers between 7:45-8:05 AM, and stored in a locked cabinet outside of classroom space. Phones will be returned at the end of afternoon advisory, and must be placed directly into a student's bag without being turned on, until the end of enrichment, homework club, or detention. If a student is found to be using a cell phone in the school building, it will be confiscated by a staff member, and a parent or guardian will be required to come to the school to retrieve it from the Head of School, and this student will receive an automatic detention. If a student refuses to give a phone they are caught using in class to a teacher or administrator, an Out of School Suspension, accompanied by a phone suspension, will be issued. Staff members will give all confiscated cell phones to the Head of School or Dean of Students, who will keep them and alert the family of his/her possession of the item. Students arriving before 7:45 AM are expected to turn their cell phones into their respective classroom phone bins, which will be available in the before-school waiting areas.

Students who choose to violate the cell phone policy more than once will be prohibited from bringing a cell phone to school for a set amount of time, as determined by the school.

Electronic Devices

No other electronic devices (including, but not limited to iPods, smart watches/Apple Watches, MP3 players, iPads/tablets, video games, computers, non-activated cell phones, e-book readers, etc.) are allowed at Memphis Rise Academy at any time, and are not to be turned in to advisors for safe keeping. If a student is found to be using an electronic device in the school building, it will be confiscated by a staff member, and a parent or guardian will be required to come to the school to retrieve it from the Head of School, and this student will receive an automatic detention. Staff members will give all confiscated electronic devices to the Head of School, who will keep them and alert the family of his/her possession of the item.

Students with smart watches should not bring them to the classroom. If a student is using a smart watch in a classroom to text or perform any social function, it will be asked for by a teacher. If a student refuses to comply with the request, the same policies listed above for cell phones refusal will apply.

Headphones that are too large to fit in our labeled envelopes (eg, Beats) are permitted on our busses, but are not to be turned in at school for safe keeping. If a student brings headphones to school, they must be off before entering the school (not on the neck) and stay in the student's bag all day and cannot be removed for any reason. Headphones are the property of the student and the school, as they are not a necessary item, is not liable for headphones that are lost, damaged, stolen, or otherwise harmed before, during or after the school day.

Use of School Chromebooks

Memphis Rise Academy Middle School often utilizes Chromebooks in its courses for word processing, research, online testing, or presentation creation purposes. When using a Chromebook, it is our expectation that students remain focused on the task at hand, rather than using the device for their own personal purposes such as internet searches, social media, etc. Our school maintains a managed service plan with GoGuardian, which allows us to monitor student computer use. If a student is breaking school expectations for Chromebook activity, consequences from a demerit to a potential suspension, based on the severity of the offense, will be issued. Additionally, if a student, due to negligence or irresponsible behavior, causes physical damage to the device or is responsible for a software issue such as a virus or malware, families may be responsible for reimbursing the school for the device.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch are provided by Preferred Meals, and are available to every student, every day, free of charge.

Breakfast will be served at the front door and eaten in Advisory classrooms between 7:45-8:00 AM. Breakfast will be available to students until 8:05 AM. Students will have time during their morning advisory period to eat breakfast. Students are also welcome to bring breakfast items from home to be consumed during morning advisory.

Students are welcome to bring lunch from home to consume during the lunch period.

Snacks/Breaks

There will be two 10-minute breaks throughout the course of the day on Monday-Thursday, and one or two 10-minute break on Friday. Students are welcome to bring snacks from home to consume during these breaks. All food items brought from home must remain in a student's bag until the designated times.

Rules for Outside Food

Memphis Rise Academy encourages that students stay alert and active throughout the day. For this reason, we allow students to bring small amounts of snacks throughout the day, to be eaten during our break times. Along with Shelby County Schools, Memphis Rise Academy encourages a Healthy Snack Policy. Healthy snacks that will help our students learn include the following:

- Fruit (whole or in cups)
- Applesauce or Jello
- Granola/cereal bars
- Vegetables
- Pretzels and crackers
- Rice cakes
- Baked chips
- Yogurt
- String cheese
- Nuts

This policy will be amended in the event that any student makes Memphis Rise Academy aware of a food allergy.

Some foods are a detriment to our classroom environment, and are never allowed in the school. These foods include, but are not limited to:

- Soda/soft drinks—this includes sugary carbonated juices or flavored drinks such as Faygo
- Energy drinks
- Candy, including Pixie Stix and other powdered sugar candies
- Abnormally large amounts of snacks (i.e. a full bag of potato chips, a full gallon of any beverage)
- Gum is not allowed at Memphis Rise Academy. Because our buildings and furniture are all less than 6 years old, please help us keep the building in the condition that all students deserve, and adhere to our gum policies in the building and, even, the parking lots.

Selling Food

Under no circumstances will students be permitted to sell any food or beverage item on Memphis Rise Academy property. Students caught selling any food or beverage items will have the items immediately confiscated, snack privileges revoked until further notice, and will receive an automatic detention, to be served on the day the infraction occurred.

Grading, Promotion, and Retention

Grading Policies

Memphis Rise Academy students take seven core classes during the school year (Math A, Math B, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Science and an elective in the middle school).

Students will receive a Rise Report each Friday with their grades in each core class. At the end of each quarter, students will receive formal Report Cards with detailed information about their performance in each core subject area, based on formal assessment and, when applicable, project performance written by teachers and administrators. Report Cards will include a numerical and letter grade for each core academic class, as well as feedback from teachers in all of which will be updated on a weekly basis in our Rise Report system.

Focus, our daily tutoring period, is also a graded class. Focus is a class where a student's effort can either greatly benefit or directly hinder their performance in related core content classes. Therefore, a student's Focus grade will be given primarily based on effort and growth, and will be contributed to by any teacher a student has for Focus that quarter.

All grades are based on a 0 to 100% scale. The grading scale is as follows:

A+	98-100
A	94-97
A-	91-93
B+	88-90
B	84-87
B-	81-83
C+	78-80
C	74-77
C-	70-73
F	69 and below

Promotion and Retention Policy

Memphis Rise Academy is an extremely challenging, college-preparatory academic environment. With consistent homework, an extended school day, and frequent assessments, we ask our students for significant commitment to academic excellence. However, our school also commits itself to daily opportunities for academic support and our school staff is readily available for ongoing support as needed.

Student promotion at Memphis Rise Academy is based on academic merit and commitment to attendance. We do not adhere to traditional “social promotion” standards. In the event that a student is in danger of retention for academic or attendance reasons, families will be notified by the Head of School and Dean of Students well in advance of the retention decision to create a plan for the student to make the growth necessary to be promoted to the next grade level. However, we still anticipate a few circumstances in which retention will be the best decision for a Memphis Rise Academy student.

If a student passes all core subjects with a 70% or better and has not been absent for more than 15 days of the school year, the student will be promoted automatically to the next grade level.

Students who earn below a 70% in two or more core academic classes over the course of a four-quarter school year, and/or (b) miss more than fifteen school days without a documented and reasonable concern that prevented attendance at school during that year, will be, in many cases, retained. Memphis Rise Academy reserves the right to promote or retain students who fall into these criteria based on what is deemed best for that student’s academic progress.

In the event that a student does need to repeat a grade, the Head of School will assemble a multidisciplinary team to plan an appropriate strategy for the following year. Based on an understanding of the reasons for the student’s lack of success during the previous year, the team will detail supports and processes for ensuring that he or she will be successful the following year. These interventions may include, but are not limited to, extra tutoring in August or after, a change in the student’s flexible ability grouping, or an effort to work with the student’s family to address personal or peer group issues.

Code of Conduct

Promoting Good Behavior

Memphis Rise Academy promotes behavior which aligns to our REACH values for positive and productive character. We give students more opportunities to see the correlation between positive behavior and success than between challenging behavior and consequences. To achieve this, we provide the following supports for all students:

- **Advisory.** At the start of the school year, all students are assigned to an advisory classroom supported by two classroom teachers and/or administrators, termed advisors. Advisors develop close, motivation-driven relationships with their advisees throughout the school year. Families should expect to hear updates from their child’s advisor on a regular basis, in Rise Reports, phone calls, or other written communication home.
- **Goal-Setting Initiatives and Community Meeting.** With the guidance of their advisor, students are instructed to set goals for themselves for the short term and the more extended (mid- and long) term. Students are rewarded through our merit program for hitting these goals and publicly celebrated during advisory and community meetings. Goals are focused on academic and behavioral success and should provide a structure for our students to be able to articulate their successes in a positive way to their school community.
- **Enrichment.** From Monday through Thursday, from 3:55 to 4:30 PM, the school offers Enrichment activities for all students who have completed their homework and who are behaving well. Students sign up for a specific Enrichment activity at the beginning of each trimester. Sample enrichments may include sports or other forms of exercise, creative writing, computer science, or culinary arts. While the majority of Enrichment activities are taught by Memphis Rise Academy staff, some may be taught by external instructors. Along with advisory, Enrichment is designed to help students build relationships with their teachers on a less academically focused basis and to be rewarded for good behavior with a self-chosen activity which interests them, provided for free during the school day. Students who earn detention or Homework Club during a given school day will not be eligible to participate in their Enrichment during that day.
- **Merits and REACH Blocks.** The Memphis Rise Academy REACH Block system is a class and school-wide positive incentive system. The system uses peer motivation and inter-advisory competition to encourage students to work

together to meet high expectations. During every period of the school day, 6th grade students are assessed on their performance as a group, earning between zero and five REACH Blocks. 6th graders can also earn merits, for behaviors and performance that meets or exceeds our standards at the discretion of our staff. 7th and 8th grade students can earn individual REACH Blocks, similar to merits, which count as both personal incentives as well as contributions to weekly team goals. Within every class period, there are multiple opportunities for our students to demonstrate each of our core values based on their individual and collective choices. Teachers measure student performance in each of the five core values per class period, award blocks for each value shown by the class, and discuss with students how they either showed or failed to show each core value at the end of every period. Advisories keep track of their REACH Blocks per week for group rewards and incentives at Friday Community Meetings.

Code of Conduct

Memphis Rise Academy has created a Code of Conduct to ensure that our school is a respectful space for learning and to allow students the ability to focus on achieving their most ambitious goals. It is a primary goal and responsibility of our staff to make expectations for success clear to our students and to coach our students on how to meet our expectations. Without a firm and consistent Code of Conduct, none of what we envision for our school can happen. This is the basis of our student Code of Conduct.

Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to maintain Memphis Rise Academy Code of Conduct at all times when in contact with school grounds, staff or partners. This could include during the school day, during any school-sponsored activities and trips, all-school events, or any time off of school grounds which results in substantial disruption to the learning environment.

Enforcement of our Code of Conduct is based on a framework of progressive discipline. Specifically, minor infractions result in less severe consequences while larger infractions result in more severe consequences. Furthermore, first-time infractions result in less severe consequences while repeated infractions result in more severe consequences.

Students are expected to always respond respectfully to the authority and direction of school staff. Behaviors that are considered disrespectful include but are not limited to rolling one's eyes, making inappropriate remarks or sounds in response to a request, or questioning a staff person's action or authority in a disrespectful manner. Such disrespect will be met with demerits in low level cases or, in higher cases, automatic detentions or in-school suspensions.

Individual Incentive and Accountability System: Merits/Blocks and Demerits

Memphis Rise Academy has developed a system of merits and demerits to provide students, families and teachers with a frequent, comprehensive report of students' behavioral performance. A student's merits and demerits are impacted by his/her fulfillment of behavioral, academic, and attendance expectations.

All students receive Rise Reports every Friday. Rise Reports detail students' performance academically, behaviorally and towards their personal goals. These Rise Reports are expected to be returned to the school no later than the following Wednesday.

Students are expected to, at minimum, meet our expectations for behavior each day, as messaged clearly during Rise Week and throughout the school year. We encourage our students to exceed our expectations for behavior and performance, which we reward with merits. Students can earn merits or blocks from a staff member for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Volunteering to help another student or teacher
- Volunteering service to the school
- Exemplary classroom behavior (taking initiative, showing courtesy or patience, performing an act of kindness, providing an exemplary answer or exemplary work)
- Outstanding effort or improvement in core academic subjects
- Outstanding display of one of our five REACH values
- Accomplishing or making significant progress towards a goal

Merits and blocks are given to students by teachers for exceptionally strong behavior in adherence to our core values. Students are expected to show the responsibility to keep track of their merits and, as they are accrued, are able to spend their merits on prizes or use them for other incentives available throughout the school year. Merits and blocks should be a point of personal pride for students who have gone above and beyond to show the Memphis Rise REACH core values.

Students who do not meet the school's expectations for behavior or academic performance are issued demerits. For example, demerits are issued when:

- Students are out of uniform
- Students arrive late to class or spend significant time out of class
- Students are unprepared for class
- Student exhibit poor conduct in class
- Students fail to follow directions or procedures
- Students talk out of turn
- Students show low-level disrespect towards a member of the school community
- Students show low-level disrespect of school property
- Students display other behaviors deemed inappropriate by the school staff

Students who earn three demerits or more during the school day receive detention during that school day and are not allowed to attend their Enrichments. The Dean of Students will be in contact for issues that require family support. Students who receive three consecutive days of detention, either through demerit accrual or more serious offenses which garner automatic detentions, may be assigned to in-school suspension, determined by the Dean of Students. Additionally, students who accrue three Homework Clubs in a row during a given week may also be assigned a Thursday detention.

Bullying/Cyberbullying

Memphis Rise Academy is committed to making our school a place that is comfortable and safe for all students to be, every day. Anything defined or interpreted as bullying behaviors will never be considered acceptable—bullying behaviors will result in an automatic detention in all cases, with more severe consequences being applied in more severe cases.

Behaviors that fit in the category of bullying can include—but are not limited to—disrespectful or demeaning comments being made to or about other people, refusal to work with specific people, any form of disrespect based in any element of a student's identity, and anything that results in another student being made to feel uncomfortable.

We acknowledge that students may engage in social media-based interactions and conversation outside of school. We expect that students will choose to communicate only in a positive and respectful manner across social media platforms, just as we expect they do in school. Bullying that occurs outside of school over social media can have direct impacts on students' ability to meet expectations at school. While we are not always in a position to administer school-based consequences for activities that take place outside of school, we take all reports of cyberbullying seriously, and are committed to investigating all situations and supporting our students and families to reaching a solution in the event that cyberbullying is reported to us.

Technology

Students will regularly use technology as part of various classes, including—but not limited to—calculators, computers, Chromebooks, and tablets. Whenever technology elements are provided for student use, they will be accompanied with specific expectations surrounding their use. In all cases, students are expected to use instructional technology items only for their intended instructional purpose. Any misuse or off-task use of technology may result in consequences, including loss of technology privileges. Serious and deliberate misuse of technology may result in more serious consequences, including in-school or out-of-school suspension.

Behavioral Accountability Contracts

In the event that Memphis Rise Academy's behavioral intervention team, a combination of our Head of School, Dean of Students, and Grade Level Chairs, determine that a student's infractions of our school's code of conduct are in need of a more significant intervention, a Behavioral Accountability Contract may be designed. Our Behavioral Accountability Contracts are put in place in order to make our expectations for students as clear as possible for all parties-- school, student, and family-- so that we can work in tandem in getting a student's behavior back on track towards academic success. These contracts specify which behaviors a student may be chronically struggling with, what our school needs to see in terms of growth in those behaviors, and mechanisms our school will use, including some that involve necessary family support, to achieve those growth goals. These contracts also will normally state potential consequences beyond daily detentions that students may receive if targeted growth goals are not pursued or met within a reasonable amount of time. The issuance of a Behavioral Accountability Contract requires a mandatory meeting with a parent or guardian. In extreme cases, a student may be suspended prior to the administration of a contract, and the student's return to school will be contingent upon the scheduling and execution of a family meeting to review these contractual goals.

Suspensions and Expulsions

In-School Suspension

At times, particular infractions warrant consequences that are more severe than demerits or detention. For these infractions, Memphis Rise Academy implements an In-School Suspension (ISS) model, ensuring that all students have as much consistent access to the curriculum as possible while at the same time ensuring that we have a consequence gradient appropriate for all degrees of infractions.

Specific infractions which may warrant ISS include, but are not limited to:

- Low-level forgery, cheating, plagiarism or dishonesty
- Skipping school or after school commitments
- Three or more consecutive days of demerit-based or automatic detentions
- Blatant or offensive disrespect or disruption
- Failure to commit to sustainable change in response to lower-level intervention

Students on ISS sit in all classes during the school day at a separated desk but are not allowed to participate in class activities i.e. turn and talks, group work, or peer tutoring. ISS students are assigned automatic detention during their suspensions. ISS students must receive zero demerits during the school day and signatures from each of their teachers on a provided ISS Success form to fully earn their way back into the classroom community. Students stay in ISS until both of these are achieved.

Out-of-School Suspensions

Students who act deliberately well outside of Memphis Rise Academy's expectations may earn Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). Actions warranting this consequence include, but are not limited to:

- Gross or harmful disrespect of a fellow student, staff member, visitor, or school partner
- Damaging, destroying or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so (including graffiti)
- Using or possessing tobacco products
- Disruption during ISS or detention through misbehavior
- Committing sexual, racial, or any other form of harassment or intimidation
- Using abusive, vulgar or profane language to any individual
- Setting off false alarms
- Gambling
- Fighting, physically or, in some cases, verbally
- Lying
- Serious forgery, plagiarism or cheating
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Being charged with a felony

- Repeated offenses for which the student has already earned ISS
- Failure to commit to sustainable change in response to lower-level intervention

If a student with special instructional needs earns OSS, Memphis Rise Academy staff or external partners will work with the student and their family to ensure that all necessary instructional minutes are provided during the Out of School Suspension as is convenient for both the family and Memphis Rise Academy staff. Situations will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the exclusion from Memphis Rise Academy Charter School on a permanent basis at the discretion of the Head of School. TN law T.C.A. § 49-6-3401 provides the Head of School with the authority to expel students for good and sufficient reason. TN law requires expulsion for no less than one (1) year for the following offenses, except for modifications on a case-by-case basis (e.g. students with special needs):

- Unauthorized possession on school property of a firearm
- Committing a battery upon a teacher, principal, administrator, or other employee
- Unlawfully possessing any drug, including any controlled substance as defined by T.C.A. §§ 39-17-403 through 39-17-415 and 53-10-101.

In addition to any of these infractions, any breaches of Federal law, TN State law, or Memphis City laws, may be handled in cooperation with the local police department and may result in expulsion. The school reserves the right to expel students for any other good and sufficient reason that it deems to be an unacceptable breach of its disciplinary policies, which may include:

- Threat of violence to students or staff in school or on a school bus
- Possession of or attempted usage of a weapon, defined as an item brought to school with the possibility of doing harm to self or others, or such an item attained on school grounds with the intention of use for the same purpose(s)
- Instigation of or participation in group violence, in school or on a school bus
- Persistent gross disrespect to school expectations and code of conduct policies, even after the steps of our discipline ladder have been taken or re-taken

Procedures for Disciplinary Action

The following section explains the procedures for determining consequences students may face for violation of this Code of Conduct. All students are entitled to due process commensurate with the disciplinary consequences to which they may be subject.

Detention

Requirements: On Mondays-Thursdays, detention is served during the last hour of the day detention is earned. Any detentions earned on Fridays will be served the following Monday, as regular detention is not held on Friday afternoons. If a student is required to serve detention and Homework Club during the same day, he/she will only serve the detention.

- **Student Notification:** If a student is required to serve detention, he/she will be notified during the last period of the day the detention is to be served.
- **Parent Notification:** Most times a student is assigned to detention, parents will receive a phone call home the same day. Additionally, parents will be notified of a student's behavioral record on Friday Rise Reports, including all accrued detentions that week. If a detention phone call is missed, please return the call within 24 hours. Please sign and return Detention Forms immediately.

In-School Suspension

Requirements: In the morning, students will need to check in with Dean of Students who will reiterate the expectations of ISS. Students on ISS will: Attend all classes, receive instruction and complete class work; Not be permitted to communicate with other students in their advisory that day, including during breaks and lunch, unless specifically instructed by a teacher for an academic necessity; Not participate in selected class activities, as determined by teacher; Be assigned automatic detention as opposed to Enrichment or Homework Club; Not attend reward events including field trips, dances, etc. Violations of these requirements may result in additional days of ISS or an Out-of-School Suspension. A student will be In-School Suspended until he/she meets his/her goal of 100% of teacher signatures for approval on ISS Success form.

- **Student Notification:** If a student is assigned ISS, he/she will be notified by a staff member, usually the Dean of Students or Head of School, the day before or the day of the beginning of their suspension period.
- **Parental Notification:** Parents of those students who have been assigned ISS will be contacted by the school within twenty-four (24) hours, notifying them of the suspension, the cause for the suspension, and the conditions for readmission. A parent meeting may be required or requested.

Short-Term Out-of-School Suspension

For suspensions between one and ten days, the following procedures will apply: When an infraction occurs, the student will be removed from the classroom and sent to the Main Office, Dean of Students' Office, or another designated school location. The student's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the Head of School or Dean of Students.

Unless a student presents a danger or risk of substantial disruption to the classroom, the student shall receive notice and an opportunity to present her/his version of the relevant facts and events prior to receiving a suspension of one to ten days.

In the case of danger or a risk of substantial disruption, the student will be removed from the school building and provided notice and the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts as soon as possible, provided this danger or risk is mitigated through the removal of the student from the school grounds.

In the case that a student is assigned an Out-of-School Suspension, the student's parent/guardian must immediately come to the school, meet with the Dean of Students and/or Head of School, and remove the student from the school building. If the parent/guardian cannot immediately come to the school building, the student will wait in a designated area until the parent/guardian arrives. Written notice will be sent home describing the incident and designating the length of suspension. Parents of those students who have been assigned an Out-of-School Suspension will be contacted by the school within twenty-four (24) hours, notifying them of the suspension, the cause for the suspension, and the conditions for readmission.

If a student is assigned an Out-of School Suspension of more than five (5) days, the Head of School or Dean of Students may develop and implement a behavior plan for assisting the student to improve his/her behavior. Students are responsible for completing academic work missed during the suspension. The completed work will receive full credit, if submitted by deadlines in accordance with the school make-up policy. If a student does not complete this work, the student may face standard academic consequences (e.g., Homework Club, no academic credit).

Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsion

If a suspension of more than ten days is assigned to a student, the following procedures will apply according to T.C.A. § 49-6-3401:

Parents or guardians of those students who have been assigned an Out-of-School Suspension longer than ten days or Expulsion will be contacted by the school within twenty-four (24) hours, notifying them of the suspension, the cause for the suspension, and the conditions for readmission. The student and the parents or guardians of the student will also receive immediate written or actual notice of the right to appeal the decision. Notices and proceedings will be translated into the student's/parent's primary language if necessary for their understanding of the proceedings.

A parent, guardian, or student may request a conference with the Head of School or a designee when the student has

received an Out-of-School Suspension of greater than 10 days or expulsion. The school will provide due process by explaining the school's view of the offense, the information gathered during the investigation, and the length of the Out-of-School Suspension, if applicable. The school will allow the student to explain his/her side or view of the offense.

A student and/or parent, upon request, will have the right to review the student's records in accordance with applicable federal and state law, including 34 C.F.R. § 99.31 and T.C.A. §10-7-504.

Parents or guardians have the right to appeal a decision to suspend a student for more than ten 10 days or expel a student. All appeals of such a decision must be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) days after receipt of the notice of the suspension or expulsion and may be filed by the parent or guardian, the student, or any person holding a teaching license who is employed by the school system if requested by the student. Failure to appeal such a decision within five (5) days waives any right to appeal. The appeal from this decision shall be to the Memphis Rise Academy Board of Directors, which may (through the Chair) appoint a disciplinary hearing authority comprising at least three members of the Board.

The appeal hearing shall be held no later than ten (10) days after the beginning of the suspension. The Board of Directors or disciplinary hearing authority shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the parent or guardian, the student, and the school official who ordered the suspension or expulsion.

After the hearing, the Board of Directors may affirm the decision of the Head of School, order removal of the suspension or expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable, or suspend the student for a specified period of time. Parents or guardians will be notified by the Board Chairman of the committee's decision regarding the appeal.

A written record of the proceedings, including a summary of the facts and the reasons supporting the decision, shall be kept or prepared by the Board or disciplinary hearing authority. The student or Head of School may, within five (5) days of the decision, request review by the full Board of Directors, or, if the initial hearing was held before the full Board, request re-review by the full Board of Directors. Absent a timely appeal, the decision shall be final. The full Board, based upon a review of the record, may grant or deny a request for a another hearing and may affirm or overturn the decision of the hearing authority with or without a hearing before the Board; provided, that the Board may not impose a more severe penalty than that imposed by the hearing authority without first providing an opportunity for a hearing before the Board. If the Board conducts such a hearing, this hearing shall be closed to the public, unless the student or student's parent or guardian requests in writing within five (5) days after receipt of written notice of the hearing that the hearing be conducted as an open meeting. The action of the full Board shall be final.

Whenever an expulsion hearing is recommended, the above-described procedural safeguards will be in effect. In general, the following will be provided:

The student shall receive written notice of the charges and a statement of the evidence, date, time and place of a hearing and notice of the right at the hearing. The school will record (by tape or other appropriate means) the hearing and a copy of such will be made available to the student upon request.

Notices and proceedings will be translated into the student's/parent's primary language if necessary for their understanding of the proceedings. A student and/or parent, upon request, will have the right to review the student's records in accordance with applicable federal and state law, including 34 C.F.R. § 99.31 and T.C.A. §10-7-504. All decisions by the Board of Directors regarding expulsion of a student will be issued to the student in writing.

In any case involving the possession or sale of illegal or unauthorized drugs, possession or usage of a weapon, or physical violence towards school staff or administration, Memphis Rise Academy will immediately pursue student expulsion, in accordance with the policies above. Memphis Rise Academy also reserves the right to pursue expulsion on a case by case basis for reasons beyond those described above, in conjunction with the Shelby County Schools Department of Alternative Schools.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

Federal and state law provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of these rights is available at <http://www.teateachers.org/cms/IDEA/141.html>.

Student Searches

In order to maintain the security of all its students, Memphis Rise Academy staff reserve the right to conduct searches of its students and their property when there is reasonable suspicion to do so. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible, and that students and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search to the extent possible. School cubbies and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of Memphis Rise Academy; therefore, students should have no expectation of privacy in these areas.

Confidentiality and Nondiscrimination

Student Education Records and FERPA Compliance

Memphis Rise Academy fully complies with all requirements of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA guarantees certain rights to families with respect to their children's education records. Tennessee's laws regarding open records, contained in T.C.A. § 10-7-504, further refine the requirements for handling student records and information.

Nondiscrimination

Memphis Rise Academy is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. Please refer questions about this policy to the Head of School.



Memphis Rise Academy Family and School Agreement of Mutual Support

Memphis Rise Academy is grateful for the ambitious choice that its parents and guardians have made to enroll their students in our college preparatory environment. We know Memphis Rise Academy is a different type of environment, as evidenced in the Handbook you have just reviewed, but we believe we are the type of school that can and will produce amazing results for your child, if we can work in partnership with you to do so.

To provide that excellent education, we ask quite a bit of our students every day, such as their energized participation in an extended school day, their commitment to a positive school culture, and their efforts to pursue excellence of academics and character outside of the school.

We are honored to provide our students with support when they are with us during the school day, but we know that support has to come just as much from the home setting as it does from Memphis Rise for our students to be in the best position to truly pursue success in college and life. For this reason, we ask our families to commit to the following guidelines to help us provide your student with the best education possible this year:

- 1) It is essential that our students arrive to school on time every day, and that they are in attendance whenever it is possible. We ask our families to fully commit to ensuring that students are here with us at 8:00am every morning, in their seats, ready to learn.
- 2) Our school also cares very much about its uniform policy, which is there to make sure that our students can be easily identified as a proud part of our school and show up every morning in clothes that are not a distraction to themselves or others. Every piece of our uniform is important, and is designed to be straightforward for our families to follow. Please make every effort to ensure that your student comes to school in our full and correct uniform every day, and that they have enough uniform pieces to be clean and comfortable throughout the week.
- 3) Our students will often set ambitious goals in our Advisory setting within our school that are meaningful to them outside of the school, or require support outside of the school. We ask our families to be active participants in supporting their pursuit of those goals outside of the school, whenever possible, in combination with your student's advisor and our Dean of Students.
- 4) Our school is excited to make frequent communication with each of our families on a consistent basis. Many times, we will call just to provide an update or to tell you about a success your student had during the day. Other times, we will need to call to communicate with the family about growth we want our students to make, academically or behaviorally. It is the expectation of Memphis Rise Academy that all calls are answered or returned by our families in a timely manner, no more than 24 hours after the call is placed. We will always leave a voicemail or follow up with a text if we do not get ahold of you when we call.
- 5) In the same way, families will be provided with a weekly Rise Report each Friday, and a quarterly report card every quarter. It is essential that we know these documents are being given to the family, as they are our primary methods of Family Communication. We ask that families make a concerted effort to review, sign and return these documents each time they are sent home, especially the weekly Rise Report.
- 6) Our students will have homework every night in at least one subject, often more than one. All homework is expected to be completed to the best of the student's ability by the next morning. We ask that our families take an active role in supporting our students' homework effort and completion every evening.
- 7) Our students are also expected to read 30 minutes a night, normally out of a school-provided independent reading book, but we also encourage our students to read newspapers, magazines, or online sources in combination with those books to stay up to date on the world around them. We ask our families to ensure that our students read every night to meet this goal.
- 8) There may be times when families and our school need to work together to find context and solutions for academic, disciplinary or other decisions that may happen in the school. We ask that these requests for conversations are

made with either the Head of School or Dean of Students. We are honored to share the same goal that you have for your child—success in college and life—and will conduct all conversations with families with this in mind. We ask that all families do the same. Additionally, we ask that families do not call teachers on their personal phone numbers to resolve these issues, but rather go through the administrative channels above.

- 9) Sometimes, we will have to bring our families in for a mandatory behavioral meeting, especially in the case of an In-School or Out-of-School Suspension. These meetings will be essential to setting strong, clear next steps that everyone can agree upon about your student's progress at our school. Additionally, if your student receives special education services, there will be times that our Student Supports Coordinator will need to legally conduct an IEP review with you present at the school. If any of these meetings are necessary, it is your responsibility to work with us to be present at a time that is convenient for both your schedule and the school's.
- 10) Finally, it is absolutely essential that our students are picked up at the end of each school day, on time. Our school day ends at 4:30 or 2:35, and our bus drop offs are all within forty minutes of that time at their respective stops. It is essential that our students are picked up at either our building or their bus stop in the timeliest fashion possible for their safety and security.

We ask that our families adhere to these guidelines so that we, as a school, can do everything we can on a daily basis to provide your students a truly excellent, well-rounded education. We are so excited for that opportunity and so honored by your trust. We ask that you **read our entire Student and Family Handbook** carefully to know all of our school's policies, and call our Principal Gus Connelly with any questions you may have. Additionally, it is essential that you **read and sign this Family and School Agreement of Mutual Support**. Signing this agreement lets us know that you are committed to making this school year the success that we know it can be, one in which your student will take an ambitious step towards college preparation.

Once again, we are truly honored that you have chosen Memphis Rise Academy for your child's education. We look forward to working with you this year!

With great sincerity and pride,



Gus Connelly
Middle School Principal



Jack Vuylsteke
Founder and Executive Director



Memphis Rise Academy Family and School Agreement of Mutual Support Signature Page

I, _____, the parent or guardian of _____, have read both the Student and Family Handbook, as well as this Family and School Agreement of Mutual Support, and hereby commit to adhering to the expectations and policies within each to ensure the absolute best opportunity for my student's success. I am willing to work with Memphis Rise Academy in the ways described above, as well as all others that I can, to help my child take a positive step towards college in the 2019-2020 school year.

Signed: _____

Name (printed): _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Date: _____