



# Student Handbook

**2026 - 2027**

**Dr. Ahmed White**  
**Founder and Executive Director**

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## Section 1: Introduction & Overview

Dear Students and Families,

On behalf of the entire leadership team and as the Founder and Co-Founder of The Rock Academy, we are thrilled and honored that you have chosen to join us on this transformative journey.

The Rock Academy was founded with a clear and purposeful mission: to **re-engage disconnected youth and support their success in the post-secondary pathways of their choice**. We are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and empowering environment where youth can rediscover their potential and thrive. Our motto, "**We love you, we believe in you, and there is absolutely, positively nothing you can do about it!**", reflects the unwavering dedication and love that drive everything we do.

As a student of the TRA community, you are an essential part of our shared vision. Together, we will strive to provide the resources, support, and opportunities needed for every student to achieve academic, personal, and professional success.

We look forward to working with you to create an environment where everyone—students, staff, and families—can flourish. Thank you for entrusting us with your education and growth.

Here's to a year of discovery, achievement, and excellence.

Welcome to The Rock Academy!



Dr. Ahmed White, Founder  
Executive Director

*Dr. Jamie Jenkins*

Dr. Jamie Jenkins  
Principal

## **Mission, Vision and Values**

The mission of The Rock Academy is to re-engage disconnected youth, ensuring they succeed in the post-secondary pathway of their choice.

We envision a world where all young people have the power to shape their own futures.

Our work is guided by our five core values:

1. **Humanity:** We lead with compassion - for ourselves and for others. We see the inherent value in those around us - flaws and all. We default to kindness and respect. We ask for help from others and give help generously.
2. **Belonging:** Human beings thrive in community. But in order to truly be in community, we must be seen, valued, and supported for who we are as individuals - and to extend those same commitments to the people around us. This is the true meaning of belonging. When we belong, we have the support, security and confidence to take chances, grow, and thrive.
3. **Courage:** We see our futures as endlessly hopeful when we are able to be bold, take chances, and see "failure" as a temporary source of feedback. We fall, but, more importantly, we get back up. We commit to looking in the mirror and courageously getting 1% better every day.
4. **Independence:** Rock Academy is not a place for lone wolves - we are a wolfpack. However, individually, we establish and live in alignment with our own personal values. In doing so, we learn to live with autonomy, chart our own futures, and take responsibility for our actions.
5. **Gratitude:** We commit to consciously recognizing the blessings around us - be they big or small. We actively practice gratitude by seeking opportunities to recognize and share it.

## **Non-Discrimination Notice**

At no time shall Rock Academy discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal by persons with a disability. Rock Academy shall provide equal access to appropriate programs or activities offered and other designated programs and affiliated groups. As required by law to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all students, Rock Academy will provide annual notice of TRA's discrimination complaint procedures to students, parents, and employees.

## **FERPA Notice**

Rock Academy is required to provide annual notice of [The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) and the rights it provides parents and students. The FERPA gives parents, students over 18 years of age and others certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents of eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal (or appropriate official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the MNPS Board of Public Education; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); community partners that assist MNPS with attendance, educational and social emotional needs of students; a parent or student on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official performing his or her tasks; or an attorney from the Department of Law with a legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school can disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

***Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605***

Student directory information is restricted in accordance with FERPA guidelines. If you do not want MNPS to disclose the types of information designated below as directory information from your student's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify your student's school annually either in writing or by completing the Directory Information Permission form, available in the [permissions portal](#) and the handbook forms packet or from the Family Information Center by the deadline stated for each school year.


Rock Academy has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Phone number
- Email address
- Grade level completed

### Staff Directory


Name	Role	Contact Information
<i>Dr. Ahmed White</i>	Executive Director	(615) 578-0403 <a href="mailto:awhite@therockacademynashville.org">awhite@therockacademynashville.org</a>
<i>Dr. Jamie Jenkins</i>	Principal	(615) 836-8100 <a href="mailto:jjenkins@therockacademynashville.org">jjenkins@therockacademynashville.org</a>
<i>Lekita Sims</i>	Director of Operations	(615) 569-3992 <a href="mailto:lsims@therockacademynashville.org">lsims@therockacademynashville.org</a>

# School Calendar



## Rock Academy 2026 - 2027 Calendar

*Updated February 2026*



July 2026							August 2026 [1]							September 2026 [2]						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	2	3	4						1			1	2	3	4	5	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
							30	31												

October 2026 [5]							November 2026 [6]							December 2026 [7]						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027 [8]							February 2027 [9]							March 2027 [10]						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28							28	29	30	31			
31																				

April 2027 [3]							May 2027 [4]							June 2027						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3						1			1	2	3	4	5	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
							30	31												

Quarter 1 = 42 Student Days Quarter 2 = 37 Student Days	Quarter 3 = 42 Student Days Quarter 4 = 50 Student Days	171 Student Days 7 Stockpiled PD Days
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## School Hours

Rock Academy Doors open at 9:15am for 9:30am start time.

Classes end at 4:30pm and optional afterschool programs run until 6:00pm.

## Section 2: Policies and Procedures

### Attendance

Regular attendance is critical to students' success at Rock Academy. Tennessee law requires children ages 6 through 17 to attend school. Attending school daily helps students succeed academically. Missing school not only leads to difficulties for a student academically, but also socially and emotionally.

The following qualify as excused absences:

- Student's personal illness
- Family member's illness that requires the student's temporary help
- Death in the family (up to three days)
- Deployment of a parent or guardian serving in the military (one day for deployment, one day for return and up to 10 days when the service member is on temporary leave at home)
- Head lice (up to three days per infestation)
- Recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the student's faith
- Court appearance or legally mandated meetings
- Documented college visitations (up to three days per year for juniors and seniors)
- The principal may allow the following circumstances to be considered an excused absence if the parent or guardian submits a written request:
  - Unexpected emergencies such as car problems
  - Job interview or conference
  - Doctor or dental appointments
  - Other circumstances requested in writing by the parent or guardian that the principal considers to require a student's absence

In order to document an excused absence:

- The parent or guardian of the student must send in a written note explaining why the student missed school within three days of the student's return to school after being absent.
- Because students sometimes lose notes or forget to turn them in, the parent or guardian should make sure the designated school staff in the front office has received the written excuse notes.
- The parent or guardian should keep a copy of the written excuse note for personal record.
- If a written excuse note is not turned in, the absence will be considered an unexcused absence.
- Absences will be marked on the student's attendance record as either excused or unexcused. The parent or guardian can request copies of the student's attendance record from the school's front office.

Given our mission and vision, the team at Rock Academy works diligently to keep track of student attendance and ensure that any impediments keeping students from coming to school are met with the appropriate resources. If a student is struggling with classwork and frustrated - we'll work on a

support plan. If the family is struggling with transportation - we'll work on a support plan. If there is an issue with another group of students - we'll work on a support plan. Bottom line: we want kids at school. And we want to help them build self-awareness and skills to identify impediments and seek resources to solve them. To support them in that work, Rock Academy has a robust House system and restorative culture that seeks to proactively avoid issues impacting attendance (and other factors). But in the event that a student misses one more days of school, the following steps will be taken by the Attendance Liaison, the Director of Operations, the student's mentor and/or the Principal.

Absence Threshold	Actions/ Interventions
Daily absence not excused in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school will contact guardians by call and/or text.</li> </ul>
3 Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student's family will receive an attendance notification</li> <li>• The student will have a conference with their mentor during House to attempt to problem solve</li> </ul>
5 unexcused absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance meeting between school representative and guardian</li> <li>• Attendance Improvement plan developed and shared with stakeholders</li> <li>• Truancy letter sent home</li> </ul>
7 unexcused absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance meeting between school representative and guardian</li> <li>• Attendance Improvement plan reviewed and updated</li> <li>• Truancy next steps shared with families</li> </ul>
10 unexcused absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Rock Academy is mandated by Compulsory School Attendance Law (TCA § 49-6-3001) to report a truancy concern to the Juvenile Courts.</li> <li>• The Executive Director communicates this requirement to families.</li> </ul>

### Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals

Students must attend at least 50% of the scheduled school day to be counted present.

If a student attends less than 50% of a scheduled school day, the student will be marked as absent. A written excuse note should be submitted to the front office for this to be considered an excused absence.

Students who arrive after the designated start time of school will be counted as tardy. A student who leaves prior to the end of school will be marked as early dismissal.

Students are expected to get an admit slip to class from the office staff upon arriving at school.

Students will not be released from school for early dismissal without prior approval from the parent or guardian and no students will be released within 30 minutes of dismissal.

### **Student Release**

The school will not release students to unauthorized persons. If a doubt arises regarding the relationship to the student, the teacher will check the student's file for authorized names. Families should alert the school to changes in household personnel or cases of custody and divorce, and should inform the office if these occurrences indicate a revision of names on the authorized list.

### **ID Badge Policy**

Students will be issued a school ID badge with their photo. Students will be required to bring the ID to school each day and it will be used to “swipe in” for daily and individual classroom attendance.

### **Building Movement Policy**

During class time, students should be in classrooms. If they are outside of the classroom during class hours, they must have a pass. Bathroom passes are only distributed to one per class at a time. If students require a visit to the nurse, a pass is required and a return pass is required to class. The nurse is to maintain a log of all incoming and outgoing students and must notify the main office when a student is in their office so that attendance can be reconciled accordingly.

### **Visitor Policy**

All faculty and staff members will wear an identification badge at all times while on campus. Volunteers and visitors for school activities are welcome, and for safety reasons must sign in at the office before going to the classroom and must wear an identification badge when in the building. Visitors must also check out in the office when they leave for the day.

### **School Closure Procedures, Delayed Opening, and Early Dismissal**

Rock Academy will abide by all MNPS school closure, delayed opening or early dismissal decisions in the due to inclement weather or other calamity. All extracurricular activities scheduled for those days will be canceled or postponed. The Executive Director or designee will notify and post notice to the school website, social media account. Parents and families will also be notified via the school auto dialer no later than 6:30 a.m.

If school dismisses:

- Students will be released from school only after the principal has determined that appropriate notice has been given to parents or guardians. Proper sign out and safety procedures should be implemented.
- Staff members should accompany students on the bus to ensure adult supervision is available and document safe release to an authorized adult.
- All school site staff may be released by the school principal when they are no longer needed to supervise students.

## Emergency Drills

Safety of students is our top priority. Rock Academy is vigilant in its communication with all stakeholders within the school. Exterior doors are locked at all times. To enter the school, visitors must enter through a security buzzer equipped with a camera in the front office during school hours. Throughout the school year, teachers, students, and staff participate in the following drills:

- **Secure:** Is when there is a threat in the area that is not school specific but could affect the school in which no one is allowed to transition in or out of the building. In these situations, the Metro Nashville Police Department in partnership with TRA maintains ongoing communication regarding the nature of the incident.
- **Lockdown:** This is when there is a threat of any nature that requires that all classrooms and exterior doors remain locked and no student movement within the building as the school implements its crisis response plan.
- **Shelter in Place:** This is a weather-related response in which students are kept inside the school in safe areas of the building when there is a risk of inclement weather. Students will remain in their shelter-in-place locations until the danger has passed.
- **Fire Drills:** TRA is required to conduct at least one fire drill monthly. Fire drills require full evacuation from the school.
- **Tornado Drills:** TRAs required to conduct tornado/severe storm drills twice a year. TRA has developed procedures to minimize risks to students, staff, and visitors in the event of tornadoes and severe storms.

## McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.) is a Federal law that addresses the educational needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

The McKinney-Vento Act addresses educational barriers and challenges created by homelessness by guaranteeing students experiencing homelessness the right to enroll in and attend school, and providing supports needed for school success. The law places the responsibility for ensuring the rights of homeless students on states and school districts.

McKinney-Vento eligible students have the right to:

- receive a free, appropriate public education;
- enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness;
- enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents;
- continue attending the school of origin, or enroll in the local attendance area school if attending the school of origin is not in the best interest of the student or is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth;
- receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested by the parent or guardian, or by the local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth; and
- receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to each student's need.

## Home Communication

Parents must be informed of the current curriculum, major assignments, projects, upcoming classroom/school events, extension activities to further the learning process at home and other pertinent information.

The following guidelines inform communication during the year:

- Teachers and/or Mentors will keep in close contact with parents by email, phone, or through notes home especially when there are areas of concern and when there is good news to share.
- Faculty have up to 48 hours during the work week to respond to parent questions or requests.
- Weekly class or grade level communication will be shared with families via email, a class blog, or other format as determined by teaching teams.
- TRA leadership will offer special parent information sessions during the year.

## Language Policy

We value the diverse culture at Rock Academy - including the lingual diversity. Families have the right to request an interpreter for any communication with the school. To request an interpreter, contact the Director of Student Supports or the Director of Operations.

## A Conqueror's Creed: (I'm A Conqueror)

### **I'm - Integrity**

We move with honesty, purpose, and responsibility

### **A - Audacity**

We take bold risks for success

### **C - Community**

We build each other up in pursuit of our wildest dreams

### **O - Optimistic**

We believe in our personal and collective success

### **N - No Quit**

We grind hard every day. We have goals to conquer.

### **Q - Quality**

We work for perfection, but will settle for excellence

### **U - Understanding**

We seek to understand before being understood

### **E - Evolve**

We are committed to long term change leading to success

### **R - Respectful**

We ALWAYS lead with kindness and dignity

### **O - Open-Minded**

We value and consider the ideas of others

### **R - Resilient**

We bounce back from setbacks and keep moving forward, because we understand that victory is on the horizon!

## **Dress Code**

At The Rock Academy, we believe in fostering positive self-expression while maintaining a safe and distraction-free learning environment. Although we do not require uniforms, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

### **1. Tops**

- Must be solid color. Logos may not be bigger than 2 inches (no text).
- Collars are not required. Students can wear long, short, or sleeveless tops (wide straps only). No tank tops.
- Sweaters, cardigans, or additional layers of clothing must be a solid color. Logos may not be bigger than 2 inches (no text). No winter jackets can be worn inside the building.
- No hats or raised hoodies inside the school. Headwear is only permitted for religious reasons.
- No oversized or undersized clothing allowed.
- No top longer than bottoms. Bottoms must be visible. Midriff must be covered.
- School spirit wear may be worn any day.

### **2. Bottoms**

- Pants/khakis/jeans/shorts/skirts/athletic pants must be solid color.
- Leggings (solid colors) may be worn under dress/skirts/shorts and must cover middrifts and buttocks.
- Shorts/dresses/skirts must be to fingertip length.

### **3. Shoes**

- Sneakers/tennis shoes are strongly encouraged.
- Shoes must have a closed toe. No flip flops or house shoes.

### **4. Other Prohibited Items:**

- Pajamas or sleepwear
- Biker shorts
- Logos, trademarks or images that contain references to illegal substances, obscene gestures and language, including (but not limited to) gangs, racial or ethnic slurs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and/or their paraphernalia.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology Policy**

Internet access is available to all students and staff. Access for students is for educational purposes only. Technology is integrated into the curriculum and daily lives of students to enhance learning. Students have computers and tablets available in their classrooms and we will have a 1-1 device structure.

The main objectives of our technology integration program and the technology curriculum are to foster confidence and skills in the use of the computer and computer applications, to develop student's critical and creative thinking, to stimulate and foster an interest in and understanding of

the use of technology for communication and research purposes, and to encourage students to work with a computer either independently or in cooperative situations.

Rock Academy reserves the right to intercept, access, monitor, copy, review, or download any communications or files that are sent, received, or stored on its network. Students are cautioned not to open any attachments sent from unfamiliar email addresses, and they should report all such emails to the system administrator as soon as feasible. Only software authorized by Rock Academy may be used on Rock Academy computers. The use of the internet for illegal, commercial, or unethical actions is strictly prohibited. All illegal activities such as transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. federal or state regulations are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Rock Academy computers shall not be used to access social media sites. Any form of digital or electronic bullying will be addressed. All students will sign an Internet Acceptable Use Student User Agreement prior to using the Rock Academy computers. Violations of this Policy or Contract may result in discipline, as well as referral to civil and/or criminal authorities for further legal action.

### **Cell Phone and Personal Device Policy**

**The Rock Academy is a phone-free zone during school hours (9:30AM - 5:30PM).** Students bring their Yondr pouch to secure their phones and AirPods upon arrival.

The use of additional personal technology during instructional periods is prohibited. A student who brings his/her device to school does so at his/her own risk. No searches or investigations will be conducted for lost or stolen devices. Personal technology includes, but is not limited to:

- cellular phones
- wireless earpieces
- iPods
- iPads
- other mp3 players
- calculators
- portable gaming devices

Damage to Yondr pouches or failure to comply with these rules will result in confiscation of the device. Guardians must retrieve devices from administration at the end of the school day.

### **Medications and Student Illness**

Students should never bring medication to their classroom. Each prescription medication to be administered by school personnel must be accompanied by a signed statement from the physician/parent detailing the dosage to be administered and the time for administration. The student's doctor must fill in the section stating that the medication must be administered at school. All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office. Calls to parents or guardians to verify the information in the request may be placed by school personnel.

School personnel will distribute no medication until a completed medication form is on file.

If your student has a temperature equal or above 100.5 F, please do not send him/her to school. Students must be fever-free without the use of medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. If your student has vomited in the past 24 hours, do not send them to school. If your student has or has recently had lice, they may not return to school until nits, eggs and lice are all completely gone.

If a student becomes ill during class appropriate first aid will be provided in consultation with the student's parents. A student will only be authorized to go home after parents' approval.

## **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides that no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in services, programs and activities provided by state and local government entities.

Anyone may use the informal complaint procedures to report and resolve complaints of disability discrimination. Use of the informal complaint process is not required prior to filing a grievance. A parent or guardian is encouraged to first meet and discuss the complaint with the school's 504 Coordinator, teacher or building administrator involved with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally. If the complaint is not resolved as of that meeting, or if the complainant wishes to bypass the informal complaint process, the parent or guardian may file a grievance.

Complaints of disability discrimination may be made orally or in writing to the 504 coordinator who will endeavor to accomplish prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by the ADA/Section 504. The complainant and subject of the complaint will be provided the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence. The coordinator will respond to all complaints within 20 days with a written response, as well as information on further grievance procedures that may be followed if the complaining party is not satisfied with the coordinator's proposed resolution.

If the parent or guardian wishes to appeal the decision of the 504 Coordinator, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Executive Director or his/her designee within 10 days after receipt of the coordinator's response. The Executive Director or his/her designee will meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion and respond in writing to the grievance within 15 days.

If appropriate, the school will take steps to prevent recurrence of any harassment and to correct its discriminatory effects on the student and others.

The complainant may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights at any time before or during these grievance procedures.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Act**

IDEA is a federal law that ensures services to children with disabilities. It governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services. IDEA requires schools to provide parents of a child with a disability with a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA, U.S. Department of Education regulations and Tennessee law and regulations. If you have questions regarding IDEA, email the Director of Student Supports.

Rock Academy complies with all state and federal [procedural safeguards](#) which can be found linked here.

### **Mandated Reporting**

Under Tennessee state law, any person with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected is a mandated reporter, meaning they must immediately report to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services or to local law enforcement. All TRA staff members are mandated reporters, under this law. TRA staff members are not required to discuss their suspicions with families prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the law, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. As mandated reporters, staff members cannot be held liable for reports made to the Department of Children's Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

If your child or family is in need of resources or support that are impacting your child's or family's well being, please reach out to any TRA teacher or staff member with whom you feel comfortable.

## Section 3: Academics

### Graduation Requirements

At The Rock Academy, we are committed to providing students with a rigorous, relevant, and adaptable education that aligns with Tennessee State Standards and supports mastery-based learning. All students will be prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce, with a challenging course of study that ensures academic excellence and success.

#### **Key Design Elements:**

- Rigorous Coursework: Aligned with Tennessee State Standards.
- Relevance: Materials that reflect real-world applications.
- Adaptability: Designed to support Mastery-Based Instructional Models for modern classrooms.
- 

**Graduation Requirements:** To earn a regular high school diploma, students must complete a minimum of 22 credits in the following subject areas:

Course Strand	Potential Curricula
<b>English Language Arts</b>	My Perspectives (SAVVAS) OUR Odell (Odell) StudySync (McGraw Hill)
<b>Mathematics</b>	Math Nation (Accelerate Learning) Open Up (Open Up Resources) enVision (SAVVAS)
<b>Science and Wellness</b>	Tennessee Experience Series (SAVVAS) Stemscope Science (Accelerate Learning) Tennessee Science (McGraw Hill)
<b>Social Studies</b>	McGraw Hill Pearson
<b>Finance</b>	Goodheart-Willcox CEV Publishing
<b>CTE Courses</b>	CEV Publishing EMC Publishing
<b>Remedial and/or Supplemental Courses</b>	Springpoint (Multiple Contents) Skew the Script (Mathematics) Curriculum Associates (Mathematics) iXL (Mathematics) Lexia (Literacy) Corrective Reading (Literacy) Proprietary Curriculum from Peer School Partners

Students must also complete the ACT or SAT prior to graduation, if the student was enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their eleventh (11th) grade year; and have a satisfactory record of attendance and discipline.

## Grading Policy

### Mastery-Based Approach

At Rock Academy Nashville, we implement a mastery-based approach to learning that aligns all academic content with the Tennessee Academic Standards. Our grading policy is designed to assess students equitably, focusing on their demonstrated proficiency in relation to state standards. Grades will be determined through standards-based grading of benchmarks rather than traditional grading methods

### Key Principles of Standards-Based Grading

- 1. Cumulative Grading Based on Benchmarks**
  - Students' cumulative grades will be the average of their benchmark assessments, which measure mastery of standards aligned with the curriculum and module lessons.
- 2. Use of Formative Assessments for Learning, Not Grading.**
  - Mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. Formative assessments will serve as feedback tools for students and instructional guides for teachers but will not factor into students' cumulative grades.
- 3. Separation of Academic Achievement and Behavior**
  - Academic behavior, including participation, effort, and conduct, will not be considered when assessing mastery. Grades will solely reflect academic proficiency.
- 4. Opportunities for Mastery Through Alternate Benchmarks**
  - Students who do not demonstrate mastery on an initial benchmark will have additional opportunities to be assessed on the same standard through alternate benchmarks. However, they will not retake the exact same benchmark assessment.
- 5. Transparent and Aligned Gradebook Structure**
  - Teachers' gradebooks will reflect courses, clusters of standards addressed through module sequences, and benchmark assessments.
  - Grading will be cumulative, reflecting students' demonstrated levels of mastery over time.

### Standards-Based Grading Scale

To assess mastery, we will employ a 0-4 scale:

Score	Description
4	Mastered – Student demonstrates a comprehensive and advanced understanding of the standard.

3	Proficient – Students consistently meet the expectations for proficiency on the standard.
2	Partially Proficient – Student demonstrates partial understanding and is progressing toward proficiency.
1	Developing Proficiency – Students show beginning understanding but require significant support.
0	No Evidence of Proficiency – Student has not demonstrated understanding of the standard.

### **Awarding of Credit and GPA Calculation**

- Course grades will be determined by the average of benchmark assessments taken within a grading period.
- A student’s GPA will be calculated based on final course grades, using a conversion scale aligned with mastery-based grading.
- The standards-based grading scale will be converted to a traditional letter grade using the guidance in the Uniform Grading System as outlined in State Board policy.
- Students will have opportunities to demonstrate growth, ensuring that their final grades reflect their highest level of mastery achieved.

This approach to grading ensures that all students are evaluated based on their demonstrated knowledge and skills, fostering a fair and equitable learning environment.

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

The Rock Academy upholds academic integrity, fostering scholarship, character, and responsibility. Violations of this policy will be addressed through a structured process: teachers will discuss concerns with students, document incidents, and submit referrals to the Principal. Confirmed violations result in escalating consequences—ranging from a warning and assignment redo to zeros on assignments and potential suspensions for repeated offenses. Academic dishonesty also affects eligibility for honors, including the honor roll and National Honor Society. Our goal is to instill ethical decision-making that extends beyond the classroom, ensuring student success with integrity.

### **RTI and EWS**

The Rock Academy will follow the Tennessee Department of Education’s Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) framework, ensuring that all students have access to high-quality instruction with appropriate scaffolds throughout the school day. Our approach prioritizes early intervention when students begin to struggle, aiming to prevent prolonged academic difficulties and support their long-term success. While our model does not encompass all aspects of RTI<sup>2</sup> implementation, it is

designed to provide a clear vision and expectations for its practical application, aligning closely with the framework used by MNPS (Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools).

Additionally, we will implement an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify at-risk students in grades 9-12 by analyzing multiple data sources. The EWS will focus on three core indicators:

**Attendance Indicator**

- Chronic absenteeism (missing 10% or more of instructional days)
- Patterns of tardiness

**Behavior Indicator**

- Discipline referrals and suspensions
- Behavioral patterns, including repeated classroom disruptions

**Academic Competency Indicator**

- Renaissance Star results
- Grades in core subjects
- End-of-Course (EOC) exam scores
- Achievement test data (including from grades K-8)
- Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) score projections
- ACT/SAT or other nationally normed assessments

**Additional Factors**

- Retention history
- Past RTI interventions
- Teacher observations

The intervention plans are implemented and monitored using the Response to Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) framework, which comprises three tiers of support.

**Tier I** focuses on core instruction, providing all students with high-quality, standards-based teaching. Renaissance Star will be administered three times annually, and performance data is regularly reviewed to ensure students are on track. **Tier II** provides targeted interventions in small groups for students who do not respond to Tier I strategies. These interventions are monitored every two weeks and may include specialized reading or math programs and behavioral support plans. **Tier III** offers intensive, individualized support for students who continue to struggle despite Tier II interventions. Progress is monitored weekly, and interventions may include one-on-one tutoring, wraparound services, and behavioral therapy.

By leveraging multiple sources of data, we will identify and support students at risk of academic failure, behavioral challenges, or chronic absenteeism. This comprehensive, data-driven approach will allow us to provide timely and effective interventions, ensuring that all students receive the necessary support to reach their full potential.

**Student Risk Identification & Intervention Plan**

At The Rock Academy, we are committed to proactively identifying and supporting students who may be at risk academically, behaviorally, or socially. To achieve this, we utilize a Student Risk Identification

Form and an Intervention Plan Template to ensure that students receive timely and effective interventions tailored to their needs.

### **English Language Learners**

School districts must have procedures in place to identify potential EL students accurately and in a timely manner.

All school districts use a home language survey (HLS) at the time of enrollment to gather information about a student's language background and identify students whose primary or home language is other than English. ([Tennessee State Board Rule on English as a Second Language Programs, Chapter 0520-01-19.](#))

A parent/guardian must complete an HLS when the student enrolls. An HLS should be completed only once in a student's educational career. The form must be completed in its entirety, signed and dated.

### **Students with Disabilities**

It is the responsibility of the district to seek ways to meet the unique educational needs of all children within the general education program prior to referring a child to special education. Tennessee's approach to teaching and learning is called RTI2.

Pursuant to IDEA Regulations at 34 C.F.R. §300.301(b), a parent or the school district may refer a child for an evaluation to determine if the child is a child with disability. If a student is suspected of an educational disability at any time, he or she may be referred by the student's teacher, parent, or outside sources for an initial comprehensive evaluation based on referral concerns. The team, not an individual, then determines whether it is an appropriate referral (i.e., the team has reason to suspect a disability) for an initial comprehensive evaluation. The school team must obtain informed parental consent and provide written notice of the evaluation.

Child Find is the affirmative, ongoing obligation of states and local districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities residing within the jurisdiction who are in need of special education and related services. [Learn more about Child Find.](#)

## Section 4: Culture and Discipline Policies

# Calm + Care + Courage x Connection = Conqueror

### A System Designed for Growth

Students have the opportunity to earn 16 daily points (4 per class) based on two core areas:

- **Daily Contribution** (0-2)– engagement, effort, collaboration, and respect
- **On-Track Performance** (0-2)– progress toward mastery and academic focus

Points accumulate not only for individual achievement, but also for each House and the school community as a whole. This creates a culture where students are motivated to succeed personally while contributing to something greater.

Our system is not punitive. It is designed to recognize growth, reinforce positive habits, and celebrate consistency.

### Milestones That Matter

Students and Houses earn recognition through:

- **Weekly celebrations** highlighting top contributors and most improved students
- **Monthly incentives** for consistent effort and academic progress
- **Quarterly celebrations** that reward sustained excellence, leadership, and growth

At the end of each school year, the House with the highest cumulative points earns the prestigious **Conqueror Shield**, building legacy and tradition within each graduating class.

### I. Vision and Purpose

The Rock Academy PBIS House System is designed to build a strong, unified school culture centered on mastery, accountability, belonging, and leadership.

This system is not punitive. It is designed to:

- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Celebrate growth and consistency
- Build peer accountability
- Create identity and pride
- Encourage academic mastery

- Develop leadership and community

Every point earned contributes to:

1. The individual student
2. Their House
3. The entire Rock Academy community

We do not compete against one another — we rise together as Conquerors.

## **II. The House Structure**

The Rock Academy will launch with one 9th grade cohort (85 students), divided into four Houses:

- Titans
- Predators
- Grizzlies
- Sounds

Each incoming class becomes a new “Chapter” within each House.

Example: Titans – Class of 2029 Chapter

This creates legacy, tradition, and vertical culture as grades are added annually.

## **III. The Daily Point System**

Students may earn up to 16 points per day.

Each day consists of 4 instructional blocks.

For each class period:

- 2 points – Overall Contribution  
(Engagement, participation, effort, collaboration, respect)
- 2 points – On Track  
(Prepared, on-task, assignments progressing, meeting mastery goals)

4 points per class × 4 classes = 16 maximum points per day

Points are entered daily by teachers in the student information system.

## **Interventions and Response to Student Misbehavior**

## BEHAVIOR MATRIX / DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

### Class-Level Tiered Consequences

Students are able to receive 2 Performance Points in each class each day (Possible total of 8 performance points per day - 4 classes x 2). If students do not meet expectations, they receive **tiered interventions** at the class level:

1. 100% Teacher Moves
2. Verbal Reminder
3. Cool Out Spot (Opportunity to return to the community)
4. Mentor/GROWLab Engagement (parent/teacher communication)
5. Office Referral
  - a. Parent/leader communication
  - b. Reset Conversation
  - c. Restorative action
  - d. Corrective action

### School-Level Consequences (Admin Assigned, Recorded in Powerschool)

For more significant behaviors, Admin will assign **school-level consequences**, documented in **Powerschool (PS)** with a **parent call**:

Consequence	Follow Up/Action
<b>100% Teacher Moves</b>	No Action
<b>Verbal Reminders x 2</b>	It is wise to use positive narration classwide/individually before progressing to this step.  If you must verbally remind a student 2x, deduct 1 performance point. (-1)
<b>Cool Out Spot</b>	If a student is still disruptive, have them reset in the classroom "Cool Out" Spot. (-1)  At this point, the student will lose their second point, but can earn it back if they cool out and can rejoin the class.
<b>Mentor/GROWLab Engagement</b>	<b>Teacher to communicate with parent.</b> If the student has to be sent out of the room, they automatically lose both points (-2).

	There <b>MIGHT</b> be an opportunity to earn 1 point back, but only with 100% agreement between student, teacher, and admin.
<b>Office Visit</b>	<p><b>Possible Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Parent/leader communication</li> <li>b. Reset Conversation</li> <li>c. Restorative action</li> <li>d. Corrective action</li> </ul>

- **Tier 1 Students** – Only school-level consequences are recorded in PS.
- **Tier 2/3 Students** – All behaviors (positive and negative) are recorded to track trends and ratios.
- **Leaders** enter school-level consequences in PS at the time of issuance.
- **Teachers** enter class points by end of day
- **Families** get a text/email Conquer Point alert
- **Families** get a weekly Conquer Point report each week.

As the first Opportunity Public Charter School, The Rock Academy is proud to serve Opportunity Youth, providing a restorative, trauma-sensitive environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

At the Tier 1 universal level, we emphasize:

- Teaching and reinforcing schoolwide expectations and classroom norms.
- Establishing clear and consistent consequences that maintain student dignity.
- Training staff to build positive, supportive relationships with students.
- Embedding SEL practices such as mindfulness, self-regulation strategies, and stress management into daily routines.

For students who experience repeated behavioral challenges, the S-Team process is initiated to develop Tier 2 behavior support plans tailored to their unique needs. For more complex situations, we conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA) to design a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). These plans include:

- Explicit teaching of replacement behaviors to address the root causes of maladaptive actions.
- Assigning a supportive adult Mentor to build trust and foster a sense of belonging.
- Integrating stress regulation and self-management techniques to empower students.

The Rock disciplinary team plays a vital role in designing and implementing individualized plans to address behavioral challenges. A restorative approach is at the heart of our philosophy.

Additionally, as needed, student interventions may include:

- Mentor Check Ins
- Community Conferences
- Community Service
- Parent Outreach
- Peer Mediation
- Conflict Resolution
- Restorative Circles
- Referrals for Substance Abuse Support
- Referrals to school-based or mental health clinics and/or other support services

### **Family Assistance**

At Rock Academy, we believe that a strong partnership between families and the school is essential to support students in overcoming challenges related to behavior and attendance. This Family Assistance Plan outlines the ways we collaborate with parents, foster parents, caseworkers, and other supportive individuals to create a network of accountability and care for each student.

#### 1. Open Communication and Relationship Building

- **Mentor-Family Connection:** Each student is assigned a Mentor who is responsible for building a positive and supportive relationship with their parent, foster parent, or caseworker.
- **Staff availability:** Parents are always welcome to visit the school to meet with staff and discuss their child's progress. Mentors will communicate consistently with families to share updates and address concerns as they arise.
- **Regular Updates:** Families will receive regular reports on their child's attendance, behavior, and academic progress.

#### 2. Home Meetings for Comprehensive Support

- **Team Collaboration:** Students, along with their Mentor, a staff member, and a parent or a non-Rock individual of their choice, will participate in home meetings. These meetings provide a safe and supportive environment to assess the student's progress, identify challenges, and create action plans for improvement.
- **Student-Led Discussions:** Home meetings will give students a voice in the conversation, allowing them to share their perspective and goals while receiving support from their team.

#### 3. Restorative Practices to Address Behavior

- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** When behavioral challenges arise, Mentors will work closely with families to identify the underlying causes and collaboratively develop strategies to address the behavior.

- Responsive Circles: Restorative circles may be used to repair harm and rebuild trust between the student, their peers, and the school community. Families are invited to participate in these circles when appropriate.

#### 4. Attendance Support

- Personalized Attendance Plans: For students struggling with attendance, Mentors and families will work together to create individualized plans to address barriers to consistent attendance, such as transportation or personal challenges.
- Daily Check-Ins: Mentors will check in with students daily to encourage attendance and celebrate improvements.

#### 5. Social-Emotional and Academic Support

- Resources for Families: The school will provide families with access to community resources, parenting workshops, and tools to support their child’s social-emotional development.
- Goal-Setting and Reflection: Families and students will collaborate with Mentors to set realistic goals for behavior and attendance, regularly reflecting on progress and adjusting plans as needed.

#### 6. Strengthening the School-Family Relationship

- Open Door Policy: Families are encouraged to reach out to Mentors or staff at any time to discuss concerns or seek support.
- Celebrating Success: The school will host regular events to celebrate student achievements and strengthen the connection between families and the school community.

By fostering trust, open communication, and collaboration between families and Rock Academy, this Family Assistance Plan ensures that students receive the guidance, accountability, and care they need to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

### Discipline Table

We utilize discipline policies and guidelines from Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). The table, code, and response type are directly from MNPS.

Type 1 Behaviors					
Behavior	Code	Definition	Response	High School (9-12) OSS	High School (9-12) Expulsion
Tardy to School, Bus or Class	100	Arriving late to school, bus, class or activity.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No

Noncompliance With a Reasonable Request	102	Not following the reasonable request of a teacher or staff member.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No
Agitating Other Students	103	Unwanted and/or unreciprocated picking on or bothering other students.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No
Profane or Indecent Language	104	Using profane or indecent language, such as cursing. If directed at a teacher, staff member or administrator, see Code 301.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No
Possession of Fireworks	106	Knowingly possessing fireworks. Fireworks will be confiscated and not returned.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No
Dress Code Violation	107	Wearing clothing that does not comply with the school's Standard School Attire policy or requirements for appropriate dress.	<a href="#">A</a>	No	No

<b>Type 2 Behaviors</b>					
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>High School (9-12) OSS</b>	<b>High School (9-12) Expulsion</b>
Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 1 Behaviors, With Evidence of Implemented Interventions	200	<p>Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 1 Code behaviors, with evidence of implemented interventions. The student must engage in 3 or more documented incidents of the same Type I Code (minimum of 3 within one semester before Code 200 is used). There must be evidence of multiple implemented interventions to address the Type I behavior. Interventions must be documented in the referral and in Support and Intervention.</p> <p>Schools are to use RPA's Peace Centers, Advocacy Centers, (Tier 2 behavior plan, collaborative</p>	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	No	No

		referral, behavior contract, restorative consequence, etc.) to address behavior concerns			
Non-Compliance with an Administrative Directive	201	Refusing to follow an administrative directive.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Possession of Tobacco Products	202	Possessing any tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, vapor or e-cigarettes, or chewing tobacco. All items will be confiscated and not returned. Students under 18 will be issued a citation.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Electronic Devices	203	Using a cell phone, electronic device, or the internet for non-educational purposes or without the permission of the classroom teacher or school administrator.  A teacher may withhold a student's phone from the student for the duration of the instructional time if the student's phone is a distraction to the class or the student. -TCA Title 49, Chapter 2 and Title 49, Chapter 6.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Disruption of School	204	Continuously and intentionally disrupting the classroom learning environment to the extent that the learning of other students or the routine functioning of the class is significantly impaired. The discipline referral must describe the significant impairment to the learning or routine functioning of the class.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Gambling	208	Betting on games or activities for money or things of value.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Drug Paraphernalia	210	Possessing any material used to produce or consume illegal drugs. Drug paraphernalia includes, but is not limited to, bongs, roach clips, miniature spoons and pipes used to consume illegal drugs. All	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No

		items will be confiscated and not returned.			
Cutting Class	211	While on school property, failing to attend a scheduled class or activity without authorization. If a student is not attending any classes while in the building for the entire school day for five days, truancy protocol should be triggered.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a>	No	No
Inappropriate Physical Contact With Other Students	212	Engaging in unwanted minor physical contact with another student such as pushing, bumping or touching.	<a href="#">A</a> , <a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	No	No

<b>Type 3 Behaviors</b>					
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>High School (9-12) OSS</b>	<b>High School (9-12) Expulsion</b>
Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 2 Behaviors, with Evidence of Implemented Interventions	300	<p>Repeated Violations of a pattern. The student must engage in 3 or more documented incidents of the same Type 2 Code (minimum of 3 within one semester before Code 300 is used). Must be evidence of multiple implemented interventions. Interventions must be documented in the referral and in Support and Intervention.</p> <p>Schools are to use Restorative Practices Assistant's Peace Centers, Advocacy Centers, (Tier 2 behavior plan, collaborative referral, behavior contract, restorative consequence, etc.) to address behavior concerns.</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No

Profane or Indecent Language Towards Teacher or Staff	301	Directing profane or indecent language toward a teacher, staff member or administrator.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Leaving School Grounds or Bus Without Authorization	302	Leaving school grounds without the permission of school officials. Exiting the bus at an unauthorized stop or jumping from exit doors or windows.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Vandalism Under \$1000	304	Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is less than \$1000. A child's willingness to repair property damaged or to make restitution will be taken into account in determining appropriate level of response.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Theft Under \$1000	305	Taking the property of another individual or the school without permission, with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property taken is under \$1000. A child's willingness to return or replace item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Falsifying School Records	306	Falsifying or altering school records, including, but not limited to, written, electronic or digital school records. This does not include cheating.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a>	Yes	No
Inappropriate Sexual Behavior	307	Engaging in mutual activity of a sexual nature that does not meet the criteria of harassment or sexual assault. First offense for sexual intercourse should range between 1-3 days of OSS including a Restorative Conference with guardians upon returning to school.  *A referral to DCS will be made.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Indecent Exposure	308	Intentionally exposing body parts generally considered private. For	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No

		shirts exposing cleavage, use Code 107 (Dress Code).			
Offensive Touching	309	Engaging in unwanted or offensive touching of areas generally considered private.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Instigating/Inciting	310	Initiating or encouraging someone else to engage in behavior(s) that lead to disruption of the school environment.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Fighting	311	Mutual participation in an incident involving physical contact (e.g., slapping, closed fists, pulling hair, kicking, biting).	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Alcohol or Drug-Like Substance: Use or Possession, Under the Influence	312	Possessing, using or being under the influence of substances that have the potential to intoxicate. A collaborative referral may be required. Students violating this code are not eligible for the First Time Drug Offender Program.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Threats, Class 1	313	A threat to cause harm to students, staff or school in which no plan exists to carry out the threat. The threat must be one that would cause a person to reasonably fear bodily injury. A Building Level Threat Assessment must be completed.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Possession of a Non-Lethal Weapon or Replica of a Lethal Weapon	314	Possessing a non-lethal weapon, including but not limited to weapon replica, stun gun, BB gun, air gun, air soft gun, pellet gun, cap gun, Orbitz gun, realistic toy gun, etc. Water guns are excluded, but not encouraged to have on school campus.	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Inappropriate Use of Electronic Devices	315	Viewing or distribution of sexually explicit images/videos and/or fights (i.e., air drop, social media post, etc.)  If a student's rights are perceived to be violated, this may rise to the level of a Title IX	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No

		<p>investigation/incident. and standard Title IX procedures should be followed.</p> <p>A teacher may withhold a student's phone from the student for the duration of the instructional time if the student's phone is a distraction to the class or the student.</p> <p>-TCA Title 49, Chapter 2 and Title 49, Chapter 6</p>			
Possession of Other Weapons	317	<p>Possessing an instrument capable of causing serious bodily injury, including but not limited to ammunition, knife, taser, and/or pepper spray. Weapons will be confiscated and turned over to the appropriate authorities.</p> <p>Use of taser and/or pepper spray may result in higher level codes (i.e. 413 – Extreme Disruption or 420 – Reckless Endangerment)</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Trespassing on School Grounds	318	<p>Entering and remaining on school property or during school-sponsored activities without authorization. Parents will be called. If a student remains on campus, law enforcement may be contacted.</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a>	Yes	No
Inappropriate Physical Contact Toward School Staff	319	<p>Engaging in intentional physical contact with MNPS staff that does not rise to the level of bodily injury.</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Gang Activity: Recruitment, Display or Possession of Symbols or Paraphernalia	320	<p>Displaying gang symbols, gang paraphernalia or participating in the recruitment/initiation of a student into a gang (violent or disruptive group).</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No
Use of Tobacco Products	321	<p>Using any tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, vapor or e-cigarettes, or chewing tobacco. For the first offense, a B response</p>	<a href="#">B</a> , <a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	No

		will be used. All items will be confiscated and not returned. Students under 18 will be issued a citation.			
Noncompliance With an Assigned Disciplinary Response	322	Repeatedly refusing to comply with an assigned disciplinary response (i.e. failure to report to ISS, Saturday School, R.E.S.E.T.).	<a href="#">B, C, T</a>	Yes	No

<b>Type 4 Behaviors</b>					
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>High School (9-12) OSS</b>	<b>High School (9-12) Expulsion</b>
Harassment of School Staff	400	Repeated incidents of intentional verbal, electronic, sexual, or physical harassment or intimidation directed at teachers, administrators or school staff. Documentation of incidents must be included in the referral.	<a href="#">C, D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Assault of a Student	401	Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly committing an unprovoked physical attack on another student. Minor physical contact, such as pushing or shoving, does not constitute assault. Students may not receive the same disciplinary consequences for their involvement in an altercation if the school administrator determines they acted in self-defense to protect themselves from physical harm (TCA 49-6-3401).  Response E may be used if the assault or the resulting injuries are severe. When response E is used, evidence documenting the incident's severity and any resulting injuries must be included in the discipline referral.	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes

Under the Influence of Illegal Drugs and/or Controlled Substance	402	<p>Being under the influence of any illegal drug(s) and/or a controlled substance not authorized for use by the student (e.g., prescription medicine) while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.</p> <p>1st offense: Mandatory collaborative referral for substance abuse will be made for any student found in violation of this code and up to 3 days suspension for high school.</p> <p>2nd offense: Required to attend First Time Drug Offenders Program (FTDOP) or Counseling and up to 5 days suspension for high school. If a student does not attend, the student is expelled.</p> <p>3rd offense: Level E response option</p>	<a href="#">C, D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Threats, Class 2	403	<p>A threat to cause harm to students, staff or to a school.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The threat must be verbal or written and include a detailed plan.</li> <li>2. Evidence must support that the threat is actually or potentially harmful or lethal to the safety of other students or staff in the student's school.</li> <li>3. A Threat Assessment, Building or District Level, must be completed within 3 school days from when school administrators are made aware to determine appropriate safety measures and support.</li> </ol> <p>A District Level Threat Assessment can be conducted with approval and/or at the</p>	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes

		discretion of the Chief Officer of Student Services.			
Threats by Electronic Transmission	404	<p>A student who transmits, by an electronic device, a credible threat:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee</li> <li>2. Creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention.</li> <li>3. A Threat Assessment, Building or District Level, must be completed within 3 school days from when school administrator is made aware to determine appropriate safety measures and support.</li> </ol> <p>A District Level Threat Assessment can be conducted with approval and/or at the discretion of the Chief Officer of Student Services.</p>	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Bullying	405	<p>Any intentional act that is severe, persistent or pervasive and substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, and has the effect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property</li> <li>Knowingly placing a student(s) in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property</li> <li>Causing emotional distress to a student(s)</li> <li>Creating a hostile educational environment</li> </ul> <p>Bullying incidents must be reviewed for civil rights violations. If bullying is repeated over time and persists after</p>	<a href="#">C, D, E</a>	Yes	Yes

		<p>documented administrative intervention, expulsion may result.</p> <p>Hazing is an intentional or reckless act on or off MNPS property, by one student acting alone or with others, directed against any other student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student, or that induces or coerces a student to endanger that student's mental or physical health or safety. Hazing does not include physical contact associated with athletic events, training or with competition conducted under a coach's or sponsor's supervision.</p>			
Cyberbullying	406	Using technology, including, but not limited to email, cell phones, voicemails, texts, photos, video messages, instant messaging, defamatory websites, social networking sites, online personal polling sites or journals to bully another student. See the definition of bullying above.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes

**Harassment**

Based on a student's real or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, disability or ancestry.

Harassment is misconduct that:

1. May be perceived or described as bullying, hazing, or cyberbullying, discrimination or intimidation
2. Is based on a student's real or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or ancestry, and
3. Creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to interfere or limit a student's ability to participate in school services, activities, or opportunities. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Includes codes: 407, 408, 409.

Based on a student's real or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or appearance.

Harassment is misconduct that:

1. May be perceived or described as bullying, hazing, or cyberbullying, discrimination or intimidation
2. Is based on a student's real or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or appearance; and
3. Creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive and objectively unreasonable to interfere or limit a student's ability to participate in school services, activities, or opportunities. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Includes codes: 410, 411.

<b>Type 4 Behaviors, continued</b>					
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>High School (9-12) OSS</b>	<b>High School (9-12) Expulsion</b>
Harassment Based on Race, Color or National Origin	407	See definition above.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Harassment Based on Religion or Creed	408	See definition above.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Harassment Based on Gender, Gender-Identity or Sexual Orientation	409	See definition above.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Harassment Based on Disability	410	See definition above.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Sexual Harassment	411	See definition above. This code should not be used outside of the formal investigation process. Contact your Executive Director and Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Civil Rights Compliance Officer prior to issuing any discipline consequence (including the two- day summary suspension option).	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Assault of a Teacher or Staff	412	Any act, intentional or unintentional, that causes or has the potential to cause physical injury to a teacher or school staff.	<a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a> , <a href="#">T</a>	Yes	Yes

		An assault is more than incidental contact. Pushing or bumping a bus driver while the bus is operating constitutes assault of staff.			
Extreme Disruption of the School Environment or Bus	413	Disrupting the school environment or bus to the extent that the safety of other students is at risk. The discipline referral must include evidence of actual disruption and actual risk of harm. Starting a fire or igniting fireworks constitutes extreme disruption. Using technology to access and alter student records or electronically tampering with MNPS technology systems and services (including but not limited to electronic records, databases, networks, and cloud services) in a manner that impairs normal school functioning constitutes extreme disruption.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Group Fighting	414	Three or more students engaging in a physical altercation. The altercation may include more students against a few students or multiple one on one fights.	<a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Same Type 3 Behaviors, with Evidence of Implemented Interventions	415	Repeated Violations of a Pattern. The student must engage in 3 or more documented incidents of the same Type 3 Code (minimum of 3 within one semester before Code 415 is used). There must be evidence of multiple implemented interventions in which one must include an informal hearing to address the same Type 3 Code. Interventions must be documented in the referral and in Support and Intervention.	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Gang Intimidation	416	A gang-involved student behaving in a way that would reasonably	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes

		be expected to cause physical injury to any person. Evidence must be provided in the referral showing that a student is gang-involved and intimidation is gang-related.			
Off Campus Behavior: For a felony charge under T.C.A 49-6-3051(b) OR An act committed against a member of the student's school community that poses a threat to the safety of the school	417	<p>Students may be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus behavior when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The student's behavior results in a felony charge under T.C.A. 49-6-3051(b): murder, rape, aggravated robbery, kidnapping, aggravated assault, felony reckless endangerment and aggravated sexual battery and the student poses a threat to the safety of other students or staff.</li> <li>2. When a student commits an act against a member of the student's school community that poses a threat to the safety of other students or school staff in the student's school.</li> <li>3. A Threat Assessment, Building or District Level, must be completed within 3 school days from when school administrators are made aware of the threat to determine appropriate safety measures and support.</li> </ol> <p>A District Level Threat Assessment can be conducted with the approval and/or at the discretion of the Chief Officer of Student Services.</p>	<a href="#">C</a> , <a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes
Sexual Assault	418	Unwanted sexual contact with the use of force against a person's will or when the victim is unable to give consent that poses	<a href="#">D</a> , <a href="#">E</a>	Yes	Yes

		<p>physical, emotional or psychological distress or injury upon the victim.</p> <p>This code should not be used outside of the formal investigation process. Contact your Executive Director and Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Civil Rights Compliance Officer prior to issuing any discipline consequence (including the two- day summary suspension option).</p>			
Robbery	419	Intentionally or knowingly taking the property of another person by use of violence or with the use of a weapon.	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Reckless Endangerment	420	A reckless action in which the behavior causes serious injury or may potentially cause serious injury. The potential harm must be foreseeable by a reasonable person.	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Vandalism Over \$1000	423	Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is over \$1000. A child's willingness to repair the damage or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Theft Over \$1000	424	Taking the property of another individual or of the school without permission with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property is over \$1000. A child's willingness to return or replace an item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.	<a href="#">D, E</a>	Yes	Yes
Refusing or Fleeing Drug or Weapon Search	425	A student who refuses to submit to a drug or weapon search when	<a href="#">C, D, E</a>	Yes	Yes

		requested is in violation of this code. Reasonable suspicion of drugs or firearms must exist for expulsion. A student violating this code is not eligible for the First Time Drug Offenders Program.			
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**Type 5 Behaviors**

Behavior	Code	Definition	Response	High School (9-12) OSS	High School (9-12) Expulsion
Rape	501	Committing oral, anal or vaginal penetration with use of force, against a person's will or when the victim is unable to give consent.	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes
Attempted Homicide	502	Attempting to kill another person.	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes
Homicide	503	Killing another person.	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes
Drugs	505 (ZT)	<p>Unlawful possession, use or distribution of drugs on school grounds, including any controlled substance or legend drug (prescription drug). Distribution of drugs is defined as the intentional transfer of any prohibited drug for money or other benefit.</p> <p>A collaborative referral for substance abuse will be made for any student found in violation of this code.</p> <p>If it is the student's first offense under unlawful possession and use, not distribution, of drugs, the student qualifies for the First Time Drug Offender program.</p> <p>After completion of the 1st Time Drug Offender program, a 30-day follow</p>	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes

		<p>up with parent and student to determine what additional services were offered and whether the student/parent participated/completed the services/support provided.</p> <p>MNPS defines distribution based on possession as the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possession of 1 or more ounces of any controlled substance and/or legend drug (prescription).</li> <li>2. Possession of 3 or more vapes containing a controlled substance.</li> <li>3. Possession of 3 or more items containing illicit substances (e.g., edibles, bags of chips, gummies, etc.).</li> </ol>			
Aggravated Assault of Teacher, School Staff or a School Resource Officer (SRO)	506 (ZT)	<p>Intentionally or knowingly</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Causing serious bodily injury or</li> <li>2. Committing an assault with a deadly weapon of a teacher, school staff, or SRO.</li> </ol> <p>"Serious bodily injury" is an injury that requires more than basic first aid. A "deadly weapon" is a weapon, such as a firearm or knife, that is designed to inflict serious bodily injury.</p>	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes
Explosives	507 (ZT)	<p>Possession of any destructive device, which includes any explosive, incendiary device or poison gas, including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices. Possession of fireworks altered or modified to constitute an explosive may be considered a Zero Tolerance offense only if the altered fireworks are identified as an explosive by law enforcement</p>	<a href="#">E</a>	No	Yes

		officials. Fireworks are not considered an explosive.			
Firearm	508 (ZT)	Possession of a firearm or bringing a firearm to school. This includes, but is not limited to, handguns, rifles and shotguns. As required by state and federal law, any student who brings a weapon to school will be referred to law enforcement.	<u>E</u>	No	Yes
Threats, Class 3	509 (ZT)	Threatens mass violence on school property or a school or district sponsored event. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The threat must be verbal or written and, if implemented, would have the potential to cause serious bodily injury.</li> <li>2. Evidence must support that the threat is a valid threat.</li> <li>3. A Threat Assessment, building or district level, must be completed within three (3) school days from when administrators are made aware to determine appropriate safety measures and support.</li> </ol> The district level Threat Assessment can be conducted with approval and/or at the discretion of the Chief Officer of Student Support Services.	<u>E</u>	No	Yes

**Zero Tolerance Offenses**

A Zero Tolerance (ZT) Offense requires an expulsion of not less than one calendar year (180 school days) under Tennessee State Law. However, the director of schools or the designee may modify the length of the expulsion on a case-by-case basis through the appeals process or through a request for modification. The following are Zero Tolerance offenses under Tennessee Law.

**Behavior Responses**

The Rock’s commitment to PBIS and Restorative Practices, as well as our overall commitment to fostering belonging, flexibility and relevance in all we do is an attempt, in part, to minimize

maladaptive behaviors. In the instances where these strategies do not result in the desired changes, we will utilize the behavior responses outlined by MNPS indicated in the discipline chart above

**LEVEL A: TEACHER, STUDENT, PARENT, SCHOOL STAFF**

1. All relevant stakeholders (the teacher, student(s), or any other adult) involved in the behavior incident share their perspectives on what happened and how they were impacted. The intent is to achieve resolution through mutual understanding and respect. Classroom expectations should be discussed and reiterated at this time.
2. The teacher will check-in with the student periodically to ensure the relationship has been restored and to encourage continual relationship building
3. Parent(s) should be notified to:
  - a. Alert them of the infraction
  - b. Get parental perspective on solutions (parent voice)
  - c. Share the outcome of the restorative intervention
  - d. To encourage at home support for the identified classroom expectation
  - e. To discuss, if necessary, the need for additional supports for the student (ex: social worker, S-Team, 504 Team, restorative assistant, counselor, psychologist or cluster support team). Additional support may also be needed to support the classroom environment and/or teacher.
4. Interventions will be documented.

**LEVEL B: ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRAL**

1. The administrator will hear the student's side of the story and provide an opportunity to write a statement.
2. The administrator will provide the student an opportunity to right the wrong and repair the harm.
3. A plan will be created to support the student's needs through providing interventions and support. Staff determines whether to involve a school social worker, nurse, school guidance counselor, psychologist, behavioral analyst, S-Team, 504 Team, IEP Team, or cluster support team. If school-based resources are unable to address the student's needs, a collaborative referral is created.
4. All interventions should be documented and provided to the parent or guardian.
5. If necessary, the administrator will have a conversation with the parent or guardian to discuss the student's needs and how to best support the student.

**LEVEL C: SUSPENSION OPTION**

1. Steps one through five are repeated from Level B.
2. If necessary, administrators may send high school students ISS or comparable services for one to three days OR one to three days of Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS), not to exceed a total of three days.
3. A formal restorative conference must occur upon return from suspension with all necessary parties to establish or modify the student's Plan of Support. Restorative conferences/re-entry meetings must be documented in Support & Intervention (S&I).

Parents/guardians, student, teacher(s), relevant support staff and community support must be invited.

#### **LEVEL D: SUSPENSION OPTION**

1. Same as Level C, except that administrator may:
2. ...give ISS or comparable services for one to three days and/or OSS for one to five days if necessary. The combination of ISS and OSS may not exceed a total of five days for high school students.  
Code 414 ONLY - Group Fight violations, up to a 10 day suspension option may be used in lieu of expulsion for high school students.
3. When choosing a higher-level response within the range of possible responses, an administrator must consider:
  - a. The student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior intervention history.
  - b. The student's willingness to repair the harm.
  - c. The seriousness of the act.
  - d. The harm caused or the potential to cause harm, including any injuries caused.
  - e. The extent of actual disruption to the learning environment.
4. Upon return from suspension, a restorative conference must occur and a collaborative referral must be made. A plan of support for the student must be created.

#### **LEVEL E: EXPULSION OPTION**

1. Same as level D.
2. Expulsion Documentation: All interventions utilized prior to expulsion must be clearly documented. All reasons for expelling a student rather than using a lower level of response must be clearly detailed.
3. Upon return from expulsion, a formal restorative conference must be held with appropriate individuals including parent/guardian, student, teacher(s), relevant support staff and community supports.

Expulsion is a measure of last resort. Prior to expulsion, all of the following factors must be considered:

- the student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior intervention history
- the student's willingness to repair the harm
- the seriousness of the act
- the harm caused or the potential to cause harm, including any injuries caused
- the extent of actual disruption to the learning environment
- whether the act was intentional.

Zero Tolerance Offenses as defined by state law require a level E response. All Zero Tolerance offenses require a mandatory expulsion of 180 school days.

#### **Disciplinary Due Process for Suspensions and Expulsions\***

The Rock Academy shall maintain compliance with LEA policies and procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a student discipline policy/code of conduct violation.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) violates school rules or district policies outlined in this handbook, he or she will be disciplined in accordance with district policy and state and federal laws that govern Special Education, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). If a student is suspended for an accumulated 10 days, the student's Individualized Educational Program team (IEP-team) will convene to determine if the behavior displayed is a manifestation of the student's disability. For more information contact your student's school or [review Tennessee's Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#).

If a student has not been determined eligible for special education and related services and violates a code of student conduct, but the school district had knowledge (as determined below) before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred that the student was a child with a disability, then the student may assert any of the protections described in this notice.

Basis of knowledge for disciplinary matters: a school district must be deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if, before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the student that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
- The parent requested an evaluation related to eligibility for special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA; or
- The student's teacher, or other school district personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the school district's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel of the school district.
- A school district would not be deemed to have such knowledge if:
- The student's parent has not allowed an evaluation of the student or refused special education services; or
- The student has been evaluated and determined to not be a student with disability under Part B of the IDEA.

### **Safe Harbor Provision**

A student may approach a school official and voluntarily surrender an object, the possession of which is prohibited by these rules, provided the object is one that the student could lawfully possess off school grounds (such as a pocket knife) and is not a firearm. This safe harbor provision does not apply if a search is in progress at the school.

If a student approaches a school official and voluntarily surrenders such an object, then the student will not be subject to any disciplinary action under these rules. The principal will make arrangements to return the object to the student's parents or legal guardian, when applicable.

If a student discovers an illegal item such as drugs, a weapon or other contraband (e.g. tobacco, alcohol) on school property, or a school bus, or at a school bus stop, the student may approach a school official and report the discovery. A student will not automatically be in violation of school codes by solely making such a report.

School officials will use discretion in determining whether the circumstances surrounding the report warrant further investigation of the reporting student.

## **Searches and Seizures**

Searches and seizures are conducted in accordance with [Tennessee Code](#) as part of the School Security Act of 1981.

### **1. Lockers and Other Storage Areas**

- Lockers and other storage areas are the property of MNPS and are subject to search.
- The search will be conducted by the principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.
- There should be reasonable suspicion for school authorities to investigate that the student(s) or visitor(s) possess(es) an item, the possession of which constitutes a crime or school rule violation. Reasonable suspicion is defined as circumstances based on statements or facts that would lead a person of ordinary care and prudence to believe and consciously entertain an honest and strong suspicion that a person or persons have done a specific act.
- If circumstances in a particular school dictate, either a general or random search of lockers or other school property accessible to students may be conducted.
- A notice will be posted at all schools that lockers and other storage areas, containers and packages brought into the school by students or visitors are subject to search for drugs, drug paraphernalia and weapons.

### **2. Students' and Visitors' Vehicles**

The following procedures apply to the search of students' or visitors' vehicles located or parked on school property. The search will be conducted by the school principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.

- There should be reasonable suspicion for school authorities to investigate that the vehicle contains weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia or other illicit items. Reasonable suspicion is defined as circumstances based on statements or facts that would lead a person of ordinary care and prudence to believe and consciously entertain an honest and strong suspicion that a person or persons have done a specific act.
- If circumstances dictate, either a general or random search of vehicles may be conducted.
- A notice will be posted at all school properties indicating that vehicles located or parked on school property are subject to search.

### **3. Search of a Student**

The following procedures apply to the search of a student for items in the student's immediate possession. The search will be conducted by the principal or his/her designee in the presence of an adult witness.

The search will be conducted in private and in the presence of an adult witness. In situations where there is an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of students and staff, and in the school official's judgment the immediate control of the student and item(s) that are subject of the search is necessary, a search may be conducted in a non-private setting and without an adult witness, provided all of the requirements of reasonableness above are met.

### **4. Item(s) Discovered and/or Seized in the Course of Searches Conducted on School Facilities**

The following procedures apply to item(s) discovered and/or seized in the course of searches conducted on school facilities. Any item reasonably felt to necessitate criminal prosecution will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

School authorities may seize any item reasonably felt to be a threat to the safety of others or is used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

NOTE: State law permits school officials to make use of metal detectors or other devices, as well as dogs trained to detect drugs or weapons, to assist in the discovery of weapons and drugs on school properties. Any contraband (such as knives, night sticks, gang-related paraphernalia, etc.) confiscated during searches or turned into school staff will be stored at MNPS' Security Office for 60 days. After 60 days, unclaimed items will be discarded or destroyed.

### **Threat Assessment**

There may be times when a student makes a written, verbal or electronic threat that might involve a specific, credible plan to cause harm to students, staff or school. In these instances, a Threat Assessment team may convene and proceed to:

- Assess threats of potentially harmful or lethal behavior
- Determine the level of concern and action required
- Organize school and community resources and strategies
- Manage situations involving students that pose threats to others
- Help to maintain a sense of psychological safety within the climate of the school community

### **Due Process Rights**

Disciplinary action will be initiated at the school level. The principal/designee will investigate a student's alleged misconduct and determine whether disciplinary action is necessary. The principal/designee will provide due process by explaining the school's view of the offense, the information gathered during the investigation, and the length of the suspension/expulsion or other behavioral intervention as determined by the principal. The principal/designee will allow the student to explain his/her side or view of the offense.

If the principal/designee has knowledge of any serious student misconduct, the principal/designee may immediately remove the student to restore order, to further investigate the misconduct or to protect persons on the school grounds. The principal/designee may suspend the student immediately for a maximum of two days (summary suspension). If it is determined that disciplinary action is not warranted, the incident will be deleted and the suspension days will be changed to excused absences.

Upon suspension of any student other than for in-school suspension of one day or less, the principal/designee will, within 24 hours, notify the parent or guardian. If the parents are unable to come for their student, the student must remain on school property until the close of the school day. Parents should be provided written notice of the suspension or expulsion.

If a suspension is for five or more days, the principal will develop and implement a plan for improving the behavior which will be made available for review by the director of schools upon request. The student will be provided the opportunity to make up missed work at the discretion of the principal/designee.

An expulsion is defined as a suspension of more than 10 days. On the same date the principal/designee makes the decision to expel a student, the principal/designee must immediately give written or actual notice to the student, the student's parents and the Discipline Office of Support Services of the expulsion and the parent or guardian of their right to appeal the expulsion. In the event actual notice is given, a written notice of the alleged misconduct will be provided in a timely manner and will include the rule allegedly violated and a brief description of the misconduct. Parents and students must also receive the information related to their right to appeal an expulsion.

A written notice will also include the name and contact information for the discipline director as well as the requirement to contact the discipline director within five days of actual or written notice of expulsion to request an appeal of the expulsion. Translation and Interpretation services are available for families during the appeal process.

If a student has received an expulsion (suspension of more than 10 days), the parent or legal guardian may contact the Executive Director for further questions. Prior to any appeal hearing, but at no time later than 15 minutes before the appeal hearing begins, the parent/ guardian will provide copies of all written evidence that the parent or guardian will introduce at the hearing. Requests on behalf of students for copies of evidence prior to the date of the appeal hearing must be made to the Executive Director and will be granted if practical. Any records provided prior to the date of the hearing may be supplemented on the day of the appeal hearing. Evidence that is protected by FERPA, such as the identity of third party student witnesses, cannot be released by the school.

Suspended or expelled students are not allowed to be on any school property or participate in any MNPS school-sponsored activity/event (for example, graduations, athletic events, etc.). If a student is suspended on an instructional day that is cancelled because of inclement weather, any scheduled suspension days must be made up on the days following the inclement weather days.

If school is dismissed for inclement weather or extenuating circumstances during a student's suspension, any days beyond 10 consecutive days of dismissal from school will count as part of the student's suspension. If school is dismissed for inclement weather or extenuating circumstances during a student's expulsion/remandment, any dismissed days of school will count toward satisfying the student's expulsion/remandment.

See more: TCA 49-6-3401 (b)

### **Process for Expulsions and Appeals**

For a suspension of more than 10 days there are three levels of appeals:

- Level 1 is to the Hearing Authority
- Level 2 is to the executive director of Student Support Services/designee
- Level 3 is to the Board of Directors

Upon making a decision to expel a student, the principal/ assistant principal or dean will immediately give written or actual notice to the parent/guardian and the student of the right to appeal the decision to expel (suspend for more than 10 days). The decision from the Level 1 or Level 2 appeals may affirm the decision of the principal, order removal of the suspension unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable, assign the student to an alternative program or suspend/expel the student for a specified period of time. Expulsions for Zero Tolerance (ZT ) offenses may only be modified by the executive director on a case-by-case basis.

All appeals of disciplinary decisions associated with expulsion (suspension of more than 10 days) must be filed, orally or in writing, within five days of written or actual notice of the decision to expel. If the appeal is not filed within five days, the right to appeal is waived. Notice of the parent or guardian's intent to have legal representation must be given to the at the time the appeal is requested, to allow for the school to also have legal representation. Each appeal hearing is recorded.

#### **LEVEL 1 - Appeal to the Executive Director**

The appeal from this decision will be to a disciplinary hearing authority and the director of discipline appointed by the Board of Education. The hearing will be held no later than 10 days after the beginning of the expulsion (suspension of more than 10 days). The Executive Director will give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the person requesting the appeal and the principal or principal designee who ordered the expulsion. Failure to attend this appeal may constitute a waiver of the student's/parent's right to appeal. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the discipline director.

A written record of the proceedings, including a summary of the facts and the reasons supporting the decision, will be made by the disciplinary hearing authority.

#### **LEVEL 2 - Appeal to the Director of Student Support Services/Designee**

A Level 2 appeal may be requested based on the following reasons:

- Parent/student believes due process rights have been violated.

- New evidence will be presented that was not presented at the Level 1 appeal hearing.

A request for a Level II appeal must be submitted in writing with the reason for the request and the evidence to support the request to the Discipline Office. Once received, the Director of Student Support Services/Designee will review the evidence provided and may grant or deny the request. The Director of Student Support Services/Designee will respond to the request with his/her decision within a reasonable time, which will not exceed ten (10) calendar days from receipt of the request. The Director of Student Support Services is not required to explain the decision.

### **LEVEL 3 - Appeal to the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors may grant or deny a request for a board hearing and may affirm or overturn the decision with or without a hearing before the board.

See more: TCA 49-6-3401(4) (B-D)

### **Appeal process for Zero Tolerance offenses**

The appeal from this decision will be to the Executive Director. The hearing will be held no later than 10 days after the beginning of the expulsion (suspension of more than 10 days). The Executive Director will give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the person requesting the appeal and the principal or designee who ordered the expulsion. Failure to attend this appeal may constitute a waiver of the student's/parent's right to appeal.

If the parent or guardian, or student, wishes to appeal an expulsion of more than ten (10) days for a zero-tolerance offense, a written request for an appeal must be made within five (5) days of receipt of the "Notice of Expulsion of More Than Ten (10) School Days." (TCA 49-6-3401 (C)). The suspending school is represented by the principal or designee. This representative explains the incident, including the facts discovered and the terms of the expulsion. Attendance, cumulative file (grades and transcripts), records, and any special information shall be brought to the appeal to address questions that may be asked by the discipline director or designee. The student has the right to explain his/her account of the behavior that led to the expulsion.

The Executive Director may affirm the decision of the principal or order removal of the expulsion. A written notification of the decision shall be sent within ten (10) school days via certified mail.

## **Section 5: Charter Authorizer**

### **Charter School Authorizer**

This school is a charter school authorized by the *Tennessee Public Charter School Commission*, which serves as the overseeing school district. This document provides important contact information for the school district as well as a link to school district resources and information for parents and students.

### **General Contact Information:**

Tennessee Public Charter School Commission  
500 James Robertson Parkway, 8th Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243  
Main Phone: (615) 532-6245

Email: [Charter.Commission@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Commission@tn.gov)  
[Charter Commission Website](#)

The Tennessee Public Charter School Commission has school district policies and procedures that apply to all of its schools. These policies and procedures, along with additional information about the school district and its schools are located on its website.

***Tennessee Public Charter School Commission District Staff:***

**Executive Director:** Tess Stovall (Tess.Stovall@tn.gov)

**General Counsel:** Ashley Thomas (Ashley.Thomas2@tn.gov)

**Director of External Affairs:** Hayden Pendergrass (Hayden.Pendergrass@tn.gov)

**Director of Finance and Operations:** Melanie Harrell (Melanie.Harrell@tn.gov)

**Director of School Programs and Supports:** Maggie Stampley (Maggie.Stampley@tn.gov)

**Exceptional Education Coordinator:** Katie Bridges (Katie.Bridges@tn.gov)

**District Migrant, Homeless, Foster Care Liaison:** Claire Seguin (Claire.Seguin@tn.gov)

**English Learner Program Coordinator:** John Bowyer (John.Bowyer@tn.gov)

# Handbook Acknowledgement Assurance

## Student Handbook Signature of Receipt

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge receipt of The Rock Academy Student Handbook. I have read and understand The Rock Academy Student Handbook and Discipline Policy. I understand that I have the right to keep a copy of this document for my records and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined within. As a student, I agree to uphold the mission and values of The Rock Academy, govern myself in accordance with the policies in the student handbook, and to contribute to its supportive and empowering environment. As a parent, I agree to abide by and hold my child accountable to the mission and values of The Rock Academy and to contribute to its supportive and empowering environment.

Students Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Media Release Consent

I, \_\_\_\_\_, grant permission to The Rock Academy to use my name, image, and likeness in photographs, videos, and other media for educational and promotional purposes. I understand that these materials may be used in publications, presentations, websites, and social media platforms associated with The Rock Academy.

I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product or the use to which it may be applied. I release The Rock Academy, its staff, and affiliates from any liability arising from the use of these materials.

### Check One:

I give my consent.

I do not give my consent.

Students Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_