

MASON

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



Student and Family Handbook

2019-2020

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“A trained mind gains freedom.”

MISSION STATEMENT

MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL is committed to the education of the whole child in preparation for secondary education through the cultivation of respect, integrity, and personal responsibility within a nurturing environment that results in a productive citizen of a global community.

ALMA MATER

*We praise thee, **Mason Prep School**
Of thy name we sing.
In love and devotion
Our proud anthems ring.
We honor, we cherish
The white, blue, and gold,
The freedom award,
And the flag we unfold.
As we walk down the pathway
Of knowledge and truth,
We will ever remember
The school of our youth.
We hail thee **Mason Prep School**,
And to thee we raise
This hymn to thy glory,
This song in thy praise.*

****DISCLAIMER****

**THIS STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK 2019-2020 IS NOT A CONTRACT,
EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED.**

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MASON

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



August 7, 2019

Dear Parents and Students:

This is the Student and Family Handbook for the 2019-2020 school year. It is revised annually and must be read in its entirety. **Information that has been added to the Handbook this year has been highlighted in yellow.** The purpose of this Handbook is to provide information for both students and parents regarding all aspects of our school. If you have questions that cannot be answered by this Handbook, please refer your question to the Main Office. In addition, should you find information herein that conflicts with written policy or procedures provided elsewhere, please bring it to the attention of the Office as soon as possible. Parents can always access the handbook via the Parent Resources page on the Mason Prep website (<https://www.masonprep.org/parentresources>) and through our KnightLine parent portal.

Parents, we ask that you read this handbook, discuss it with your child(ren) – especially revisions and additions – and electronically sign the Handbook Acknowledgment. This will be part of the back-to-school forms that will be available in KnightLine for parents by early August 2019. Students will be asked to sign the Handbook Acknowledgment on or shortly after the first day of school. Mason Prep's **Acceptable Use Policy for iPads, Tablets, and Computers** has been evolving as we have implemented our 1:1 iPad/tablet program in grades 3 through 8, and it is now a separate document from the Student and Family Handbook. An acknowledgement form for this policy will also be part of the back-to-school forms found in KnightLine.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these details and for your cooperation. The Faculty, Staff, and I are excited about the prospect of a new school year, and we look forward to working with all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erik Kreutner".

Erik Kreutner
Head of School

EFK/mc

DISCLAIMER

**** NOTICE****

**** PLEASE READ THE DISCLAIMER AND THE STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK 2019-2020 CAREFULLY****

The contents of this handbook are presented as an overview and guidelines of the current policies and procedures of Mason Preparatory School. The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook replace all prior inconsistent policies, written and oral. From time to time it will be necessary for Mason Preparatory School to change, delete, or add to this handbook.

This handbook is for informational purposes only and is not intended to create, and it does not create, a contract between you and Mason Preparatory School. Nothing in this handbook binds Mason Preparatory School to any specific procedures, policies or privileges.

I. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND PHILOSOPHY

A. Introduction

In order to fulfill its mission (see cover page of this Handbook), MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL holds academics and student academic achievement in highest regard. Of highest importance are the qualities of respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness needed from every student, at school and at home. In order for a student to reach his or her academic potential, each student is expected to come to school ready to pay attention, to participate to his or her best ability at school and at home, and to accept responsibility for work and actions. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a ready source of information for students and their families.

B. School Philosophy

1. We believe that the students of MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL should be afforded every opportunity to develop intellectually, morally, physically and aesthetically. In order to accomplish this holistic development for all students, the School is committed to providing a quality educational program within a sound, effective, and nurturing learning atmosphere. We work to maintain academic excellence and to use current and proven teaching and learning techniques which serve to motivate, challenge, and prepare the students to continue the educational process on the secondary level.

2. We further believe that education is an ongoing learning process, which necessitates instructing students in the fundamental educational concepts and the basic skills. At the same time we strive to develop in our students the desire to learn so that they will be better prepared to aspire to higher learning skills. The mastery of these skills, basic and advanced, enables each student to attain his or her highest potential and thus become competent at whatever goals in life he or she may pursue. We believe also that each student should be considered by the faculty as an individual with separate and unique needs and interests and that each teacher should discover these abilities and develop them to their fullest. Every student should develop a sound and positive self-concept. Our program strives to help students accomplish this development and also the awareness of the importance of good citizenship and patriotism. Respect, understanding, and concern for each student are entrenched in the School's beliefs; hence, healthy communication with the students and with parents is expected to be fostered.

3. **Environment/Esprit de Corps/Ethos:** MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL is distinguished by its caring, pleasant, and nurturing atmosphere; by valuing and teaching character, citizenship, integrity, and respect; and by the school's esprit de corps that flourishes here. Everyone connected with the school is expected to support the school and staff, to adhere to school rules and policies, and to work together for the school's welfare and for the benefit of its students.

C. The Mason Prep Pledge

The Mason Prep Pledge embodies the philosophy of the school. Students and staff will sign the pledge at the beginning of the school year and recite it together at the first assembly of the new school year and every Monday morning after that. Students are expected to show respect and courtesy to all school staff members, to fellow students, and to guests/visitors. Students are to be treated likewise by these adults as well.

THE MASON PREP PLEDGE

- I believe that every person has worth as an individual.*
- I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect.*
- I believe that my every thought and act of unkindness is harmful to me as well as to others.*
- Therefore, I pledge today to respect myself and others in my thoughts and actions.*
- I will discourage unkind acts by others at every opportunity.*
- I will treat all people with dignity and kindness, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my efforts.*

During daily morning announcements and morning assemblies, our students and staff also recite together the Pledge of Allegiance and the Lord's Prayer. Students are not required to participate in this recitation but are asked to stand and maintain a respectful demeanor.

D. School Hours

Regular school hours for all grades are 8:00 A.M. – 3:05 P.M., Monday through Friday. The school office is open from 7:45 A.M. – 3:45 P.M. each regular school day. On days when a special class schedule is in effect, e.g., a half day, office hours will vary accordingly. During the summer, the school office is open from Monday through Thursday with modified office hours.

E. Calendars and Schedules

1. **Academic Calendar:** An annual academic calendar of school events for each school year is distributed to all families during the summer prior to the start of the year and is available on the school website. Class schedules are provided to students and families at the beginning of the school year.

2. **Daily Class Schedule:** The daily class schedule will be provided to students and parents at the beginning of the school year.

3. **Modified Class Schedules:** On occasion it will be necessary to modify the daily class schedule to accommodate special events such as assemblies, achievement testing, etc. Teachers and students will be notified of the nature of the modified schedule, and every attempt will be made to maximize instructional time and exposure to each academic area.

F. Admissions Policy

MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL accepts qualified students and follows a policy of non-discrimination as to race, sex, color, religion, and national or ethnic origin. MASON PREP seeks a student population diverse in various ways. The school is an independent, non-profit educational facility for grades K - 8. MASON PREP relies on and values our parents as a source of good information and recommendations to families that may be seeking a school of our caliber. The support from our parents in creating positive "word of mouth" benefits our school and our families in many ways. For further information about the school's admissions process, or to recommend a family, please contact the **Director of Enrollment, Mrs. Lawrie Stamatiades, 56 Halsey Boulevard, Charleston, S.C., 29401, (843) 805-6015, Fax: (843) 805-7796, e-mail: admissions@masonprep.org.**

G. School Offices

1. School office hours are 7:45 A.M. to 3:45 P.M. Working hours are modified during the summer.
2. **Main Office:** Any questions concerning your student should be directed to the Main Office. Administrative Assistants Kim Hendriks and Millie Copeland can be reached at the main office number (843) 723-0664, or by email at mainoffice@masonprep.org. The main office fax number is (843) 723-1104.
3. **Business Office:** Questions concerning tuition or bill payments should be directed to the Business Office. The direct phone number for the Director of Finance, Stephanie Pierce, is (843) 805-6340. Her e-mail address is pierces@masonprep.org, and the Business Office fax number is (843) 805-7796.
4. **Admissions Office:** Please contact the Director of Enrollment, Mrs. Lawrie Stamatiades, with any admissions-related inquiries. The Admissions Office's direct phone number is (843) 805-6015, and the fax number is (843) 805-7796. Mrs. Stamatiades can be reached by e-mail at admissions@masonprep.org.
5. **Communications Office:** The Communications Office is responsible for sharing information about our school with current and prospective families and for publicizing school activities in various media. The Director of Communications, Mrs. Joanne Stemple, can be reached through the main school phone number at (843) 723-0664 or by e-mail at stemplej@masonprep.org. Please contact the Director of Communications with newsworthy

information related to any MASON PREP student, parent, grandparent, alumni, or school activity and with updated addresses. Information for all types of media, to include all Web-based media, newspapers, radio, and television, must be facilitated through this office. **A MASON PREP Media Release Consent Form should be electronically signed for each student. This form is part of the annual start-of-school form packet that is accessed through our KnightLine parent portal.**

6. **Mason Prep Foundation:** The Mason Prep Foundation is the fundraising arm of Mason Prep School. The Foundation's efforts will raise funds to help Mason Prep provide financial aid to qualified Mason Prep students, promote the development of Mason Prep's faculty, and enhance and improve Mason Prep's facilities and its educational programs. The sole purpose of the Mason Prep Foundation is to support the mission and strategic goals of Mason Prep School.

II. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Academic Expectations

MASON PREP sets high standards for its students. Curricular materials used in all courses at this school are on or above grade level beginning in kindergarten. Each student is expected to complete classroom and homeroom assignments in a timely manner and to maintain an acceptable level of achievement. MASON PREP has no special education program to meet the needs of the student who deviates markedly from the norm. It is not a special needs school and is not equipped for students with substantial learning disabilities or behavioral disorders. Where accommodation is requested in an effort to meet the learning needs of a student, and the School has on file a current and appropriate educational evaluation, the School is willing to consider and make such reasonable modification of policies, practices, and procedures as would not fundamentally alter the nature of the academic program provided by MASON PREP and/or present an undue burden for students and/or school staff. Such modifications may be provided by the staff learning specialist and/or a classroom teacher. Students are, however, required to take and successfully complete specific courses in order to meet the school's graduation requirements. Given the above, if the School determines it cannot successfully meet the needs of any student or recognizes that MASON PREP is not the appropriate educational situation for the student, it may recommend or require placement elsewhere. MASON PREP reserves the right to dismiss a student with severe behavioral or academic difficulties at any time at its sole discretion.

B. Attendance Policy

Students cannot learn if they are not present for class. Additionally, students are best prepared for the academic day if they are on time for school. It is critical that both parents and children work together to be at school and on time. It is also critical that parents make every effort to keep their children at school for the entire academic day whenever possible.

C. Absence Policy

1. A student is expected to attend school. It is the policy of MASON PREP that a student must attend school a **minimum** of 165 days per year to receive credit for that year's work.
2. The administrative office at MASON PREP must receive written notification from parents of **planned** absences as soon as possible (at least one week prior to absence). That notification will be circulated to all teachers.
3. In the case of **any** absence a note, signed by the parent or guardian and stating the cause of the absence, **must be given to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school after an absence.** The homeroom teacher will initial the note and send it to the administrative office. Students absent more than **three (3) consecutive days must present a doctor's excuse.**
4. Absences in excess of ten (10) days without a doctor's excuse and/or an approved tutorial program will require an intervention conference with the parents and administration. Such absences may require a student to receive tutoring or possibly repeat the grade and may prevent an eighth -grade student from having the opportunity to earn a Carnegie unit for high school in Algebra I, French I, and/or Spanish I.
5. A student who goes home sick should collect work and books prior to departure, if physically possible, and a parent/guardian must sign the student out at the Main Office. If a student is to go home sick, arrangements must be made

through the Main Office. Students are not permitted to directly contact their parents for this purpose; **these arrangements may only be made through the school nurse or the main office.**

6. The following situations will be recorded as excused absences:

- a. absences for which a doctor's excuse has been provided;
- b. participation in a grade-wide field trip;
- c. absences when the student is representing MASON PREP in an interscholastic event, such as a statewide competition or student leadership event; or
- d. attendance at the funeral of an immediate family member.

7. Exceptions to the above rules and/or unusual circumstances must be approved by the Head of School and will be handled on an individual basis.

D. Tardy Policy

1. Promptness in arrival at school and attendance through the end of the school day are essential so that a student may gain full benefit from all classes and may not interrupt classes in progress nor inconvenience others. For the child and teacher, any tardy arrival or early departure is a disruption and hinders work, teaching, and learning.

2. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their homerooms by 8:00 A.M. **Students who arrive between 8:00 A.M. and 8:10 A.M. should go directly to homeroom, and the homeroom teacher will record the tardy arrival.**

3. **Students who arrive after 8:10 A.M. must report to the Main Office to receive a tardy slip;** they will be admitted to class upon presentation of the tardy slip to the faculty/staff member in charge of the class. The main office will record all tardies on the attendance log. Because excessive tardies affect a student's academic performance, there will be no differentiation between excused or unexcused tardies. When traffic situations arise that impact large numbers of our families, the school may decide not to count students as tardy up to a time to be set at the school's discretion. Once a student has accumulated five (5) tardies, a letter will be sent home informing parents of the concern along with a reflection form to be completed by the student and parents and returned to school. After ten (10) tardies, which are excessive, parents will be informed that the student will serve a Friday detention. Continued tardies will warrant consideration of more serious consequences. Tardies may be considered excused if they were due to an unavoidable medical appointment and the student provides documentation from the doctor's office.

4. Because the morning hours are a critical time for dedicated academic work, a student not in attendance at school by 11:00 A.M. will be counted as absent even though he/she may actually come to school after that hour.

E. Early Departure Policy

1. Early departure refers to a student leaving school before 3:05 P.M. Students leaving before 3:05 must be signed out in the main office and must wait inside the building for their ride. An excessive number of early dismissals in a grading period, **especially when those absences frequently affect attendance in the same class or classes,** will result in an intervention conference with the parent(s).

2. Parent cooperation is appreciated in arranging **all** student appointments with doctors, dentists, etc., after school. In the event such an appointment is completely unavoidable, the child must bring a parent's note to school on the morning an early dismissal is necessary, if not sooner. That note must be initialed by the homeroom teacher then taken by the student to the administrative office. **A note from the parent is the preferred notification method** when a student is leaving early; however, if necessary, an e-mail may be sent to the main office (mainoffice@masonprep.org). We prefer that these e-mails are sent to the main office rather than directly to the teacher. The office will notify the teacher(s) whose class(es) will be missed. The student will be called from their class when their parent arrives and **must** sign out before leaving the building.

In order to avoid disturbing classes, parents should consult their child's schedule and arrange to pick up the student at a break between classes.

3. **If a student leaves school for an appointment or other out-of-school activity and returns during the same day, the student must be signed in at the main office upon his/her return to school.**

4. If a student reports to school but checks out before 11:00 A.M. and misses the remainder of that school day, that student will be counted as absent. A student who checks out but returns to school will be counted as present if he/she has been in classes for at least 4 hours.

5. Due to the hectic pace of the end of the school day, we ask that you not call the main office with messages for your student after 2:50 PM. Students leaving class for an early departure will not be called after 2:55 PM, which approximates the end of the last academic period of the day. **Although we appreciate that many of our students and their parents have busy after-school schedules, we would appreciate your help in adhering to this policy. If a student is to be picked up between 2:30 and 3:05, arrangements should be made in advance through the Main Office.** Contacting the main office rather than contacting teachers directly is more likely to result in your child's readiness to leave, since teachers are less able than the office staff to check their email or receive phone calls during the school day.

F. Missed Work

1. Students who miss class for travel or other reasons are required to meet the same standards as those who remain in class. Some homework can be assigned prior to departure, but class work/instruction cannot always be duplicated after the return. Arrangements for taking tests that will be administered while the student is absent **must** be made with the appropriate teachers prior to the absence. It may be necessary for tests to be taken prior to the absence. If teachers agree that tests may be taken after a planned absence, teachers and the student will coordinate a schedule for make-up tests.

2. Make-up work is the responsibility of the student, and students are responsible for finding out what work they have missed and when they must have it completed. Homework sheets provided in grades 4-8 are done as a courteous service by another student and **are not** the "final word". Students who have been absent should contact their homework buddies or other responsible classmates. Homework for absentees can be located on the homework shelves near the office at the **end of the school day**. Assignments for grades 4 – 8 can also be found on the individual class pages on the MASON PREP website. Although homework assignments should be available online, homework buddies are expected to be conscientious and thorough about this responsibility.

3. In order to be excused from having homework or taking tests or quizzes upon returning to school, a student who is absent because of illness must present a written excuse from the parent to the teachers involved. The note must state that illness has prevented adequate study. A student who is absent because of illness will have a day for each day missed to make up any work, beginning the day after the student returns. In other words, a student who is out sick for three days will have the day he/she returns to school plus three additional days to make up work that was missed during the absence. The homeroom teacher will help coordinate a make-up work schedule. In the event of an extended absence, the Director of Guidance or an administrator may help to coordinate the student's make-up schedule.

4. **MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL does not have the resources to provide homebound instruction in the event of a student's extended medical absence. In such an event, the student may be able to receive homebound instruction through his or her local public school district. However, it is important to note that homebound instruction provided by a public school district will be aligned with the curriculum provided by the student's neighborhood public school.**

G. Class Overviews

1. At the beginning of the school year, each teacher will provide a class overview via the MASON PREP website that describes course expectations, grading policy, classroom management plan, and other relevant information. We encourage you to bookmark or download all class overviews for future reference. A teacher's class overview is provided as information for students and parents at the beginning of the year **and should serve as a reference for parents throughout the year**. We ask that parents understand the need for flexibility should changes to class policies become necessary during the school year.

2. Students and parents should access and read the overviews on the website at the beginning of the school year. Students will be given a sign-and-return sheet to bring back to school. The sheet is to be signed by the student and the parent.

H. Academic Grading Scales

1. Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will not receive grades on progress reports or their quarterly skill reports. These documents will instead contain checklists of skills and each student's progress with these skills throughout the school year.

2. Grades 1 - 3

Academic Classes

E (Excellent)	E+	E	E-
VG (Very Good)	VG+	VG	VG-
G (Good)	G+	G	G-
S (Satisfactory)	S+	S	S-
N (Needs Improvement)	N		

Special Area Classes: Art, Music, Computer, Physical Education, French, Spanish, Science

H High **S** Satisfactory **L** Low

Grades in special area classes are based on a student's interest and effort.

3. Grades 4 - 8

Academic Classes

A's (93-100)	A+ (99-100)	A (95-98)	A- (93-94)
B's (85-92)	B+ (91-92)	B (87-90)	B- (85-86)
C's (77-84)	C+ (83-84)	C (79-82)	C- (77-78)
D's (70-76)	D+ (75-76)	D (72-74)	D- (70-71)
F	F (a grade below a 70 is a failing grade)		

Special Area Classes: Art (4-6), Music (4-6), Computer, Physical Education, French (4th), Spanish (4th)

E Excellent **AA** Above average
A Average **BA** Below average

Grades in special area classes are based on a student's interest and effort. A teacher in a special area class may choose to use a rubric to determine a student's grade in his or her class.

I. Testing and Assessment

1. Assessment is an important part of a student's academic routine and evaluation process. Teachers devote much effort and take great care in designing tests that are fair, comprehensive, and balanced. It is the policy of the school that major assessments will be announced well in advance of the testing date.

2. A student's performance on an individual assignment, quiz, test, or project or a student's performance during any specific grading period must never be discussed with anyone outside of the student's other teachers, the administration, and the immediate family of the student.

3. No more than two tests and one quiz, or one test and two quizzes, should be assigned in any given class day.

4. Teachers in grades five through eight will coordinate the testing schedule to avoid scheduling too many assessments in one day.

5. For classes in middle school (grades 6 – 8), the goal is a minimum of four assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, and/or papers) per grading period in each academic subject.

6. It is standard policy for graded assessments to be corrected by students in all academic classes. Teachers may choose to require a parent's signature on an assessment indicating the parents' acknowledgement of the grade. However, if a teacher chooses to notify parents by e-mail when a graded assessment has been returned, that teacher may choose not to require that the assessment be signed by parents. During an eighth grader's second semester of the school year, a parent's signature on a test will only be required if the eighth grader makes a C (84) or below. Corrections on all tests are always required.

7. A teacher may offer students the opportunity to earn back a portion of unearned points on an assessment. If this is the case, all students in the class will have this opportunity.

8. Grades earned on assessments will be posted by teachers of grades 5 – 8 in their online grade books by the Monday afternoon of the week following the assessment. These grades will be accessible by parents through the **NetClassroom** section of the Mason Prep website. However, grades for major long-term assessments such as research papers or projects may understandably require more time before posting.

9. A student's average for a grading period should be a fair representation of the quality of that student's work. Although a teacher may publish a grade weighting system at the beginning of the year or a grading period, circumstances may dictate the need for a slight change to that weighting system **for the year or for that grading period** in the interest of fairness to students.

J. Semester Examinations

1. Exams will be administered to students in grades 6 - 8 at the end of the first and second semesters.

2. Grade 6 will take exams only for Mathematics and GVC (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Composition.) Grades 7 and 8 will take exams for all six academic subjects.

3. During exam periods, book bags and all other study materials must be placed away from student desks in an area designated by the teacher. Students who finish exams and have checked over them before the allotted time ends may then silently read a **non-illustrated book; electronic devices may not be used at this time.** At the end of each exam day, students taking exams will be dismissed only on Halsey Boulevard.

4. In the event that any student must be absent from a scheduled exam, the following procedure must be followed:

- a. Parents must notify the main office and/or the Assistant Head of School as early as possible on or before the day of said exam.
- b. Upon returning to school, a note from the parents stating the cause of the absence will be required. This note must be given to the teacher whose exam was missed, with a copy to the office.
- c. Make-up of the exam(s) missed will be at the discretion of administrators and the pertinent teacher(s).

5. Corrected exams will not be sent home. Parents who would wish to review their child's exam should call the school for an appointment.

6. Semester exams count 1/5 (20%) of the total semester grade. Each quarter's average counts 2/5 (40%) of the total semester grade.

K. Exemption of Examinations

An examination exemption policy is a positive incentive for eighth graders and is subject to the following guidelines:

1. Only eighth grade students will be allowed to exempt an exam.
2. Only second semester exams will be exempted.
3. Exams in courses taught for high school credit (Spanish, French, and Algebra I) cannot be exempted.
4. A 95 yearly average will be the minimum grade accepted to exempt any subject exam.
5. All students must attend exam review classes, even if they are exempting the exam.
6. Students will be informed by the administration prior to the exam of their status regarding exemption. Students are not to ask teachers about their status.
7. Decisions on exemptions will be made by the administration, and all decisions are final with no appeal.

L. Homework

1. Homework is an important aspect of the learning process; it should provide reinforcement of skills learned during the school day as well as a more thorough understanding of materials and concepts presented in class. Homework is, as are

chores at home, an avenue toward the establishment of a serious **work ethic** and **character skills**, such as: responsibility, accountability, initiative, resourcefulness, creativity, time management, perseverance, ability to face and handle frustration, and cultivation of independent work/study habits.

2. Students are responsible for the daily completion of homework and its presence at school in a timely fashion. The school and parents **must** expect students to complete their work and **must** hold students accountable for doing so. **For this reason, work left at home cannot be faxed, e-mailed, or brought to school by a parent.** Homework is not to be done in the gym prior to 8:00 A.M., in morning homeroom, or at afternoon carpool. Unless otherwise specified by a teacher, homework is to be done independently with **no** collaboration on work/answers with other students. Sharing answers on homework in person, by phone, in writing, or through other electronic means without permission from the teacher assigning the work is considered cheating and will result in academic penalties, such as 10 points deducted from the quarterly homework average for that subject. In upper grades where homework may be graded, a zero will be given. **Disciplinary consequences may also follow honor code violations involving homework.**

3. If a student requires an unusual amount of time to complete homework (too much or too little time), please notify his/her teacher(s). The quantity of homework time varies with grade level and with student ability, diligence, and focus. Students are often given class time to begin homework in order for the teacher to see that students understand the assignment. Students who are able to complete homework in school are not relieved of study obligations. No less than 15 minutes of independent reading should be accomplished daily by every student; math homework will be assigned nearly every day in grades 1-8. Weekend homework is often lessened.

4. For grades 4-8, the homework/preparation grade, which comprises no more than 20% of the quarter's grade, is 100 at the beginning of each quarter. Students in grades 4-8 who are without homework, or who do not have homework completed to the satisfaction of the teacher assigning the work, will have 5 points deducted from the quarterly homework average for that subject. Only as a student fails to complete a homework assignment in a timely manner will 5 points be subtracted from the homework grade. If a student does not meet the teacher's expectation for having an assessment corrected and/or signed by a parent, 5 points will be deducted from the homework average, **not** the test grade. Exceptions to this policy for a given class will be noted in that class's overview given out at the beginning of the year. Students in grades 3 and 4 who have not completed assignments when they are due will be expected to have the completed work by the next day. If by the next day the student has not finished the work, he/she may be required to stay in from recess to complete those tasks.

5. Students in grades 3 - 8 are to use the specified daily assignment book and to follow the guidelines of the school's study and organizational skills program. Homework assignments in grades 4 - 8 are also available by accessing individual class pages on the Mason Prep web site. **Homework is not always written work; studying is a major component of homework. Daily review/study of subjects is expected.** If there is no homework in a subject, the student should write "none". No subject should have a blank next to it. Once an assignment is finished and put in the proper place for return to school, the student should then check the box marked "**complete**" next to that assignment. The box cannot be checked until the work is done, or a parent signs the notice or test, and everything is put in its proper place.

6. Parents may be somewhat involved in homework in the lower grades; however, an adequate study area, materials, and general supervision are to be provided by parents for all students. Ultimately, however, **homework is the responsibility of the student.** If a parent is more concerned about a child's work than he/she is, **a meeting with a teacher or administrator may be appropriate in order to determine how best to increase the child's motivation.** The less parents are involved with homework, the more character skills are gained by the child.

7. Although there may be academic penalties associated with missing homework, there are also life lessons that are learned when students forget things that they need for school. In many cases, the benefits of those life lessons outweigh the negative consequences of missing homework. With that in mind, **we ask parents not to bring homework, projects, papers, etc. to school when they are left at home or in a car. We continue to recommend that parents read Jessica Lahey's book *The Gift of Failure*, which beautifully illustrates these life lessons.**

M. School Field Trips

1. Educational outings beneficial to students may be planned throughout the year. Field trips are intended to be educational in nature and must be linked to some aspect of the school's curriculum in one or more subject areas. Information, including appropriate attire, will be sent home prior to a field trip.

2. A student who arrives or departs from any field trip in a manner other than the regularly arranged travel for the class **MUST** have written parental permission submitted to the teacher in charge **prior** to the event.

3. Seat belts **are required** for all students, when available. Booster seats are required for some of our younger students when applicable under South Carolina’s child passenger restraint laws. **These laws state that children can use a seat belt (in a rear seat) instead of a booster seat if they are at least 8 years old or at least 57 inches tall.**

4. Volunteer drivers may be needed for transporting students to and from field trips and will be arranged by the field trip sponsor. Drivers are not to provide or buy treats for students, make any unauthorized stops, nor play videos for students in their vehicles. **There is to be no smoking in these vehicles.**

5. Unless permission is given by a teacher or administrator, students are not permitted to use their mobile devices for entertainment purposes while in transit to or from a school field trip. These journeys provide wonderful opportunities for conversations involving students and also parent chaperones. **We encourage parent chaperones to refrain from using their mobile devices on school field trips, especially when close supervision by them is necessary for student safety.**

6. Unless permission is given by a teacher or administrator, students are not permitted to use their mobile devices to take pictures on field trips. The same permission is necessary to post pictures on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, **Snapchat**, or other social networking sites.

N. Academic Remediation

1. It is not uncommon for students to experience difficulty with their academic work at some point during the school year. This difficulty may manifest itself as a specific problem on a specific topic or a prolonged difficulty with a particular subject area. In either case, there are a number of options available to address and resolve these difficulties.

2. **Extra Help:** Extra help is available from teachers on a scheduled basis. This schedule is provided to students at the beginning of the school year and at regular intervals thereafter; the master extra help schedule for grades 5 – 8 will be posted on the MASON PREP website by mid-September. Parents are asked to communicate with the pertinent teacher if they have questions about extra help.

a. Teachers in the middle school are available for extra help either before, during, or after school on specified days. Individual teachers will provide students with their schedules for extra help.

b. Teachers may elect, on request, to provide individualized extra help.

c. **Teachers have the discretion to require students to come with questions when attending extra help. This enables students to be better advocates for themselves during the learning process.**

3. Outside Tutoring

a. Tutoring may be an option if extra help is not sufficient to resolve a student’s academic difficulty or guarantee a student’s success in a course. Parents and students who are considering tutoring during the school year should first make sure they are making full use of extra help provided by teachers.

b. Parents who are considering engaging an outside tutor are encouraged to schedule a conference with the pertinent classroom teacher(s) and administration to discuss the situation and determine the best course of action. The teacher or administrator may be able to suggest a tutor or tutors who have demonstrated familiarity with the MASON PREP curriculum. Parents should ensure that the tutor stays in contact with the student’s teacher to maximize familiarity with the material the student needs to master and the classroom expectations of the teacher. Outside tutors who wish to work with a student on MASON PREP grounds are expected to first contact the school **in order to confirm the availability of a workspace and the time that best suits the student’s daily and weekly schedule.**

c. As a general rule, teachers and assistant teachers are not permitted to provide paid tutoring services to students currently in their classes.

4. **Learning Specialist:** MASON PREP is fortunate to have on staff a full-time learning specialist, who will work with students to address specific learning issues, organizational issues, and identified learning conditions. Teachers may refer students to the learning specialist for a screening and/or special help. Parents interested in having a child work with the learning specialist should begin the process by contacting the homeroom teacher or pertinent teacher **to discuss a possible referral.** However, not all students will qualify to receive the services of the learning specialist. In particular, students in grades

4 through 8 must have received a psychoeducational evaluation within the past three years in order to be served on a consistent basis by our learning specialist. MASON PREP has developed a student referral form that parents will be asked to complete as part of the data-gathering process used to determine the student's eligibility to receive services from the learning specialist.

5. Summer Tutoring: Students in academic difficulty at the end of the school year may be required to receive summer tutoring to ensure adequate mastery of course material. In addition, summer tutoring may be recommended to address significant deficiencies in specific areas. Summer tutoring is normally recommended by teachers at the end of the school year, and a conference will be scheduled to discuss the concerns with parents. The student may be placed on academic probation for the following year. A year-end grade of a D or an F (i.e. 76 or below) in Mathematics or Grammar, Vocabulary, and Composition for grades 4 - 7, or Foreign Language for grades 6 and 7 will require such summer work for students rising into grades 5-8. Academic probation and retention will be considered for a student with several D's and/or F's for the year, and/or the student may not be allowed to return to MASON PREP. **These consequences could also be a consideration when summer tutoring is required by the school but does not occur.**

O. Work for Extra Credit

Work for extra credit may be assigned at the discretion of the teacher on the condition that the opportunity is made available to all students in the class.

P. Guidance Program

1. A Director of Guidance is on staff at MASON PREP to minister to the needs of students, parents, and faculty/staff. In addition to group counseling and classroom guidance, individual counseling will be provided if the issue at hand has a short-term solution.

a. When long-term counseling or psychoeducational evaluation is necessary, services outside the school will be recommended. In such cases, the counselor will ask for a release from the parents of the MASON PREP student that would allow the sharing of information between the school (i.e., the school counselor, the current teacher, the learning specialist, and /or administrators) and the professional. Parents are not required to give such a release to the school, but it does allow the school and the mental health professional to work together for the betterment of the child. In addition, the professional most likely will ask for a release.

b. Any psychological evaluations or behavioral checklists that are given by professionals for members of the faculty/staff of Mason Prep to complete to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of one of our students must be handled through the Guidance Office. These forms will then be distributed to the appropriate teachers/staff as requested by the parent. Once they are completed, the Director of Guidance will make a photocopy of the forms to be retained in a locked drawer in the guidance office and the originals will be mailed and/or faxed to the requesting professional. Upon a student's departure from Mason Prep, these forms will be destroyed. Such forms will also remain confidential and will not be shared with other members of the faculty/staff.

c. Psychological evaluations or behavioral checklists that are to be completed by teachers in an online format are also acceptable. The information contained in these online reports is also confidential.

Q. Communications with Parents

1. **Weekly/Periodic Reports:** The school and classroom teachers will send various communications to parents during the week; these communications may be sent home with students or electronically. These communications will include informational fliers, notes requiring parent action, and graded work to be signed. It is important that parents read these papers immediately and act on them as required.

2. Academic Notices (A-Notes)

a. Academic Notices are used in grades 5 – 8 to communicate concerns of an academic nature to parents. These slips have three copies. The white copy will be scanned and e-mailed to the parents, one (yellow) will be kept on file in the office and the teacher will keep the third copy (pink). Also, it will be noted if a conference is necessary. Each A-Note is reviewed by at least one administrator before being sent home.

b. Teachers and/or administrators will issue Academic Notices for the following situations:

- developing pattern of declining academic performance;
- developing pattern of missed, careless or incomplete homework assignments (typically, an A-note will be sent home every third instance in a given class);
- pattern of failure of the student to return signed academic work; and/or
- specific academic concerns.

3. **Progress Reports:** Progress reports may be sent home via students at the mid-point of each academic grading period, normally after the end of the fourth week of each quarter. Parents are asked to review these reports carefully. In the lower grades, parents are asked to sign and return the copy, and in grades 4 – 8, parents are asked to sign and return the envelope in which the reports were sent. Parents in grades 4 – 8 are to keep the reports. Since parents in grades 5 – 8 will have online access to grades through our NetClassroom feature (accessed through the school website), not all students in these grades will receive printed progress reports. In these grades, progress reports will be sent home for any subject in which a student has an average below 80. Teachers may choose to send home progress reports for any other student, especially those showing a marked decline in his or her work. Students in grades 5 – 8 who do not receive printed progress reports at the midpoint of a quarter will instead receive a note to that effect. All students in grades K – 4 will receive progress reports at the midpoint of each quarter.

4. **Report Cards:** Report cards for 1st through 8th grades will be sent home via students after the end of each quarter. Year-end report cards for grades 1 - 8 will be sent home with each student or may be mailed if necessary. At the end of each quarter, kindergarten students will receive a checklist of skills and a record of their progress with these skills. Additionally, report cards will be withheld if a student's account with the business office is not current.

5. It is requested that report cards, progress reports, and notices requiring a parent's signature be returned the following school day after being received. **Tests sent home for parents' review should not be signed until the student has made corrections.** Parents must put full signatures (not initials) on report cards and returned papers and should take time to look over the student's papers, tests, and reports of progress. **Please discuss with your child the importance of bringing information home to you. Specific pocket folders should be designated for papers and school information that must go home to parents.** Please establish a routine at home so that students give parents information from school daily. It is the student's responsibility to give all information to parents in a timely manner, to get parents' signatures if necessary, and to return signed papers back to school promptly.

6. Parents are asked to notify the school office in writing if a copy of a student's report should be mailed to another parent or guardian.

R. Conferences

1. Teachers and administrators welcome communication with parents. Concerns and/or opinions expressed by a parent **will not** have a negative effect on the student. If questions or concerns exist, it is necessary that they be brought to the attention of persons who can/should be involved in the address and solution of problems. General talk among parents, particularly within earshot of children, tends to initiate or heighten concerns of uninvolved parties and hurt the child and the school. Although a parent may disagree with the school, its administrators, or its teachers on matters involving that parent's child, it is important that the parent show support for the teacher and school to the child. This visible support is most likely to lead to a more positive resolution to the situation at hand.

2. Parent-teacher conferences will be on a scheduled basis and may be initiated by teacher, parent, or staff. Parents wishing to schedule a conference may do so through the school office. **No one may go directly to a classroom in any grade for a conference or for any other reason without first checking in at the school office and obtaining a visitor's pass.**

3. Parents wishing to talk with a teacher on the telephone should contact the school office, and the teacher will be asked to call the parent **within 24 hours**. If a parent needs immediate contact with a teacher, please call the main office. Teachers should not be expected to respond to emails or text messages sent outside of regular school hours, although they may choose to do so. It is requested that faculty and staff members not be called at home. Parents may also contact a teacher via email; faculty email addresses are available through the Faculty/Staff Directory on the MASON PREP website. Teachers are asked to respond within 24 hours. Most homework assignments can be easily clarified by having your child call a responsible

fellow student. Students will be assigned a homework buddy, but they should also have the telephone numbers of several other responsible classmates.

4. Two days (one per semester) have been set aside for parent-teacher conferences regarding students in kindergarten. **Kindergarten students will not have school on those days.** For the 2019-2020 school year, these conference days will take place on **November 5 and March 13.**

S. Educational Records Bureau (ERB) Assessments

1. Standardized tests are administered each year to grades 3 - 8. MASON PREP administers the Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP), published by the Educational Records Bureau (ERB). The results of these tests are used for information to guide instruction and to determine any necessary adjustments in curriculum. Students need to do their best, to work carefully, and to check all work. On testing days, students' prompt arrival and attendance are important; no appointments outside of school should be made at this time. Make-ups are difficult to complete; however, students who are sick should not attend school just to take these tests. Every effort will be made to reschedule make-up achievement tests during the two weeks following the testing period. MASON PREP is traditionally recognized for having scores **above average** on nearly every subtest of our standardized testing program in all grades.

2. The standardized test scores for seventh graders may be requested by high schools during the eighth-grade high school application process.

3. MASON PREP's membership in the ERB also allows our school to administer the Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA) to our students in kindergarten through second grade. Unlike the CTP assessments, the CPAA is a formative assessment that is designed to measure student progress and inform instruction during the school year. The CPAA is an adaptive assessment, meaning that each student will experience the CPAA in a different way. Students start with the same question but the following questions depend on whether the student answered correctly without a hint, with a hint, or answered incorrectly. The CPAA is designed to be given in less than one class period in one day and will be administered to our students three times per year: in the fall, in the winter, and in the spring.

T. Graduation Requirements

1. Any eighth-grade student who fails any of the academic subjects (i.e., receives a grade for the year below 70) will not receive a diploma nor be promoted to ninth grade. Provisions will be made for a diploma to be awarded after the successful completion of required/designated summer tutoring or summer work and another administration of the course exam.

2. Students in the eighth grade may be recommended by the academic teacher(s) and the Head of School to receive a high school credit, or Carnegie unit, for Algebra I and Spanish or French. Successful academic performance and attendance in those subjects is a prerequisite for a Carnegie unit to be awarded.

U. Promotion and Retention Policies

1. It is the policy of MASON PREP to continually review the progress of each student, and on the basis of this progress, to invite students to return to school the following school year. If it is deemed that insufficient progress is being made, a conference will be scheduled with the student and his/her parents to discuss the situation. Specific criteria will be established that must be met for that student to progress in the fall.

2. If a student in grades 1 through 8 fails one core subject, his/her promotion will be contingent on satisfactory completion of tutoring and retesting in the affected academic areas. Evidence of successful completion must be submitted to the Head of School prior to re-enrollment.

3. If two or more core subjects are failed, the grade must be repeated unless the student receives summer tutoring or completes a remedial program in all subjects involved. Failure in two academic subjects may deny promotion to the next grade level at the discretion of the Head of School.

4. Should a kindergarten student not display solid progress (academic, behavioral, or social-emotional) as defined through skills reports, teacher-developed assessments, the Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA), and parent-teacher conferences throughout the year, it is possible that the student may be asked to repeat the kindergarten year. If this

appears to be a possibility, the school will initiate the appropriate discussions with parents no later than the beginning of the second semester, which starts upon students' return to school after Christmas break.

V. Student Placement

1. Student placement involves the assignment of students to homeroom classrooms, selected classes, and special programs or activities based on stated criteria for the class or program. The goal of each placement process is to place each child where he/she will be most successful. The school takes this goal very seriously. While at times it may seem that a child is placed at a disadvantage for future opportunities, we believe strongly that the rigor of every course and program prepares every child for success in high school. We ask for the **support and trust** of our parents in this difficult but very important process. Students with older siblings **could** be placed with teachers in grades K through 4 by whom those siblings were taught; however, this may not always be the case. Determination of what is best for each student, as well as other extenuating circumstances, could prevent such placements from being made.

2. **Grades K – 5:** There is a simple placement process for assignment of students in these grades to homerooms. Teachers from the previous school year develop a recommended class roster based on **academic balance**, student behavior, gender balance, and student compatibility. Our teachers take care to ensure that each child is placed into a homeroom class that is a great fit for each student's learning style and social and emotional needs. The lists are reviewed and approved by administrators. Parent requests are not encouraged; however, they will be considered. It may not be possible to accommodate parent requests.

3. Grades 6 – 8

a. **Homeroom assignments:** Students in these grades will be subject to assignment to homerooms in a manner similar to that for Grades K – 5.

b. **Mathematics placement:** Over the course of a number of years, Mason Prep has found it beneficial and necessary to place students on the basis of demonstrated performance and ability in mathematics. Historically, mathematics serves as a line of demarcation for academic struggles and adolescent development. Simply stated, the school has found through experience that not all children develop, mature and progress at the same rate, and those differences are highlighted in the mathematics classroom. Consequently, the school places students in rising 6th – 8th grades according to mathematics performance and ability. The school has found that this model best serves the needs of all students while preparing them for the rigors of high school.

(i.) Students will be screened during the summer to determine assignment to one of two tracks: advanced or grade-level.

	Advanced	Grade Level
6 th grade	Advanced Sixth Grade Mathematics	Sixth Grade Mathematics
7 th grade	Pre-Algebra	Seventh Grade Mathematics
8 th grade	Algebra I	Pre-Algebra

(ii.) Students may change tracks during a school year based on **compelling** justification that the student would be more successful in a different track. Such a change will be considered at the end of the first semester.

(iii.) Should a student in an advanced math class end two consecutive quarters with a test average of 76 or lower for each quarter (in other words, a D or an F), that student will be moved to the grade-level math class in his or her grade as soon as possible during the next quarter. Please note that this refers to the student's test average, not the overall course average.

(iv.) Factors considered in the placement screening include academic performance in mathematics, GVC, and other core subjects (including performance on semester exams and/or diagnostic tests, test averages, quiz averages); standardized test scores (Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematics Parts 1 and 2 of the Comprehensive Testing Program [CTP]), teacher recommendation (including assessments of in-class performance, completion of work in a timely manner, class behavior, focus and attention, participation, maturity and independence, skill level, areas of weakness, organizational skills, ability to tolerate rigor of increased workload and level of difficulty, recommendations from other teachers within the grade level team); and administrator review. While not an academic factor, administrators must be mindful of the school's policy regarding maximum class sizes.

(v.) **Scheduling impacts:** Students in grades 6 – 8 attend several classes based on their math groups. In these grades, students may attend their GVC (grammar, vocabulary, and composition) classes in their math groups for scheduling reasons; however, the content of the different GVC sections will be the same. In addition, for scheduling reasons students in these grades may also attend some special area classes in their math groups.

(vi.) Parent requests will be considered; however, the school expects to consider all requests based on the criteria listed above.

3. **Foreign Language:** All students in grades K – 2 will study one semester of Spanish and one semester of French each year, and students in grades 3 – 8 will study the language chosen by them and their parents. Each year, rising third grade parents will indicate a language preference for the remainder of their children’s time at MASON PREP. Preferences are generally accepted on a “first come, first served” basis to maintain required class sizes.

W. Library Media Center (LMC)

The MASON PREP Media Center is one of the academic hubs of the school. Our Library Media Center holds over 8,000 books, DVDs, videos, and databases geared for the age levels of its patrons. Under the direction of the Media Specialist, various activities such as the Accelerated Reader program and the South Carolina Book Awards encourage a love for reading. Students in grades K - 5 have a scheduled weekly class that includes instruction in information and media literacy skills. Other open periods throughout the week allow all students, teachers, and parents to use the Media Center for research, reading, and checkout for leisure reading. Each year guest authors, or illustrators are invited to MASON PREP to enrich our program. The Media Center also sponsors the KNI-TV in-school news broadcast. Each student and teacher are provided a library card number to use when checking out books or other materials from the Media Center. Books can be checked out for a week and renewed for a week. To encourage responsibility, a fine of 5 cents a day is charged when a book is not returned in a timely manner. Students are responsible for the care of books while in their possession. When a book is damaged or lost, a student will be required to pay for the replacement cost of the book. Report cards will be held when fines or fees are not paid.

X. Academic Recognition

1. Headmaster’s List

a. The Headmaster's List recognizes outstanding academic achievement for students in Grades 5 - 8 who have no subject grade lower than a 93 for that particular reporting period. This list is announced quarterly at Head’s Assemblies. Students who achieve this distinction for the semester and the year are recognized at appropriate ceremonies.

b. As a reward, students on the Headmaster’s List receive a half-day off from school to be taken **only** during the next grading period. Students who choose to take the half-day, **from lunch to the end of the day** (lunch begins at 12:20 for 7th and 8th graders), must give prior notice to the school. **At least one day prior to taking the half-day**, written notice from the parent must be presented to the school office, to the homeroom teacher, **and** to the student's teachers whose classes will be missed. If a test is scheduled on the afternoon a student plans to be gone, that test must be taken before departure. Half-days do not accumulate and **cannot** be taken on days when school is in session for only half of the day. These honored students must plan ahead when taking a half-day as they do with their studies. Cooperation from students and parents with these requests will allow the school to be able to keep this reward for such deserving, hardworking students.

2. **Faculty List:** The Faculty List recognizes academic achievement for students in Grades 5 – 8 who maintain an overall grade average of 93 or higher for a given grading period, with no subject grade below an 85.

3. **Honor Roll:** The Honor Roll recognizes academic achievement for students in Grades 5 - 8 who maintain an overall grade average of 90 – 92 for a given grading period, with no subject grade below an 85.

4. **Honor Graduates:** The eighth-grade students who have the highest and second highest averages for the 7th and 8th grade years **combined** will be recognized at Graduation as the first and second honor graduates, respectively.

5. **Academic Subject Awards:** An eighth grader will also be recognized at Graduation in each eighth-grade academic subject: Algebra I; Pre-Algebra; Literature; English Grammar, Vocabulary and Composition; Science; History; French; and

Spanish. Each subject award will be presented to an outstanding student who meets criteria for academics, citizenship, participation, and potential in that course.

6. **Academic Marshals:** Seventh graders who meet the criteria for Headmaster's List and Faculty List (see items 1 and 2 above) for the year will be designated as Academic Marshals and be recognized at the annual Graduation Ceremony.

7. **President's Award for Educational Excellence:** This award is presented to graduating eighth graders who earn a grade point average of 90 or higher through the first semester of 8th grade and who score in the 85th percentile or higher in Mathematics or Reading on a standardized achievement test.

8. **President's Award for Educational Achievement:** This is a special award that recognizes graduating eighth graders who show outstanding educational growth, improvement, or intellectual development in their academic subjects by overcoming various obstacles and challenges.

9. **George Grice Eighth Grade Scholar Awards:** This award is sponsored by the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) and recognizes graduating eighth graders who score at or above the 90th percentile on any one of the reading or mathematics subtests of the ERB/CTP assessments taken during the 7th and 8th grade years.

10. **Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP):** Students in 7th grade are eligible to participate in this program based on their scores on the ERB/CTP assessments in the 5th and/or 6th grades.

11. **American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese Examination Award:** This award recognizes the graduating eighth graders who display outstanding academic achievement in the study of the Spanish language.

12. **Le Grand Concours (National French Examination) Award:** This award recognizes the seventh and eighth graders who display outstanding academic achievement in the study of the French language.

Y. Summer Reading and Mathematics Work

Educators generally agree that academic work of a continuing nature over the summer is beneficial for most children. It is also generally agreed that children greatly benefit from the change in routine afforded by a long summer break. Required work in these areas will be assigned to every student, and, in some grade levels, assessments based on summer work may be given when students return to school; however, the assigned work shall be designed to be compatible with the nature of the summer break. Summer work is due on the first full day of school and will count as part of the first quarter's grades.

III. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

A. School Philosophy

A successful school environment depends on many factors, but good order and discipline are certainly among the key elements. As in any institution there are necessary rules and guidelines to enable the members of the organization to function effectively and attain the goals of the organization. A school is no different in this regard; however, a school has the additional responsibility not only of functioning effectively, but also of teaching young people the importance of this process and how to conform to the rules and guidelines of an organization. It is arguably one of the highest callings of a school. MASON PREP takes this responsibility very seriously in the belief that teaching and modeling effective discipline to a child prepares the child for the demands of adult life and for being a productive citizen. An effective discipline system should accurately define the rules and boundaries for how a child should look and how a child should act and should build good character.

B. Student Dress Code

1. **Appropriate appearance and clothing reflect and affect the seriousness of academic activities.** The faculty and administrators of MASON PREP expect that all students will be neat and clean in appearance and request that students and parents be considerate in selecting school clothing. While it is realized that the appropriateness of school clothing depends on the age and development of the child, these differences must be recognized and dealt with accordingly, at school and at home.

2. **The neatness, cleanliness, and modesty of the clothing are of prime importance, as is a student's overall**

appearance, which includes hair length and style. The responsibility for selecting appropriate clothing for school and/or special events is an important one for our students and is in keeping with our school's mission of developing responsibility, self-discipline, and accountability. Although parents may not necessarily agree with all aspects of our dress code, we ask for your support and cooperation. Non-compliance with the dress code may have unintended consequences for our students. When one does not follow the student dress code, this may convey to that student's classmates that the student perceives himself/herself to be above the rules. Students and their parents should be aware of the impact that this may have on relationships with students (and their parents) who comply with the dress code.

3. The faculty and administrators retain the right to disallow any inappropriate clothing worn at school or school functions. Disciplinary action will be taken against flagrant violators. A dress code notice (see #6 below) may be used to notify parents about dress code infractions. Should a student receive more than one dress code notice for a particular dress code infraction, stronger consequences (such as a detention) will follow.

4. Parents should ensure that all P.E. clothing, removable outerwear, binders, and lunch carriers are **labeled** with the child's name and that their children are in compliance with the dress and appearance code before leaving home.

5. Students are to be dressed properly **before** they arrive at school and are not to bring a second set of clothing in case the first is not appropriate. If students would like approval/disapproval of an article of clothing before wearing it, they are encouraged to bring the article to discuss with an administrator. Students dressed inappropriately may not be allowed to attend class or an activity until the problem is corrected, if possible. If the office or Assistant Head has P.E. clothing available, the student will change clothes and return to class. The inappropriate article of clothing will remain in the office for the student to pick up at the end of the day. If no clothing is available in the office, the student's parents may need to bring clothing to school so that the student may change and attend class. Students who disregard dress code and appearance rules may also receive disciplinary action and **may not** be allowed to wear a certain type of clothing for the duration of the school year. The school realizes that many fashions and vogues rapidly come and go and that students want to wear the current trends. However, popular fashions are not necessarily appropriate for the classroom. Clothing appropriate in the presence of family may be totally out of place among classmates, particularly adolescents.

6. Dress Code Notice (D-note): Dress Code Notices are used to communicate issues regarding the dress or appearance of a student. Parents are requested to act on these notes in a timely manner. The teacher or administrator will state on the slip the infraction. A punishment is generally not involved unless the student fails to correct the problem or the problem is one of a recurring nature; consequences can include detentions during lunch or recess or after school. Teachers and administrators will issue Dress Code Notices for the following rule infractions:

- a. improper or inappropriate clothing item;
- b. lack of a required clothing item, e.g., a belt; or
- c. need for a haircut;

7. The following list, although not all-inclusive, gives examples of inappropriate attire and appearance:

a. Bare midriffs, halters, or cropped tops are not allowed. A cropped top is one that allows a portion of the waist area to be exposed. No tank tops or shirts that expose undergarments are permitted. Sleeveless tops must have straps with a width of two inches or more; this applies to students in all grades. Attire will be considered inappropriate if any portion of the midriff is exposed when a hand is raised.

b. Decoratively patched, ragged, or dirty jeans (or any such type of clothing) are not allowed.

c. Except for the designated P.E. T-shirt that should be worn on P.E. days, T-shirts may **NOT** be worn by students in any grade. It can be difficult to determine whether a girl's top is indeed a T-shirt; tops that are more casual and look like a traditional T-shirt (for example, lacking a finished collar) **are discouraged as part of a student's daily attire.** If a female student has a question about whether a top is appropriate for school, she should ask the Assistant Head of School in advance.

d. Any article of clothing with inappropriate or offensive writing or drawing will not be allowed, to include T-shirts visible through another shirt or blouse.

e. Boys in grades K - 8 are expected to wear shirts with collars and sleeves, and shirts are to be **tucked in** except during P.E. or recess. If boys in grades K - 8 wear pants with **belt loops, belts should be worn.** Pants are to be worn **at the waistline.** "Sagging" pants do not meet the criteria for clothing of neatness and modesty and **are not allowed.** Pants

that are long enough to "puddle" around the shoes are too long and **cannot be worn**. Hooded sweatshirts may be worn **inside and outside** on cold days.

f. No off-the-shoulder or tight-fitting attire is permitted. Tank tops and low-cut tops are **not** permitted. Skirts, dresses, culottes, shorts, and skorts must be **no shorter** than mid-thigh; this also applies to boys' shorts. **Clothing is inappropriate if it is not modest, particularly when the individual is sitting or bending over. Undergarments may not be exposed at any time.**

g. All shirts are to be buttoned and tucked in. Untucked outer shirts are not considered to be acceptable substitutes for jackets.

h. All students will be required to wear the designated P.E. uniform on their P.E. days; students are also permitted to wear their P.E. uniforms on any day that is not a special dress day. The uniform includes a MASON PREP P.E. shirt, MASON PREP shorts, and on chilly days, a fleece or sweatshirt, sweatpants, and/or wind pants. The only T-shirt that may be worn on P.E. days is the designated Mason Prep P.E. T-shirt. Students must have their P.E. T-shirts tucked in other than the time when they are actually in P.E. class. MASON PREP athletic team and camp T-shirts will **not** be permitted as part of the P.E. uniform. Students are to wear athletic shoes with socks on P.E. days; boat shoes such as Sperrys are not acceptable for P.E. class. Students are not to change into or out of their uniform before or after P.E. classes, except on days of special events such as a head's assembly. **It is highly suggested that boys, particularly in grades 6 through 8, also wear compression shorts (such as those made popular by Under Armour) underneath their PE shorts.** MASON PREP "sweats" or wind pants may be worn the entire day throughout the school year by any student.

i. Collared shirts are to be worn under all sweatshirts or fleece tops on non-P.E. days.

j. Other than MASON PREP P.E. clothes, students may **not** wear athletic or leisure-type clothing, such as sweat pants, warm-up clothing, or basketball type shorts.

k. Boys and girls in grades K - 8 are permitted to wear long shorts **all year long**. These shorts must be worn at mid-thigh length or longer; basically Bermuda-style in length. Shorts may not be rolled at the waist or at the cuffs to achieve shorter lengths. Parents of boys who choose to wear shorts that are shorter in length should work with their sons to ensure that the shorts are appropriate and modest both when the boys are standing and when they are seated.

l. Students in these grades who frequently violate the dress code will not be allowed the privilege of wearing shorts. **Shorts, including P.E. shorts, are too short when they interfere with modesty.**

m. Girls' leggings, including jeans leggings, are allowed only if worn under a dress whose length conforms to the dress code. On P.E. days, girls may wear leggings under shorts or skorts if the leggings are black or navy blue. Spandex/bike shorts or athletic leggings are not to be worn to school by girls of any age.

n. Undergarments, e.g., boxer shorts, are not to be visible under any clothing for males or females.

o. Hats are not to be worn by males or females in the building. (Administrators may allow wearing hats on special clothing days.)

p. No flip-flops or soccer sandals may be worn by students in grades K through 8. Platform or stacked shoes may not be more than 2" high. Using play equipment and participating in ball games require closed-toe shoes with back straps in order to help ensure the student's safety. **Students in grades K – 4 are encouraged to wear shoes or sandals with back straps; students who choose to wear shoes without back straps may not be permitted to participate in some activities at recess in the interest of safety. Whereas we recommend back straps for grades 5 – 8 for safety in outdoor activities and on stairs, other sandals are permissible.**

q. Students are to dress nicely for field trips unless the activity requires other specific clothing. Unless the field trip involves getting dirty, students will wear school-branded apparel, such as shirts, sweatshirts, or fleece tops emblazoned with the Mason Prep logo. **Boys should wear long dress pants and girls should wear dresses or skirts of appropriate length, nice slacks, or colored jeans.** If specific different clothing for field trips is necessary, students and parents will be notified.

r. **Special assemblies, such as Head's Assemblies, the Christmas Program, Awards Day, and Graduation, require "dressy" student clothing to suit the occasion. Jeans are not acceptable for any student, and shorts**

are not acceptable for students in grades 4 – 8 but may be worn by students in grades K - 3. Long pants, e.g., khakis, are appropriate for boys, as are dresses or skirts for girls. On the day of a Head's Assembly, students who have a P.E. class may wear the P.E. uniform; however, these students are encouraged to dress up. However, students who do not wear the P.E. uniform to the assembly may only participate in P.E. class that day if they are wearing athletic shoes and are wearing shorts or pants (not a skirt or a dress), or if they change into PE clothes before class. Students not dressed correctly may be asked to call home in order to obtain proper attire for assemblies, Awards Day, or graduation, and may receive a dress code notice.

s. Unusual and/or extreme clothing, hair styles (including pony tails for boys), permanent hair color, hair cuts (including shaved portions of the head), clothing accessories, or tattoos are not appropriate for school and will not be allowed.

t. No jewelry is to be worn on any portion of the face. Earrings are acceptable only for females. Students will be asked to remove any jewelry that is distracting or hazardous to anyone's safety.

u. Hair is to be neat, clean, and well-groomed and should not be in the eyes. Boys' hair that reaches a length where it becomes an academic distraction to the student by requiring adjustment on multiple occasions during the school day has reached the point where it is in need of being cut. Boys and girls are encouraged to have hairstyles that enhance their looks. We understand that hair length and hair styles are often the greatest bone of contention for our boys. We ask for parents' support in helping their sons to comply with this section of the dress code.

v. The administration may choose to allow different clothing for a special occasion. Students will be notified in advance. Typically, participation in these occasions will require the student to earn his/her donation for a designated charity or service activity. Dress Down Days will only permit the wearing of T-shirts or other specified clothing. All shorts, skirts or pants worn on these days must comply with the regular dress codes.

C. Citizenship

Developing citizenship and respect are vital elements in the school's mission. MASON PREP is as interested in molding good citizens who respect others as it is in molding good students. Violating rules is wrong and hurting others cannot be tolerated. Families must monitor their children's exposure to acts of negativism, bullying, and violence and must work together with the school to help their children develop behavior that is appropriate for school. Toward those ends and in light of increasing violence in schools and its causes, the following Code of Ethics has been adopted for use with the school's Discipline Plan:

Student Code of Ethics

- I will strive to advance my knowledge and ability as a student and a citizen.
- I will accept responsibility for my actions, for all that I do or fail to do.
- I will respect the opinions of all students and teachers even if I disagree.
- I will not cheat.
- I will not lie.
- I will not steal.

- I will respect and conform to the rules of conduct and behavior as announced by my teachers and the school authorities and encourage my peers to do likewise.

(Presented and adopted by MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL and the Rotary Club of Charleston)

D. Student Behavior and Discipline

MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL believes ALL students can and should behave at school. Good behavior includes following school rules and procedures; showing respect for self, others, and property; and demonstrating good manners, friendliness, and kindness to all. MASON PREP will tolerate no behavior that prevents teachers from teaching or students from learning. Students and parents should both realize that continued misbehavior and disruption of class will NOT be tolerated. When there are guests at school, especially a substitute teacher, all students are expected to exhibit their best behavior. Students misbehaving for a substitute will receive consequences more serious than usual. When any behavior

problem develops, it will initially be handled in school with consequences appropriate to the circumstances. If the problem continues, a conference will be scheduled with parents to resolve the difficulty. **Good behavior is an essential part of the education process at MASON PREP and certain behavior may result in detention, suspension, disciplinary probation, or expulsion.** MASON PREP reserves the right to dismiss any student from the school for academic reasons or for unsatisfactory behavior. (See **School-wide Discipline Plan** and **The Mason Prep Pledge**.)

E. Honor Code

1. **Honor is essential in the development of character.** The British writer John Ruskin said, "To make your children capable of honesty is the beginning of education." The MASON PREP Honor Code states, "Students at MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL are neither to lie, cheat, or steal; nor accept or tolerate that behavior from anyone."

2. While the school acknowledges the value of classmates and friendships, it is wrong not to report any major honor code offense. Children must be taught, at home and at school, the difference between "tattling" on childish behavior and the need for reporting more serious concerns or problems to adults. Reporting is not "tattling" when academic integrity or a student's physical or emotional safety is at risk. **No one** should "suffer in silence."

F. Academic Honesty

1. In addition, considered essential to our academic environment is the mutual trust that exists between students and faculty and staff. All concerned must make a concerted, consistent effort to see that such trust is not breached.

2. Consequently, a student's work is to be his/her own. Except in certain situations where student collaboration in the completion of work inside or outside of school has been specified by the teacher, students are NOT to share work and/or answers on, but not limited to, homework, class work, reading labs, tests/quizzes, or exams. Except when specified by a teacher, obtaining and using information for homework, quizzes, and tests, written papers, etc., from another source other than the student himself is considered cheating. Students getting, sharing, possessing, or using information without the direct approval from the teacher will receive an academic penalty which could be as severe as a grade of zero on the work. That student may also **receive disciplinary consequences**, depending on the severity of the problem; these consequences could be as strong as suspension or expulsion from school.

3. Students may not plagiarize; that is, use the words or ideas of others as their own. A student who does not know how to document the source of information obtained or quoted from printed material, online sources, the use of technology, or any form of media, is held responsible for asking a teacher the correct procedure. Plagiarism is considered cheating. Consequences for plagiarism may be the same as those for cheating on an assessment (see above.)

4. Students are to be careful not to give the appearance of cheating or being dishonest on any work. During quizzes, tests, and exams, students are responsible for shielding their work from the eyes of others and for avoiding the creation in others' eyes of the perception that cheating may be occurring. **This includes the perception that academic dishonesty could be occurring through the use of technology.**

5. For the purpose of concentration and for a student's own protection, there can be no talking or any communication during tests or quizzes unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Talking during tests and/or quizzes will prompt a loss in academic points and other consequences. A student who is talking or communicating in any way after turning in a test while others are still working will suffer academic penalties, i.e., a loss of 10 points on the work, and possibly other consequences. If another offense occurs during the same testing period, there will be a loss of 10 points per offense.

6. When the same assessment is given to different classes during different periods, there is to be no discussion of the assessment by students who have already taken the assessment with those who have not. This is especially important when less structured times such as snack, lunch, or recess fall between those periods.

7. AFTER completion of every quiz, test and exam, students in grades 4 - 8 will write in cursive handwriting and sign with a legible signature the complete **HONOR CODE** Pledge, "I have neither given nor received help on this quiz/test/exam."

G. School-wide Discipline Plan

To support the philosophy and beliefs of the school **and to provide our students with a safe and orderly environment**, the following school-wide discipline plan has been established to govern behavior at school.

1. Teachers will establish rules and procedures to govern the routine in their classroom and for their classes. These rules are explained to students at the beginning of the school year and are summarized in the Class Overview which can be downloaded from each teacher's web page at the beginning of the year. A statement of the classroom discipline process is posted in each classroom **and is explained to students at the beginning of the school year**.

2. Teachers in areas grouped by grade, e.g., grades K-2, grades 3-4, grades 5-6, or grades 7-8, may develop specific guidelines applicable to the students in their area as long as those procedures do not conflict with or modify overall school discipline guidelines.

3. **The following are considered to be major discipline violations:**

- Honor Code Violation
- Academic Dishonesty (i.e. Cheating, Plagiarism, etc.)
- Disrespect
- Obscenity
- Inappropriate Physical Contact
- Leaving School Grounds
- Vandalism, Destruction of Property
- Possession of Prohibited Material
- Threat of Safety/Harassment/Bullying

4. Accountability is reinforced by the assignment of appropriate consequences. The goal of the school's discipline plan is to apportion consequences quickly, fairly, and equitably. Parents and students must bear in mind the old adage that "fair is not always equal." As a general rule, consequences may involve classroom disciplinary actions, group disciplinary actions, meetings with an administrator, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

5. Classroom and group disciplinary actions may consist of a seating change, loss of a specific class privilege, phone call to parents, loss of recess, or other similar actions assigned by teachers or administrators.

6. **Detentions**

a. More serious incidents or patterns of poor behavior may result in the assignment of a detention. Students who are recommended for a detention will meet with an administrator to explain themselves.

b. Group detentions will usually be held on Fridays, from 3:20 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. It is recognized that students earning detentions inconvenience their parents; however, students must correct behaviors resulting in detention and should "repay" parents for being inconvenienced. Students assigned to a detention will perform work that pertains to their infraction if at all possible. When a detention inconveniences a student, such as by coinciding with an after-school party or athletic event, it may be an even more effective reminder of the need for appropriate behavior.

c. When students leave detention, they are to wait for their rides in the front foyer. If they are not picked up within 10 minutes, they **must** check into Extended Day.

d. Students receiving three detentions may be included in a parent conference with the administration and his/her teachers.

e. Upon receiving a **fifth detention**, students will receive an in-school suspension.

f. A student receiving **ten detentions** will automatically be suspended from school for at least one day.

7. **Suspensions**

a. **In-school suspension:** Students assigned to an in-school suspension will serve it over the course of one school day. The student will perform his/her academic work in a specified and supervised work area and will not attend any scheduled student activities. The student will take all scheduled tests, quizzes and other graded work. A student serving an in-school suspension may not participate in any extracurricular activities on the day of the suspension.

b. **Out-of-school suspension:** This form of suspension is normally one day in duration; however, if warranted by the circumstances, a longer period may be necessary. Students assigned an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus for that particular day(s) and will receive a grade of zero for graded homework and class work assignments. Tests and quizzes assigned on the day of suspension will be made up at a later date, and academic penalties such as the loss of points on those tests and quizzes may be possible. A student serving an out-of-school suspension may not participate in any extracurricular activities on the day of the suspension.

8. Major Offenses

a. If a student commits a major offense, information concerning the circumstances of the incident, the name of the student(s) who broke the applicable rule and the recommended action to be taken will be forwarded to the Head of School, or in his absence the Assistant Head, to determine the consequence. Depending on the severity of the offense, the student may be sent directly to the Head of School or, in his absence, the Assistant Head.

b. Any infraction deemed severe may result in immediate in-school or out-of-school suspension and/or disciplinary probation, or expulsion. A student may be suspended from school for one day or more if the administration feels that removal from the school environment will have a positive effect on the student and/or the classroom. It should be noted that there may be serious academic consequences surrounding a suspension, e.g., loss of points on tests, quizzes, homework, and loss of class instruction.

9. Repeated Behavior Offenses in Lower Elementary Grades

If a student in grades K – 4 displays unacceptable behavior on a repeated or high-frequency basis, a conference with the Head of School and/or Assistant Head may become necessary. Further disciplinary action may be required.

10. Prohibited Materials

Students may not possess or wear any item that is a threat to the safety of students and adults or creates a distraction to teaching and/or learning. The items on the following list, though not all-inclusive, are NOT allowed on the MASON PREP campus, on any field trips, or at athletic events: drugs, alcohol, flammable or explosive items, tobacco, e-cigarettes or similar devices, weapons, pocketknives, dangerous or sharp objects, or laser pens. Possession of any of these items on campus will result in suspension or expulsion.

H. Behavior Notices (B-notes)

1. Behavior notices are used to communicate behavior issues among students, parents, and the school. These slips have three copies. One copy (white) will be scanned and e-mailed to the parents. One copy will be kept on file in the office. The teacher will keep the third copy. The teacher will state on the slip the rule infraction. Also, it will be noted if a conference and/or detention is necessary. A punishment may or may not be involved.

2. Teachers and administrators will issue behavior notices for the following rule infractions:

- a. disruption of teaching/learning process;
- b. general disregard of school/classroom/playground rules; and
- c. major offenses.

I. The School and the Law

Any unlawful act by a student on the campus or off campus at a school activity not only makes the student subject to penalties which a court of law may prescribe, but also will result in the student's suspension or expulsion from MASON PREP. It is the policy of MASON PREP to fully cooperate with law enforcement officials in the investigation of alleged unlawful acts involving MASON PREP students.

J. Harassment/Abuse

1. Definition

MASON PREP is committed to providing an environment free of harassment or abuse of any kind. Sexual

harassment and harassment based on gender, age, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability, are prohibited by law and contradictory to the school's policy and philosophy. Inherent in MASON PREP's belief in the worth of the individual is the principle that every individual, including each student, teacher, or member of staff/administration, is due appropriate respect and freedom from harassment in any form. Therefore, harassment as defined in this policy may or may not be based upon a legally protected status; harassment may also be considered sexual or non-sexual in nature as set forth below. Abuse, as defined below, may or may not overlap with harassment; additional legal protections and requirements regarding abuse are provided under state law. **All forms of sexual harassment, other prohibited harassment, and abuse as defined below are specifically prohibited.**

2. Harassment Based on Legally Protected Status

a. Sexual/Gender Harassment (Protected Status): Sexual/gender harassment is defined to include unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Undesired physical contact; repeated, unwelcomed requests for social engagements; and questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference are included in this definition. Such harassment may also be based upon gender, despite lack of sexual advances. Sexual harassment is prohibited by school policy when the behavior is directed at an employee (whether faculty, staff, or administration) or student because of his or her sex/gender and (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of academic benefits or employment; (ii) educational opportunities/academic benefits or job benefits or other decisions affecting an individual's employment or educational opportunities are explicitly or implicitly granted or withheld based on submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome requests or conduct, based on sex/gender; or (iii) the academic and/or work environment is hostile, in other words, oppressive and/or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance or an employee's job performance by creating a sexually intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. The above definitions will be interpreted and applied by the school consistent with accepted standards of mature behavior.

b. Non-Sexual Harassment (Other Protected Status): Non-sexual harassment includes conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's academic/job performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment on the basis of a person's legally protected status other than sex or gender, i.e., race, age, color, religion, national origin, and/or disability.

c. Examples of Protected Status Harassment: For the purpose of this policy, the following are examples of Sexual/Gender Harassment and of Non-Sexual Harassment as defined above. Harassing or offensive conduct in the academic environment or workplace, whether committed by regular members of MASON PREP's community (including students, faculty, staff, and administrators) or third parties (e.g., parents, guests, vendors) in school-related settings may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other favors based upon stereotypes of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, or disability;
- Unwanted physical contact, including touching, pinching, or brushing the body;
- Verbal harassment, such as sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats; epithets; slurs; negative stereotyping (including "jokes"); or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts which relate to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability;
- Non-verbal conduct, such as display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, leering, whistling, or obscene gestures; written or graphic material that defames or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on MASON PREP's premises or that is circulated in the workplace via e-mail or otherwise; and
- Acts of physical aggression, intimidation, hostility, threats, or unequal treatment based on sex (*even if not sexual in nature*) or upon race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability.

3. Non-Protected Status Harassment

For MASON PREP's purposes, harassment in the academic environment not necessarily based on sex/gender or other protected status may be defined as follows: Any harassing behavior in the academic environment, either verbal or non-verbal, where such behavior threatens a student's or an employee's safety and/or traumatizes the student or employee to a point that the student's or employee's performance in the academic environment or work environment is significantly affected.

4. Abuse

MASON PREP is committed to the prevention of any form of abuse, including psychological well-being of any student. Such abuse can be sub-divided into three areas:

a. **Physical abuse:** non-accidental physical injury and/or extreme and/or repeated failure on the part of the caretaker to meet the child's physical needs;

b. **Psychological/emotional abuse:** extreme and/or repeated conduct, which is inhumane or otherwise unconscionable;

c. **Sexual abuse:** sexual involvement between a child and an individual who has greater knowledge, authority, power, or resources.

5. Reporting Duties for All Types of Harassment and/or Abuse

a. Any student or employee who believes that a faculty member's, administrator's, school employee's, non-employee's, or fellow student's actions or words constitute discrimination, harassment, or abuse toward himself or another has a responsibility to report the situation immediately to the Head of School, or in the case of the Head of School's absence, conflict or other concern, to the Assistant Head, the Board Chair, or any school teacher or administrator. Thereafter, you may be asked to submit a written description to the Head of School. MASON PREP understands that such reporting may be embarrassing and will make every effort to handle the matter with sensitivity and discretion.

b. Please note that rights and requirements, including time deadlines, related to the filing of claims with any state or federal enforcement agencies are not changed by this internal complaint resolution process. While in some instances the involvement of outside agencies may be appropriate, it is MASON PREP's hope that all will access and find the school's internal complaint process satisfactory. As set forth in the Open Door/Complaint Handling Process, MASON PREP asks that employees, students, and anyone else concerned bring any difficulties in using the procedure to its attention.

6. Additional Duties in Reporting Non-School Related Child Abuse:

MASON PREP strives to abide by South Carolina law, which dictates requirements for reporting neglect or abuse, even when it occurs outside the school. South Carolina law requires that any faculty member who has reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect as defined by law must immediately report it to the local office of the Department of Social Services or other proper law enforcement agency.

7. Cooperation

All school employees, students, and/or parents/guardians are expected to fully cooperate as requested in any investigation. If MASON PREP determines that any student, parent/guardian, or employee has intentionally withheld information or provided false information at any time, appropriate action may be taken.

8. Retaliation

Retaliation against any student or employee for filing a complaint, participating in or cooperating with an investigation is strictly prohibited. MASON PREP will not tolerate adverse treatment of employees or students because they report any harassment or abuse or provide information related to such complaints. After a report, MASON PREP may make follow up inquiries to determine that any prohibited activity has in fact ended and retaliation has not occurred.

9. Complaint and Investigation of All Types of Harassment and/or School Related Abuse

a. A complaint of alleged protected status harassment (including sexual/gender harassment) or school related abuse with all appropriate times, places, and dates should be submitted to the Head of School or, in his/her absence or in case of conflict or other concern, to the Assistant Head, Director of Guidance, the Board Chair, any school teacher, or administrator. The complaint may be made by anyone involved including the student, his/her parents/guardian, or eyewitnesses including teachers, parents or students. While the initial complaint may be made verbally, the school may request a written complaint to follow. Although failure to immediately receive the complaint in writing will not prevent investigation, delay or lack of substantiated detail may hamper the investigation and appropriate resolution.

b. Upon receipt of the report, MASON PREP may take such immediate actions, as it deems appropriate. This may include notifying the individual charged and/or the parents, if a student is involved, that a complaint has been lodged. Impracticality of immediate parent notification will not prevent MASON PREP from taking such immediate action as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to separating and/or questioning and/or preliminary disciplinary action of the individual(s) involved. MASON PREP will conduct a prompt investigation of any allegations of school related abuse, sexual harassment or harassment of a similarly offensive nature based on protected status, including gender, age, race, color, religion, national origin and disability. The Head of School or, in case of the Head of School's absence or conflict, the Board's designee (the "designee") may appoint a member of the faculty or staff to investigate and document the events specific to the charges.

c. During the investigation, anyone who is alleged to have committed acts of harassment or abuse will be contacted and permitted to respond to specific allegations. Upon review of the investigation and/or documentation, the Head of School or the Board's designee will determine the seriousness of the circumstances. As to any student who is the subject of an investigation, the Head of School, or the Head's designee, will notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) if he/she determines that potential adverse disciplinary actions may directly affect the student's permanent record or ability to attend school. If, within five (5) days of such notification, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) so request, the case may be submitted to an *ad hoc* committee generally comprised of the Head of School or the Head's designees, the Chair of the school's Board of Trustees, and/or a member of the Board appointed by the Chair of the Board. The Head of School or the designee will appoint the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will present the findings of the committee and recommendations for action to the Head of School or the designee, who will make the final decision. At his/her discretion, the Head of School or the designee may request additional information and/or recommendations. Whether or not an *ad hoc* committee is requested, the ultimate decision rests with the Head of School or his designee.

d. As to any MASON PREP employee who is the subject of any investigation, the Head of School or the designee has full discretion to seek such input and assistance from the Board as he/she determines to be appropriate. Further, the Head of School or the designee has full authority to take such disciplinary action as he/she deems appropriate at any stage of the investigation. Should the matter call for discipline or action as to a MASON PREP employee or third party, such action, discipline and/or communication as the Head of School or designee deems appropriate will follow.

e. Information provided will be kept as confidential as possible in keeping with an investigation that is as thorough as MASON PREP determines necessary and appropriate to the charge. Once a complaint of school related abuse or protected status harassment has been filed, the Head of School or the designee may periodically keep the accuser, the accused, the reporting party, and Board Chair informed as the investigation and decision processes unfold. When a final determination is made, the Head of School or the designee will inform the accuser, accused, reporting party, and Board Chair of the ultimate resolution and/or action to be taken. In all cases, the Head of School or the designee may also keep other concerned persons informed.

10. Discipline for All Types of Harassment and/or School Related Abuse

a. **Complaints Involving Students:** MASON PREP, at its discretion, may suspend or otherwise separate from regular classes any student accused or suspected of any type of harassment or abuse. The circumstances will be promptly investigated by the school and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies. Any student determined by investigation and at the sole discretion of MASON PREP to have participated in any form of harassment, abuse, or otherwise inappropriate behavior is subject to discipline, up to and including immediate expulsion. Other disciplinary or responsive action may include, but is not limited to, training, referral to counseling, and/or disciplinary action such as a warning, reprimand, detention, suspension, transfer, community service, and/or other requirements and/or penalties. Ongoing civil or criminal charges, pleas or other court related action will not impede MASON PREP from making an independent determination to the extent it determines it has sufficient information to take such action as it deems appropriate.

b. **Complaints Involving School Employees:** At any time following notice of a complaint, the School, at its sole discretion, may suspend with or without pay any school employee accused or suspected of abuse or harassment as defined herein. The circumstances will be promptly investigated by the Head of School and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies, if required. Any school employee determined by its investigation and at the sole discretion of MASON PREP to have participated in any form of abuse, harassment, or otherwise inappropriate behavior is subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Other disciplinary or responsive action may include, but is not limited to, training, referral to counseling and/or disciplinary action such as a warning, reprimand, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal of

responsibility and related pay, community service and/or other requirements and/or penalties. Ongoing civil or criminal charges, pleas, or other court related action will not impede MASON PREP from making an independent determination to the extent it determines it has sufficient information to take such action as it deems appropriate.

IV. HEALTH AND MEDICAL

A. Immunization Requirements

1. All students are required to have a current South Carolina Certificate of Immunization on file in the school office. South Carolina law does not allow Mason Prep to accept immunization forms from other states.

2. The certificate, DHEC Form 1148, must have the dates of all shots given the child. New students must present this certificate to the school office **prior to the first day of school**.

3. Parents should check with their physician to be sure all shots are current. If additional immunizations are necessary, an up-to-date immunization form should be provided to the school office.

B. Contagious Conditions

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is running a fever, i.e., a temperature of 99° F or higher! If your child is sick, he/she should remain at home. If a child develops a fever while at school or is throwing up, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. A student who has had a fever should be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

C. Special Medical Conditions

The school must have written notification if a child has special health conditions, such as allergies, diabetes, migraine headaches, etc. **A MASON PREP Medical Information Form should be electronically completed and signed for each student. This form is part of the annual start-of-school form packet that is accessed through our KnightLine parent portal.** Please be thorough when completing this form as the school will consult it to ensure your child is cared for according to your instructions.

D. Medical Treatment

1. MASON PREP employs a nurse whose duties include medical treatment of students on a routine or limited basis. A “Sick Room” is located next to the main office, but students will remain there only temporarily. Parents will be notified in any situation requiring more than routine attention.

2. If it is necessary for a child to be sent home, we ask that parents arrange to pick up your child as quickly as possible. In general, students will not be dismissed from class unless there is a serious illness or physical problem. If a student is to go home sick, arrangements must be made through the school nurse or the Main Office. Students are not permitted to directly contact their parents for this purpose.

3. **Minor Injuries:** Minor injuries to children, e.g., bumps, cuts, scrapes, bruises, bruised feelings, etc. will be treated in the Sick Room. Parents will be called if the nurse has concerns or per parent instructions. Children will be returned to class as soon as possible.

4. **Emergency Care:** Injuries of a significant nature will be attended to immediately by the school nurse. If required, the school nurse or school officials will contact emergency medical responders to ensure that the injury receives the appropriate level of care. Parents will be notified immediately of an injury that requires this level of response.

E. Dispensing of Medication

1. **Mason Prep has established a policy identifying procedures for the safe administration of medications during school hours.** The document entitled “Mason Preparatory School Policy for Medications Administered at School” describes the policy in great detail. A form must be completed for any prescription medication that is to be administered at school, while another set of forms must be completed for any students who will self-medicate (e.g., students with diabetes or students using inhalers for asthma) or will use self-monitoring devices (e.g., students with diabetes.). These **forms must be**

signed and completed by a licensed health care professional. Any and all medications must be dispensed by the school nurse or through the office. On out-of-school field trips, a teacher will supervise the administration of medication. No medication will be administered nor dosage changed without a current, signed form on file with the school.

2. Students **are not** allowed to self-administer any medication unless the requirements specified in the “Mason Preparatory School Policy for Medications Administered at School” are met.

3. The Sick Room is equipped with a small refrigerator for medications that must be kept cold.

F. Head Lice Policy

The following information comes from the National Association for School Nurses (NASN):

“Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. They feed on human blood. The eggs, also called nits, are tiny, tear-drop shaped eggs that attach to the hair shaft. They are often found around the nape of the neck or the ears. Nits may appear yellowish or white and can look similar to dandruff. But, unlike dandruff, they can be difficult to remove. Nymphs, or baby lice, are smaller and grow to adult size in one to two weeks. Adult lice are the size of a sesame seed and tan to grayish-white.

Head lice infestations are not related to cleanliness. In fact, head lice often infest people with good hygiene and grooming habits. Infestations can occur at home, school or in the community. Head lice are mostly spread by direct head-to-head contact—for example, during play at home or school, slumber parties, sports activities, or camp. Less often, head lice are spread via objects that have been in recent contact with a person with head lice, such as hats, scarves, hair combs, brushes, etc.

Head lice are not dangerous. They do not transmit disease, but they do spread easily. Should your child display adult lice or nits, it is important to talk to your family physician or pediatrician to get appropriate care. A few things to consider include:

- *All household members and other close contacts should be checked, and those with evidence of an active infestation (live lice or nits within 1 cm of the scalp) should also be treated at the same time.*
- *There are a number of available treatments, including new prescription treatment options that are safe and do not require combing out nits from your child’s hair.*
- *Resistance to some over-the-counter head lice treatments has been reported. The prevalence of resistance is not known.*
- *There is no scientific evidence that home remedies are effective treatments.*
- *Family bed linens and recently used clothes, hats and towels should be washed in very hot water.*
- *Personal articles such as combs, brushes and hair clips should also be washed in hot water if they are in contact with a person with head lice.”*

1. If a student is discovered to have head lice at school, parents will be notified immediately and the child will be sent home so that proper treatment can be rendered. It will be necessary to notify the parents of other students in the child’s grade, but the name of the infected student will not be given.

2. If a parent realizes at home that his/her child has head lice, please notify the school office or the nurse immediately. Again, it will be necessary to notify the parents of other students in the class, but the name of the infected student will not be given.

3. In either of the cases listed above, proof of treatment for lice must be presented to the school nurse before a child can be re-admitted to school.

4. If two students in a given home room present with infestations of live lice within a 30-day period, the school nurse will check all students in that grade for lice.

5. The school nurse will check all students in grades K – 4 for lice shortly after the beginning of the school year.

V. CAMPUS SECURITY AND SAFETY

A. Access to the School

Access to school buildings is controlled at all times. All doors are kept closed and locked during the school day with special exceptions as required to facilitate movement of students. Access to doors is by electronic pass cards or key tags

assigned to school staff members. **Students are not to open an exterior door for any adult, including teachers, administrators, or even their own parents. Parents should not open one of our school's exterior doors or hold a door open for any adult with whom they do not have a trusted personal relationship.**

B. Visitors

1. All persons, **including parents**, entering the campus at any time **must** enter through the main entrance on Halsey Boulevard and sign in at the office. The office will issue a MASON PREP visitor's identification sticker that is to be worn at all times while on campus. Anyone bringing a forgotten item to a child, e.g., lunch, must take that item to the office. **Parents and visitors may not go directly to classrooms in any grade at any time.** Classes cannot be disturbed, and student safety is of prime importance. Every visitor, regardless of identity or purpose/brevity of visit, must be in the habit of going to the main office immediately upon arrival on campus to get a visitor's badge. **No exceptions will be made. Upon arrival, each visitor must make the front desk staff aware of the purpose of his/her visit to campus. The front desk staff must be made aware of any changes or additions to the purpose of a visit before the visitor travels to any other classroom or office.**

2. Parents and other visitors are not to enter the building or classrooms after the main office is closed at 3:45 P.M. except to pick up children from the Extended Day program, retrieve material from the homework shelf for a child who was absent, or attend a specific meeting. **No one** is to ask the custodian or other school personnel to provide entrance/access to any building, office, classroom, or lockers after 4:00 P.M.

3. Except during school-sponsored events and athletic practices, **MASON PREP's campus is closed to students, parents, and visitors at 5:45 P.M.**

4. Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes or similar devices, is not allowed in any of the school's facilities or on the premises.

5. Visitors must mute their cell phones in order not to disturb work or assemblies in progress.

C. Leaving School Grounds

1. Children will not be permitted to leave school grounds during school hours without permission. Children may depart under the supervision of a parent or a person so designated in writing by a parent. Students leaving school prior to 3:05 P.M. **must** sign out in the office and be picked up at the main office. If the student then returns to school before 3:05 P.M., he/she must sign in at the office. A student who plans to leave school grounds temporarily while waiting for a ride or an athletic activity/practice **must** have written permission from his/her parent(s) on file in the office and with the athletic director and is **not allowed to return** until time for his/her ride or activity.

2. No student is allowed to visit the Alberta Sottile Long Lake across the street from the school without the supervision of a MASON PREP staff member or other appropriate adult. The lake does not belong to the school and is considered off-campus. Leaving school grounds without permission is considered a major offense and warrants a suspension or more serious consequences.

D. Parking

1. **On-Campus Parking:** Faculty and staff are assigned parking spaces in the lot on the corner of Halsey Boulevard and Montagu Street, in the lot on the corner of Barre and Bull Streets, in the garage under the Harriett Starr Mason lower school building, and in several other on-campus spaces. The use of the lower school parking garage is restricted to faculty and staff. Twenty-one general-use, public parking spaces with a two-hour limit are available on Halsey Boulevard immediately in front of the school. The Charleston Police Department may ticket cars that are parked in a direction opposite to that of traffic in the adjacent lane.

2. **Off-Campus Parking:** Off-campus parking in the vicinity of the school is limited as well. Several spaces in the parking lot at the corner of Bull and Barre Streets are available for parking by parents when needed (Head's Assemblies, Open Houses, class parties, performances, etc.)

3. **The priority for the fenced parking lot at Halsey Blvd. and Montagu St. is for faculty/staff use.** Extra spaces in this lot may be used by parents during the school day. Visitors and parents are first encouraged to use the parallel spaces on Halsey Boulevard or to park perpendicular to the fence on Halsey Boulevard between the curved drive and Montagu Street. **A**

parking space perpendicular to that fence has been marked for “Future Knights”; this space is dedicated for prospective parents visiting the school for admissions purposes. Your help in keeping this space clear is appreciated. **At no time should visitors or parents park in the driveway in front of the school.** Please be very considerate of the school’s neighbors at all times.

E. Morning Drop-off, Afternoon Pick-up and Departure Procedures

1. MASON PREP’s drop-off, pick-up, and departure procedures have been carefully designed to achieve safe and expeditious movement of children and flow of traffic. Please follow them carefully. **Please be mindful that the need to keep our students safe should take a higher priority than parents’ convenience – you will see this language in several locations in this handbook. This is because we believe that student safety is of the utmost importance.**

2. In order to maintain good relationships with all residents in the neighborhood surrounding the school, it is essential for ALL drivers, walkers, and bikers to show consideration for the school's neighbors (and the entire neighborhood) and to respect their property and access to and from their property. **Do not block the entrance to the school’s parking lot or the driveways of neighbors, businesses, or medical facilities. At no time should a car enter the yard of a neighboring house.** No vehicle should travel into the space for a driveway or parking lot entrance/exit unless the vehicle can completely clear that space. Please extend courtesy to all other car pool drivers.

3. All drivers must watch for the safety of walkers and bikers. Do not make a U-turn on any street surrounding the school. **It is essential to leave at least one lane of the street open so that neighborhood traffic may continue to flow.** Please notify all persons designated to bring students to school or to pick them up of all necessary rules and instructions and tell them to display the **car pool sign** showing the name of the child being picked up. **All vehicles**, even those transporting one child, **must display a car pool sign.**

F. Morning Drop-Off Procedures

1. **Students are not to be dropped off before 7:30 AM.** The only exception to this rule is that members of the KNI-TV in-school broadcast crew may be dropped off on the day of a broadcast at an earlier time specified by the KNI-TV sponsors.

2. Students may be dropped off at the Halsey Boulevard gymnasium foyer or on Bull Street between the side entrance to the gym and the entrance to the courtyard between the Middle School and Lower School buildings. At least one administrator or staff member should be in each of these locations by 7:35 AM. **Please do not drop off students in the Faculty parking lot at any time.**

3. Halsey Boulevard

a. Drivers should pull down as far as possible through the front drive on Halsey Boulevard. Once a car has entered the front drive and comes to a full stop, students are to unload from the **passenger side** of the car as quickly as possible even if the car is not at the gym entrance and even if it is raining. Having a student walk a few steps to reach the gym entrance is far safer than having the line of traffic build up on Lockwood Drive. If the front drive is congested, do not interfere with the flow of traffic on Lockwood Drive as accidents easily happen in those circumstances. Rather, travel down Lockwood Drive, turn left on Wentworth or Beaufain Streets, left on Barre Street, and left on Montagu Street, then enter the front drive. Distance traveled does not match the importance of everyone’s safety.

b. **Do not drop students off on Halsey Boulevard and let them cross the front drive. Please be mindful that the need to keep our students safe should take a higher priority than parents’ convenience.**

c. **Do not turn onto Halsey Boulevard just south of Montagu Street. What appears to be a “shortcut” simply causes more cars to wait on Lockwood and Montagu. Please be considerate of your safety and the safety of others.**

4. **Bull Street:** Students may be dropped off on Bull Street between the side entrance to the gym and the entrance to the courtyard between the Middle School and Lower School buildings. To prevent a buildup of traffic on Bull Street, drivers

should pull down as far as possible on the asphalt area next to the middle or lower school buildings, come to a stop, and have students unload quickly.

5. Students in grades 3 – 8 arriving after 7:30 and before the 7:55 A.M. bell must report to the gymnasium and remain **with a staff member** until the bell to go to homeroom sounds at 7:55 A.M.

6. Students in grades K – 2 arriving between 7:30 and 7:55 must report to the multipurpose/lunch room and remain **with a staff member** until the bell to go to homeroom sounds at 7:55 A.M. If students in these grades are dropped off on Bull Street, they may enter the school through the entrance to the gym foyer.

7. No playing is allowed in the gym, the lunch room, or on the grounds during this time. Students are asked to **sit** and visit with their classmates. Homework is not to be done during this time. **With the exception of eighth graders, students are not to visit classrooms before 7:55 A.M. Eighth graders have the privilege of dropping off their backpacks and other materials in their home rooms between 7:30 and 7:55 A.M.**

8. Students arriving after the 8:00 A.M. bell **must enter the building through the main entrance on Halsey Boulevard**, because the doors to the gym foyer from Halsey Boulevard and Bull Street automatically lock at exactly 8:00. They may go directly to their homeroom between 8:00 and 8:10 and will be marked tardy by their homeroom teacher. After 8:10, students must check in at the front desk and receive a tardy slip before going to class.

G. Afternoon Pick-up Procedures

1. Students in grades K – 8 will be dismissed at 3:05 P.M., and afternoon pick-up usually takes approximately 15 minutes. Unless a parent has been notified by a teacher or staff member that a child is to stay later, cooperation in picking up children no more than 15 minutes after dismissal time is appreciated. Every day, **including the first day of school**, children have designated pick-up zones based on the residential areas listed below, and parents should pick up children in their car pools at these points. **Children are not allowed to leave the pick-up area to enter a parked car. Do not walk a child across the street or the front drive; please pick him/her up in the regular car line. Please be mindful that the need to keep our students safe should take a higher priority than parents' convenience.** MASON PREP does not take responsibility for the safety of students who walk to meet drivers waiting off campus. Procedures for walkers and bike riders can be found in Section H. Please call the school office if an unexpected late pick-up (after 3:30) is anticipated. Children being picked up later than the regular dismissal time will wait in the gym foyer under a staff member's supervision until 3:30 P.M., at which time they must go to Extended Day and sign in. After 3:30, parents will be charged accordingly.

2. Each afternoon, staff members will be outside at the two loading areas with students. Staff members will oversee the safety of students, will keep the lines moving, and will remind drivers to pull down as far as possible at both pick-up areas. Your **cooperation and respect** for those performing this difficult job are **expected and appreciated**. Please follow these directions and the included diagram carefully.

3. **Each vehicle and car pool must have the full name of the students to be picked up**, which should be displayed in **LARGE PRINT** in the front windshield during afternoon pick-up. These car pool signs help the pick-up line move faster and are essential on rainy days to identify vehicles and car pools. Pick-up may take longer the first few days of school, especially if car pools are not used and directions are not followed. **Please be prepared to follow the instructions and diagram for pick-up, to use car pools, and to display car pool signs on the first day of school.** The diagram can be found at Appendix 4. For safety's sake, a child **may not** cross either Halsey Boulevard or Bull Street or the front drive to enter his/her driver's parked car. In both loading zones, students must remain in their grade's designated area and should watch for their rides. Afternoon pick-up is not a time for play. **Please be mindful that the need to keep our students safe should take a higher priority than parents' convenience.**

4. Procedures for entering and exiting the two permitted loading areas are described below. **Do not enter either loading area directly by way of Lockwood Boulevard.** Please stay far to the right on the street so that regular traffic can move safely.

5. **Students who live in peninsular Charleston south of Calhoun Street, the West Ashley area, James Island*, Folly Beach, Johns Island, Kiawah Island, Wadmalaw Island, Hollywood, Yorges Island, Ravenel, and Meggett will be picked up on Halsey Boulevard.** Drivers are asked to enter the Halsey Boulevard entrance from Montagu Street. Please remember while on Montagu Street not to block our neighbors' driveways and to stay as close to the right hand side of the street as possible to allow opposing traffic to pass. Do not turn from Montagu onto Halsey until you can safely enter the

driveway in front of the school building. When leaving the front drive, **turn left on Halsey** and exit on Lockwood. **Students will not be allowed to leave the pick-up area or cross the front drive to enter a parked car.**

*** In order to balance the traffic at Mason Prep’s two pick-up locations and in order to prevent traffic from backing up onto Calhoun Street, certain James Island families have been asked to pick up their students from Bull Street.**

6. Students who live in peninsular Charleston north of Calhoun Street, Mt. Pleasant and other East Cooper areas, Daniel Island, and North Charleston or other areas further from school than North Charleston and accessible from Interstate 26, will be picked up on Bull Street in the asphalt area next to the school. Drivers must enter Halsey Boulevard from Calhoun Street, turn left onto Bull Street, and pull down as far as possible in order to load the maximum number of vehicles at a time. In order to avoid a line forming on Calhoun Street and impairing traffic, please do not arrive at school earlier than 2:55 P.M. To exit this pick-up area, loaded vehicles must proceed down Bull Street and cross over Barre Street before turning off of Bull Street. This is necessary in order not to encumber the Montagu St. pick-up line. **Students will not be allowed to leave the pick-up area to enter a parked car.**

H. Walkers and Bikers

1. Students who walk or bike to school must enter the school campus via Bull Street and then through the entrance to the gym foyer. Students are not to unlock and/or open from the outside the gate between the teachers’ parking lot and the playground. Once bikers reach the school doors, they must dismount and walk their bicycles to the bike racks. **All bicycles must be locked.** Walkers and bikers must enter through the gymnasium foyer door on Halsey Boulevard and **are not** to use the teachers’ parking lot door to enter or exit the building. Bikers should wear helmets, which should also be secured. **MASON PREP takes no responsibility for stolen or damaged bicycles or helmets.**

2. Because of the heavy traffic in the vicinity of the school during afternoon dismissal at 3:05 P.M., a school staff member will escort walkers and bikers in a group to the corner of Barre and Montagu Streets. These students need to move to the back yard as soon as the bell rings and travel **with the group.** Walkers and bikers must walk on the side of Montagu Street next to the school down to the corner of Barre and Montagu before crossing the street. Bikers must cross Barre Street before mounting their bicycles.

I. Emergency Procedures

MASON PREP will conduct periodic drills to practice emergency procedures for fire evacuation, severe weather (e.g. tornadoes), natural disaster (e.g. earthquakes), and external/internal threats resulting in a campus lockdown. These drills may be announced in advance to facilitate training or may be unannounced to assess readiness. Specific procedures for each drill will be reviewed with the students prior to announced drills.

J. Inclement Weather

1. In the event of severe weather conditions that cause driving to be dangerous, **MASON PREP will automatically be closed if Charleston County public schools close at the beginning of the weather-related event.** Additionally, notification will be made by email, on the school website, and through the school’s social media platforms as early as possible. If because of severe weather the school should need to close during the day, notification would be made via email, the school website, and the school’s social media platforms. Notification about weather-related closures may also be made on local television stations.

2. MASON PREP reserves the right to re-open before the Charleston County School District does after a weather-related closure. This could also include opening at our normal time while a delayed opening is in effect for CCSD schools.

3. Because of conditions unique to our location, particularly related to flooding, MASON PREP may at times be forced to close even though Charleston County schools remain open.

K. Fire and Safety Equipment

Fire extinguishers are stationed at various locations throughout the school. Students should not attempt to use this equipment for an emergency but should immediately contact the nearest adult to address the situation. In addition, panels used to control the operation of the school’s security system are placed in locations around the school. Students must not tamper with these panels as doing so will disrupt the settings and possibly affect use of the doors.

VI. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Emergency Contact Information

A MASON PREP Emergency Contact Form should be **electronically signed for each student before the first day of school. This form is part of the annual start-of-school form packet that is accessed through our KnightLine parent portal.** Please do not allow your student to complete his/her own Emergency Contact Form. Parents are responsible for notifying the main office immediately of any and all changes in information on the Emergency Contact Form throughout the school year.

B. Special Events

1. **Celebration of Birthdays:** MASON PREP emphasizes the importance of each student's birthday by recognition during morning announcements and a birthday ribbon. Parents are welcome to send a birthday treat to school **after coordinating with the child's teacher; healthy options are encouraged.** Birthday invitations, or invitations for any party, may be distributed at school IF the child's entire class (or all the boys or all the girls) are invited. If such inclusion is not intended to occur, we ask that you convey invitations by other means, such as by electronic invitations (evites). Please realize the difficulties and hurt feelings caused when children are excluded, no matter what grade level or occasion.

2. **Class/School Parties:** Homerooms are graciously treated to classroom parties as arranged by the PTO Room Coordinators who must coordinate/confirm their plans with the homeroom teacher. Parties are typically held in conjunction with Halloween, Christmas, possibly Hanukkah, and Valentine's Day. 7th and 8th graders have no parties as such, but they will hold several dances during the year. Any other school-sponsored party to be held on or off campus must first be approved by the administration. No school-sponsored swimming parties are permitted. Those assisting with on-campus parties must obtain a visitor's pass from the office.

3. **Middle School Dances:** Several dances will be scheduled during the school year for middle school students. A dance is always scheduled around Valentine's Day (for which 8th grade room coordinators are asked to organize decorations and 7th grade room coordinators are asked to provide the food.) A spring dance is held for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders (for which 7th grade room coordinators are asked to organize the decorations and 6th grade room coordinators are asked to provide food.) The school arranges for a local disc jockey to play contemporary but appropriate music and for teachers to act as chaperones.

4. **Halloween Carnival:** This event is sponsored by the eighth grade and helps defray the expenses of their class trip.

5. **Grandparents' Day:** This event is held in alternating years to honor the grandparents of Mason Prep students. **Grandparents' Day will be celebrated on May 1, 2020.**

6. **Sixth Grade Bazaar:** The sixth grade sponsors a yearly holiday bazaar to help defray expenses of their class trip. These students and their families make items over the summer to sell at the bazaar.

7. **Field Day:** Field Days are held in the spring. Separate field days are held for kindergarten – 3rd grades and for 4th – 6th grades.

C. Unauthorized Items

1. Students may not possess or wear any item that is a threat to the safety of students and adults or creates a distraction to teaching and/or learning. The items on the following list, though not all inclusive, are NOT allowed on the MASON PREP campus, on field trips, or at athletic events. Possession of any of these items on campus or at school-related off-campus activities will result in suspension or expulsion:

- a. drugs or alcohol
- b. flammable or explosive items
- c. tobacco, e-cigarettes, or similar devices
- d. weapons, pocketknives, dangerous or sharp objects, or laser pens.

2. The following items are prohibited from being in possession of students while on campus unless specifically approved by a teacher or administrator:

- a. skateboards, roller skates, shoes with embedded wheels, etc.
- b. live animals, reptiles, amphibians, etc.

c. chewing gum. Students are not allowed to chew gum at any time during the school day. This rule is essential to prevent damage to clothing, carpet, furniture, etc., and is applicable to all areas of school grounds from arrival to departure and to all field trips off campus during the school day.

3. Playing any music brought to school by a student is allowed only when specifically requested by teachers or staff for a specific class purpose. Playing music designated as “Parental Advisory” or “Explicit” and/or containing inappropriate language is not allowed on campus or on field trips at any time.

4. A student is allowed to use an e-reader, such as a Nook or Kindle, provided the device is labeled with the student’s name, and the student uses the device at a time when the student would be permitted to be reading.

5. Students in grades 3 through 8 are provided with school-owned mobile devices, such as iPads or Windows tablet computers. If parents choose to allow students to bring personally-owned electronic communication devices, such as mobile phones or tablets, to school for personal or safety reasons, these devices must be turned off at all times during the school day and must be kept in the student’s book bag or locker (in grades 4 and below) or in the pocket organizer hanging on the wall in the student’s home room (grades 5 through 8). If the student uses the device without permission at any time during the school day for any reason, the device will be taken from the student and may be picked up by the parent from the Head’s office. If a student is a chronic offender, he/she may lose the privilege of bringing such devices to school for a specified period of time.

6. Smoking is not permitted by anyone on the MASON PREP campus or in the presence of students on school field trips. This includes e-cigarettes and similar devices.

D. Lunch/Snack Break

1. As a rule, children bring their lunches to school or purchase lunch as offered by the PTO. Chocolate and white milk are served at lunchtime and may be purchased on a semester basis. (The order form for the first semester is sent home in the summer mailing.) For grades K - 6, no other drink is available at lunch other than milk and water. Students in grades 7 and 8 may use the juice and snack machine at lunch and break. No students may use the juice or snack machine before 3:30 P.M. or visit the machine without permission, particularly while in Extended Day. Students in afterschool activities or athletic practices may use the machine only under the supervision of a coach or activity sponsor.

2. Parents are asked to observe the following guidelines when preparing lunch:

- a. **do not** send soft drinks to school at any time.
- b. **do not** make a habit of **bringing** lunch to school for your student(s).
- c. **do limit** sweets for lunch.

3. During the school-wide morning break, students may bring a **small** snack (healthier options such as fruit, cheese, vegetable sticks, or crackers are preferred). It is not necessary for students to bring a drink for morning break. The food privilege may be removed for those with violations.

E. Student Recognition/Awards Program

MASON PREP encourages recognition of students through various avenues, such as creative writing awards, success cards, Nice Knight Awards, announcements, Star of the Week, etc.

F. Financial Requirements

Students' fees and fines (e.g., tuition, Extended Day costs, library fines, etc.) must be current so that those students may receive report cards. **The Head of School has the ability at any point during the school year to determine that a student or students may not continue attending school until the family’s past due balance has been paid.** No fees or fines will be accepted on the last day of school.

G. Fundraising

1. The school and the Parent-Teacher Organization will engage in a limited number of fundraising activities throughout the school year. Family support is appreciated and encouraged. Students soliciting sales are not to go door-to-door but rather should contact close neighbors, relatives, friends, and professionals whose offices may participate.

2. The MASON PREP Foundation was established in 2015. The Foundation's efforts will raise funds to help Mason Prep provide financial aid to qualified Mason Prep students, promote the development of Mason Prep's faculty, and enhance and improve Mason Prep's facilities and its educational programs. The sole purpose of the Mason Prep Foundation is to support the mission and strategic goals of Mason Prep School. The Foundation has been granted nonprofit tax-exempt status and has its own Board of Directors.

3. **Annual Fund:** MASON PREP, like nearly all independent schools, cannot cover the cost of operations though tuition and fees alone. The Annual Fund, the primary fundraiser at MASON PREP, provides the school with the capability to provide enhancements out of reach of the regular operating budget. The school's budget is devised to keep necessary annual tuition increases as small as possible. Enhancements, such as technology expansion, are necessary to broaden the educational opportunities of MASON PREP's students and must be funded outside tuition costs. Gifts to the Annual Fund are tax-deductible. All friends of MASON PREP are encouraged to participate. (Updated current addresses for all constituents, especially alumni and grandparents, are needed and appreciated.)

H. Re-enrollment

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, Mason Prep uses a continuous enrollment contract. Parents may opt out of a child's enrollment contract for the next school year by providing written notification to the school at any time through the last day of February. Parents will receive a reminder each January about this deadline. Parents who want to continue their child's enrollment at Mason Prep do not need to take any action. On March 1, all students whose parents have not chosen to opt out will automatically be considered to be re-enrolled at Mason Prep for the next school year. This process will continue throughout each student's time at Mason Prep. Purchase of tuition assurance is required of all families who select the two-payment plan or choose to pay in eleven installments and/or if a student is on academic or disciplinary probation.

I. Scholarships/Financial Aid

1. MASON PREP's financial aid program is primarily need-based. Notification will be sent to current parents by mail and by e-mail when the application process begins each year. Financial aid recipients selected from applications submitted will be notified by mail **and/or email**.

2. **Financial Aid:** MASON PREP is fortunate to be able to offer a limited but robust financial aid program. Aid grants are awarded based on demonstrated financial need or hardship. As a general rule, aid grants will not exceed 75% of the applicable tuition and fees. Financial aid is available for both new and returning students.

a. **Eligibility Requirements:** In order to be eligible, returning students must be current in meeting financial obligations to the school, must be in good academic standing, and must have a satisfactory disciplinary record.

b. **Application Process:** In order to attain consistency, accuracy and confidentiality, MASON PREP uses a nation-wide service developed by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). The service, School & Student Services (SSS), involves an application submitted by families directly to SSS. The application must be submitted electronically through the SSS website (**www.solutionsbysss.com/parents/**). SSS will process the application and forward a summary financial statement to MASON PREP. Upon receipt of applications, a Financial Aid Committee meets beginning in February of each school year to review all applications and make decisions about financial aid awards. Applicants will be notified by mail and/or e-mail as to the outcome of their application. Applications received after the February committee decisions will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

3. Scholarships:

a. The following scholarships commemorate those financial bequests awarded to the school's endowment fund and are part of the school's need-based financial aid program:

- HARRIETT STARR MASON Memorial Scholarship;
- RUTH CLINKSCALES Memorial Scholarship;
- NANCY D. HAWK Memorial Scholarship;
- ELIZABETH J. MACKALL Memorial Scholarship;
- JOEY McCARTER Memorial Scholarship;
- BETH DANIEL Honorary Scholarship; and
- EDWIN J. THORNHILL III Memorial Scholarship.
- The RIFE ALEXANDER KADRY Memorial Scholarship is given to a rising first grader and may be awarded to the same student each year and through the eighth grade if criteria regarding academics, citizenship, and financial assistance are met.

b. The following merit scholarships are announced at end-of-year ceremonies:

- The HARRIETT STARR MASON Scholarship for Outstanding Citizenship is awarded to a rising 6th grader, and the winner is selected by the MASON PREP faculty.
- The JAMES O. WHITE III Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a rising 8th grader; students are faculty-nominated, and the winner is student-selected.

J. Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) Volunteers

MASON PREP'S PTO is considered a vital support group of the school. Through various efforts and fundraisers, the PTO lends immeasurable benefits, tangible and intangible, to students, faculty and staff, and the entire MASON PREP community. All families, relatives, and friends of MASON PREP are encouraged to join and participate in this organization. The PTO has created an online app that includes features such as a family directory. While the school strongly promotes volunteerism by its students, the PTO and all volunteers set a stellar example for the school and student body. For further information, contact the current PTO co-presidents. MASON PREP is grateful for the PTO and its volunteers!

K. School Property

1. Students, faculty and staff, and MASON PREP families have a responsibility for the care of school property. Keeping the buildings and grounds neat and tidy requires a joint effort so that MASON PREP can remain attractive for all constituents, visitors, and our neighbors. Littering is prohibited. Students are not to tolerate misuse of property by others and should report violations to school personnel.

2. Vandalism of any form has no place at MASON PREP and will be handled in a serious manner. If a student damages, destroys, or loses school property, to include textbooks, library books, school-provided mobile devices, or uniforms for sports teams, parents will be required to pay for repair or replacement. Report cards will be withheld until payment is rendered. (Of course, the student should be made to repay his/her parents.) A consequence for the student will be included. Students are expected to take care in using P.E., recess, sports, and technology equipment. Students who tamper with any portion of a computer or technology equipment are subject to pay for repair or replacement, will suffer disciplinary consequences, and will be excluded from using such equipment. It is advisable that all textbooks be covered for better protection. Students are not to write in non-consumable books except with the permission of a teacher.

L. Information Technology

1. **Acceptable Use Policy:** MASON PREP fully supports the integration and use of information technology resources. Due to the potential and serious implications of misuse of these assets, MASON PREP has developed a detailed **Acceptable Use Policy** for users, which is accessible through the KnightLine parent portal. Parents and students will be asked to carefully read it and sign an acknowledgement that they have done so. **This acknowledgement form is part of the annual start-of-school form packet that is accessed through our KnightLine parent portal.**

2. School Website

a. MASON PREP's website (www.masonprep.org) offers many features designed to enhance communication between the school and our families. Each constituent (student, parent, faculty/staff member) is assigned a unique username and password that provides access to a customized (and customizable) home page. In addition, our website is linked directly to the school's database, which means that parents should update their own User Profile whenever a change in name, address, phone number, e-mail address, etc., occurs. A student's home page contains links to pages for all of his or her classes; that also includes access to grades and assignments for students in grades 4 – 8. MASON PREP teachers will use the pages to provide class overviews, class announcements, homework assignments, a class calendar, and resources such as helpful web sites or downloadable documents. Long-term events such as tests, projects, papers, etc., will be displayed on classroom calendars. MASON PREP parents have similar home pages, which feature links to class pages for every student in the family as well as parent resources.

b. Other components of the website include:

- Calendar features
- The ability for a teacher to e-mail every parent in a class or grade at once.
- A parent resource page featuring downloadable resources such as handbooks, summer work information, field trip information, athletics forms, etc.
- A PTO section, including links and relevant information regarding lunch and uniform ordering.
- A news feature, which will also publish headlines on the site's home page.
- Access to teachers' online gradebooks in grades 5 – 8.
- The ability for the school to communicate with groups of parents by e-mail instead of paper.

c. Parents are asked to update their contact information, particularly e-mail addresses and mailing addresses, by clicking "Edit" in the "MY PROFILE" section on the home page that loads upon logging in to the Mason Prep website. Missing login information can be obtained by calling or e-mailing the main school office (mainoffice@masonprep.org).

d. MASON PREP sends a weekly e-mail newsletter, the Knightly News, to current parents and staff members. This newsletter is designed to keep our families informed while reducing the volume of e-mail communication between MASON PREP and our parents. The Knightly News contains information from the school and from the Mason Prep PTO; this information may be relevant to all grades or to specific grades. The Knightly News should arrive each Sunday afternoon during the school year.

e. Please note that a teacher may create a supplementary class website on another platform, such as Google Classroom, in order to have access to functionality not provided by our school website.

M. Use of Equipment

1. Students will not be permitted to use the school telephones for personal calls before, during, or after school unless approved by the school office. Students need NOT call for a forgotten lunch or homework. Classmates will happily share lunch. **No student may call parents to initiate a change in after school plans except those involving academic matters such as extra help or tutoring.** Parents are asked not to allow a change of plans unless school personnel initiate the change for academic or disciplinary reasons.

2. If a student needs to communicate with a parent during the school day, that communication should take the form of a phone call using an office telephone with permission rather than a text message or a phone call from the student's mobile phone.

3. Students will not be allowed to operate the copy machines.

4. Fax machines are for school business only and are not to be used to fax or receive student work.

5. The school microwave ovens are not for student use.

6. Physical education equipment that is stored in the gym is intended for use only in P.E. classes. Most of this equipment is not intended for outdoor use and is not to be borrowed for use at recess without the permission of a physical education teacher.

N. Lost & Found

Lost items are placed in the gymnasium foyer. **Parents are asked to LABEL THEIR CHILD'S CLOTHING so that it can easily be identified and returned.** Students and parents are asked to check the lost and found items often to keep the amount of clothing at an acceptable level. Volunteers from our PTO occasionally take unlabeled clothing items from the Lost & Found to local nonprofits for resale; parents will be notified in advance when this is scheduled to happen.

VII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General Responsibilities

One of the primary goals of MASON PREP is that our students learn to be responsible citizens and involved learners. We expect each student to:

- Display your best effort and highest level of engagement in every thing you do;
- Show respect for yourself, your parents, your family, your teachers, and your classmates;
- Follow the rules and procedures of Mason Preparatory School;
- Do not lie, cheat, or steal nor tolerate those who do (our Honor Code);
- Learn as much as you can; and
- Have fun.

B. Special Responsibilities

Within any successful community, it is necessary for people to perform services that help everyone in the community. The following is a list of responsibilities and leadership opportunities that will be assigned and available to students throughout the school year:

1. **Morning Announcements:** The Mayor and Mayor pro tem will perform this duty in the morning. On occasion, members of the 8th grade class or city council officers or representatives will assist or fill in for this responsibility.
2. **Flag Detail:** This is a very important duty as our national and state flags must be raised and lowered correctly and on time each and every school day. Each class in grades 4 – 8 is assigned a specific period of time during the year to be responsible for raising, lowering, and folding the flag. A rotating schedule will be written at the beginning of each school year.
3. **Student Greeters:** On occasion it may be necessary to select a small number of students to act as escorts for special events or visitors.
4. Special tasks as assigned by the Head of School or Assistant Head.

C. Eighth Grade Responsibilities

As the class next in line for graduation, eighth graders have the following responsibilities:

- Promote a sense of honor and trust between students, as well as between students and faculty;
- Uphold and follow school rules;
- Set an example as positive role models for the children in the school;
- Assume leadership roles throughout the school;
- Greet kindergarten and first grade students in the morning during the first week of school;
- Act as “Pen Pals” for our youngest students; and
- Leave Mason Preparatory School a better place because of their contributions.

D. Eighth Grade Community Service

Eighth graders are required to perform ten hours of off-campus community service as a requirement for graduation from the school; these hours must be completed between the end of the seventh grade year and the end of the third quarter of the eighth grade year. This program is sponsored by the Director of Guidance, and detailed information will be provided to students and parents at the end of seventh grade.

VIII. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A. In-School Activities

1. **City Council:** The City Council is MASON PREP's student government. Its purpose is to provide student leadership opportunities and to promote the general welfare of the MASON PREP community and the greater community beyond our campus. Students serve as officers and representatives, assisted by one or more faculty advisors. Officers are elected by the student body and faculty in an election held in the spring of each school year. Sixth, seventh, and eighth students are eligible to be elected to one of five officer positions.

a. The City Council is composed of class representatives and five officers. Council officers are elected in a school-wide election in the spring of each school year. City Council officers will come from the sixth through the eighth grades; however, the Mayor must be an 8th grader and the Mayor Pro-Tem may be a 7th or 8th grade student. Students who offer themselves for a school office must: 1) be ready to assume the responsibilities of the office and represent the school in an exemplary manner; 2) be academically qualified, i.e., have an overall year's average of 80 for the year prior to the election, with no D's or F's for the year in any subject; 3) be a citizen in good standing with minimal disciplinary problems.

b. Two City Council representatives will be elected by each homeroom at the beginning of the school year. These representatives are considered the voices of the homeroom members and will report the business conducted in City Council to the homeroom.

c. In addition to leading the City Council meetings and planning, facilitating, and overseeing duties and projects of the council, the school, and classes, the Mayor and Mayor Pro tem assist with morning announcements and help with other tasks where their leadership is needed. The Secretary will record the minutes of City Council meetings, will assist with the creation of City Council announcements, and will carry out correspondence on behalf of the City Council. The Safety Director assists the administration in planning and conducting fire and other safety drills. The Director of Health and Environment facilitates student participation in keeping the school and grounds safe and clean and manages the recycling processes and biweekly pick-up. The latter three officers will help with any other tasks as needed.

2. **Yearbook Staff:** Students in grades 7 and 8 may apply to participate in the staff that creates the school's yearbook.

3. **KNI-TV:** Students in grades 6 – 8 may apply to participate in the twice-weekly student television news broadcast on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

4. **National Junior Honor Society:** The National Junior Honor Society was founded in 1929 "to create an organization that would recognize and encourage academic achievement among middle level students while also developing other characteristics essential to citizens in a democracy. These ideals of scholarship, character, service, citizenship, and leadership remain as relevant today as they were in 1929."

a. The MASON PREP chapter of the National Junior Honor Society follows the guidelines and the criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character set forth in the *National Junior Honor Society Handbook* published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. MASON PREP emphasizes the five criteria as described below:

Scholarship

- 7th grade candidate – has met minimum cumulative average of 93 for 6th grade and first semester of the 7th grade.
- 8th grade candidate – has met the minimum cumulative average of 93 for 6th & 7th grades, and first semester of the 8th grade.
- Members of the Mason Prep chapter of the NJHS must maintain a cumulative average of 93 or higher in order

to remain in good standing. Members whose cumulative averages fall below 93 will be placed on probation after one quarter and will then be removed from the chapter after two quarters of substandard grades.

Leadership

- has held a position of responsibility as a student, i.e., City Council representative or officer, sports team captain, etc. (a “no” answer does not disqualify the candidate);
- demonstrates evidence of leadership in school or community;
- demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities;
- exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals and rules;
- contributes ideas that improve the life of the school;
- maintains and exemplifies a positive attitude;
- inspires positive behavior in others; and
- demonstrates reliability and dependability in any responsibility accepted.

Service

- provides two forms of school or community service (a minimum of two hours per activity is required);
- volunteers assistance willingly and cheerfully, without being prompted; and
- works well with others.

Citizenship

- meets Mason Preparatory School standards of conduct;
- understands importance of civic involvement as demonstrated by participation in school activities ;
- respects the school and its ideals, and obeys school rules;
- respects the authority of persons holding positions of responsibility within the school; and participates maturely in school functions and activities.

Character

- receives criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously;
- consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior;
- cooperates with peers and school personnel, and by complying with school guidelines;
- demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and truthfulness;
- regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others; and
- manifests truthfulness in adhering to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and shows an unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others.

b. Students in grades 7 – 8 may be nominated by faculty members for membership in the MASON PREP chapter.

c. In accordance with the *National Junior Honor Society Handbook*, the selection process is an anonymous process. Nominations are forwarded to a Faculty Council appointed by the Head of School. The council carefully considers each candidate and selects deserving and eligible students for membership based on the criteria listed above.

d. Students selected for membership will be inducted into the chapter at a ceremony early in the third grading period.

e. Any member who falls below the standards of scholarship, leadership, character, citizenship, or service may be dismissed from the school’s NJHS chapter or placed on probation.

6. **Middle School Quiz Bowl:** Students in grades 7 and 8 may try out for this academic team which competes in the SCISA Middle School Quiz Bowl events.

7. **Drama Group:** Details about the 7th/8th grade drama tryouts and production will be provided early in the school year.

8. **Castle System:** During the 2018-19 school year, MASON PREP implemented our own house system, similar to those found in many boarding schools. Tying in with our school team name, the Knights, this system is called the “castle system” at our school. Each student will be randomly sorted into one of four castles upon entering the school and will remain in that castle throughout his or her time at MASON PREP. Points may be awarded by teachers or administrators on a class-wide or school-wide basis in order to positively reinforce desired behavior and acts of good character with a spirit of healthy competition. MASON PREP’s four castles are:

- **Castle Halsey** (inspired by our school’s location on Halsey Boulevard)
- **Castle Hawk** (named after our school’s founder, Mrs Nancy Hawk)
- **Castle Montagu** (inspired by our school’s location on Montagu Street)
- **Castle Starr** (after the middle name of our school’s first headmistress and namesake, Miss Harriett Starr Mason)

B. After-School Activities

1. Various after-school activities are provided according to availability, space, and interest. The schedule of activities will be sent home at the beginning of each semester. The instructor establishes costs, and payments are made to the individual instructors directly. Unless otherwise specified, students must go to their regular pick-up area at 3:05. At the 3:20 P.M. bell, students may go to their activities. If there is a late activity, students **must** check in at Extended Day at 3:05 P.M. and then go to the activity at the specified time.

2. At the end of each activity, students will be dismissed from the main front entrance on Halsey Boulevard unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Students are **never** to wait outside (or inside) for their rides unless they are supervised by a MASON PREP staff member or the adult in charge of the activity. A student who is not picked up within ten minutes after an after-school activity **must** report to Extended Day. If a student knows that he or she should attend extended care following an after-school activity, that student should proceed directly to extended care upon being dismissed at the end of the activity.

C. Extended Day Program

1. The Extended Day Program is a program provided as a convenience for MASON PREP families and students. The program begins at 3:05 P.M. and ends at 5:45 P.M. The Extended Day Program normally begins on the first full school day of the school year and ends on the last full day of the school year.

2. **Check-in procedures:** Students staying for Extended Day should report to their assigned classroom as soon as possible after they are dismissed from their homeroom. Once there, they will be checked in by the Extended Day worker responsible for that class. These students should **NOT** go outside for afternoon pick-up.

3. **Schedule:** A quiet study period is held from 3:05 to 4:00 P.M. to allow students to do homework. Students may participate in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities and games beginning at 4:00 P.M.

4. **Supervisors:** Mason Prep faculty and staff members and selected college students supervise children in Extended Day activities. For the study period, children will be organized by age to prevent children of widely differing ages being together.

5. Extended Day services are provided until **5:45 P.M.** **Parents who do not pick up their children by 5:45 P.M.** will be charged a late fee of \$25.00. Any child who is not picked up by 5:45 on three (3) occasions may not be allowed to continue using Extended Day services.

6. To contact Extended Day personnel from 3:30 P.M. to 5:45 P.M., call 723-8566 (Note: this is a dedicated line for the Extended Day program). Since Extended Day personnel who may answer this line will also be supervising children, use this line **only** if there is an extremely important message. This number is for Extended Day use only and is not to be used during the day for school business.

7. During the first weeks of school when **kindergarten students** are dismissed at 1:00 P.M., Extended Day services will be available to these students beginning after their dismissal.

8. On days that students are dismissed early (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Grandparents’ Day, etc.), and on the day

of the Halloween Carnival, there will be **NO Extended Day** available. Parents will be reminded as to the availability of Extended Day. The last day for Extended Day services will be Friday, May 22, 2020.

9. Bills for Extended Day services will be mailed monthly to parents by the Business Office. The hourly fee is **\$6.50**. Families will be billed for Extended Day charges through the Smart Tuition system. Bills must be current for report cards to be issued. Bills delinquent over one month will result in a monetary penalty from Smart Tuition and the student's ineligibility to stay in Extended Day.

10. A student who is not picked up within 10 minutes after an after-school activity or Detention **must** report to Extended Day. Students may **not** wait outside for their rides unless a MASON PREP staff member or the adult in charge of the activity supervises them.

11. Children of faculty/staff **must** go directly either to Extended Day or to their parents' classroom or office if in the presence of that parent at 3:05 P.M. unless they are being picked up in the car dismissal line. Faculty/staff members must report to the Extended Day check-out area to retrieve their children. These students will not be allowed to dismiss themselves to go to parents' classrooms or offices. Students riding with faculty/staff must also report to Extended Day until the driver is ready to leave campus.

12. A student on an athletic team **MUST** remain in Extended Day until time for team practice **or** until time for the student to leave campus **with** written parental permission. Written parental permission must be on file in the office and with the Athletic Director.

13. Inappropriate behavior during Extended Day will warrant disciplinary consequences and may preclude a student's being allowed to attend Extended Day. Without direct permission from an Extended Day employee, students may not leave Extended Day to go to another area of the school. This includes other classrooms, the gym, lockers, and the snack or drink machines.

14. Parents and other authorized persons picking up students in Extended Day are to go first to the Extended Day check-out area, not to other rooms or areas. A child must be checked out of Extended Day in the foyer inside the main entrance of the school.

IX. STUDENT ATHLETICS

A. School Philosophy

As part of MASON PREP'S mission to provide for the holistic education of its students, a team sports program is available to students in grades K - 8. **Commitment** and **cooperation** are necessities from any and all athletes and their parents. Sports teams at MASON PREP emphasize instruction in skills, team play, and sportsmanship -- not just winning. However, it is understandable that in postseason play, the emphasis may shift more toward striving for victory. The senior teams' focus is to prepare the athlete to make the transition to the high school level of play. Students on all school-sponsored teams are recognized at the Sports Banquet, which is held in May.

B. Athletic Programs

1. The following sports are available to Mason Prep students:

Fall	Volleyball for 5 th – 8 th grade girls
Winter	Basketball for boys in grades 4 – 8 Basketball for girls in grades 4 – 8 Co-ed developmental basketball for grades K – 3
Spring	Co-ed tennis for students in grades 4 – 8 Softball for girls in grades 6 – 8 (with sufficient interest) Co-ed golf for students in grades 6 – 8 (with sufficient interest)

2. Teams for each age group will be formed depending on the number of players who sign up for the sport. Attention

to registration deadlines by students and parents is an important part of the creation of Mason Prep's athletic teams and the assignment of our students to those teams.

3. In order to participate on a MASON PREP athletic team, an updated physical form signed by a physician must be on file with the athletic department. This physical form must have been completed by the physician since the end of the previous school year.

4. Summer camps are offered to MASON PREP students for basketball, soccer, and volleyball. It is recommended for students to attend these camps in order to participate on our school's competitive basketball and volleyball teams.

C. Sportsmanship

1. MASON PREP expects its students, **and their families and guests**, to display good sportsmanlike conduct in all physical activities and at all sports events – on and off the area of play. A good sportsman is defined as a person who is fair and generous and is a good loser and a gracious winner. Sportsmanlike conduct includes support of MASON PREP teams, players, and coaches. Sportsmanlike conduct does not mean negative behavior, words and/or actions, directed toward opponents or referees by players or spectators. Inappropriate behavior at any activity casts a negative reflection on that person, the students/players, and the school and sets a poor example for young people.

2. Individuals (children or adults) who do not conduct themselves appropriately at sports events or other school activities may be asked not to attend or participate in future activities until such behavior is corrected with necessary self-control.

3. Unsportsmanlike conduct exhibited by a player or the player's family members or guests will result in that student being "benched" and removed from play and/or removed from the team.

D. Athletic Awards

1. It is a fact that the sports programs in which Mason Prep students participate involve team competitions. When Mason Prep athletic teams perform well in league or tournament competitions, it is appropriate for the team to receive trophies. In keeping with the philosophy of the school, it is appropriate to recognize individual achievement as well. However, also in keeping with the school's philosophy that recognition should be measured and not inflated, athletic awards should be limited to an appropriate number.

2. MASON PREP has established the following individual awards for athletic achievement for each team:

a. **The Team Player Award:** This award is presented to the athlete who contributes to building a strong team foundation. The qualities encompassing this award are team spirit, positive attitude, participation, timeliness, and acting as a good role model for everyone on the team and to competitors.

b. **The Dedication and Determination Award:** This award is presented to the athlete who shows he/she is prepared to compete every time he/she steps onto the court or field, who gives 100% effort both in practice and in matches/games to advance his/her level of play, and who responds to positive criticism from coaching staff.

3. Due to the nature of the program, individual awards are not presented to players in the K – 3rd grade developmental basketball league.

E. Athletic Handbook

The Athletic Director will provide additional information regarding athletic guidelines in an Athletic Handbook.

X. PARENT SUPPORT

A. Philosophy and Expectations

Students are the most important constituents at any school. Obviously, due to the ages of students at MASON

PREP, our students cannot always choose the best courses of action as they attempt to navigate the educational process. That being said, it is MASON PREP's philosophy that teachers and parents must work in harmony to ensure the best interest of each and every child. Harmony is best achieved through regular and honest exchanges of information. Doubtless there will be occasions where not everyone is happy with a particular incident, action or decision but if we work together from a perspective of mutual interest, the chances are that we will arrive at the best course of action for our children. Simply put, we need you and you need us! Our expectation is that, as parents, you will communicate your concerns in a timely manner and we, as administrators and teachers, will do the same. Our teachers always appreciate a formal meeting, i.e., one scheduled in advance, and our teachers will communicate with you before a problem has reached the point of criticality.

B. Communications with the School

In order to ensure that each student has a successful school year, it is vital that both the school and the parents are communicating on a regular basis. Parents who have a concern about their child should contact the child's teacher as soon as possible. If the problem is one of a social nature, it might be helpful to contact the Guidance Director in addition to the teacher. If the problem is with another area of the school, the concern should be first addressed **with the person in charge of that area**. Even though this procedure is informal, in the interest of common courtesy, it is required that meetings be scheduled in advance, so that all involved parties can be fully prepared and can give the concerns their full attention.

C. Field Trips. Field trips are intended to reinforce and supplement the academic curriculum. Since by their very nature these activities take students away from school, it is also an opportunity for unique, fun experiences for our students. MASON PREP encourages parental participation in our field trips. Each trip is planned by a coordinating teacher who is in charge of the event from start to finish. He/she will set the requirements for chaperones and attempt to equitably distribute the selection of parents.

D. Chaperone Responsibilities. Parents are usually needed to help chaperone students on school field trips. The teacher responsible for coordinating the trip will ask for a specific number of chaperones, and parents are welcome to express their interest in serving as a volunteer. It is customary for a parent to be given responsibility for a group that includes their child. Responsibilities of a chaperone include:

1. Oversight and supervision of a small group of students.
2. Ensuring that students follow the rules and schedule of events as established by the coordinating teacher. Chaperones must not modify the itinerary without the approval of the coordinating teacher.
3. Ensuring that all children in the group are afforded restroom breaks and opportunities to eat and/or drink when needed.
4. Ensuring that all children remain with their assigned group.
5. Ensuring that children's behavior is appropriate.

E. Chaperone Responsibilities for Overnight Trips. In addition to the responsibilities listed above, chaperones for overnight trips must:

1. Submit the necessary paperwork for a background check by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and a national background check.
2. Participate in the Stewards of Children training developed by Darkness to Light, either online or in person. VIRTUS training through a Catholic church is an acceptable substitute for the Stewards of Children training.

F. Driver-Chaperone Responsibilities

A driving responsibility is a significant addition to the responsibilities of a chaperone. As a driver, the chaperone is responsible for the supervision and safe transportation of assigned children for the duration of the field trip. Additional responsibilities include:

1. Possessing a current South Carolina driver's license and automobile insurance and showing same to the coordinating teacher or main office prior to the start of the trip.

2. Ensuring that students wear seat belts or are in booster seats (when required) at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
3. Having a map and itinerary in case the vehicle becomes separated from the main group.
4. It is also strongly recommended that each driver have access to a mobile telephone for emergency communications.
5. Parents acting as field trip drivers must not make unscheduled stops on the way to the field trip or on the way back to school. Parents must not play videos for students riding in their vehicles.

G. Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is the formal mechanism for focusing the collective talent and energy of parents and teachers. An effective PTO is neither apathetic nor overbearing; ideally, the PTO is a vibrant group of individuals who work together to achieve common goals that directly benefit or improve a particular facet of the school. MASON PREP is very fortunate to have such an organization! While it is not possible for everyone to devote dedicated time to PTO activities, please consider some way in which **you** might contribute to PTO efforts. Our children and the school will most certainly benefit from your involvement!

H. Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed and are encouraged to help in many ways. Many volunteers work on planning special school events while some work on special projects being considered by the PTO Board or school administration. Many parents give presentations on their careers or participate in the Homeroom Parent program. Whatever your talents or interests, MASON PREP needs you and welcomes your time and support. Your support of MASON PREP is always appreciated, and we look forward to a wonderful year.

MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Student and Family Handbook
2019 - 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We have read and understand the contents of the 2019-2020 Mason Preparatory School Student and Family Handbook. We understand that students and families must respect the policies, procedures and routines of the School in order for the School to pursue its mission and better fulfill its goal of excellence in holistic education of each student, the development of the student into a productive citizen and the cultivation of respect, integrity and personal responsibility. We acknowledge and affirm the Honor Code, the MASON PREP PLEDGE and the Student Code of Ethics as fundamental values of Mason Preparatory School. We also acknowledge the detailed academic and behavioral expectations and the reporting responsibilities described herein. We have signed the Disclaimers in duplicate and understand and agree that all signed documents (whether duplicate or not) will have the same force and effect. We have read the Handbook and Disclaimer and acknowledge that this Handbook is a guideline and is not a contract with Mason Preparatory School.

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Grade for School Year 2019 – 2020 _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

_____ Date _____

Do not return this page

Do not return this page. It should remain with your handbook. A duplicate that should be electronically signed for each student is part of the annual start-of-school form packet that is accessible through our Knightline parent portal.

Code
Pick-up curved drive only
Pick-up Bull Street only

