

310 Cony Road  
Augusta, Me 04330  
(207) 480-7917

**Student & Parent Handbook for**  
**Maine Arts Academy Middle School**  
**2025-2026**

The Maine Arts Academy Student and Parent Handbook is intended to guide students and parents or guardians in the operations of the school. Policies contained herein have been approved by Maine Arts Academy Board of Directors.

***Mission Statement***

“Providing a rigorous academic and well rounded visual and performing arts curriculum, educating students in grades 7-12, from across the State of Maine”

***Vision Statement***

Nurturing the next generation of leaders to become invaluable citizens at the heart of Maine’s cultural, economic and social well-being.

***Tag Line***

Create. Learn. Lead. Maine’s only public arts school for grades 7-12.

***Authorization and Governance***

MeAA operates statewide under the authorization and oversight of the Maine Charter Commission and the MeAA Board of Directors.

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*Policies and procedures listed in this handbook may be changed without prior notice at the discretion of the Maine Arts Academy, hereinafter referred to as MeAA in this handbook.*

## **Admission**

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### ***Program Scope***

MeAA is a full-time, public middle school serving students in grades 7-8. Full-time status is defined as students enrolled in 8 or more courses each semester. Exceptions to this may be granted by the Head of School. All students will be classified under public school status.

Currently, MeAA is available to students who qualify for public school funding in the State of Maine. Foreign exchange students may enroll after open enrollment is completed.

### ***Non-Discrimination Policy***

MeAA, under the governance of the MeAA Board of Directors, complies with all applicable federal and state rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or veteran status. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the Head of School, Maine Arts Academy, 310 Cony Road, Augusta, ME 04330.

MeAA is a publicly-funded school. Currently, students who are, or will be, residing in the state of Maine for the academic year are eligible to attend.

Families must provide at least one of the following documents during the enrollment process in order to demonstrate residency; however, students who are unable to demonstrate a fixed residence will not be denied admission:

- ❖ Copy of a utility bill with a home address within the state
- ❖ Copy of a housing agreement with a home address within the state
- ❖ Other documents as accepted by MeAA on a case by case basis

### ***Special Education***

Maine Arts Academy will ensure that the needs of children with disabilities are met in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws. Maine Arts Academy is designated as a local education agency (LEA) for purposes of meeting special education requirements pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). As such, MeAA will comply with all requirements of Maine's Unified Special Education Regulation (Chapter 101) applicable to school administrative units. MeAA will participate in all MODE-required monitoring activities,

and submit all data and information deemed necessary by the MDOE in order to fulfill its general supervisory authority over special education in a timely manner.

Families who have questions regarding special education at Maine Arts Academy should contact the Special Education Coordinator, Special Education Teacher, or the Principal. Policies regarding Special Education can be found on the Maine Arts Academy Website.

### ***Section 504 Plan***

MeAA shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). Any facilities of MeAA shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA.

Students who qualify for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan (“Section 504 Plan”) or are currently receiving accommodations or other services, are admitted as general education students meeting the minimum admission requirements. The administration will review all Section 504 Plans and discuss with the parent/guardian the accommodations required by the student.

Further, MeAA will comply with the MeAA Board of Directors’ policy outlining the requirements for identifying and serving students with a Section 504 Plan. MeAA recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of MeAA. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning is eligible for accommodation by MeAA.

### ***Suspended/Expelled Students***

In the case of a student who has been expelled or suspended or is the subject of an expulsion or suspension proceeding, Maine Arts Academy administrative unit may deny admission or participation in public school programs, facilities or activities as part of an equivalent instruction program pursuant to section 5021. **Is this where we’d put a policy for holding back a student?**

### ***Transfer Credits***

Students may transfer in credits from a public or private school after a careful review of transcripts by the Principal.

Homeschooled students must provide proof of registration with the state as a homeschooler in order for MeAA to accept transferred credits and show proof of qualifying academic credits and work.

**Title 20-A: EDUCATION**  
**Part 3: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
**Chapter 207-A: INSTRUCTION**  
**Subchapter 2: ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OR MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

**§4711. Elementary/Junior High School Course of Study**

The basic course of study for the elementary schools must provide for the instruction of all students in life and career readiness, English language arts, world languages, health education and physical education, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and visual and performing arts, as described in the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements subject to the schedule specified in section 6209. Health education must include instruction that addresses the relationship between physical and mental health in order to enhance student understanding of attitudes toward and behavior relating to mental illness and to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness. [PL 2021, c. 190, §1 (AMD).]

***Enrollment Process and Application***

The online enrollment application may be accessed on the MeAA website. The enrollment application collects parent information, student information, as well as background demographic, and requests for records. The MeAA website provides additional instruction to applicants.

Enrollment Applications are date/time stamped and processed in the order in which the forms are received. Students who have completed the initial application process can expect to hear from MeAA within two weeks.

The MeAA open-enrollment for current students begins on January 1st until March 15th. After March 15th, if current students have not submitted an application for re-enrollment, they may have to be placed on the waiting list should a lottery be required.

***Age Levels of Student Enrollment***

Grade level is determined by the student's birthday and age as of October 15 as well as completed course work for the previous grade level. Students will remain in the calculated class for enrollment and state assessment purposes for the duration of the school year.

October 15 deadlines:

8th Grade=Age 13

7th Grade =Age 12

***Registration/Course Selection***

MeAA personnel will schedule each student in the courses which meet the student's academic

progress and graduation requirements. Students are provided detailed course information to help them establish graduation plans. All courses are approved by the school administration.

### ***Civil Rights, Discrimination and Appeals Process***

In accordance with Federal and State OCR (Office for Civil Rights) Guidelines, any student who believes that MeAA, or any of the school's staff, instructors, and/or administrators have inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 (sex/gender), and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability) may make a complaint which shall be referred to as a formal grievance. However, whenever possible and practical, an informal solution to the complaint is encouraged and should be attempted with the MeAA Executive Director.

### ***Complaint Procedure:***

1. Any student who believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report his/her concern promptly to the Dean of Students. Students who are unsure whether discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the Dean of Students.
2. School staff is expected to report possible incidents of discrimination or harassment of students. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students.
3. Students and others will not be retaliated against for making a complaint. Any retaliation by students or school staff will result in disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion or dismissal.
4. Students are encouraged to utilize the school unit's complaint procedure. However, students are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6050) and/or to the federal office for Civil Rights, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, SW McCormack POCH Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557 (telephone: 617-223-9622).

*If an informal acceptable solution cannot be attained*, the student shall reduce the complaint to writing and formal Title IX and Section 504 grievance procedures shall commence. The complainant may file her/his complaint directly with the Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education, and/or use the internal grievance process set forth as follows:

1. If the student's parents/legal guardians are dissatisfied with the resolution, an appeal may be made in writing to the administration within 14 calendar days after receiving notice of the resolution. The Head of School shall review the investigation report and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate. The Head of School's decision shall be final.

2. If the student's parents/legal guardians are dissatisfied with the decision of the Head of School, an appeal may be submitted in writing within 14 calendar days after receiving notice of the decision. The Board will consider the appeal in executive session, to the extent permitted by law, at its next regular meeting or a special meeting. The Head of School shall submit the investigation report and any other witnesses or documents that he/she believes will be helpful to the Board. The student, his/her parents/legal guardians and his/her representative shall be allowed to be heard. The person(s) against whom the complaint was made shall be invited and allowed to be heard. The School Board's decision shall be final.

## **Instruction and Curriculum**

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### ***Staff Qualifications***

Teachers at MeAA must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- ❖ Hold a bachelor's degree or graduate degree and obtain a Maine state teacher's certification
- ❖ Approved criminal history record check and fingerprinting (CHRC)

MeAA shall abide by all applicable Maine State Department of Education Teacher Certification requirements as outlined in the Title 20-A, Chapter 502.

MeAA shall maintain licensure and personnel records in the format specified by the Maine State Department of Education (MDOE). This documentation can be provided to the MDOE upon request or can be made available for examination upon 24 hour request.

### ***Course Assignments***

Teachers are assigned to teach courses for which they hold current Maine certification with proper endorsements or are classified as adjunct faculty.

### ***Alignment to State Standards***

MeAA courses are aligned to Maine and national standards as required by state law.

## **Academic Operations**

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### ***Course Approval***

The principal is authorized to grant approval for courses requiring administrative approval as a prerequisite for enrollment.

### ***Add/Drop Period***

Students may add or drop courses during the first two weeks of the course for year-long courses and within the first week for semester-long courses.

### ***Course Load***

At minimum, students are required to take seven classes, which includes both arts and core academics. Permission to take fewer than seven courses granted on a case-by-case basis by the principal.

### ***Low-Enrollment Courses***

Some courses are dependent upon enrollment. Students will automatically be enrolled in an alternate course if their original course choice is not offered or at maximum capacity.

### ***Credit for Courses***

Credit for coursework completed at MeAA is based on a letter grade system which represents demonstrated proficiency in the Maine Learning Results and National Arts Standards. A grade of 69 percent or below is not passing.

### ***Change of Student Information***

Students are required to inform the main office of changes in address, telephone number, emergency contact(s), or any other important directory information within two (2) school days of the change. If a student moves out of the state of Maine, the student will be immediately transferred to their resident state.

### ***Voluntary Withdrawal***

To voluntarily withdraw a student from MeAA, parents/guardians (or students who are 18 years of age or older) should notify the school administration as far in advance of the withdrawal as possible. All requests for transfer of student records will be initiated by the school in which the student will be enrolled. Official school records must be delivered from MeAA to the sending school. A parent must put in writing a formal withdrawal with proof of where the student will be attending.

### ***Hardware & Materials Use and Return***

Laptops issued by MeAA to students will be returned to the school, or the student will be charged and report cards/transcripts will be held. If laptops are not returned, legal action will be taken. All students must complete and return MeAA's computer and acceptable use policy before receiving a school laptop. Furthermore, any materials lent out to students (e.g., textbooks, music books, equipment, etc.) must be returned by the student's last day, or the student will be charged for a replacement.

### ***Progress Reports & Report Cards***

Progress reports will be generated and mailed home at the mid-semester point each semester. Report cards will be generated and mailed following the end of each semester.

### ***Transcripts***

All Transcript requests should be in writing with 2 weeks notice. Transcripts will be forwarded to colleges, educational institutions, and/or employers to which students are applying.

### ***Student Privacy***

MeAA, in compliance with Federal Laws 93-308 and 93-568, presents these facts for the information of parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and students.

1. Student records are open for review and inspection by parents/guardians or students 18 years of age or older. Students 16 years of age or older or who are emancipated have the right to give informed consent regarding their records, with some exceptions. Information regarding students 14 years of age or older with HIV/AIDS or a sexually transmitted disease may be released by the student only.
2. Appointments may be made at the Main Office for viewing cumulative records of grades, and/or achievement test scores.
3. MeAA, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), have adopted a policy regarding student education records and the release of student information. This policy is set forth in the FERPA section of this handbook.

### ***Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information***

Parent(s) or guardian(s) who do not want personally identifiable information (otherwise known as directory information) contained within a student's educational records made public may file a written objection with the MeAA Executive Director or principal regarding the public release of such information within ten (10) calendar days following notice of these rights to students.

## **Grading and Testing**

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### ***Grading Policy***

Grading policies are in compliance with applicable state of Maine and school guidelines.

### ***Course Retake for Grade Replacement***

Students who have already received credit for an academic course may not receive credit again for the same course. Students are able to take arts courses repetitively because each course progresses to a higher level each year.

### ***Attendance and Grading***

Attendance may be credited as a percentage of the final grade in each class. If a student has missed ten class periods of the same class or ten days in a semester, the teacher may refuse acceptance of make-up assignments caused by absences. Students will defer to individual course syllabi regarding late work deadlines. Teachers may not accept late submissions after a certain time period outlined in their course syllabi.

Notice needs to be given to the office no later than 1:00 pm if a student is being dismissed to go with another student via bus or pickup. This also pertains to students taking a bus they are not regularly scheduled for.

### ***Grade Scale/Grade Point Value***

Credit for coursework completed at MeAA is based on the following grading system and the demonstrated proficiency or mastery of learning standards required for graduation. Final grades for each course will be averaged into the GPA. Honors, early college and AP classes are based on a 5 point GPA scale and all other classes are based on a 4 point GPA scale.

#### **Grading Policy:**

<b>A+</b>	97-100
<b>A</b>	93-96
<b>A-</b>	90-92
<b>B+</b>	87-89
<b>B</b>	83-86
<b>B-</b>	80-82
<b>C+</b>	77-79
<b>C</b>	73-76
<b>C-</b>	70-72
<b>F</b>	69 -0 Not passing

**High Honors** = A average (93 +)

**Honors** = B average (83 +)

### ***Class Rank***

Class rank for seniors will be determined by March 30th. Class rank information will be published on the student's transcript and designated as official class rank.

### ***Late Assignments and Work-at-Home Days***

Students are required to hand in work by the teacher's designated due date.

Students are required to complete work assigned on *Work-at-Home-Days* and hand it in by the next day. If a student does not have internet access, special arrangements can be made to complete the assigned work.

All special education services are provided on *Work-at-Home-Days* through synchronistic electronic meetings. Students are assigned a designated time to meet and work with the special education teacher.

### ***Appeals Process***

Students wishing to appeal a final grade in a course must follow the appeals process within 7 days, including:

- ❖ Identify in writing any assignments that he/she would like re-evaluated.

- ❖ Explain in writing why the student believes the grade on each of the identified assignments should be revised.
- ❖ Submit identifications and explanations to the course instructor in writing.

### *Standardized Assessments*

All students enrolled and attending 7-8 grade at MeAA will participate and take part in all district and statewide assessments developed by the Maine Department of Education and Charter Commission, as well as any assessment developed by the United States Department of Education or the Maine Legislature to implement the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) assessment requirements.

### **Conduct and Discipline**

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#### *Student Code of Conduct Overview*

MeAA faculty and staff believe in creating a school community that is safe and welcoming for everyone. The educational opportunity at MeAA is a partnership between the student, family, and educational team. MeAA uses Restorative Practice techniques to redirect behavior on most first offenses. Using this approach helps students build positive relationships and partner with other individuals to find ways to “right the wrong.” Examples of interventions may include: method of apology, researching the impact of a behavior, writing a paper/creating a presentation about research, loss of privileges, or behavior contract. Although MeAA strives to use restorative practices, drug use, vaping and any illegal substance results in an immediate suspension.

Issues within the classroom are first dealt with by the teacher. If a warning is ignored and the behavior continues, the student will be referred to the Dean of Students. The teacher will submit a referral which states the nature of the problem.

The student will meet with the Dean of Students to review the incident and develop a plan using an internal intervention to return to the class, which may include communication with the parent/guardian.

With each additional referral, the student will be assigned a consequence or disciplinary step to be determined based on the student’s behavior and the relationship of this behavior to the student’s community and fellow students. Additional referrals may result in suspension from school, and the need for a conference between the student, parent/guardian, and principal to develop a plan for return to class.

It should be noted that there are instances where this process may be altered. Behaviors such as violence toward others, bullying, harassment, intimidation, disrespect toward instructors, non-compliance, and other behaviors that a staff member deems as disruptive to an orderly learning environment, may result in an automatic referral to the Dean of Students and could lead to suspension or expulsion.

To ensure a positive school community, the following Code of Conduct, broken down into various components, is what is expected from students who choose to attend MeAA.

### ***Transportation***

Maine Arts Academy understands that students like to go to other students' houses. Some of our buses are full, so we request advanced notice. Your student will be given a Bus Notice to present to the bus driver prior to boarding.

Students are prohibited from riding the bus to another student's bus stop if the other student was absent from school that day. If you are requesting a Bus Notice for a student, please include your student's name, the name of the student they will be traveling with, the date, the bus hub and emergency contact information for that day.

### Rules for Students on the Bus

- **Bus Driver/and or Administration:** Must be obeyed at all times. The driver has the authority to assign seats and make new rules, if necessary.
- **Stay Seated:** Remain in your seat with your back against the seat and bottom on it, facing forward, for the entire trip.
- **Keep it Inside:** Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.
- **Clear the Aisles:** Keep your feet and bags out of the aisle to ensure it remains clear.
- **No Disruptions:** Do not shout, throw items, or otherwise disturb the driver or other riders.
- **Personal Space:** Respect others' personal space and property.
- **Safety Equipment:** Do not tamper with bus controls or safety equipment, including emergency exits.
- **Cell Phones:** Silent Mode-Headphones strongly encouraged when listening to your personal electronic devices.
- **Language:** No foul language.
- **Trash:** Trash in the trash can as you exit. If you bring it on the bus, it is your responsibility to remove it from the bus.
- **Gum:** No gum chewing on the bus.
- **Food:** Food and drinks may create a choking hazard while riding a bus.
- **No inappropriate actions** between students.

- **No tobacco or drug** use of any kind.
- **All school rules** must be followed per the Student Handbook.
- **Seating:** Middle school students will sit in the front of the bus and high school students will sit in the back of the bus. There will be a clear separation of seating.

**ALWAYS BE KIND!**

***Use of Illegal Substances, drugs, vaping or possessing drug/vaping paraphernalia.***

The following is the disciplinary procedure for any type of illegal substances, drug use, vaping or possessing drugs or vaping paraphernalia including, pods, vape juice, vape drops etc...

First Offense: Suspension for 5 days

Second Offense: Suspension for 7 days

Third Offense: Suspension for 10 days and possible expulsion

***Policy***

**JICI - TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL**

**Tobacco-Free Policy Rationale:**

Maine Arts Academy is dedicated to providing its students, staff and visitors with a safe and healthy environment to learn, work and play. Tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Maine and the United States. Research has shown that students addicted to tobacco products do not learn as well because they are focused on the need for more tobacco versus learning. Maine Arts Academy has adopted a tobacco-free campus policy that prohibits the use of all tobacco products in school buildings, facilities, on school buses and at school sponsored events. This policy reflects and emphasizes the hazards of tobacco use, will assure compliance with laws, protect school community members from secondhand smoke and demonstrate tobacco-free lifestyles.

**Policy Statement:**

To support and model healthy, tobacco-free lifestyles and to create an environment free of tobacco smoke, Maine Arts Academy has adopted the following tobacco-free policy effective 3/7/19.

All school buildings and property shall be tobacco-free at all times that school events are in session. This also includes all functions taking place on school grounds or events sponsored by

the school. The policy applies to all staff, students, visitors and families. The policy extends to school buses and all leased or owned vehicles.

The policy applies to the smoking or use of all tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, spit and smokeless tobacco chew, snuff, electronic cigarette, vape products and other nicotine delivery systems.

Possession of any tobacco products is prohibited by students and others under the age of 18 on school property, in school vehicles and at school-sponsored functions. Students are prohibited from wearing clothing or gear that includes tobacco brands, including e-cigarette or electronic nicotine delivery system brands.

- The sale, distribution or promotion of tobacco products and paraphernalia is prohibited on school grounds and at all school functions.
- Advertising of tobacco products is prohibited in school buildings, on school property and in all school publications.
- Tobacco industry and tobacco retailer sponsorships of school activities or functions is prohibited.

## *Policy*

### **JIC - Student Code of Conduct**

Ethical and responsible student behavior is an essential part of the educational mission of our school. To that end, the Maine Arts Academy School Board has developed this system-wide Code of Conduct with input from school staff, students, parents, and the community. The Code defines our expectations for student behavior and provides the framework for a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment.

#### Article 1 - Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior

The Code of Conduct is intended to support and encourage students to meet the following statewide standards for ethical and responsible behavior:

- Respect
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Responsibility
- Courage

## Article 2 - Code of Conduct

All students are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct and all related Board policies and school rules. The Code applies to students:

- On school property;
- While in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity;
- During virtual or synchronous instruction; or
- At any time or place that such conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline, general welfare of the school, or directly interferes with another student's ability to learn.

## Article 3 - General Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policies

The following expectations for student behavior are fundamental to a safe, orderly and respectful environment in our schools. Each student should:

- A. Be courteous to fellow students, staff, and visitors;
- B. Respect the rights and privileges of other students and school staff;
- C. Obey all Board policies and school rules governing student conduct;
- D. Follow directions from school staff;
- E. Cooperate with staff in maintaining school safety, order, and discipline;
- F. Attend school regularly;
- G. Meet school standards for grooming and dress;
- H. Respect the property of others, including school property and facilities;
- I. Refrain from cheating or plagiarizing the work of others; and
- J. Refrain from vulgarity, profanity, obscenity, lewdness, and indecency.

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary consequences depend upon the seriousness of the violation and the student's prior disciplinary record. Consequences will range from a verbal warning for minor misconduct up to and including expulsion for the most serious offenses. Behavior that also violates the law may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

## Article 4 - Expectations

The following is a summary of Maine Arts Academy's expectations for student behavior. In many cases, the Board has adopted policies that address these expectations in greater detail. Students, parents, and others should refer to the policies and student handbooks for more information about the expectations and consequences. In case of an inconsistency between the Code of Conduct, Board policies and/or school handbooks, Board policies will prevail.

#### A. Violence and Threats

Students will not engage in violent or threatening behavior. Prohibited behavior includes fighting, assault and/or battery, taking hostages, threats to commit violence against persons or property, or threats, intimidation, or harassment. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

#### B. Weapons

Students will not possess or use weapons of any kind (examples include but are not limited to firearms, explosives, and knives). Students also will not use any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person (examples include but are not limited to bats, lighters, tools, and toy weapons). Firearms violations will result in expulsion in accordance with state and federal statutes; other weapons violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

#### C. Hazing

Hazing is prohibited. Maine law defines injurious hazing as any action or situation, including harassing behavior that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school. No student will plan, encourage, or engage in such activities in connection with any school program or activity, including extracurricular, co-curricular, and athletic activities. Students who engage in hazing activities are subject to suspension, expulsion, and/or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

#### D. Discrimination and Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Students will not discriminate against other students on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability. Nor will students harass one another on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity and familial status or disability. Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Harassment is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

#### E. Drug and Alcohol Use

Students will not distribute, possess, use, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug, or look-alike substance as described in Board policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

#### F. Tobacco/Nicotine Use

Students will not smoke, use, possess, sell, or distribute any tobacco/nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes and vaping devices. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school.

#### G. Conduct on School Buses

Students must comply with all Board policies and school rules while on school buses. Students who violate these policies and rules on a school bus may have their riding privileges suspended or revoked, and may also be subject to additional disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, depending upon the particular violation.

#### H. Computer/Internet Use

Students may use school computers, networks, and Internet services only for educational purposes. Students will comply with all policies and rules governing acceptable use.

Unacceptable use may result in suspension or cancellation of computer privileges as well as additional disciplinary and/or legal action.

#### I. Extra Curricular Activities

Students must follow all Board policies and school rules while participating in extracurricular activities. Students who violate Board policies and/or school rules may be subject to suspension or removal from the activity as well as additional disciplinary action under applicable Board policies and/or school rules.

### Article 5 - Removal of Disruptive/Violent/Threatening Students

A. Students who are disruptive, violent, or threatening death or bodily harm to others may be removed from classrooms, school buses, or other school property when necessary to maintain order and safety. The staff member who orders the student removed should arrange to have the student escorted to the office or other designated location.

B. If a student does not comply with a staff member's order to leave, the staff member will contact an administrator, or, if not available, another suitable person, who will respond promptly.

C. Staff members are not required to take action that puts them at risk of serious injury.

D. The responding administrator will take appropriate action. If the student fails to obey verbal directions, force or restraint may be used only to the minimum extent necessary to protect any person from imminent physical harm and must comply with current restraint and seclusion policies and procedures. The administrator may invoke the school's crisis response plan if appropriate.

## Article 6 - Special Services

### A. Referral

Maine Arts Academy has adopted policies and procedures for determining when a student will be referred for special services.

### B. Review of Individual Educational Plan

The school will schedule an IEP meeting to review the IEP of a student who has been removed from class when:

- (a) school officials and/or the parent believes the student may present a substantial likelihood of injury to himself/herself or others;
- (b) the class removals are sufficient to constitute a change in the student's special education program; or
- (c) school officials or the parent believes that the student's behavior may warrant a change in educational programming.

### C. Restraint and Seclusion

Maine Arts Academy also has established a policy on the use of restraint and seclusion.

## Article 7 - Referrals to Law Enforcement Authorities

The administrators have the authority to seek the assistance of law enforcement authorities when there is a substantial threat to the safety of the schools, students or staff. Administration may also inform law enforcement authorities when they have reason to suspect that a student or staff member may have violated a local, state, or federal statute. Serious offenses will be reported to law enforcement authorities.

## Article 8 - Dissemination of System-Wide Student Code of Conduct

The system-wide Student Code of Conduct will be distributed to staff, students, and parents through handbooks and/or other means selected by the administrators.

### **Policy Communication**

This policy will be communicated through a variety of efforts to educate students, school staff, parents and visitors. The policy will be listed on the school website and printed in employee and student handbooks.

### **Policy Enforcement**

Everyone is required to comply with Maine Arts Academy tobacco-free policy. Enforcement of this policy will follow the standard procedures of the school for each group as laid out below. All school staff are expected to enforce the policy under the direction of the administration.

**Student Violations:**

The Administration shall develop age-appropriate disciplinary guidelines for students violating this policy. Strategies may include confiscating tobacco materials and paraphernalia, notifying family, providing tobacco education and referral to tobacco treatment along with:

The following disciplinary procedure for any type of illegal substances, drug use, vaping or possessing drug or vaping paraphernalia including, pods, vape juice, vape drops etc...

Suspension for 5 days

Suspension for 7 days

Suspension for 10 days and possible expulsion

**Other Adult/Visitor Violations:**

Visitors, including families, to the school facility must comply with regulations set forth by Maine Arts Academy. Persons found to be using tobacco products will be asked by school officials to refrain from use while on school property. They will be informed of the tobacco-free policy. Persons who do not comply will be asked to leave the property. If they refuse to leave, law enforcement may be called and they could be charged with trespassing.

**Tobacco Treatment Support:**

Information regarding tobacco treatment resources, such as onsite counseling and the Maine Tobacco Helpline (1-800-207-1230) will be made available for tobacco users who are interested in quitting.

Approved: March 7, 2024

***Use of Language and Images***

Students must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs or acts in written or oral communications, including email, discussion board, listserv, virtual classroom, student websites, phone apps, or in photographs. Students are prohibited from posting content from or links to suggestive, lewd or otherwise inappropriate websites. Students are prohibited from using any electronic device to search for, post or use vulgar, abusive, pornography at school. If the device is school-owned, this policy also applies to at-home use along with the technology agreement. Parents are responsible for providing a laptop for the student if the school-issued laptop is removed due to misuse.

***Dress Code***

Appropriate attire shall be worn at all school activities. Appropriate is defined as not causing a disruption to the academic environment. Certain courses may require specific types of attire, but shall not require specific brands of attire.

The following is a list of guidelines for appropriate attire, which is subject to change by school

administration at any time.

1. Wearing appropriate/safe footwear is required.
2. Clothing must not be see-through and cover undergarments.
3. Clothing must cover midriff over naval but can be cropped.
4. Clothing must not reference alcohol, drugs, gangs, profanities or disrespect groups or individuals.
5. Length of shorts and skirts: must be fingertip length when arms are resting at your side
6. Clothing must be appropriate for daytime but pajamas are acceptable.
7. Clothing and shoes must be safe to wear.
8. No costumes will be worn to school unless it is a designated costume day.

Students are encouraged to dress and prepare for all weather conditions.

Failure to adhere to the Academy's dress code will result in the following:

*First offense:*

Meeting with student, verbal warning, parent contact, and request to change/cover inappropriate attire

*Second offense:*

Written warning, parent contact, request to change/cover inappropriate attire, and in-school suspension

*Third offense:*

Meeting with parents/guardians, in-school or out-of-school suspension, and behavior action plan for student to return to classes appropriately

### ***Cell Phone Use***

Cell phone use by students is permitted between classes and at lunch. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or have them out during academic times. Students will be required to store their phones in a receptacle in the classroom per the teachers' instruction. Students not adhering to this policy will be asked to turn in their phones to the teacher, the front desk, or the Dean of Students. Failure to do so will result in a referral to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action.

### ***Personal Respect***

MeAA administrators, instructors, and students know that personal respect is the foundation of learning. Language, comments, or images that show a lack of respect for individuals or groups will be addressed by the individuals involved and then with intervention from the

Dean of Students as deemed necessary.

### ***Defiance & Insubordination***

Students should follow the requests of school staff; failure to do so is defiance toward school personnel or rules. Defiance is defined as defying instructions of school personnel, the bold resistance of school authority, and/or contemptuous behavior or attitude that is manifested by breaking of school rules. Acts of defiance may result in disciplinary action including in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion.

### ***Transportation***

Students utilizing MeAA transportation (van, bus, etc.) are expected to behave appropriately and respectfully en route to and from school and at transportation hubs. Failure to do so will result in a warning, action such as assigned bus seat, and may result in the loss of transportation. No eating will be allowed on the buses.

### ***Bullying***

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention in Schools

#### **I. Introduction**

It is our goal for MeAA to be a safe and secure learning environment for all students. It is the intent of the MeAA Board to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the Board has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

Bullying and other forms of peer mistreatment are detrimental to the school environment as well as student learning, achievement and well-being. Peer mistreatment interferes with the mission of the school to educate its students and disrupts the operations of the school. Bullying and other forms of peer mistreatment affect not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior. These behaviors must be addressed to ensure student safety and an inclusive learning environment.

It is not the Board's intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others, or from engaging in civil debate. However, the Board does not condone and will take action in response to conduct that interferes with students' opportunity to learn, the educational mission of MeAA, and the operation of the school.

#### **II. Prohibited Behavior**

The following behaviors are prohibited:

1. Bullying;
2. Cyberbullying;
3. Harassment and Sexual Harassment (as defined in board policy ACAA);
4. Retaliation against those reporting such defined behaviors; and
5. Making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior.

Any person who engages in any of these prohibited behaviors that constitutes bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions. **If a student engages in bullying or cyberbullying outside of school hours, but it affects the school climate, the school may take disciplinary action against the student.**

### **III. Bullying and Cyberbullying Defined**

“Bullying” and “Cyberbullying” have the same meaning in this policy as in Maine law:

A. “Bullying” includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a student or students that:

(1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:

1. (a) Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property; or
1. (b) Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property;

**OR**

(2) Interferes with the rights of a student by:

1. (a) Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or
1. (b) Interfering with the student's academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school;

**OR**

(3) Is based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based on a student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, and that has the effect described in subparagraph (1) or (2) above. (These behaviors might also meet the criteria for harassment as defined in board policy ACA: Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students.)

Examples of conduct that may constitute bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, or demeaning humor;
2. Behavior that is likely to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others, including but not limited to gossip, spreading rumors, and social exclusion;
3. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidations such as use of aggressive, menacing, or disrespectful gestures;
4. Threats of harm to a student, to his/her possessions, or to other individuals, whether

transmitted verbally, in writing or electronically.

5. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money, or involuntary loans or donations;
6. Blocking access to school property or facilities;
7. Stealing or hiding books, backpacks, or other possessions;
8. Stalking; and
9. Physical contact or injury to another person or his/her property.

B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device, including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device and personal digital assistant.

Examples of conduct that may constitute cyberbullying include, but are not limited to the following actions on any electronic medium:

1. Posting slurs or rumors or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, disparaging, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material about a student on a website, an app, in social media, or any other electronic platform;
2. Posting misleading or fake photographs or digital video footage of a student on websites or creating fake websites or social networking profiles in the guise of posing as the targeted student;
3. Impersonating or representing another student through the use of that other student’s electronic device or account to send email, text messages, instant messages (IM), phone calls or other messages on a social media website;
4. Sending email, text messages, IM, or leaving voicemail messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to bombard the target’s email account, IM account, or cell phone; and
5. Using a camera phone or digital video camera to take and/or send embarrassing or “sexting” photographs of other students.

C. “Retaliation” means an act or gesture against a student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. “Retaliation” also includes knowingly falsely reporting an act of bullying.

D. “Substantiated” means that the outcomes of the investigation on the Responding Form (JICK-E2) provide clear evidence to prove that bullying or cyberbullying, as defined in policy, did occur.

E. “Alternative discipline” means disciplinary action other than suspension or expulsion from school that is designed to correct and address the root causes of a student’s specific misbehavior while retaining the student in class or school, or restorative school practices to repair the harm done to relationships and persons from the student’s misbehavior.

#### **IV. Application of Policy**

A. This policy applies to any student, school employee, contractor, visitor or volunteer who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying or retaliation, all of whom have the responsibility to comply with this policy.

B. This policy applies to bullying that:

1. Takes place at school or on school grounds, meaning: a school building; property on which a school building or facility is located; and property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training. "School grounds" also includes school-related transportation vehicles.
2. Takes place while students are being transported to or from schools or school-sponsored events;
3. Takes place at any school-sponsored event, activity, function, program, instruction or training; or
4. Takes place elsewhere or through the use of technology, but only if the bullying also infringes on the rights of the student at school as set forth in this policy's definition of bullying.

#### **V. Reporting**

*Refer to the Reporting Form – JICK-E1*

Bullying or suspected bullying is reportable in person or in writing (including anonymously) to school personnel.

A. School staff, coaches and advisors for extracurricular and cocurricular activities are required to report alleged incidents of bullying to the Dean of Students or other school personnel designated by the superintendent. Any other adult working or volunteering in a school will be encouraged to promptly report observed or suspected alleged incidents of bullying to the building principal or school personnel designated by the superintendent.

B. Students who are believed to have been bullied or are aware of incidents of bullying are strongly encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

C. Parents and other adults who believe that an incident of bullying has occurred are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

D. Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an alleged incident of bullying are prohibited. Any student who is determined to have knowingly falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **VI. Responding**

*Refer to the Responding Form – JICK-E2*

The Dean of Students, principal or a superintendent's designee will:

- A. Promptly [OR: within 3 days] investigate and respond to allegations of bullying behavior;
- B. Keep written documentation of all allegations of bullying behavior and outcomes of the investigations, and report alleged and substantiated incidents to the superintendent;
- C. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) who was alleged to have bullied AND of the student(s) who was believed to have been bullied that a report of an alleged incident of bullying has been made;
- D. Communicate to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student(s) who was believed to have been bullied the measures being taken to ensure the safety of the student(s) who was believed to have been bullied and to prevent further acts of bullying;
- E. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of their own child's involvement in the findings of the investigation and actions to be taken;
- F. Communicate with local or state law enforcement agencies if it's believed that the pursuit of criminal charges or a civil action under the Maine Civil Rights Act may be appropriate.

## **VII. Remediation**

*Refer to the Remediation Form – JICK-E3*

The school principal or a superintendent's designee will:

- A. Identify the specific nature(s) of the incident.
- B. Apply disciplinary actions, which may include but are not limited to, imposing consequences that include appropriate discipline. In determining the appropriate response to students who engage in bullying behavior, school administrators should consider the type of behavior, the frequency and/or pattern of behaviors, and other relevant circumstances.
- C. Remediate any substantiated incident of bullying to counter the negative impact of the bullying and reduce the risk of future bullying incidents, which may include referring the victim, perpetrator or other involved persons to counseling or other appropriate services.

## **VIII. Appeal**

Notification shall be provided to parent(s), guardian(s) and students of the right to appeal a decision of a school principal or a superintendent's designee related to taking or not taking remedial action in accordance with this policy. The appeals procedure must be consistent with other appeals procedures established by the school board and may include an appeal to the superintendent.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 254 (11-A)

20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(15), 6554

Maine Public Law, Chapter 659

Cross Reference:

AC - Non Discrimination, Equal Opportunity  
ACAA - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students  
ACAA-R – Student Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure  
ACAD – Hazing  
AD – Educational Philosophy/Mission  
ADAA – School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior  
CHCAA - Student Handbooks  
GCI – Professional Staff Development  
IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety  
JI - Student Rights and Responsibilities  
JIC - Student Code of Conduct  
JICC - Student Conduct on Buses  
JICIA - Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
JK - Student Discipline  
JKD - Suspension of Students  
JKE - Expulsion of Students  
JRA-R – Student Education Records and Information Administrative Procedures  
KLG - Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Adopted: April 4, 2017

***Staff Limited Use of Recording Devices***

Staff and administrators may use audio and/or videotape for legitimate educational or administrative purposes, including but not necessarily limited to:

- evaluating learner and/or staff performance;
- developing learner or staff skills through self assessment;
- accommodating the needs of learners or staff with disabilities; or
- other professional development opportunities.

Learners may video for instructional purposes under the supervision and with prior authorization of administration.

Video or audio tape recordings of learners' instructional programs or activities are confidential learner records protected under FERPA. Staff is prohibited from the use of audio and/or video recording meetings, conferences, or personal conversations without the consent of all parties. Where parent to staff conversations may be recorded with one party consent, staff must notify the Executive Director. Disclosing the content of any electronic recording of in-person

communication without the consent of all parties could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### ***Learners & Parents Limited Use of Recording Devices***

Learners may use audio and/or videotape recording for legitimate educational or instructional purposes under the supervision and with prior authorization of administration. Learners are not able to upload, post, or share audio, video, or photos without permission from administration. Disclosing the content of any electronic recording of in-person communication without prior authorization of administration could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Video or audio tape recordings of learners' instructional programs or activities are confidential learner records protected under FERPA. Learners and parents are prohibited from the use of audio and/or video recording meetings, conferences, or personal conversations through technology platforms, school grounds, in the school building or any school provided transportation without the consent of all parties.

Parents shall be permitted to audio record any IEP meeting regarding their child at their own expense. Schools may also audio record (or video record for families who are deaf or hard of hearing) IEP Meetings in which case the recording becomes an educational record subject to the provisions of Chapter 101 under M.U.S.E.R.

### ***Plagiarism***

MeAA students are expected to uphold the highest regard for academic integrity and honesty. Cheating (giving or receiving information) and plagiarism (submitting work that is not cited or original to the student) on any class assignment may result in a zero grade for the assignment without the opportunity to complete an additional assignment to make up for lost points. Please note that using AI as a source of information is subject to teachers' classroom policies per their syllabi.

1. The following procedure governs identification and discipline for instances of academic dishonesty when work has been borrowed but not cited from the original author.

First Offense: The teacher will meet with the student and parent and notify the Dean of Students. The student will not receive credit for the plagiarized assignment. In addition, he or she will be required to review the plagiarized lesson and complete the plagiarized lesson for 70% of the original points.

Second Offense: The student and parent will attend a conference with the Dean of Students. The student will not be allowed to rewrite the assignment.

Continued Offenses: Failure of the course.

2. The following procedure governs identification and discipline for instances of academic dishonesty when work has been given or received by cheating instead of completing the work

on their own.

First Offense: The teacher will meet with the student and parent and alert the principal. The student will receive a zero for the assignment.

Second Offense: The student and parent will attend a conference with the principal. The student will receive a zero for the assignment.

Third Offense: The student will fail the course.

Fourth Offense: The student may be suspended or expelled from school.

### ***Academic Freedom/Student Rights***

In addition to other rights established by law, each student served by MeAA shall possess the following substantive rights, and no school district shall limit these rights except for good and sufficient cause:

- ❖ No student shall be unlawfully denied an equal education opportunity or be unlawfully discriminated against because of national origin, race, religion, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration or a physical, mental or sensory handicap.
- ❖ All students possess the constitutional right to freedom of speech and press, the constitutional right to peaceably assemble (see Freedom of Assembly) and to petition the government and its representatives for a redress of grievances, the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and to have their schools free from sectarian control or influence, subject to reasonable limitations upon the time, place and manner of exercising such right.
- ❖ All students possess the constitutional right to be secure in their persons, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures.
- ❖ All students shall have the right to be free from unlawful interference in their pursuit of an education while in custody of a common school district.
- ❖ No student shall be deprived of the right to an equal educational opportunity in whole or in part by a school district without due process of law.
- ❖ The foregoing enumeration of rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage other rights set forth in the constitution and the laws of the State of Maine or the rights retained by the people.

### ***Technology Usage***

MeAA has done due diligence to protect students' personal information and to guard against cyber predators by installing anti-virus software and security settings on each MeAA issued student computer. Students are responsible for installing updates and patches for anti-virus software. Students must not change the security settings of the computer or remove any identifying codes on the equipment.

Students must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement governing their use of the on-loan hardware,

the internet and email.

Students who are found to be in breach of the Acceptable Use Agreement, or have been withdrawn from the school, must return the computer to MeAA. Students/families who do not comply with the return request will be liable for the cost of the computer. Parents are also responsible for providing a laptop for their child if the school-issued laptop is taken away due to misuse.

Cell phone use by students is permitted between classes and during non-academic times. Students are not permitted to use cell phones during academic times. Students not adhering to this policy will be asked to turn in their phones to the teacher who will then turn it into the office for the remainder of the day. Failure to do so will result in a referral to the principal for further disciplinary action.

### ***Campus Boundaries***

MeAA has boundaries on campus and as such, students who are found away from the academic campus are considered out-of-bounds, which may result in disciplinary action. At no time are students permitted anywhere on campus without supervision.

### ***Discipline - Appeal Process***

A parent or student has a right to appeal disciplinary action. If an appeal is desired, a letter must be received by the school district office within ten (10) school business days with an official request for an appeal hearing.

### ***Re-admission***

A student who has earned a long-term suspension or expulsion from MeAA and wishes to be considered for entrance or readmission to MeAA must appeal to the MAA Board of Directors. In the case of expulsion, entrance or re-admission will be considered based on review of the offenses resulting in expulsion and a review of the student's re-entry plan and according to MeAA policy and Maine law.

### ***After School Events & Activities***

In order to attend after-school events and activities, students must be present in school that day, if the event or activity occurs on a school day. Students arriving after lunch will not be permitted to participate in the event or activity without administrative permission.

Students will not be permitted to attend extra-curricular school events if they have a behavior infraction within the week of the event that rises to a level II or level III infraction on the behavior rubric.

Students must also submit the after-school agreement form into the main office 1 week before they are planning on staying after school hours with a signature from the teacher responsible for supervising the event, parents and principal.

### ***Media Use and Publishing***

Parents/Guardians must sign a form in order for MeAA to not publish videos, photographs or any social media posting of their child. The school will assume that it is okay to make publications, if the parent has not notified the school in writing.

## **Record Keeping**

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### ***Records to be Maintained***

MeAA will maintain and store the following records:

- ❖ Student Information Forms/Demographics
- ❖ National and State Assessment Results
- ❖ Student Transcripts

### ***Records Storage***

Records will be stored in accordance with state standards and MeAA policies.

### ***Attendance Tracking***

MeAA tracks attendance for State and Federal reporting. Within the State of Maine, the following measures are tracked:

- ❖ Instructional Hours
- ❖ Attendance
- ❖ Student Behavior Data

### ***Instructional Hours***

MeAA will implement a school that provides students with the state required instructional hours per year. All courses have been and will be audited to ensure they meet this criteria and evidence of that audit will be recorded. Audit records are maintained by MeAA.

School assemblies, student orientations, testing, parent-teacher conferences, and other instructionally related activities directly involving students may be included in the required instructional hours.

### ***Work at Home Days***

Work at home days are defined as any days that are school cancellation days due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. On these days, students will have assigned work and will be signing in synchronistically through Google. If the student does not sign into Google Meet as required, they will be marked absent. **If the work is not completed as scheduled, the student will be assigned after school hours or a learning center.** If the student does not have access to the internet, special arrangements can be made to extend the due date of the work that needs to be submitted within 24 hours of the work-at-home-day or per teacher assigned due date.

### ***Attendance Policy***

As a Maine public school, Maine Arts Academy (MeAA) must adhere to the same attendance requirements as other public schools. MeAA follows the laws of the State of Maine regarding

procedures of absences. Accordingly, the following are MeAA's policies for tracking student attendance and, when necessary, reporting truancy. Truancy is considered any time a student has accumulated ten absences or seven consecutive absences.

If a student leaves without spending at least a half-day in school or comes in late after the half-way time mark, they will be marked absent for the day.

Unexcused absences are absences which do not meet the Maine State criteria or were not reported in a proper and/or timely manner. A student should not have more than 10 unexcused absences in a school year or they will be considered TRUANT. Absences can be excused for various reasons, including:

- Physical, mental, or behavioral health.
- Medical or legal appointments.
- Religious holidays.
- Family emergencies.
- Approved personal or educational purposes.
- Disruptions caused by homelessness.

Maine Arts Academy will only approve one pre-planned vacation per student for not more than 5 days if this vacation is planned during a non vacation week.

If a student falls under the definition of Truant, Maine Arts Academy will assess their grade level for the future year.

Teachers have the right to supersede this absentee policy in their syllabi and have the liberty to fail a student who does not meet their attendance policy.

If your student is absent from school, please call MeAA to report the absence by 8:30 a.m. If your student arrives late or leaves early for an appointment, please send a note to school with your student with proof of the appointment. Documentation from the source of the appointment will ensure the absence is excused.

If a student knows he/she is going to miss three or more consecutive school days, administration must be notified by the parent/guardian via phone or email. If the absence is due to illness or injury, a doctor's note will be requested.

If a student is taking an educational vacation, please let the school know ahead of time.

### ***Student/Parent Satisfaction Surveys***

As part of our continual school improvement process, MeAA will distribute, and collect

satisfaction surveys from students/parents about their experience with various aspects of their school experience annually through the Maine Charter Commission. Data collected in surveys will be considered the property of MeAA. Results shall be reviewed at least annually during MeAA Board meetings.

## **Materials and Technology**

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### ***Inventory Identification***

All hardware belonging to MeAA is clearly marked with an inventory identification tag or label. Any hardware bearing an inventory identification tag or label is “on loan” to the student for the semester or the school year. School materials (such as books and software) are also “on loan” to the student for the semester or the school year. Identification tags and labels should not be removed. Students will be billed for any loss of damaged equipment. Students who damage instruments including pianos will be responsible for any costs incurred.

### ***Insurance Coverage***

School insurance will not cover stolen, lost, or fire-damaged equipment. MeAA highly recommends adding the laptop to the parent’s/student’s homeowners/renters insurance policy. MeAA also provides information about laptop insurance.

Without the insurance protection against stolen, lost or fire-damaged equipment, the student and their family are financially responsible for replacement costs for any equipment damaged by fire, lost or stolen. All technology packages must be insured up to \$2,000.

## **Food Service Policies**

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**For the 2025/2026 school year, all meals are FREE for Students. The policy below is when/if the State of Maine changes the policy for free food for all students.**

**Free status** students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day.

**Reduced status** students will be allowed to receive a breakfast for \$.00 and lunch for \$.00 each day.

**Full pay students** will be allowed to receive a breakfast and lunch for the School’s published standard rate each day which is FREE for the 2023/2024 school year.

Although meals will be free to all students this school year, parents’ completion of the free and reduced lunch application helps inform Maine Arts Academy of its progress toward schoolwide and academic goals.

**The School** will have designated staff in attendance at each meal time to monitor and track meals served. The School will maintain electronic tracking of all meals served, as well as, keep physical copies of meals consumed daily.

### **Reason for Policy**

The goal of the School is to provide students and staff with healthy meals each day. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program.

### **Forms and Instructions:**

Application for Free and Reduced Meals can be requested from the School or online at [Student Eligibility & Applications | Department of Education](#).

### **Additional Information:**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g.Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the Agency where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

The Maine Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, religion, ancestry or national origin.

If you wish to file a discrimination complaint electronically, please select File a Complaint and complete an intake questionnaire. Before completing this process it may be helpful to review relevant links under Guidance. If you are not sure how the Maine Human Rights Act may apply

to, you please review the publication "What It Is! How It Works!". Maine is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## **FERPA Policy**

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### ***NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

- A. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day Maine Arts Academy (MeAA) receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- B. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask Maine Arts Academy to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the Maine Arts Academy decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Maine Arts Academy will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- C. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school unit as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; person or company with

whom the school unit has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the Maine Arts Academy discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- D. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Maine Arts Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

- E. Maine Arts Academy may make public at its discretion personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without parental consent if that information has been designated as directory information by the school. This school unit has designated the following information as directory information: the student's name, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletes, and honors and awards received.

Such information will not be disclosed if the parent of the student informs the school unit in writing within 10 days of the first student day of the school year or within 10 days after enrollment that such information is not to be designated as directory information with respect to that student. Any such notice should be sent to the Executive Director at the following address:

Maine Arts Academy  
310 Cony Road  
Augusta ME 04330

- F. Federal law permits military recruiters and institutions of higher learning to request and receive the names, addresses and telephone numbers of high school students upon request, unless the student's parent or eligible student notifies the school unit that he/she does not want such information released. Such information will not be disclosed if the student's parent or eligible student notifies the school unit, in writing, that such information should not be released without his/her written consent. Any such notice should be sent to the Executive Director at the following address:

Maine Arts Academy  
310 Cony Road  
Augusta ME 04330

- G. Under Maine law, Maine Arts Academy shall not publish on the Internet without written parental consent any information whether directory or otherwise, that identifies a student, including but not limited to the student's full name, photograph, personal biography, email address, home address, date of birth, social security number and parent's names.

## **Emergency Information**

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- A. The objectives of Maine Arts Academy emergency operations program are to protect the lives and well-being of students and staff through the prompt and timely response of trained school personnel in an emergency.
- B. To meet these objectives, the school has established a comprehensive emergency operation program. The State Police also do practice training on the school campus when school is not in session.
- C. Full emergency policy available upon written request.

### **It is the responsibility of Maine Arts Academy officials to:**

1. to protect students and staff from the effects of hazardous events
2. to provide inservice emergency response training
3. conduct drills and exercises
4. integrate procedures with local emergency responders and businesses
5. address the general functions that may need to be performed during an emergency situation
6. establish an incident command system to manage emergencies

## **Additional Information**

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### ***Middle School Recess***

1. Respect Others

- Use kind and appropriate language.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Include others in games; no bullying or teasing.
- Listen to and follow directions from staff.

## 2. Stay in Designated Areas

- Remain within the assigned recess boundaries at all times.
- Ask permission before leaving the playground or blacktop area.
- Do not enter the building without a pass or permission.

## 3. Use Equipment Safely

- Use playground equipment as it is intended (e.g., feet-first down slides).
- No climbing on fences, roofs, or outside structures.
- Share equipment and take turns fairly.

## 4. Play Fair and Follow Game Rules

- Follow the agreed-upon rules for games and sports.
- No rough play, tackling, or aggressive contact.
- Accept outcomes gracefully—no arguing or fighting.

## 5. Dress Appropriately for the Weather

- Wear proper shoes (closed-toe preferred) and clothing for outdoor play.
- Bring coats or jackets when it's cold; sunscreen or hats when it's sunny.

## 6. Food and Drink

- No eating or drinking on the playground unless permitted by staff.
- Clean up after yourself—throw trash in bins.

## 7. When the Whistle Blows / Bell Rings

- Stop playing immediately and listen for instructions.
- Line up or walk to class promptly and quietly.
- Return equipment if used.
- Clean up after yourself—throw trash in bins.
- Return any dishes necessary to the kitchen
- No throwing food/No food fights
- Stay seated in designated areas
- Be respectful of others
- Use an inside voice
- Listen to lunch duty teachers
- Walk at all times
- Wait your turn in line. No pushing or skipping in the line.
- Please bring a nutritious lunch with NO energy drinks/Soda

## *Field Trips*

### **RULES:**

- **Stay with the group:**  
Students should always remain with their assigned group and chaperone, especially in unfamiliar or crowded locations.
- **Listen to instructions:**  
Pay close attention to directions from teachers, chaperones, and any guides at the destination.
- **Respect the environment:**  
Don't touch exhibits or objects without permission, and be mindful of nature and surroundings.
- **Be aware of hazards:**  
Pay attention to posted signs, potential dangers, and any warnings from supervisors.
- **No wandering off:**  
Students should not wander away from the designated group or designated areas.
- **Follow bus rules:**  
Stay seated, keep aisles clear, and follow the driver's instructions.

### **RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR:**

- Be polite and courteous: Use good manners, be respectful of others, and show appreciation to those who are guiding the trip.
- Keep noise levels appropriate: Be mindful of noise levels, especially on the bus or in quiet areas.
- Clean up after yourself: Don't litter and dispose of trash properly.

### **ADDITIONAL TIPS:**

- *Dress appropriately:*  
Wear comfortable clothing and shoes suitable for the weather and activities.
- *Pack essentials:*  
Bring necessary items like sunscreen, insect repellent, and any necessary medications, which **MUST** be given to MeAA staff upon arrival at school.
- *Communicate any needs:*  
Inform supervisors about allergies, medical conditions, or any specific needs.
- *Stay hydrated and fed:*  
Bring snacks and water, and follow designated eating and drinking areas.
- *Have fun and be engaged:*  
Participate in activities, ask questions, and enjoy the learning experience.

### **PERMISSION:**

- All students will be required to turn in their permission slips by the field trip deadline or they will not be able to attend.
- Students must be passing all classes and not be truant to participate in field trips



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & SIGNATURE PAGE**

**Please sign and return to your homeroom teacher.**

**Student**

**I have read and understood the expectations and requirements of Maine Arts Academy.**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian**

**Please read and then sign and date below saying that you have read and understood the expectations and requirements of Maine Arts Academy.**

**Parent or Guardian's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

