

Merced Scholars Charter School Policies



MSCS POLICY - #2000

SCHOOL POLICIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) adheres to all policies adopted by the Merced County Office of Education (MCOE). Said policies take precedent over any MSCS policies.

MSCS Policies

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MSCS POLICY - #2001 ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Expectations for Maximizing the Use of Academic Support Resources:

Many academic support workshops are in place. It is an expectation that students who fall below B in any academic course attend these sessions to ensure excellence in learning. Students with a D or failing grade in any academic course are required to attend the academic support session appropriate for their educational needs, as prescribed by their assigned Personalized Learning Teacher. All juniors and seniors, who have not passed the CAHSEE, must attend the CAHSEE support classes.

Violation of this policy will result in placement on a student improvement plan and may result in dismissal from the school.

All students enrolled in math at MSCS are required to utilize the ALEKS tutorial program for a minimum of 30 minutes per week which will be tracked and recorded by their assigned Personalized Learning Teacher. If students do not have access to a personal computer with internet access, they will be required to add this time to their weekly personalized learning session to utilize the computer lab for their required ALEKS time.

Violation of this policy will result in a 10% drop in their weekly math grade.

MSCS POLICY - #2002 AVAILABILITY OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Expectations for Provision of Support Programs:

MSCS will provide support classes/programs in such areas as Spanish, Algebra, Biology, etc. These programs will be offered to any and all interested students.

The offering of such support classes/programs is for the benefit of the students and to assist parents with home schooling responsibilities. It is of great importance that the classes/programs are of the highest quality and this involves a commitment of time and resources. In order to ensure that the classes and programs offered make the best use of time and resources, the following policy will be implemented:

- When a minimum of eight eligible students and/or parents request a program it will be given consideration.
- Once offered, the program will remain in place providing the average attendance is a minimum of five eligible students.

Cancellation of classes may result when the following occurs:

- Classes/programs being offered fall below the minimum attendance.
- No student attendance two weeks in a row.
- This cancellation policy does not apply to CAHSEE classes.



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**MSCS POLICY - #2003
A-G CREDIT PROCESS
(Amended Effective July 1, 2008)**

Expectations for Achievement of A-G Credit:

MSCS courses were approved by the University of California (UC) for A-G credit in the fall of 2007. Based on this UC decision, Policy #2003 is hereby amended to read as follows:

MSCS students may elect to take MSCS classes that meet standards for college entrance. There will be specific UC A-G guidelines and requirements.

Upon approval of the MSCS Administration, MSCS students may be given high school credit for Merced Community College or other Community College courses. These courses must be transferable to a university and the grade must be an A, B or C.

MSCS students may access their educational enhancement budget to pay for Community College textbooks. These must be returned to the school at the end of the semester.

MSCS students may access their educational enhancement budget to pay all or part of the tuition for an on-line University of California or California State University class.

The following criteria will apply:

1. Student must be making successful progress in MSCS courses, as determined by the personalized learning teacher and the parent.
2. The course must be approved by the MSCS administration and the student's personalized learning teacher.
3. The student must be in grade 10, 11 or 12.
4. Payment must be made directly to the provider or vendor.
5. Proof of completion of the course will be required. If the student fails to complete or pass the course, he/she will be required to reimburse the fees to the Charter School.

Failure to complete or pass the course followed by failure to reimburse the fees may result in withholding of diploma.

(Items 4 and 5 are required to be in compliance with California Constitution, Article XVI, Section 6.)

MSCS has received approval for UC credit for the following courses:

CATEGORY A: HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE

1. Cultural Geography (9th Grade)
2. World History (10th Grade)
3. U.S. History (11th Grade)
4. American Government (12th Grade)

CATEGORY B: ENGLISH

1. English I (9th Grade)
2. English II (10th Grade)
3. English III (11th Grade)
4. English IV (12th Grade)

CATEGORY C: MATHEMATICS

1. Algebra I
2. Geometry
3. Algebra II

CATEGORY D: LAB SCIENCE

1. Biology

CATEGORY E: LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH

1. Spanish I
2. Spanish II

CATEGORY F: VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

1. Fine Art

CATEGORY G: COLLEGE PREPARATORY ELECTIVES

1. Spanish III
2. American Economics (12th Grade)

MSCS POLICY - #2004 ATTENDANCE/LEARNING SESSIONS/ASSIGNMENTS REQUIREMENTS

Weekly/Bi-monthly Personalized Learning Session Attendance:

MSCS students are required to attend weekly and/or bi-monthly meetings with their assigned teacher. A designated time and day will be set between student and assigned teacher. These will be set upon initial enrollment to the school. It is expected that the student will arrive on time and attend every session. Flexibility of scheduled time is only allowed for emergencies and at the discretion of the Personalized Learning Teacher. Students are required to call in advance when absent for an emergency. Assigned work is due within twenty-four hours. A new appointment time will be scheduled by your Personalized Learning Teacher which the student will be required to attend.

Violation of this policy will result in loss of privileges, reduction in grades, and may result in dismissal from the school.

Assignment of Weekly vs. Bi-monthly Personalized Learning Sessions:

It is the mission of Merced Scholars to provide a personalized education for every student and to ensure that students earn mastery level of the California State Standards. To this end, students will be evaluated based on their ability to meet academic and responsibility requirements. Students who are achieving B or above grades in academic work, may be placed on a two-week assignment pattern at the discretion of their teacher.

Failure to meet standards (falling below a “B” average), may result in student being required to return to weekly meetings until consistent improvement is evident.

Expectations for Completion of Weekly and/or Bi-Monthly Assignments:

MSCS students are required to have all assigned work completed with a grade of C or better at the designated time of their Personalized Learning Session.

Incomplete, illegible, and sloppy work is not acceptable or tolerated and will not provide any credit. Late work will immediately drop the grade by one complete letter.

If a student misses two sequential meetings with their assigned Personalized Learning Teacher due to illness, a doctor’s note will be required.

Violation of this policy will result in loss of privileges, reduction in grades, and may result in dismissal from the school.

MSCS Policy - #2005 BEHAVIOR/CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Expectations for Student Behavior/Conduct:

MSCS is committed to provide a safe and orderly environment that allows for high quality teaching and learning practices. The following broad principles, if honored by all, will lead to personal achievement for all students and ensure that every student at MSCS is a success.

It is expected that all students will comply with the following Behavior Expectations:

1. Attend Personalized Learning sessions on time with work completed.
2. Actively support and participate in required and voluntary activities including labs, fieldtrips, seminars, workshops, and other sponsored events.
3. Accept responsibility for your education, decisions, and actions.
4. Act in a way that best represents your school, parents, community, and self to promote a safe and healthy learning environment.
5. Be active in the school and community.
6. Maintain a balance between academics, co-curricular activities, and community projects, continually giving your best effort to each.
7. Support your fellow students in their endeavors and activities.
8. Respect cultural diversity, individuality, and the choices and rights of others.
9. Conduct regular meetings with your parents to assist in your learning, review your progress, and communicate school-related information.

MSCS POLICY - #2006 COMPLETING OWN WORK

Expectations of Student Completing Own Work:

Students are expected to practice responsible and honest behavior. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated at Merced Scholars Charter School and are listed below:

- Cheating on tests, homework, or grading of assignments
- Fabrication (any intentional falsification or invention of date, citation, or other authority in an academic exercise)
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Plagiarism (stealing and passing off as one's own the words or ideas of another)
- Theft or alteration of materials

Violation of this policy will result in:

First Offense: The student will lose all credit for the assignment and/or test with no makeup permitted. If the assignment is a standard in the course, the standard must still be completed to the appropriate performance level. Parents will be contacted and violation may result in loss of school privileges.

Second Offense: The second offense of academic dishonesty in any course, in any year, will result in the student being dropped from that course with a grade of "F" and no credit will be given. Parents will be contacted and there will be a loss of school privileges.

Third Offense: The third offense of academic dishonesty in any course, in any year, will result in a grade of "F" for that course and dismissal from MSCS.

MSCS POLICY - #2007
COMPUTER USE POLICY
(See also, E-Mail Policy, Internet Policy)

Computer Use Policy:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 1016---
Computer Use Policy.

MSCS POLICY - #2008 DRESS FOR EMPLOYEES

Expectations for Staff Appearance:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 3002--- Employee Appearance.

It is expected that staff dress is a manner which will maintain a professional image and provide a model for students. It is also important to dress appropriately and safely for the job being performed. Therefore, in situations where an employee might be required to run, intervene with student behavior, or supervise students under conditions that require strenuous physical activity, it is recommended that closed toe shoes with backs be worn.

Staff should refrain from wearing revealing blouses, very short skirts, shorts that are less than six inches above the knees, and shirts or blouses that have sexual, violent or otherwise inflammatory or derogative writings.

Failure to comply with this dress code will result in the staff member being asked to change clothing.

MSCS POLICY - #2009 DRESS FOR STUDENTS/PARENTS

Expectations for Student/Parent Appearance:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 3002--- Employee Appearance

When attending MSCS classes or school-sponsored events (e.g. field trips, testing or programs), students and parents will be expected to dress in acceptable and modest attire conducive to learning and maintaining a respectful school climate.

Examples of inappropriate dress include, but are not limited to:

- Visible underwear (boxers, thongs, bra straps)
- Exposed midriff or cleavage
- Clothing or accessories that could be construed to demonstrate gang affiliation
- Strapless tops UNLESS layered under outer clothing
- Any pointed metal, lengthy chains or sharp studded jewelry
- Clothing that advertises inappropriate language, alcohol, tobacco, suggestive content, illegal substances, or causes a perceived threat to others
- Clothing that in any way expresses profanity
- Bare feet
- No gang attire

Failure to comply with this dress code will result in the student or parent being asked to change clothing.

MSCS POLICY - #2010 DUAL CREDIT FOR COLLEGE COURSES

Expectations for Dual College/High School Credit:

MSCS Students will be allowed dual credit for college courses passed with a grade of C or better. A total of ten high school credits will be awarded for three units of college credit. Prior to taking the college class, the student will meet with his/her assigned Personalized Learning Teacher to develop an academic plan reflecting the value of the college course. Upon completion of the course, the student will present a copy of the official grade to their Personalized Learning Teacher. At that time, credit will be recorded.

Failure to follow the procedure will result in denial of high school credit.

MSCS POLICY - #2011 EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Procedures for Funding of Educational Enhancement Activities:

The Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) will create an educational enhancement activities budget in the amount of \$300 per average daily attendance per year. The purpose of this budget will be to provide funds to supplement the cost of educational activities that broaden and enhance student knowledge. These activities will include, but not be limited to:

- Music, drama, art lessons
- Physical education
- College or university classes

All activities must be tied to an appropriate MSCS course outline that is aligned to California State standards and qualifies for elective or core academic credit (units). To be eligible for these funds, a student must be passing every class with a grade of C or better. Activities must be supervised by a qualified service provider who will work with school instructional staff to develop a plan that meets credit requirements. It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal to meet with any proposed service provider and review qualifications for service agreement. Prior to approval, all service providers must be cleared by the Department of Justice (i.e. fingerprinted). Costs for fingerprinting will be covered by MSCS. Once approved by the Vice Principal, the student's Personalized Learning Teacher (PLT) will be responsible for developing and monitoring the Service Contract Instructional Plan that will document alignment to standards to demonstrate appropriate credits. The PLT will monitor student progress weekly. The process for accessing these funds will be conducted under two phases.

Phase One:

- Each school year, prior to October first, each student will complete an application form for the use of the funds.
- Each application will be reviewed by the Charter School Administration and, if appropriate, approved.
- MSCS will enter into a contract with the service provider.
- Providers will submit invoices to the Career and Alternative Education Department (CAE) of Merced County Office of Education (MCOE).
- CAE will make arrangements to remit payment of appropriate invoices. Payment must be made directly to the provider or vendor per California Constitution, Article XVI, Section 6.
- Proof of completion of the course will be required. If the student fails to complete or pass the course, he/she will be required to reimburse the fees to the Charter School. Failure to complete the course followed by failure to reimburse the fees may result in withholding of diploma.

Phase Two:

After October first, if there are remaining funds, any student may submit an application for their use.

A committee composed of one administrator and two teachers will review the applications and approve on a first-come, first-serve basis until the funds are depleted.

- MSCS will enter into a contract with the service provider.
- Providers will submit invoices to the Career and Alternative Education Department (CAE) of Merced County Office of Education (MCOE).
- CAE will make arrangements to remit payment of appropriate invoices. Payment must be made directly to the provider or vendor per California Constitution, Article XVI, Section 6.

Proof of completion of the course will be required. If the student fails to complete or pass the course, he/she will be required to reimburse the fees to the Charter School. Failure to complete the course followed by failure to reimburse the fees may result in withholding of diploma.

Failure to comply with the process will result in loss of access to funds.



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MSCS POLICY - #2012
E-MAIL
(See also Computer Use Policy, Internet Policy)

E-mail Policy:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 1016---
Computer Use Policy.

MSCS POLICY - #2013 ENROLLMENT POLICY

Procedures for Enrollment:

The Merced Scholars Charter School will actively recruit a diverse student population from Merced County and the surrounding areas who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy. Admission to the school shall be open to any resident of Merced County who demonstrates the ability to succeed in a home school non-classroom based model of instruction.

Prospective students and their parents or guardians will receive orientation regarding the school's instructional and operational philosophy and will be informed of the school's student-related policies. The school will establish an annual recruiting and admissions cycle which shall include reasonable time for the following: (a) outreach and marketing, (b) orientation sessions for parents and students, (c) an admissions application period, and (d) enrollment. The school may fill vacancies or openings that become available after this process using either a waiting list or any other non-discriminatory process.

In the event that the number of students seeking admission to any grade or class exceeds the school's capacity, the school shall have the right to grant priority in admissions to siblings of current students and residents of the charter-granting county. Additional new enrollees will be determined by a public random drawing.

Students selected through the lottery will have 30 days to sign a commitment letter to indicate that the pupil will attend the school. If the signed commitment letter is not returned within the allotted period of time, the School will proceed to offer enrollment to the next student on the waiting list created through the lottery process. After the school year has begun, applications for enrollment will continue to be accepted and date/time stamped on a rolling basis, with students accepted for enrollment on a basis of available capacity,

Enrollment Procedures:

- Parent and students must attend an orientation
- All students must complete testing to assist with placement
- Parents are expected to attend an enrollment conference
- Teacher, parent and student will sign an agreement at the first meeting

Eligibility Criterion for All Student Admissions:

In order to enroll as a regularly attending student capable of benefiting from a non-classroom based Personalized Learning program, all students, including students with disabilities, will meet a minimum standard.

Academic Proficiency Requirements for All Students:

All students, including students with disabilities, in order to enroll as a regularly attending student capable of benefiting from a non-classroom based Personalized Learning program will meet the following academic criteria:

- Demonstrate, on a standard assessment, the ability to read, write, and comprehend, in either English or the student's native language at a level that will ensure success when using standards-based materials appropriate to the student's grade level.
- Demonstrate, on a standard assessment, the ability to utilize standard mathematic operations to solve equations at a level that will ensure success when using standards-based materials appropriate to the student's grade level.

Student and Parent/Guardian Agreement:

All students, including students with disabilities, in order to enroll as a regularly attending student will agree to the following participation guidelines:

- Attend and participate in prescribed courses and resources offered on-site.
- Meet with a Consulting Teacher to coordinate a Personalized Learning Plan
- Participate in assessment
- Participate in a minimum of five hours daily, of teacher-directed and parent-directed supervised instruction.
- Parent participation as described in MSCS policy.

MSCS POLICY - #2014 FIELD TRIP/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Expectations for Students Participating in Fieldtrip and School Activities:

Participation in field trips and school activities is a privilege and created to enrich the school experience. In order to participate in a field trip, a student must have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 or C in all currently enrolled classes. Students are expected to sign-up by required due dates and once a student has signed up there is an expectation of commitment to attend. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that best represents themselves and the school.

Violation of behavior and/or attendance requirements may result in loss of privilege to attend future school trips and activities. Student may also be required to write an apology letter and/or complete additional assignments related to improving personal responsibility.

**MSCS POLICY - #2015
FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS
TAKING EXAMS TO MEET NCLB REQUIREMENTS**

Conditions and Restrictions of MSCS Financial Support for Teachers Taking Exams to Meet NCLB Requirements:

MSCS will pay the fees once for a California Department of Education supported examination that will assist the teacher to meet No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements. If the teacher fails to pass the examination on the first try, no additional tests will be paid for by MSCS.

MSCS will purchase reference books prior to taking the test. These books will be maintained in the Vice Principal's office and will be made available to any teacher preparing for the examination.

MSCS POLICY - #2016 GRADING

Guidelines for Grading of Student Work:

Student work may be graded by either the teacher or parent/guardian. On occasion and at the teacher's discretion, students may grade their own work. In no event shall student work be graded by another student.

Students are expected to complete all assigned work between sessions. This work will be turned in to the teacher at the regularly scheduled individualized learning session. If an appointment is missed because of an emergency, the student will contact the teacher and reschedule. In this event, the new appointment must be within three school days and the work must be turned in at that time. In the event of a catastrophic illness or other catastrophic occurrence, the teacher and site administrator will work with the parents to develop an alternative plan.

It is expected that each MSCS teacher will follow a grading policy that is established by MSCS.

For classes where the grade is quantifiable, the following scale applies:

- A = 90 – 100% mastery of content presented
- B = 80 – 89% mastery of content presented
- C = 70 - 79% mastery of content presented
- D = 60 – 69% mastery of content presented
- F = Failure to master at least 60% of the content presented.

For classes where a rubric is a better method of evaluation, the following applies:*

- A – Excellent work in this class
- B = Good work in this class
- C = Acceptable work in this class
- D = Less than acceptable work in this class
- F = Unacceptable work in this class

*Method of evaluation is appropriate for items such as English compositions, electives, and other courses where the primary content consists of skills being acquired, and courses which have no list of specific content items to be mastered.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in loss of credit.



MSCS POLICY - #2017 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – HIGH SCHOOL

High School Graduation Requirements:

A diploma of graduation from high school shall be awarded to each student who has taken and passed the California High School Exit Exam, beginning with the Graduation Class of 2006, and has satisfactorily met the course work requirements for graduation. These requirements are:

1. Satisfactory completion (take and pass) of 220 semester hours of credit in grades nine through twelve.
2. Satisfactory completion (take and pass) of the course requirements for their English Learner (EL) or Special Education program equivalent to the following sequence below.

REQUIRED SUBJECTS	SEMESTER CREDIT	REQUIRED SUBJECTS	SEMESTER CREDIT
ENGLISH	40 CREDITS	SOCIAL STUDIES	35 CREDITS
9 th English I	10	9 th Geography	5
10 th English II	10	10 th World History	10
11 th English III	10	11 th U.S. History	10
12 th English IV	10	12 th Economics	5
		12 th American Government	5

MATHEMATICS.....**20 CREDITS**

Must complete 20 units of mathematics during the 9th-12th grades and must complete a course (or courses) that covers the standards of Algebra I during the 7th-12th grades. The Algebra portion of the requirement may be met either partially or fully by conclusion of the 8th grade. Any algebra course(s) taken during the 9th-12th grades may be included in the 20 units of mathematics required for graduation.

HEALTH (9th - State Requirements).....**5 CREDITS**

SCIENCE.....**20 CREDITS**

9th – 12th (One course in Physical Science and one in Life Science)

FINE ARTS/FOREIGN LANGUAGE.....**10 CREDITS**

9th – 12th 10

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.) 9th -12th**20 CREDITS**

9th - P.E. I 10

10th - P.E. II 10

COMPUTER LITERACY.....**5 CREDITS**

Students are required to successfully complete one semester (5 credits) of Computer Literacy or pass an equivalency test. If students pass the equivalency test and complete all required assignments, 5 credits will be added to their transcript.

ELECTIVES.....**65 CREDITS**

Some elective units may include mandatory courses assigned by the Vice Principal or designee to remediate students who have not yet passed the California High School Exit Examination or who are failing to make adequate progress in the academic program.

TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION is 220 CREDITS

Note: Students who have not passed any section of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) will be required to attend a CAHSEE Exit Prep Course designed to help them pass the exam.

Special Note: A Certificate of Completion, in lieu of a diploma, will be awarded to those students who do not pass the California High School Exit Exam but do satisfactorily complete the 220 semester hours of credit.

MSCS POLICY - #2018 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School Graduation Requirements:

A diploma of graduation from eighth grade shall be awarded to each student who has satisfactorily met the course work requirements for graduation. These requirements are:

- A grade point average of 2.0
- Satisfactory completion of all coursework (no failing grades)
- Satisfactory attendance record that is characterized by fewer than 5% (9 days) unexcused absences or 10% (18 days) excused absences. In unusual circumstances, exceptions may be approved by the vice-principal
- Show competency in the areas of Reading, Writing and Math
- All obligations met (books returned and fees paid)
- **Successful completion (70% or better) of the 8th grade Constitution examination**
- Satisfactory demonstration of positive social and academic behavior

Special Education

Students enrolled in special education programs are eligible for differential assessment procedures if the individualized education program team determines they have not demonstrated evidence of the ability to attain the district's regular competency standards.

Participation in graduation ceremonies is a privilege and may be revoked at the discretion of the Personalized Learning Teacher or administration.

Failure to meet graduation requirements will result in failure to graduate.

MSCS POLICY - #2019
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – SPECIAL EDUCATION
FOR: STANDARD DIPLOMA AND CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Graduation Requirements/Special Education-Standard Diploma and Certificate of Completion:

A. Philosophy

Merced Scholars Charter School believes that individuals with exceptional needs should be given the opportunity to earn a standard high school diploma when the student has completed the prescribed course of study and has passed the California High School Exit Exam with or without accommodations. Only when it is determined by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team that student needs will not be met within this course of study leading to a diploma, the team may recommend an alternative course of study for which a student may earn a Certificate of Completion.

B. The IEP Team will determine the course of study from the following options:

1. The individual completes the course of study as described in the Merced Scholars Charter School Graduation Requirements for a standard high school diploma.
2. The individual satisfactorily meets the IEP goals and objectives as determined by the IEP team for which a Certificate of Completion will be awarded.
3. The individual satisfactorily attends and participates in the instruction as prescribed in the IEP and meets the objectives of the statement of transition services for which a Certificate of Completion will be awarded.

C. The individual with exceptional needs who meets the criteria for a standard high school diploma or a Certificate of Completion shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a pupil of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate.

Adopted by the Merced County Office of Education Board:

Alternative Standards for Graduation/Special Education:

A. Philosophy

Merced Scholars Charter School believes that there is a need for accommodations and/or alternative standards for students enrolled in special education programs that have diagnosed learning handicaps or disabilities that preclude the attainment of the schools regular standards.

B. Accommodations, Modifications, Alternative Standards for Special Education Students

1. All Merced Scholars Charter School special education students are eligible for accommodations, modifications, and alternative standards. It is the goal of Merced Scholars Charter School that, whenever possible, students achieve these standards without accommodations or modifications. Accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative standards are to be applied only when the Individual Education Program (IEP) team determines that the student’s disability appears to prevent the attainment of the schools established standards.
2. In the case where one or more alternative standards are developed for a student enrolled in special education, the modifications, accommodations, and alternative standards may be maintained throughout the student’s school experience, irrespective of whether the student continues to be enrolled in special education.

C. Accommodations

When the extent of the student’s disability prevents the attainment of the regular established standards, the IEP team may modify the testing procedures or set alternative standards.

1. Test Accommodations

An “accommodation” is a change of the conditions of format of any Merced Scholars Charter School Test designed to make the test more suitable for special education students.

The following accommodations may be used when the test is administered to a special education student:

a. General

- (1) Administer the test individually or in a small group.
- (2) Read directions aloud to students.
- (3) Utilize “total communications” in providing instructions.
- (4) Provide extra samples when giving instructions.
- (5) Repeat and rephrase directions until understood.
- (6) Provide individual instructions and examples upon request.
- (7) Read problems aloud to students.
- (8) Allow students to read aloud.
- (9) Allow use of math “manipulatives”.

- b. Modifications of the written format.
 - (1) Reduce the number of items per page.
 - (2) Allow for more space on a page between columns and problems.
 - (3) Have all materials needed to answer a problem on the same page as the problems.
 - (4) Write examples and problems on a white-board or project onto a screen.
 - (5) Provide large-print test or use magnification equipment.
 - (6) Allow student to mark answers in test booklet rather than on and answer card or sheet.
 - (7) Place math problems on graph paper.
- c. Alterations to time constraints.
 - (1) Allow more time per item.
 - (2) Increase the number of test sessions and shorten the duration of each session.

2. Alternative Standards

An “alternative standard” is a standard adopted by Merced Scholars Charter School and developed by an IEP team for a student whose disability prevents the achievement of the regular state adopted standard. Every effort must be made to insure that special education students achieve the standards prescribed for students in the regular program. However, when an IEP team determines that a student’s disability appears to prevent the attainment of those established standards, then alternative standards may be developed for that student.

In setting alternative standards, there are three options available to the IEP team:

- a. Combination of “enabling” skills.

This requires an analysis of each Merced Scholars Charter School objective/task to identify all of the skills which “enable” the student to accomplish that task. The IEP team may then require the student to demonstrate proficiency on a combination of those enabling skills rather than the schools objective/task.

Identification of enabling skills provides a framework for remediation and subsequent assessments. Consequently, this option is recommended for all assessment prior to grade 12.

- b. Selective application of regular Merced Scholars Charter School - Career Planning and Career Technical Education.

Under this option, the IEP team selects those standards which are required for life/work after completion of high school. Then the student is required to meet only those standards.

For example, a proficiency test may require the reading and comprehending of a series of unrelated paragraphs. However, the test also may require the reading and comprehension of a series of simulated “real-life” tasks: business letter, driver’s test, job application, classified ad, recipe, street map, landscape blueprint, etc. Under this option, the IEP team may choose to eliminate the series of unrelated paragraphs and require proficiency only on those simulated real-life tasks.

- c. Reduction of the complexity of Merced Scholars Charter School adopted standards.

This option simply allows the IEP team to develop alternative standards as the exit (graduation) criteria for an individual student.

Of all the non-standard accommodations of assessment procedures discussed in this section, this option must be considered last and should be reserved only for those students the IEP team believes will be unable to be successful when any of the other options are applied.

D. Procedures and Documentation of IEP Meetings

- 1. The IEP team shall determine whether the student has met the standards necessary to earn a standard diploma or the recommended alternative course of study to earn a Certificate of Completion. When necessary, the IEP team shall recommend a plan to assist the student in meeting the necessary performance objectives. Options the IEP team may select include:
 - a. The student shall receive additional instruction in a deficient area and the regular test/assessment shall be administered once the remediation has occurred.
 - b. The performance objectives of the Merced Scholars Charter School tests shall be retained, but the accommodations and/or alternative modes of assessments shall be used.

- c. Finally, when required by the handicapping condition, alternative standards of performance shall be prescribed.
2. Under this policy, special education students will be assessed at the same intervals as students in the regular Merced Scholars Charter School program. Also, special education students will be tested until they achieve the standards prescribed by the IEP team. The IEP team shall document its prescription for proficiency standards in the student's Individual Educational Plan. The completion of each alternative standard must be noted on the student's permanent record card.

Note: References have been made to the Treatment of Individuals with Disabilities Under 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Standards for Graduation and Assessment (Special Education).

A. Philosophy

Merced Scholars Charter School believes that the California High School Exit Exam and other standardized tests must be administered in accordance with the instruction provided by the producer of such tests. Therefore, accommodations for students who have been diagnosed with learning handicaps or disabilities will be documented in the student's Individual Education Plan.

B. California Department of Education Guidelines for test accommodations for the California High School Exit Exam.

1. The Individual Education Plan team with the participation of the parent and student must decide the accommodations.
2. The decisions must be based on accommodations that are provided in daily classroom instruction and testing.
3. The accommodations are made on an individual basis and not on the basis of disability category, social or demographic background, or record of educational achievement.
4. The accommodations are reviewed by the Individual Education Plan team as necessary.
5. The accommodations are documented in the Individual Education Plan.

C. The State of California has determined that the following are standard accommodations which validate the student's test results on the CAT/6 test to meet STAR requirements:

1. The use of a flexible setting.
2. The use of a large print test.

3. The use of revisited test directions.
4. The use of out-of-level testing by one year.

The following are non-standard accommodations, which allow for student participation to measure student progress and establish program accountability. These non-standard accommodations change the format, presentation, or response and, therefore, invalidate the test results:

1. The use of a Braille test.
2. The use of flexible scheduling.
3. The use of a revisited format.
4. The use of aids and/or paraprofessionals.
5. The use of out of an out-of-level test of more than one year.

MSCS POLICY - #2020 HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Expectations of Student, Parent and Staff Respect for Diversity

MSCS is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. MSCS programs and activities will be free from discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disability, or any other unlawful consideration.

Harassment – Definition: Harassment is unwanted and unwelcome behavior from other students, parents or staff members that interferes with another individual’s life. When it is sexual in nature, it is “sexual harassment”. When it is racial in nature it is “hate-motivated behavior” or sometimes, a “hate crime”.

Discrimination – Definition: Discrimination is negative or unfair treatment that brings discriminatory attention toward an individual based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or gender.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the school.

MSCS POLICY - #2021 HONORS AND AP CLASSES

Honors and AP classes:

MSCS does not offer Honors or AP Classes.

If teachers and staff go through the process and identify a class as Honors, it will not be recognized at this time by the UC system as an Honors class and will not meet A-G requirements. At this time, the UC is not granting A-G status to any non-classroom based programs.

Advanced Placement

- An AP (Advanced Placement) class is a course designed to prepare students to take the College Board-Sponsored Advanced Placement (AP) exam. These national curricula are developed by both high school and college teachers under the auspices of the College Board. Most universities award college credit based on AP exam scores.
- Advanced Placement courses must meet the UC prescribed criteria. (See UC website)

Honors Courses:

MSCS has adopted the following procedures for the identification of an Honors Course:

1. An MSCS teacher or parent may identify a class that either exceeds or has the potential to exceed basic curriculum requirements and standards. (Since MSCS is a Home School, parents are included). A formal proposal must be submitted to the Curriculum Council. A copy of the proposal form is attached.
 - *This form is modeled after the form provided by UC. Particular emphasis should be placed on section C, question 29, "Indicate how this honors course is different from the standard course." The Council will be looking for a unique spin that may include more writing, more reading and/or more investigation. Explicit detail about how this course exceeds the rigor of the standard course must be provided.*
2. Upon submittal of a proposal, MSCS will form a curriculum council composed of the MSCS vice- principal, the Career and Alternative Education program specialist in charge of curriculum, one MSCS teacher, one MSCS parent and a representative from the Merced County Office of Education Curriculum and Instruction department.
3. If it is demonstrated that the class is worthy of an extra grade point, it may be recommended to the Advisory Board for approval. The Curriculum Council may refer the course back to the applicant and provide an opportunity to amend and re-submit. In this case, the Council provides specific feedback to the applicant.

Community College Classes:

Upon approval of the Administration, MSCS students may be given high school credit for Merced Community College or other Community College courses. These courses must be transferable to a university and the grade must be an A, B or C.

UCCP has not approved MSCS classes for A-G credit. UCCP is in the process of determining whether they will grant A-G status to any non-classroom based instructional programs.

Upon approval of the Administration, MSCS students may be given high school credit for Merced Community College or other Community College courses. These courses must be transferable to a university and the grade must be an A, B or C.

On-Line Honors and Advanced Placement Courses:

For the 07-08 school year, Merced Scholars Charter School has established a budget to provide funds to pay for a maximum of three on-line accredited, A-G approved courses for summer school, fall semester and spring semester (a maximum of nine classes per year) for on-line Honors and/or AP classes. This policy will be reviewed annually and is subject to change in future school years.

The following criteria will apply:

1. Student must be making successful progress in MSCS courses, as determined by the personalized learning teacher and the parent.
2. The course must be accepted by the California UC system.
3. The course must be approved by the MSCS administration and the student's personalized learning teacher.
4. Student must be in grade 10, 11 or 12.
5. Payment must be made directly to the provider or vendor.
6. Proof of completion of the course will be required. If the student fails to complete the course, he/she will be required to reimburse the fees to the Charter School. Failure to complete the course followed by failure to reimburse the fees may result in withholding of diploma.

(Items 5 and 6 are required to be in compliance with California Constitution, Article XVI, Section 6.)



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MSCS POLICY - #2022
INTERNET POLICY
(See also Computer Use Policy, E-Mail Policy)

Internet Policy:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 1016---
Computer Use Policy.

MSCS POLICY - #2023 PARENT PARTICIPATION

Expectations of Parent Participation:

Students are required to attend weekly and/or bi-monthly meetings with an assigned Personalized Learning Teacher. A designated time and day is set between the student, parent and teacher. It is expected that the student will arrive on time and attend every session. Students are required to call in advance when absent for an emergency. When such an emergency occurs, student work is due to the assigned teacher within twenty-four hours. A new appointment time will be scheduled by your Personalized Learning Teacher.

MSCS is a Home School Program. It is not an Independent Study program. Therefore, Parents/Guardians are expected to take an active role in their child's learning experience. These expectations specifically include:

- A Parent or Guardian will attend a minimum of 50% of the regularly scheduled student appointments with their assigned Personalized Learning Teacher. In rare instances, extenuating circumstances may apply. In such cases, the Personalized Learning Teacher may submit a request for a temporary waiver to the MSCS administration.
- A Parent or Guardian will provide the student with the necessary assistance and instruction for completing assignments on a daily basis. It is expected that each Parent will:
 1. Establish a routine for daily lessons
 2. Provide a quiet, well-lit workspace without distractions
 3. Follow a routine that suits the family, but give priority to the child's education
 4. Assure that needed materials are on hand (basic supplies, materials for science experiments, etc.)
 5. Set aside time every day to review and correct completed assignments and to plan the next day's school assignments and activities
 6. Document all educational activities including field trips, educational trips, and other coursework
 7. Keep a positive attitude and include enjoyable educational projects and activities that provide the variety needed to keep the student interested and motivated
 8. As appropriate, a Parent or Guardian will correct completed work under the direction of the assigned Personalized Learning Teacher.

Failure to comply with this policy, including refusal of parent to participate, will result in MSCS recommendation that the student return to either a comprehensive school program or an Independent Study program.



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MSCS POLICY - #2024 PARENT VOLUNTEERISM

Guidelines for Parent Volunteerism:

Parent Volunteerism is a welcome enrichment to MSCS programs. Examples of parent volunteerism include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance in organization and attendance at field trips
- Assistance in organization and attendance at open houses and orientations
- Assistance in organization and attendance at other school events and activities
- Provide assistance to the school's Leadership Class
- Membership on Advisory Board
- Parent Organization membership

It is expected that parents who volunteer will dress according to the employee and student dress code and will conduct themselves in a manner reflective of the school mission. Failure to do so may result in denial of volunteer assistance.

MSCS POLICY - #2025 SAFETY PRACTICES EXPECTATIONS

Expectations for Student Observance of Safety Practices:

Under the Merced County Office of Education, MSCS Sponsoring agency, the school is guided by Comprehensive Safety Plan Policy #P5018. This policy states, “Merced County Office of Education recognizes that students and staff have the right to safe and secure school sites where they are free from physical and psychological harm.”

MSCS is committed to maximizing school safety and to creating a positive learning environment that teaches strategies for violence prevention and emphasizes high expectations for student conduct, responsible behavior, and respect for others. The Merced County Office of Education Superintendent approved the MSCS Comprehensive Safety Plan in December, 2006 after the required steps were taken to fulfill the required legislation.

The Safety Plan and Handbook provides the guidelines for safe conduct and is available for review through the Vice Principal. As required by law, the MSCS Safety Plan is reviewed according to mandates.

It is expected that all students will comply with the following Safety Restrictions:

1. All activities that present a real or potential danger to anyone’s personal safety are prohibited.
2. Running and/or rough-housing are not permitted in the building; rough-housing is not permitted in the school area, including the outside perimeter of the building.
3. No one may obstruct an entrance to the school, or any door or passageway.
4. Riding skateboards, scooters, roller blades, etc. in an MSCS area, inside or out, or on any of the adjoining property is prohibited by MSCS policy.
5. All MSCS students, staff and parents on campus must participate seriously in all safety drills that are conducted.
6. MSCS students must stay and walk in a group (defined as within sight of the supervising chaperone) on all walking fieldtrips outside the MSCS building.
7. MSCS shall be responsible for the proper supervision of students during school hours, while at school-sponsored activities, and while students are using district transportation to and from school and other activities. Except as provided herein, neither MSCS nor the Merced County Office of Education, nor any officer or employee thereof, shall be liable for the conduct or safety of students outside of school hours (8:00-4:30 p.m.) or when the student is not on school property.
8. Students shall not be on school property before or after their Personalized Learning sessions, field trips, enrolled classes, school sponsored activities, and any enrichment or academic support session. Parents/guardians are not to deliver their child to school more than 10 minutes before aforementioned activities or leave them at schools longer than 10 minutes after; unless prior approval is given by the school Vice Principal or designee.
9. All school-sponsored social or extracurricular activities of pupils shall be under the direct supervision of a MSCS or Merced County Office of Education employee. Students shall and abide by the directives of such supervisor at all times.

Violation of these Safety Restrictions will result in disciplinary action and may result in suspension or expulsion.

It is expected that all students will comply with the following Safety and Behavior Rules:

1. Follow Behavior Conduct Expectations for students.
2. Follow school policies for successful learning.
3. Respect the rights of others
4. No profanity.
5. No pagers, cellular phones, walkmans, Discmans, radios, earphones, or laser pointers are allowed to be on at any time.
6. You are expected to cooperate with the MSCS staff and complete your assigned work by due dates assigned for your Personalized Learning Teacher.
7. Fighting is not tolerated.
8. Drugs, alcohol, weapons, or other illegal contraband are not permitted on school premises.
9. Public displays of affection or sexual harassment are not permitted on school premises.

Violation of these rules will result in an immediate referral and an appropriate disciplinary action will be taken based on the severity of the offense which could include suspension or expulsion.

MSCS POLICY - #2026 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment Policy:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 3013 Sexual Harassment Policy---Employees.

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 5015 Sexual Harassment Policy---Students.

MSCS POLICY - #2027 STUDENT ASSISTANT EMPLOYMENT

Guidelines for Student Employment:

Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) may employ students for clerical assistance. The following conditions will apply:

1. The student must be over the age of sixteen.
2. The student must be either a junior or senior in good standing (minimum GPA of 2.5).
3. The student must be enrolled in an appropriate ROP course (i.e. Accounting, Business Occupations & Technology, Computer Applications).
4. The student will attend an ROP class an average of three hours per week over the course of the semester
 - The student will work under the direct supervision of the MSCS Vice-Principal who will coordinate with the ROP teacher to design a training plan itemizing the duties of the student. The training plan must incorporate those duties relevant to the ROP class.
 - In addition to the training plan, a cooperative agreement will be required. This agreement must be signed by the teacher, the MSCS training supervisor, the student and parent.
 - The student will be employed an average of eight hours per week for approximately sixteen weeks each semester.
 - Each week, the Vice-Principal will complete a time sheet rating the student's performance. The student will be responsible for turning the time sheet in to the ROP teacher.
 - The student will be paid minimum wage and will receive ten units of elective credit for each semester completed.

Violation of these procedures will result in termination from employment and loss of elective credit.

MSCS POLICY - #2028 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance Abuse Policy:

Merced Scholars Charter School adheres to the Merced County Office of Education Policy P 5006---
MCOE Philosophy Regarding Substance Abuse (Students).

MSCS POLICY - #2029 SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF PUPILS

Suspension and Expulsion Policy:

MCOE Policy P 5008—Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils in Merced County Community School will apply to MSCS.

MSCS maintains a comprehensive set of student discipline policies. These are distributed as part of the school's handbook and clearly describe the school's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse violence, safety and work habits.

Each student and his/her parent guardian are required to verify that they have received and understand the policies prior to enrollment.

Students who violate the school's discipline policies, who are a serious disruption to the education process and/or who present a health or safety threat may be suspended for up to ten school days. The school will notify and confer with the student's parents or caregiver as soon as possible regarding the suspension.

If the violation of the discipline policy is a serious offense that merits expulsion, and/or if the student presents an ongoing threat to the health and safety of others, the school may take action to expel the student or transfer him/her to an appropriate setting. In such cases, the school will send a written notice of the facts, allegations, and student/parent rights to the parent or caregiver and a committee designated by the Advisory Board will hold a hearing regarding the offense. If the committee determines that the case merits expulsion, the student may be expelled or offered reinstatement, as appropriate.

These processes will be amended as required by law to protect the rights of students with disabilities or exceptional needs. This includes, but is not limited to convening an individualized educational plan team if a suspension lasts beyond ten days, or in the event that expulsion is recommended. The school will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance report.

MSCS POLICY - #2030 TEXTBOOK AND SIGNIFICANT EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Guidelines for Textbook and Significant Educational Materials:

MSCS will provide textbooks and other instructional materials needed for student success. This will include textbooks required for off-campus community college and on-line classes. Each student will be responsible for the maintenance of these materials. It is expected that when a course is completed, the textbooks or other significant educational materials will be returned to MSCS in good condition. Other Significant Educational Materials will be defined as materials other than consumable supplies valued at \$25.00 or more.

If said textbooks and/or materials are lost or damaged, the student will be responsible for their replacement and will be charged a replacement fee.

Failure to return textbooks or significant educational materials or to reimburse the school for their loss or damage will result in loss of privilege to participate in graduation ceremonies.

MSCS POLICY - #2031 VENDOR SELECTION

Procedures for Selection of Vendors:

MSCS will follow the procedures outlined in MCOE policy 2002 in the selection of vendors. It is expected that prior to that procedure, any staff member selecting a textbook or other educational resource will research a variety of vendors to evaluate the product and its value as a resource to the adopted curriculum of MSCS. The proposal will be submitted to the school administration and, if recommended, the processes outlined in MCOE policy 2002 will be followed.

Violation of this policy will result in the non-selection of a vendor.

MSCS POLICY - #2032
DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE NOTIFICATION FOR STUDENT ENROLLMENT TERMINATION

Process for Notification to Student's District of Residence When a Student Leaves or is Expelled Without Graduation or Completing the School Year:

1. Inform the student that you will be notifying his/her district of residence.
2. Provide the student with a copy of his/her transcripts and a completed form (see attached – *Notification to Student's District of Residence of Student's Enrollment Termination*).
3. Send copies of the student's transcripts with a completed form (see attached – *Notification to Student's District of Residence of Student's Enrollment Termination*) to the student's district of residence. Send via U.S. Mail with a return receipt requested.
4. When the post office provides the return receipt, attach it to the form.
5. Maintain copies of the form and all documents in the student's file.
6. MSCS Vice Principal is responsible to maintain *Student Check-off List: District of Residence Notification for Student Enrollment Termination* (attached).



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MSCS POLICY - #2033 HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Guidelines for Issuance of a Certificate of Completion in Lieu of a High School Diploma:

Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) will issue a Certificate of Completion to a student who has met all the school's course requirements for graduation (as outlined in the student handbook), but has been unable to pass both the Math and English/Language Arts sections of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) by the time he/she finishes the school's required course work.

Students who have not passed both sections of the CAHSEE and are interested in pursuing a diploma may enroll in the summer school program offered by Valley Community School. They may also continue to attend MSCS in the fall until they pass the CAHSEE or turn 18. Students who are over age 18, or who are unable to attend summer school, are encouraged to enroll in the programs offered through the Merced Union High School Adult School.



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SAMPLE



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SAMPLE

MSCS POLICY - #2034 POLICY FOR MAINTENANCE OF PERMANENT (CUMULATIVE) STUDENT RECORDS

Procedures for Storage of Permanent (Cumulative) Student Records:

All Permanent or Cumulative Student Records will be maintained in fireproof files in the office of the Secretary. All files will be tabbed with the student's last name, first name, date of birth, and attending school year. Keys to these files will be solely in the possession of the vice-principal and the school secretary. Personalized Learning Teacher will be responsible for updating these files at the end of each grading period.

Upon enrollment, four original copies of Master Agreement will be signed and dated by parent and Personalized Learning Teacher and will be filed as follows: (1) *Student Cumulative File*-original, (2) *Master Agreement file*-one copy, (3) *Teacher's "Current" (Work In Progress) file*-one copy, and (4) *Parents*-one copy. It is ultimately the Vice Principal's responsibility to ensure the master copies have been filed with the school secretary within one week of student enrollment.

No files will be removed from the Secretary's office without the consent or knowledge of the Vice Principal or designee. No copies will be made of student files without the knowledge or consent of the Vice Principal, designee, or minor's parent or guardian. Files may, under special circumstances, be checked out from the school secretary, but only if the Vice Principal is aware of the circumstances. At no time will any student files leave the premises. Personalized Learning Teachers and parents will have access to these files under the following conditions:

- The files are to remain in the secretary's office at all times.
- A file log designating the date, printed name of the person(s) reviewing the file, and signature of the person(s) reviewing the file will be placed in the file and must be maintained at all times (Education code 49064).
- While reviewing the files, either the Vice-Principal or the school secretary must be present.
- No copies will be made of student files without the knowledge or consent of the vice principal, designee or minor's parent or guardian.
- After reviewing a file, it will be placed back in the file cabinet in the presence of: (1) the Personalized Learning Teacher and/or parent and (2) the vice-principal and/or secretary.

Items to be kept in the permanent or cumulative file will include, but not be limited to:

- A record of their enrollment date
- Transfer records from previous schools attended
- Enrollment documents, including documents signed by the parent and/or student
- Permanent grade records
- Four year plan
- Parents rights and responsibilities
- Merced College application
- Lunch forms
- E-Rate forms

POLICY FOR MAINTENANCE OF PERMANENT (CUMULATIVE) STUDENT RECORDS

- Contact information consent
- Medical information
- ILP or Learning Plan Forms
- All state test results
- Graduation or drop date and related documents
- Work permits

MSCS POLICY - #2035
POLICY FOR MAINTENANCE OF
CURRENT (WORK IN PROGRESS) STUDENT DOCUMENTS

Procedures for Storage of Current or Work-in-Progress Student Documents:

All current student documents, or documents related to academic work in progress will be maintained by the assigned instructor. The following conditions apply:

- All documents will be placed in the file cabinet and locked before the Personalized Learning Teacher leaves the classroom.
- Administration will have access to the documents in the presence of the Personalized Learning Teacher or secretary.
- Parents will have access to these files in the presence of the Personalized Learning Teacher or the vice-principal.

Items to be kept in the current student documents file will include, but not be limited to:

- Assignments
- Completed work
- Grades
- Weekly Grade Sheet and Attendance
- Copies of the following:
 - Master Agreement
 - If applicable, Student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)
 - Four year plan
 - Permanent grade records
 - Medical information
 - ILP or Learning Plan Forms
 - All state test results

Optional:

If applicable, copy of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Personalized Learning Teacher will be responsible for transferring permanent grade records and any permanent documents to the permanent/cumulative file at the end of each grading period.

MSCS POLICY - #2036
ENROLLMENT/PARTICIPATION IN
MERCED UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS

Procedures for Enrollment/Participation in Merced Union High School District (MUHSD) Programs:

The Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) has entered into an agreement with the Merced Union High School District (MUHSD). Under this agreement, MSCS students will have the opportunity to participate in certain MUHSD music programs.

Prior to enrollment in an MUHSD program, the student and parents will meet with the MSCS Vice Principal to determine whether the class is appropriate for the student and, if it is a class that includes playing an instrument, the specific instrument the student will play.

Enrollment in the program will require the parent and student to sign an agreement in compliance with the following conditions:

1. Parents and Student understand that enrollment in the program is a commitment.
2. Students enrolled in MUHSD Programs will be expected to attend on a daily basis for the entire school year.
3. Students enrolled in MUHSD Programs will be subject to the same rules and consequences of discipline as all other MUHSD students. This will include calling the school in the event of an absence.
4. If a student commits a serious infraction (fighting, vandalism, etc.) the MSCS administration will have the right to impose disciplinary action as warranted.
5. Parents are responsible for their child(ren)'s transportation to and from MUHSD.
6. Parents and student are responsible to assist in the fundraising activities of the program as expected by all other MUHSD students enrolled in the program.
7. Parents are responsible for repayment to MSCS of lost or damaged instruments, uniforms, books, or any other instructional materials that MSCS are held responsible for by MUHSD because of student neglect or misuse.
8. Prior to withdrawal from this program, the student and parent must meet with the MSCS administration to justify the reasons for withdrawal.

Once it is determined that enrollment in this program is appropriate for the student and both parent and student have signed the agreement, the Assistant Superintendent of the Merced County Office of Education, Career and Alternative Education Department, will meet with the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction of MUHSD to finalize the agreement. Enrollment is not guaranteed and will not be finalized until this meeting is held and an agreement signed by the Assistant Superintendents of MUHSD and MCOE. There is the possibility that extenuating circumstances will nullify the agreement.

Failure to comply with these rules/expectations will result in loss of credit and rescission of the right to participate.



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MSCS POLICY - #2037

REQUEST TO CHANGE PERSONALIZED LEARNING TEACHER

Procedures for Requests to Change Personalized Learning Teachers:

Parents may request a change of Personalized Learning Teacher (PLI) for their child. The procedures for doing this are as follows:

1. Submit a written request to the Vice Principal. The written request should include
 - a. An explanation of why you believe a change would benefit your child.
 - b. A description of any additional services your child needs. As an example, you might indicate that your child seems to need extra support in a given curricular area such as math.
 - c. Any extenuating circumstances such as conflicts between existing PLI and the student.

2. The Parent or guardian meets with the Vice Principal
 - a. The reasons for the request will be verbally presented.
 - b. The parent will explain their reasons for requesting a specific PLI.

If appropriate, the Vice Principal will initiate a change based on the following criteria:

1. The availability of PLIs.
 - a. If a PLI has a full load, that teacher will not be considered.
 - b. The justification for the request of a specific PLI and that PLI is available.

2. The specific needs of the students.
 - a. If, for example, a student needs extra support in the area of math, the goal will be to provide a PLI (teacher) who is strong in that curricular area.

MSCS POLICY - #2038

PROCEDURES FOR FINGERPRINTING OF VENDORS

MSCS provides a budget for educational enhancement activities. (See Policy #2011). Vendors must be fingerprinted before MSCS can contract for their services. The following procedures will be implemented for fingerprinting of vendors:

- Parent will set up meeting between vendor and Personalized Learning Teacher (PLT).
(This may be a telephone meeting).
- MSCS Parent, student, PLT and MSCS administrator will complete appropriate required paperwork. (refer to policy 2011 applications)
- MSCS Vice Principal will contact MCOE (Rita Martinez) to set up an appointment for fingerprinting.
- MSCS Vice Principal will contact CAE accounting (Marie Janz) to arrange for payment for fingerprinting.
- When fingerprints clear, MCOE Human Resources will notify MSCS administration (Vice Principal, Sherry Housley).
- MSCS Vice Principal will notify parents and PLT that fingerprints have cleared and student may begin lessons with vendor.

MSCS POLICY - #2039 COMMUNITY SERVICE

The expectation is that prior to graduation, every student will participate in twenty hours of community service.

- Community Service is defined as volunteer service for approved non-profit agencies and will not include evangelical service.
- The assigned MSCS personal learning teacher will verify, document, and record service hours. To receive credit for Community Service hours, students must write a minimum of one paragraph about their experiences.
- Community Service hours will not be given for service performed for a parent or a relative.
- It is recommended that each student's service be described and approved prior to beginning any service.
- Incoming freshman may perform community service during the summer before entering high school. It is recommended that students contact the school prior to performing their services to ensure that the work will be approved.
- Approved Service for any nonprofit agencies completed during weekends or vacation time will be credited with no more than 8 hours per day.
- Students wishing to perform service at Camp Green Meadows are required to have a minimum 2.0 GPA, good attendance and teacher approval.
- Community service for any nonprofit agency can be completed during the summer and applied towards general service hours.
- Service hours will not be given for any club meetings.
- Hours earned for after school or weekend training or planning sessions may count towards community service when the training results in actual volunteer service toward the community.
- Students entering MSCS may have their Community Service hours pro-rated depending on their grade level. Hours are pro-rated at five hours per year.

Failure to meet this expectation may result in failure to graduate from high school.

MSCS POLICY - #2040

USE OF TEXTBOOK(S) THAT ARE BELOW GRADE LEVEL

Under certain circumstances, the Personalized Learning Instructor (PLT) may determine that a student is not able to benefit from a textbook that is currently approved for a particular course. This may be because of a learning disability or because the student is performing far below grade level.

When these circumstances arise, the PLT will confer with the school Vice Principal to determine the most appropriate replacement and how the work will be rated or graded.

After the PLT and Vice Principal have met and agreed on the alternative textbook, the PLT will confer with the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian agrees with the arrangement, they will sign a waiver (see attached).



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MSCS POLICY - #2041 MSCS POLICY FOR ACCEPTING LATE WORK

Late work will be accepted no later than one class session beyond due date.

All exceptions must be pre-arranged with the Personalized Learning Teacher with good cause.

Late work submitted at this time will be reduced one grade.

After one class session with no work turned in, a warning notice will be sent at the end of the day to the student's parent **by the Personalized Learning Teacher with copy given to MSCS Vice Principal.**

MSCS POLICY - #2042
WAIVE CAHSEE REMEDIATION CLASS AND
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDY ON OWN

The State of California requires that students pass the California High School Exit Examination as a condition for the granting of a diploma. This test has two parts, language arts and math. Students must pass both parts in order to earn a high school diploma.

Merced Scholars Charter School offers remediation classes for each area. Students who have not passed the language arts section are required to attend the language arts remediation class. Students who have not passed the math section are required to attend the math remediation class.

If a student and his/her parents agree that for some reason they wish to opt out of taking the remediation class, they may sign a waiver (see attached). At that time, the personalized learning teacher (PLT) will provide supplementary coursework that the student and parent can review on their own at home.

It is important to emphasize that failure to pass either portion of the CAHSEE will result in failure to earn a high school diploma.



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MSCS POLICY - #2043 SCHOOL VISITORS

Guidelines for School Visitors:

Upon entry into the school, all visitors, other than students and parents/guardians who have regularly scheduled meetings with their teacher, must sign in with the school secretary located in the first room to your right.

Students and/or their parents/guardians are permitted to have unscheduled meetings with their teachers during the school day. They must check in with the school secretary and wait in the hall or other designated spot until the school secretary verifies that the teacher is available. MSCS strongly recommends that you call ahead to schedule an appointment.

Casual visitors who are known to the teacher may meet with the teacher before or after school or during their lunch break, not during their scheduled teaching time. Such meetings will be held outside the teacher's classroom.

All other visitors with school related business must be cleared by the school secretary or vice principal before meeting with any staff.

Failure to comply with the above guidelines will result in denial of access to the school.



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MSCS POLICY - #2044 SUPERVISION OF SIBLINGS

Expectations of Supervision of Siblings During Student/Teacher Conference:

Parents may bring siblings of MSCS students to their regularly scheduled student/teacher conferences. The following expectations apply:

1. Siblings under the age of six will be under the supervision of an adult or responsible teenage sibling at all times.
 - a. The parent or person responsible for supervision of the child must be able to see the child at all times.
 - b. The child must not be disruptive of the learning session.
 - c. The child must not be allowed to wander throughout the facility.
2. Children over the age of six who are able to sit at the tables in the hallway and quietly work on a personal project or read do not have to be supervised by an adult, but the expectation is that they will not be disruptive or wander throughout the facility.

Failure to comply with the above guidelines will result in loss of privilege to bring siblings to learning sessions/conferences.

MSCS POLICY - #2045
VERIFICATION OF COMPLETED STUDENT WORK/JUSTIFICATION FOR ATTENDANCE

Expectations for Providing 180 days of Instruction to all MCOE Students:

California State law requires that all students be provided 180 days of instruction. MSCS provides a 180 day calendar. However, MSCS utilizes a home school methodology in which the Personalized Learning Teacher meets with each student an average of one hour per week. The purpose of these meetings is to assign work of the full instructional days until the next meeting. It is not possible for a full time Personalized Learning Teacher to meet with every student on the first day of school. Therefore the credentialed faculty has met to establish universal student assignments that MSCS students may complete in order to meet attendance requirements for the days prior to their first meeting with the Personalized Learning Teacher.

As students complete the work, the attached form will be completed by the teacher and placed in the student's permanent file.

Failure to complete the work associated with the form and completion of the form could result in negligence in meeting full attendance requirements.



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MSCS POLICY - #2046 SCHEDULING BI-WEEKLY STUDENTS

Expectations for Scheduling of Students Who Meet with their Instructors Every Other Week:

For purposes of accurate and timely attendance reporting, it is expected that all students who meet with their Personalized Learning Teacher every other week, rather than every week, will be scheduled on Mondays or Tuesday exclusively.

Since attendance must be reported on Tuesday, this will allow an opportunity for these students to turn in their work prior to, or on the day that attendance is due.

Alternatively, if a student cannot attend on Monday or Tuesday, they can be scheduled to attend an alternate day, providing they are willing to do their work in advance, so that they are always working one week ahead of the school calendar.

This policy will be effective starting in the 2008-2009 school year.

Failure to comply will result in denial of bi-weekly attendance option.

MSCS POLICY - #2047

COMPLETING TEN UNIT COURSES IN THREE SEMESTERS

Expectations for Students Completing Ten Units of Coursework Over a Three Semester Period:

In some instances, the personalized learning teacher may determine that an individual student will have a greater opportunity for success if he/she is allotted additional time to complete coursework that is normally completed in two semesters. This is most likely to occur when students are challenged by a particularly rigorous academic course.

In this event, the teacher may elect to pace the student's learning to assure mastery of one level before moving to the next level. For some students, this may be an effective strategy. However, in no event will the student be given more than ten units total for the three semesters of course work.

As an example, the personalized learning teacher may determine that student X needs more than two semesters to complete the Algebra course. The teacher paces the learning and the units of credit posted to the student's transcript will be relative to the percentage of work completed. This student may earn 3 credits in semester one, 4 credits in semester two and 3 credits in semester three, for a total of ten credits.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result of loss of credits.

MSCS POLICY - #2048 TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Expectation for Submission of Transcript Requests:

Requests for transcripts or other records must be submitted a minimum of two full school days prior to the date needed. For example, transcript requests must be submitted before noon on Monday if needed by Wednesday afternoon. (Each of these days must be days that school is open.)

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in delayed copies of transcripts.

MSCS POLICY - #2049 DROPPING STUDENTS FOR FAILURE TO ATTEND

Expectations for Attendance:

All MSCS students are expected to attend their weekly or bi-weekly learning sessions. If a student misses a planned session, the Individualized Learning Teacher (ILT) will attempt to contact the parent and/or student. If the ILT is unable to contact the student and the student fails to attend the second regularly scheduled session, a registered letter will be sent to the parents notifying them that if they do not contact the school immediately and the student does not attend the third session, they will be considered truant and dropped from the MSCS roll.

Failure to attend three consecutive sessions may result in expulsion from MSCS.

MSCS POLICY - #2050

DROPPING STUDENTS FOR FAILURE TO ATTEND SUPPORT CLASSES

Expectations for Support Class Attendance:

All students who enroll in MSCS support classes are expected to attend regularly. If a student misses three consecutive classes without notifying the teacher and having a valid excuse, the student will be dropped from the class.

Failure to attend three consecutive classes may result in being dropped from the class.

MSCS POLICY - #2051
MINIMUM DAYS OF ENROLLMENT PRIOR TO TAKING CAHSEE

Expectations for Enrollment Prior to Being Eligible to Take CAHSEE:

All students must be enrolled in MSCS a minimum of thirty days prior to taking the CAHSEE exam.

Failure to enroll a minimum of thirty days prior to taking the exam will result in the student taking the exam through their previous school of enrollment or not at all.

MSCS POLICY - #2052
REQUIRED CLASS FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS WHO HAVE NOT PASSED CAHSEE

Expectations for Enrollment and Participation in Support Classes for Juniors and Seniors Who Have Not Passed CAHSEE:

All juniors and seniors (11th and 12th graders) who have not passed the California High School Exit Exam, must attend an appropriate MSCS support class a minimum of two hours each week until such time as the exit exam is passed.

Failure to participate will result in MSCS recommendation that the student return to a comprehensive high school.

MSCS POLICY - #2053
REQUIRED CLASS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT
ACHIEVING A MINIMUM GRADE 2.0 (C) IN ALGEBRA

Expectations for Enrollment and Participation in Support Classes for Students Who are not Earning a Minimum Grade of 2.0 in Algebra:

At the beginning of the school year, all students who have not passed Algebra will be given a pre-test. If the student scores below 75%, the Personalized Learning Teacher will require that the student participate in the Algebra support class.

Those students who passed the pre-assessment but fall below a 2.0 average during the year will be required to attend the Algebra support class until such time as the student is able to maintain a minimum 2.0 average without further support.

Failure to participate will result in MSCS recommendation that the student return to a comprehensive high school.

MSCS POLICY - #2054 COMPUTER LITERACY GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

MSCS recognizes the importance for students to possess basic computer skills and knowledge to be competitive in today's technological world. Therefore, all students will be required to meet the Computer Literacy graduation requirement commencing with the graduating class of 2010.

All 9th and 10th grade students will be required to:

- enroll in the Computer Literacy course for at least one semester (5 elective credits) OR
- successfully pass an equivalency test. If the student passes the equivalency test and completes all required assignments, 5 elective credits will be added to his/her transcript.

Priority enrollment will be given to 11th and 12th grade students who have not successfully completed a Computer Literacy course or have transferred from another school.

MSCS POLICY - #2055

A-G NON-SITE BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Each student engaged in A-G coursework must have a minimum of one hour per week of contact with a Subject Area Teacher in each core area. Satisfaction of this contact hour may be fulfilled as follows:

- 1. English Language Arts**
Attendance in an English Language Arts class that focuses on comprehension and writing skills. Students will be able to take this class for credit or as a drop-in basis for tutoring with no credit.
- 2. Social Studies**
One set office hour per week for students to consult with Subject Area Teacher in any area of social studies.
- 3. Mathematics**
Attendance in a math class that focuses on increasing knowledge of basic skills. Students will be able to take this class for credit or as a drop-in basis for tutoring with no credit.
- 4. Science**
One set office hour per week for students to consult with Subject Area Teacher in any area of science.
- 5. Spanish**
Attendance in a one hour Spanish lab focusing on the oral component of language acquisition.

All Subject Area Teacher will be available by phone and email for additional student contact.