

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Each MCPS school shall annually develop and adopt a local school discipline policy with the involvement of all school community stakeholders and in accordance with the existing MCPS policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities. The development of the school discipline policy will be coordinated and ratified by the school leadership team and will include engagement of stakeholders such as parents and students when appropriate. We inform parents and students about the school discipline policy and encourage them to participate in efforts to ensure that school is safe and orderly. It is the expectation that students and families work positively with school staff to resolve conflicts, and help students understand that a positive and safe school environment is conducive to high levels of teaching and learning.

By working together, Forest Oak Middle School will be a safe, happy, and productive school for your children. Our school discipline philosophy is to educate students on proper behavior and civility.

Attached is a current copy of the Forest Oak Middle School discipline policy. We discuss student expectations for behavior extensively during the first week of school and throughout the school year. Please discuss the school expectations with your child at home and keep a copy for reference. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Shahid Muhammad
Principal
2017-2018 Attachments

Forest Oak Middle School Discipline Philosophy

We believe that the most important functions of our school are teaching and learning. Our goal is to provide a safe and respectful educational atmosphere. Learned positive behaviors help students grow socially and appropriately cope with life experiences in the future. It is important that students be supported to make good social and behavioral choices.

The MCPS Discipline Policy requires parents/guardians to share responsibility for their children's behavior at school. This means clearly communicating to families the positive behaviors expected of all students, working positively with school staff to resolve conflicts, and helping students understand that demonstrating positive behaviors elevates the learning of all.

Respect is an important pillar of character that all Forest Oak students should demonstrate:

- Respect For Oneself – Students avoid situations that could bring about physical and/or emotional harm to themselves.
- Respect For The Rights Of Others – Students avoid situations that could bring about physical and/or emotional harm to others. Students show positive regard to others in words and actions. Students demonstrate positive regard to adults so that they can effectively teach and to their fellow students so that they can learn.
- Respect For Property – Students use materials and property for their intended use.
- School staff members are obligated to model and demonstrate respect for students. Staff need to be active listeners to student concerns/issues and model respectful speech and actions towards students.

The Forest Oak Middle School discipline policy supports learning and is a balance between the rights and responsibilities of students and the expectations/consequences for behavior at school.

Student Expectations

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS BY:

- respecting themselves and others (refrain from derogatory speech, inappropriate language and bullying behaviors)
- treating all property with care
- following directions the first time they are given
- walking quietly through halls
- removing hats and bandanas
- demonstrating empathy for others
- turning off and/or putting away cell phones and electronic devices from 7:50-3:00
- not bring weapons including but not limited to guns, knives, pocket knives, and toy or imitation items that resemble a weapon
- using a hallway pass in their agenda books when permission is granted to leave the classroom

- refraining from student to student interaction of a sexual nature (kissing, inappropriate touching of another's body parts i.e. chest, bottom)
- Dress Code: Please dress in a manner that is conducive to the primary objective of learning.
- ✓ Shirts to be worn at all times.
- ✓ No article of clothing can advocate the use of violence, alcohol, drugs, or anything illegal.
- ✓ Shorts and other pant apparel must be long enough that the student's bottom is not showing standing or sitting.
- ✓ Shirts must cover chest and midriff areas.
- ✓ All clothing must conceal undergarments including bra straps; boys' underwear due to slouching of pants is prohibited.
- ✓ Hats, hoods and sunglasses may not be worn during the school day. Any headwear worn must have a necessary function and be approved in advance by administration.

Pro-active Strategies

Pro-active discipline strategies school staff use to deter negative behaviors:

****not in order of severity****

- Positive reinforcement
- Relocating students to other classrooms
- Restorative practices
- Restating expectations
- Referral to counselor
- Behavior modification contracts
- Class meetings
- Modifying work
- Student responsibility roles (class jobs)
- Mentoring programs
- Positive behavior lunch bunch
- Incentives for positive behavior
- All hands on deck monitoring student hallway transitions
- Publicly displayed discipline data and goal setting
- Parent-Student-Administration-Teacher Conferences

Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) and MSIF “Give Me 10”

Forest Oak Middle School is a PBIS school. PBIS is a research-based, school-wide systems approach to improve school climate and create safer and more effective schools. The process focuses on improving a school's ability to teach expectations and support positive behavior for all students. It includes school-wide procedures and processes intended for ALL students, ALL staff and in ALL settings. The PBIS team is comprised of teachers, counselors, team leaders, support professionals and administrators who meet to problem solve, plan for student recognition and evaluate the PBIS program yearly.

We promote Cougar Pride!

MSIF Give Me 10

The Maryland School Improvement Framework (MSIF) is a list of 10 characteristics that all middle school students should learn and apply in their daily lives. Demonstrating the following characteristics will have a positive impact on each student’s academic and social experiences in school and in adulthood.

Positive Academic Identity	Communicates
Shows Empathy	Values Diversity
Collaborates	Problem Solves
Creates/Innovates	Shows Persistence
Reflective Thinker/Learner	Critical Disposition

Teachers teach these characteristics to students every Tuesday during Cougar Time. We believe that learning and applying these characteristics/skills aids our students to be successful 21st century learners.

Students’ positive behaviors reinforced:

Teachers are encouraged to acknowledge students’ positive behavior throughout the day. Routines and language with respect to appropriate school behavior and the MSIF characteristics are consistent throughout the school.

Rewards and incentives for positive behaviors are earned both individually and by class. Students will earn “Cougar Cash” for demonstrating positive student behavior. Students will have the opportunity to use their earned “Cougar Cash” to purchase items from the school store and to save their cash for incentive activities such as DJ for the Day, free time, and physical activity outside or in the gym. Students may also participate in quarterly “Give Me 10” celebrations if selected by their teachers for demonstrating a MSIF characteristic.

Continuum of instructional Strategies and disciplinary responses (not in order of severity)

Disciplinary Responses to Negative Behaviors Based on Severity of Issues/Progressive Discipline	
Classroom-based responses	Conflict Resolution
Peer Mediation	Restorative Practices
Removal from extra-curricular activities/loss of privileges	Restitution
Temporary removal from class	Parent Conferences
Detention	In-School Intervention
Suspension (Out –of-school short term/long term	Expulsion
Referral to Alternative Education	Referral to mental health services

Major Office Referral Offenses

Repeatedly or persistently defying or refusing to follow directions of teachers, staff, or administrators	Sexual Activity Sexual Attack Sexual Harassment
Engaging in moderate to serious behavior that distracts teaching and learning and directly affects the safety of others	Bullying/Harassment
Alcohol/Inhalants/Drugs	Threat to adult or student
Theft (Persistently or habitually taking property of another without permission)	False Alarm Bomb Threat
Weapons (real or look-alike)	Fighting: Attack on adult or student Seriously Bodily Injury
Explosives	Firearms
Arson (setting a fire or helping others to set a fire with intent to endanger others)	Rough play that injures or hurts others (even when not intended)

Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment

The Forest Oak Middle School administration will not tolerate any forms of bullying, intimidation, or harassment, whether physical, verbal or online. All incidents of bullying, intimidation or harassment are reported to a staff member, counselor, or administrator, for immediate investigation. Please take note of MCPS Form 230-35 Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment, to submit a complaint. For more information on MCPS bullying policies, please see MCPS Policy JHF Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/pdf/230-35.pdf>

Due Process

Parents have the right to appeal a decision of disciplinary consequence for a student to the principal. The principal shall hear the appeal within three school days and notify the parent of his/her decision. The decision of the principal can be appealed to the Office of School Support and Instruction. Information on the appeal process is located in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities Regulation.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy/pdf/jfara.pdf>