

# BCMCS

## Student Code of Conduct

### School Year 2011-12



*“To let the child do as he likes, when he has not yet to develop powers of control, is to betray the idea of freedom. For the undisciplined child enters into control by working in the company of others, and not by being told that he is disobedient.” ~Maria Montessori*

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

At Bucks County Montessori Charter School [BCMCS], it is important that the students clearly understand the policy set forth by BCMCS and possible consequences for violating rules within our policy. First and foremost, we adhere to the fact that our children are our most precious gifts. Through nurturing and sensitivity, we hope to prepare them to attain the highest levels of personal and social achievement so that they will become constructive contributors in our community and in future communities for which they will belong.

With this in mind, it is essential that our ultimate objective is reflected in the methods of discipline used at BCMCS. Our approach is to lead children towards self-discipline—and our intention is to avoid spending unnecessary time responding and reacting to behavior problems; but rather, to focus the attention on prevention, placing the focus on self-discipline and independence within the children to handle circumstances themselves.

The Montessori Method addresses the need of change toward positive behavior through peer influences, lesson planning or instruction whenever possible—it is integrated within the Montessori philosophy. Maria Montessori stated that discipline needs to be more of a learning condition and less a punitive experience. The child is more interested in the process; whereas adults are typically more interested in the product. Montessori warned that if we judge children by our own measure, we will frustrate their efforts at self-development. If we recognize that the children's purpose is self-development and we respect their efforts, children will develop self-discipline through their work and, thus, obedience will follow.

In our Montessori school, the child's opinion is asked for and respected, and the child is invited to share his/her view. Montessori students want to follow the rules when the rules are clearly defined. When prepared for in this manner, it invites the child to assume responsibility for his/her behavior. Assuming responsibility for behavior is to understand and accept the consequences for violating rules. In that instant, *as discipline being seen as a learning experience*, it will be executed by the staff and personnel of BCMCS as outlined in this **Code of Conduct** document.

## **I. Procedures for Dealing with Dispute Issues between and amongst Students:**

### 1. First Instance:

- Peer Mediation among all students involved. An assisting apparatus [peace table/feather, peer mediation documentation, etc.] will be utilized in the process.

### 2. Second Instance:

- Continued mediation, with same, like or similar apparatus used, with teacher monitoring, acting as an arbitrator, amid and among all students involved.
- Observation notes to be documented by teacher, and written explanations to be fostered by students among each another.

### 3. Third Instance and/or if No Progress is made:

BCMCS teachers will continue to work with children to address all issues of the dispute; however, if progress is not made and/or a third instance takes place, BCMCS personnel will then follow both steps listed below to further address the matter:

1. A teacher produced contract will be written between and among all involved parties [by all involved student(s) and teacher(s)] with the intention to resolve the matter.
2. Strict guidelines, set forth in the contract, must be stated, reviewed and signed by student(s), teacher(s) and principal or administrative designee.

### 4. Fourth Instance/Deviation of Set Contract will result in:

- Automatic Level 1 offence and written infraction to be issued to a/the student(s), who involve, engage, entail or cause themselves in a fourth like incident and/or deviate from set contract guidelines.

## **II. Process for Dealing with Discipline Issues Involving Student Actions:**

### **Level 1 Offense:**

Level 1 acts of misconduct include repeated infractions of classroom management procedures or rules, or other misconduct that disrupts the educational process to the extent that the classroom teacher needs administrative support to correct the problem. The following is a non-inclusive list of Level 1 infractions:

1. deviation of set contract guidelines as listed in Procedure I [Student to Student Disputes]
2. excessive tardiness [more than 5 per marking period]
3. disrespect toward staff members or refusal to follow directions given by staff
4. dress code infraction or violation [as listed in Parent/Student Handbook]
5. minor aggravation or harassment
6. abusive or profane language
7. unauthorized departure from classroom or designated area
8. copying of someone else's classroom work
9. Possessing and/or using nuisance items [i.e. laser pens, noise makers, etc.]
10. chewing gum or misuse of disposing chewing gum
11. disruption of the orderly classroom process
12. running, making excessive noise, or other disruptions in halls, buildings, classrooms or other supervised settings
13. improper use of electronic equipment during school hours
14. disobeying school bus conduct rules

### ***Level 1 Disciplinary Guideline...***

#### **Step 1:**

When a Level 1 incident first occurs, BCMCS personnel will:

- explain or review the class or school rule(s) to the student involved and verbally warn of possible consequences
- Teacher will self-memo the occurrence, noting the date, time and rule in question.
- Note that first incident occurrences are only documented by school personnel.

#### **Step 2:**

If another like Level 1 incident ensues or a repeat of the same Level 1 infraction reoccurs, BCMCS personnel will:

- have the student be a constituent in understanding the unwanted noted behavior, with the student to assist, with the teacher, the creation of capable and feasible corrective measures to be instilled, and agreed upon by student and teacher
- teacher will document an official BCMCS Level I Discipline Report {See Exhibit A}, noting agreed upon corrective measures [set consequences that relate to the

behavior with the intent to right the conduct], to be completed and signed by principal/vice-principal, teacher, student and parent, with the finished form to be kept in the student's school file

- *Set consequences* are to be fostered by the teacher(s) and student(s), with the goal to correct the conduct. The corrective(s) is/are to be inspired and creative, fitting the unique nature of the situation. Much as the Montessori philosophy fits the child, this action is to be situated to fit the circumstances of the incident.
- These *set consequences*, although fostered by the student(s) and teacher(s), need to be accepted and approved by the principal or vice principal and understood by the parent(s) via the Level I Infraction form.

### Step 3:

Upon the third occurrence of a like or same Level 1 infraction, BCMCS personnel will apply the appropriate consequences and/or outcomes as listed in step 2, resubmit a second BCMCS Montessori Discipline Report [following the same set guidelines, noting it as the third offence] and apply any one or combination of the following consequences:

1. principal/vice-principal/student/teacher conference; and/or any combination of such
2. parent conference call
3. in-class disciplinary action or assignment
4. withdrawal of student privileges
5. counselor/student conference
6. confiscation of nuisance item(s) or material(s) for the remainder of the school year

Step 4: If a student's behavior does not change as a result of actions taken at step 3, or if a fourth incident occurs, the student is automatically moved to Level 2 disciplinary options, with another Level I Discipline report being documented as before, noting its fourth occurrence.

### ***Level 2 Disciplinary Procedural Guidelines...***

Any one or combination of the following will be considered:

1. Any combination of teacher, principal/vice-principal or designee, parent, and student conference.
2. In-school suspension up to 3 days.

### **Level 3 Offenses [Serious]:**

A recurrent behavior or like behavior that persists from a Level 2 offence will automatically be converted into a Level 3 offence. Level 3 acts of misconduct also

include those student infractions which are more serious than those in Levels 1 in their effect on the orderly process of our school's program. Examples of Level 3 misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Cheating or copying another student's test
2. Setting off false alarms
3. Leaving the building, school grounds or designated field trip area
4. Failure to comply with legally and officially recognized directives issued by school personnel
5. Truancy
6. Fighting [defined as a physical conflict between two or more individuals NOT resulting in visible or noticeable markings or injuries from the incident]. A fight has occurred if a student who is attacked strikes back. (To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel help)
7. Altering school records or documents, or forgery of a name on school documents
8. Vandalism or defacing of school property
9. Inappropriate acts of familiarity or inappropriate displays of affection [for example, touching of another's private area part(s), vulgar jesters, etc.]
10. Throwing or irresponsible use of objects, which are otherwise not dangerous, which cause bodily injury or damage to property
11. Possession of tobacco, alcohol or drugs
12. demonstration of any malicious, intolerable or unwanted physical contact that does or does not result in bodily injury

### ***Level 3 Disciplinary procedural Guidelines...***

Teacher, principal/vice-principal or BCMCS personnel, student, and parent will conference in person and any one or combination of the following will result:

- Grade penalty for copying or cheating
- Exclusion from extracurricular/club activities
- In-school suspension up to 5 days
- Suspension up to 3 days
- Restoration and/or restitution, as applicable
- Withdrawal of selected student privileges
- Supervised school service assignment
- Involvement of law enforcement personnel

### **Level 4 Offenses [Severe]:**

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Any repeated offense of a Level 3 infraction, or any new serious or severe violation, after being disciplined for a Level 3 offense

2. Repeated acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior which may prove to be damaging to the school, harmful to health and safety of the populous, or that may inhibit the rights of others
3. Being excessively disrespectful toward school personnel or defiant refusal to comply with lawful and legally recognized requests or directions of school personnel
4. Terroristic threats, oral or written, to do bodily harm to another, or to the property of another
5. Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying of another; or encouraging, permitting or assisting in Bullying
6. Fighting [defined as a physical conflict between two or more individuals resulting in visible or noticeable markings or injuries from the incident]. A fight has occurred if a student who is attacked strikes back. (To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel help)
7. Misdemeanor theft or extortion
8. Using severely profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, racially or ethnically offensive language and/or gestures
9. Possession or creation of materials containing any of the elements listed in #8
10. Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences
11. Possessing a device, object, or substance with the intent to cause bodily harm to individuals
12. Failure to report to school personnel the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in the school setting
13. Use or distribution of any substance represented to be a drug or alcohol
14. Lewd conduct, non-criminal sexual misconduct, and/or sexual harassment
15. Hazing
16. Possession of drug paraphernalia
17. Non-felony burglary of school facility or major vandalism to school property
18. Assault or threatening bodily injury or causing offensive physical contact
19. Engaging in felony conduct away from school, if the principal or designee determines that the student's continued presence threatens the safety or other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process
20. Possessing any object that appears to be/is a firearm or weapon
21. Behavior that threatens the safety of the school environment

***Level 4 Disciplinary Procedural Guidelines...***

Any one or combination of the following may be considered:

1. Any discipline technique outlined in Level 3
2. Suspension from school, not to exceed ten (10) days at a time
3. Involvement of law enforcement personnel
4. Alternative Education Placement

5. Reassignment of class

**Level 5 [Extreme] Mandatory Removal or Expulsion Offenses**

When a student's behavior does not change as a result of action taken in the Level 4 guidelines, and the student is referred a second time for a repeated Level 4 disciplinary infraction or like action, the student, upon discretion of the principal, can be moved to Level 5 Offence category meant to be for permanent removal from school or expulsion. The terms of any removal or expulsion **will** prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities during the term of the removal or expulsion. All Level 5 offenses that relate to Penal Code violations can result in a report to the Falls Township Police Department. A school BCMCS designee or team will serve as the basis for student disciplinary consequences and placement, to be set forth by the Principal.

### III. Procedures for Physical Restraint, Emergency Placement, Removal, Suspension and Expulsion

#### **Physical Restraint**

Any school employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student that the employee reasonably believes is necessary in order to:

1. Protect a person, including the employee, the student, or other students from physical injury
2. Obtain possession of a weapon or dangerous object or school personnel believes that he/she has a reasonable suspicion or probable cause for such
3. Protect property from serious damage
4. Restrain an irrational student
5. Remove from a specific location a student refusing a lawful command of a school employee, including from a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or impose disciplinary measures

#### **In-School Suspension [Alternative Education Placement]**

The principal or appropriate administrator may order a student to be immediately placed in an **Alternative Education Placement (AEP)** if it is reasonably believed that the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it interferes with:

1. Warrants such punitive measure
2. Hinders a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class
3. Impedes the ability of the student's classmates to learn or
4. Hampers the operation of the school or school-sponsored activity.

At the time of the emergency placement, the student shall be given oral notice of the reasons for emergency placement in an AEP. Within a reasonable time after the emergency placement, the student will be afforded a removal conference as outlined in this code. The principal or appropriate administrator shall not be liable for civil damages for an emergency placement.

#### **Removal**

BCMCS personnel will remove from the classroom a student who engages in conduct described under Level 4 of the Code of Conduct. The principal shall either place a student removed under this provision into an Alternative Education Placement (AEP) or recommend expulsion, as appropriate. When a student is removed from class by a teacher under this provision, the principal shall schedule a removal conference within the next three (3) school days. The conference shall include the principal, parent/guardian, student, and the teacher who removed the student, when appropriate. Even if all persons are not present, if valid attempts have been made to require their attendance, the principal may still order the appropriate placement and the duration of the placement.

If the principal's decision is that the student should be expelled, the student shall be provided a due process hearing with the BCMCS Board of Trustees for expulsion consistent with this Code of Conduct.

If the principal's decision is that the student should be returned to that teacher's classroom following completion of the assignment in and after an AEP placement and the teacher withholds his or her consent for that return, the principal/CEO shall determine the student's placement.

Terms of removal under this provision will prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

### **Suspension**

The principal or other appropriate administrator may suspend a student who commits a Level 4 offense. A suspension may not exceed ten (10) school days, and the student shall be responsible for all class work missed during the period of suspension. Multiple suspensions for subsequent offenses are permissible.

Before suspending the student, the principal shall conduct an informal conference at which:

1. The student is advised of the conduct of which he or she is charged
2. The student is given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.

School personnel will make every effort to notify the parent prior to suspending a student from school. If the parent cannot be contacted prior to removal, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible and shall be informed of the reasons for suspension.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide adequate supervision of the student during the period of suspension.

### **Expulsion**

1. A Board decision is required to expel a student.
2. Expulsion is permanent exclusion from the school.
3. All expulsions will require a formal hearing.
4. Any student recommended by the administration for expulsion will be given notice of the hearing, an opportunity to hear the evidence against him/her, and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
5. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless on suspension, shall be placed in his normal class except:

- If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others; and
- If it is possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for no more than 10 school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed.

**Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying:**

BCMCS is committed to a safe environment for all students, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. 'Harassment, intimidation or bullying' means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act constitutes one or more of the following:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- Is severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be imposed in order to positively change the behavior of a student in question of harassing, intimidating or bullying as set forth in the BCMCS Code of Conduct and set procedural guidelines.

Moreover, remediation on the impact of an injured party of bullying will proceed in any/all cases. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration to a positive climate, and/or support for the injured party and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitutes violations of this policy.

The Principal/CAO is authorized to direct the development and implementation of actions addressing the elements of the bullying policy, and receive any/all reports of alleged incidents consistent with the complaint and examination components of set procedures. BCMCS had in a place a policy to report suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, which is available at the school and on the school's website.

In addition, BCMCS can follow through set school measures associated to bullying and like incident(s) that occur outside the school setting if those acts meet the criterion listed in the school's definition.

## **Bus Conduct**

The bus driver is responsible for discipline on the school bus. Misconduct must be reported to the principal, or designee, who will take the appropriate disciplinary action. Please refer level 1 disciplinary guidelines of the handbook for further information on appropriated steps. Servicing district codes and rules supersede any/all BCMCS guidelines.

## **Diversity Statement**

We believe we are more alike than different. We also believe in, and value, diversity. We know that a diverse school means people are different in size, color, shape, culture, religion, strengths and weaknesses. All children have the right to feel safe and supported in our school community. If we are to meet the needs of all students we must model how to interact. We must provide an environment that is safe from damaging comments and physical harm.

## **Jurisdiction**

Unless otherwise defined in the Code of Conduct for specific offenses, the school has authority over its students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district/school transportation. This jurisdiction includes any activity during the school day on school grounds and some acts which occur within 300 feet of school property. This jurisdiction also includes any attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

The BCMCS Code of Conduct is based on the premise that one's education involves a love of learning, respect for others, and self-discipline. Basic to this premise is the belief that effective learning situations can best be provided and positive behavioral patterns enforced when unacceptable behavioral patterns and their consequences are outlined, communicated, and understood by students, parents, and school personnel. When excessive discord does arise, as was listed above, adherence to this code will assure that all parties are treated with courtesy, respect, and fairness, yet with a firmness that is intended to help direct students to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner.

## IV. Rules and Responsibilities in enforcing and administering BCMCS Codes of Conduct

### **Responsibility and Authority for Administration and Enforcement of the Code of Conduct:**

1. The principal and/or designee shall have the responsibility of implementing the Code of Conduct.
2. Assignment of a student to an Alternative Education Placement (AEP), in accordance with the Code, may be made by the principal or designee.
3. Suspension of a student from school, not to exceed three (3) days, may be imposed by the principal or designee if the student engages in conduct for which one may be placed in the AEP.
4. The principal or designee shall have the authority to expel a student for disciplinary infractions and/or violations of the law in accordance with this Code and state and federal law.
5. The principal may order the immediate suspension or placement in an AEP of a student whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with school operations or activities. Additionally, a student may be immediately recommended for expulsion if the principal reasonably believes that such action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm.
6. The school principal shall provide each employee, parent and student a copy of the BCMCS Code of Conduct to be signed noting acceptance.
7. The school principal shall inform each teacher who needs to know of a student who has committed an expellable offense.

### **Role and Responsibilities of School Personnel in Maintaining Acceptable Conduct:**

#### The Principal has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure a safe and orderly environment for teaching and learning.
1. Enforce the Code of Conduct.
2. Provide appropriate support for teachers who seek help in discipline management.
3. Notify parents within 24 hours of receipt of a report of violation of a level 2 or higher infraction of the Code of Conduct.
4. Provide in-service training to students and staff related to the Code of Conduct when deemed necessary.
5. Communicate with parents when their child becomes a discipline concern.
6. Secure a signed acknowledgement from parents confirming receipt of a copy of the Code of Conduct, and understanding of the Code.
7. Report firearm offenses to PDE in accordance with the Pennsylvania Education Code.
8. Schedule a removal conference within three (3) class days after a formal teacher removal of a student.
9. Provide parents with notice of conferences, hearings, reviews, and appeals as required by state and federal law.
10. Make appropriate reports to law enforcement.

11. Strive to provide discipline that is instructive.
12. Adhere to all state law policies related to the Confidentiality of Student Records and Parental Rights

Teachers and other school personnel have the responsibility to:

1. Be knowledgeable of the Code of Conduct and sign an acknowledgement to that effect.
2. Develop, maintain, and communicate classroom rules and discipline management procedures consistent with the Code of Conduct philosophy.
3. Remove from class a student who commits a mandatory removable or expellable offense under the Pennsylvania Education Code.
4. Maintain an orderly classroom and atmosphere.
5. Establish rapport and an effective working relationship with parents.
6. Report in writing, not to exceed one page, to the principal or designee any known violation of the Code of Conduct.
7. Maintain confidentiality of student records, including receipt of information that a student has committed an expellable offense.

### Responsibilities of Parents

Throughout this plan, “Parents” include natural parents, single parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons active in parental relation to the student. Parents assume a highly significant role in the education of their children. Parents should:

1. Make every effort to provide for the needs of the child.
2. Teach the child to pay attention and obey the rules.
3. Be sure their child attends school regularly, and promptly report and explain absences and tardiness to the school.
4. Be sure their child is appropriately dressed at school and during school-related activities.
5. Ensure that the child develops proper study habits at home.
6. Participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences regarding their child’s progress, behavior, and general welfare.
7. Keep informed of school policies and academic requirements of school programs.
8. Participate in school-related organizations.
9. Receive and discuss report cards and school assignments with their child.
10. Inform school authorities of any learning concern or condition that may relate to their child’s education.
11. Provide all records required for enrollment; maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school.
12. Cooperate with school administration and teachers, and seek resolution of disputes.
13. Have their child attend school tutorials [Classroom Plus] when offered

14. Submit a signed acknowledgment confirming receipt of the Parent/Student Handbook and the Code of Conduct.
15. Control their child. A student's parent is legally liable for property damage if the proximate cause of the damage is caused by: a) the negligent conduct of the student if such conduct is reasonably attributable to the negligent failure of the parent to exercise the duty of control and reasonable discipline; or b) the willful or malicious conduct of a student who is at least 12 years of age but under 18 years of age.
16. Grant or deny any written request from the school to make a videotape or voice recording of the child unless the tape or recording is to be used for school safety or related to classroom instruction or an extra or co-curricular activity.
17. Work in partnership with school personnel to ensure student success.

### **Expectations of Students**

All students are entitled to enjoy the basic right of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. BCMCS fosters a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other staff. Students shall exercise their rights and responsibly, in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of the school's mission. The school's rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and maintain order in the school. Students who violate the rights of others or who violate district or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures designed to correct the misconduct and to promote responsible citizenship.

### **V. DEFINITIONS:**

The following words and terms, as were used in this code, and will have the stated meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**Alternative Education Program (AEP)** – an instructional or non-instructional setting other than the general classroom [i.e. the principal's office, special education room, etc.] completely apart from other students. Instruction may or may not be given that focuses on core subjects and/or self-discipline, and may or may not provide for behavioral needs through supervision and counseling.

**BCMCS** – The Bucks County Montessori Charter School

**Bullying**—Harassment or intimidation through any intentional act, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act constitutes one or more of the following:

- physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- is severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or

- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

**Class Disruption** – Relates to any behavior which violates the rules of a particular classroom and interferes with a teacher’s presentation or other students’ opportunity to concentrate on the presentation of assignment.

**Co-Curricular** – Directly related to a specific course.

**Discipline Management** – Any action which is intended to promote proper behavior and/or discourage misconduct.

**Expulsion** – Removal of a student from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. Expulsion for periods up to one year is required by law for certain student offenses and expulsions further contain a provision that prohibits attendance at school activities.

**Extracurricular** – An activity sponsored outside of the school day or apart from the typical school setting.

**In-School Suspension** – An in-school setting, apart from the regular classroom, where the student continues to receive instruction to the extent possible; intended for students who commit disciplinary infractions (where applicable).

**Parents** – Includes single parent, legal guardian, or person(s) in lawful control of a student.

**Placement Review Committee** – An established BCMCS three-member committee--the faculty shall select two teachers to serve as members of the committee, and one additional teacher shall serve as alternate. The principal or designee shall select one member from the professional staff. The committee shall have the responsibility to:

1. Determine, in accordance with law and policy, the placement of a student when school personnel wish to readmit a student who has been removed from the class.
2. Make recommendations regarding readmission of expelled students prior to completion of a court-imposed deposition.

**Reassignment of Classes** – A student may be removed from the assigned classroom and placed in another class. To the extent possible, the student should continue to receive instruction in the subject from which the student has been removed. The purpose of this type of removal is to remove the student from a potentially disruptive situation and/or to separate students who have been involved in a conflict. Length of removal or stay will be determined by the principal.

**School Premises** – Any property owned by the school or over which the school or its personnel exert lawful control, including property visited by students in connection with a school-operated activity, such as a field trip or an extracurricular activity.

**Suspension** – Removal of a student from school and school activities for a period not to exceed ten (10) days at a time, for disciplinary infractions.

**Part A: General Guidelines for Student Discipline**

Discipline should be instructive in order to reinforce appropriate behavior and foster a safe, positive learning environment.

1. Discipline shall be administered, when necessary, to protect students, school employees, or property and maintain essential order and discipline.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case.

Factors to consider shall include:

- A. Seriousness of the offense;
  - B. Student’s age.
  - C. Frequency of misconduct;
  - D. Student’s attitude and honesty; and
  - E. Potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment
3. Discipline options may include the following educational interventions:
    - Counseling by teachers, special services, or administrative staff.
    - Parent-teacher conferences.
    - Peer mediation
    - Quiet time.
    - Behavioral contracts.
    - Verbal correction.

**Standards for Extra or Co-Curricular Activities:**

All students are expected to adhere to the BCMCS Code of Conduct as it applies to school-related or school-sponsored activities. Students involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethics and conduct. BCMCS students, staff, and parents view participation in these extracurricular and co-curricular activities as a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the teachers, sponsors, coaches, and directors of these activities may develop and enforce codes of conduct that will take into consideration both school related misconduct and conduct that occurs outside of the school’s usual jurisdiction, regardless of time or location. This will include any misconduct that would reflect negatively upon BCMCS. Before an extracurricular or co-curricular activity sanction will be imposed, evidence must be presented to the principal in one of the following forms.

- A report from a law enforcement agency
- Personal admission by the participating student
- Observed behavior by a school employee

The student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the offense and afforded the opportunity of a meeting with the principal to discuss the offense.

### **Part B: Technology Policy/Integrity**

These policies shall apply to all users of computers and telecommunications systems which are entered via equipment and access lines located in BCMCS. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with policies and guidelines at the local, state, national, and international levels. The use of equipment and related software is a privilege, not a right, and should be treated as such.

Any user who does not comply with policies and procedures may face appropriate disciplinary actions, including all student discipline management techniques, and denial of continued computer access.

- Outside software may not be used without written authorization from the principal or designee.
- Users are responsible for the security of their network accounts. Passwords should not be shared or used carelessly.
- System setup and maintenance may only be performed by authorized personnel.
- Computer equipment must be left in good condition for the next user.
- If there is a problem with a piece of equipment, it should be reported in writing to the principal or designee.

### **Parental Rights to Limit Access to the Internet**

The school uses a blocking/screening program to aid in eliminating inappropriate Internet sites. It is very effective, but is not a foolproof solution. Parents wishing not to allow their child access to the Internet must notify the school principal in writing.

### **Acceptable Use Regulations**

Users are expected to abide by the generally-accepted rules of on-line etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Be polite.
2. Do not reveal any personal information.
3. Illegal activities should not occur over a network.
4. Use the computer network in a way that will not disrupt the use of the network by other users.

5. All communications and information accessible via the computer network should be assumed to be private property.

Only students who have been authorized by the school and who are under direct supervision of designated employees are permitted to use a school computer or to access any local network or outside telecommunications services. Prior to such authorization, the student and the student's parent must sign and return the School Acceptable Use Form acknowledging their responsibilities and the consequences of violation.

Electronic communications access is available to students and personnel in BCMCS. This system includes all computer hardware, software, networks, and related peripherals that a user may encounter within the school.

The Internet is a network of networks connecting millions of computer users all over the world. The Internet enables worldwide connection to electronic mail, discussion groups, databases, software, and other information sources, such as libraries and museums. BCMCS provides electronic communications access to promote educational excellence in BCMCS by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. BCMCS believes that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is inconsistent with the educational goals of BCMCS.

The principal or designee will oversee the school's Electronic Communications System.

The school's system will be used only for administrative and educational purposes consistent with the school's goals and mission. Commercial use of the school's system is strictly prohibited.

The school will provide training to all users in proper use of the system and will provide all users with copies of acceptable use guidelines. All training in the use of the school's system will emphasize the ethical use of this resource.

Copyrighted software or data may not be placed on any system connected to the school's system without written permission from the holder of the copyright. Only the owner(s) or individual(s) the owner specifically authorizes may upload copyrighted material to the system.

### **System Access**

Access to the school's Electronic Communications System will be governed as follows:

1. With the approval of the principal or designee, school employees, and/or students will be granted access to the school's system;
2. The school will require that all passwords be changed at least once each semester;

3. A teacher may apply for a generic class account and will ultimately be responsible for the use of the account. Teachers with individual accounts will be required to maintain password confidentiality by not sharing the password with students or others;
4. Any system user identified as a security risk or as having violated the school computer use guidelines may be denied access to the school's system;
5. Outside disks may not be used without written permission from the principal or designee;
6. Disks used at school may not be removed from the school, except for those outside disks brought to school with written permission.

### **Instructional Technology Coordinator Responsibilities**

As the school's coordinator for the Electronic Communications System, the principal and/or designee will:

1. Be responsible for disseminating and enforcing applicable school policies and guidelines for the school;
2. Ensure that all users of the school's system complete and sign an agreement to abide by school policies and administrative regulations regarding such use. All such agreements will be maintained on file in the principal's or designee's office;
3. Ensure that employees supervising students who use the school's system provide training emphasizing the appropriate use of this resource;
4. Be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed necessary to ensure appropriate use of the system;
5. Be authorized to establish a retention schedule for messages on any electronic bulletin board and to remove messages posted locally that are deemed to be inappropriate;
6. Set limits for disk utilization on the system as deemed necessary; and
7. Revoke use of the system by individuals as deemed necessary.

### **Individual User Responsibilities**

The following standards will apply to all users of the school's Electronic Communications System:

#### **Online Conduct:**

1. The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use;
2. The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by school policy;
3. System users may not use another person's system account;
4. System users must purge electronic mail in accordance with established guidelines;

5. System users may redistribute copyrighted programs or data only with the written permission of the copyrighted holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the copyright holder or designee in accordance with applicable copyright laws, school policy, and administrative regulations; and
6. System users may upload and download public domain programs in the system only with written permission from the principal or designee. System users are responsible for determining whether a program is in the public domain.

### **Vandalism Interdict:**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy school equipment or materials, data of another user of the school's system, or any of the agencies or networks that are connected to the Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of school policy and administrative regulations and possibly as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Any interference with the work of others, with or without malicious intent, will be construed as vandalism. Vandalism, as defined above, may result in the permanent cancellation of Electronic Communications System use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration and/or network, hardware, or software repair or replacement.

### **Forgery Prohibition:**

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.

### **Information Content/Third Party Supplied Information:**

System users and parents of students with access to the school's system will be aware that use of the system may provide access to other Electronic Communications Systems in the global network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material. The school will provide written notification to parents of potential objectionable material access.

A student knowingly bringing prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment will be subject to suspension and/or revocation of privileges on the district's system and will be subject to other disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

An employee knowingly bringing prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school policies.

## **Network Etiquette**

System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette:

1. All use must be in support of education and research and no use will serve to disrupt the use of the network;
2. Be polite. Use appropriate language.
3. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving electronic messages is considered inappropriate;
4. Transmitting obscene messages or pictures is prohibited;
5. Revealing personal information of the users or others is prohibited; and
6. Using the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users is prohibited.

## **Consequences of Misuse of Electronic Communications System or Resources**

Any attempt to violate the provisions of these guidelines may result in revocation of a user's account, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt. Any user who does not comply with school policies and procedures may face additional disciplinary actions, including all student discipline management techniques and/or appropriate legal action.

## **Termination/Revocation of System User Account**

The school may suspend or revoke a system user's access to the school's system upon suspected violation of school policy and/or administrative regulations regarding acceptable use.

Termination of an employee's account or of a student's access will be effective on the date the principal, or designee receives notice of student withdrawal or of revocation of system privileges, or on a future date if so specified in the notice.

## **Disclaimer**

The school's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school does not make any warranties, whether express or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein.

The school does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected.

Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the school.

The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's Electronic Communications System.



**Exhibit A:**

**Bucks County Montessori Charter School  
Level 1 Discipline Report**

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

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

Listed below are the Level 1 infractions to the BCMCS Student Code of Conduct. As stated in the Code, the Montessori philosophy emphasizes that correcting negative behavior should be more of a learning condition and less a punitive experience. Unfortunately, your child was unable to adhere to one or more of the following infractions as designated by a check mark, thus necessitating additional involvement in our collective attempt to foster a resolve in the matter.

|   |
|---|
| 1. deviation of set contract guidelines as listed in Procedure I [Student to Student Disputes]                          |
| 2. excessive tardiness [more than 5 per marking period]   |
| 3. disrespect toward staff members or refusal to follow directions given by staff                                       |
| 4. dress code infraction or violation [as listed in Parent/Student Handbook]  |
| 5. minor aggravation or harassment  |
| 6. abusive or profane language  |
| 7. unauthorized departure from classroom  |
| 8. copying of someone else's classroom work   |
| 9. Possessing and/or using nuisance items [i.e. laser pens, noise makers, etc.]   |
| 10. chewing gum or misuse of disposing chewing gum  |
| 11. disruption of the orderly classroom process   |
| 12. running, making excessive noise, or other disruptions in halls, buildings, classrooms, or other supervised settings |
| 13. improper use of electronic equipment during school hours  |
| 14. disobeying school bus conduct rules   |

Explanation of incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This  Second  Third  Fourth instance hereby documents and signifies an infraction of a Level 1 act, and is subsequent to the disciplinary action set forth in the BCMCS Student Code of Conduct. The set action(s) to be taken include(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Vice Principal  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and have your child bring back to school on the follow in-session school day. You may retain a colored copy for your records.**

**Exhibit B:**  
**Bucks County Montessori Charter School**  
**Level 3 [Serious] Discipline Report**



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

Listed below are the Level 3 [Serious] infractions to the BCMCS Student Code of Conduct. As stated in the Code, these infractions are much more serious than those in Level 1, and follow more strict consequences. The checked infraction(s) indicate the violation to the BCMCS Code of Conduct:

|   |
|---|
| 1. Cheating or copying the work of another student's test   |
| 2. Setting off false alarms   |
| 3. Leaving the building, school grounds, or assigned activity area without permission   |
| 4. Failure to comply with lawful directives issued by school personnel  |
| 5. Truancy  |
| 6. Fighting [defined as a physical conflict between two or more individuals NOT resulting in visible or noticeable markings or injuries from the incident]. A fight has occurred if a student who is attacked strikes back. (To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel help) |
| 7. Altering school records or documents, or forgery of a name on school documents   |
| 8. Vandalism or defacing of school property   |
| 9. Inappropriate acts of familiarity or inappropriate displays of affection, [for example, touching private parts, vulgar hand jesters, etc.]   |
| 10. Throwing or irresponsible use of objects which are otherwise not dangerous that cause bodily injury or damage to property   |
| 11. Possession of tobacco, alcohol or drugs   |
| 12. Demonstration of any malicious, intolerable or unwanted physical contact that does or does not result in bodily injury  |

Explanation of incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The set action(s) to be taken include:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Vice Principal  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**You must accompany your child to school the following school day and conference with the teacher and other school personnel before your child can be reinstated in the classroom. You will be notified as to the time and date of the conference. All set actions will be made clear and permanent subsequent the meeting.**

**Exhibit C:**

**Bucks County Montessori Charter School  
Level 4 [Severe] Discipline Report**



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

Listed below are the Level 4 [Severe] infractions to the BCMCS Student Code of Conduct. As stated in the Code, these infractions are much more severe than those in Levels 1 and 3, and follow strict consequences. The checked infraction(s) indicate the violation to the BCMCS Code of Conduct:

|   |
|---|
| Any repeated offense of a Level 3 infraction, or any new violation after being disciplined for a Level 3 offense  |
| Repeated acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior which may prove to be detrimental to the school, harmful to health and safety, or that may inhibit the rights of others  |
| Being overly disrespectful toward school personnel or defiant refusal to comply with lawful requests or directions of school personnel  |
| Terroristic threats, oral or written, to do bodily harm to another, or to the property of another   |
| Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying of another; or encouraging, permitting or assisting in Bullying  |
| Fighting, this is defined as physical conflict between two or more individuals resulting in visible markings or injuries from the incident. A fight has occurred if a student who is attacked strikes back. (To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel help) |
| Non-felony theft or extortion   |
| Using severe profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, racially or ethnically offensive language and/or gestures   |
| Possession or creation of materials containing any of the elements listed in #8 level 4 offence   |
| Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences   |
| Possessing a device, object, or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in any school setting   |
| Failure to report to school personnel the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in the school setting   |
| Use or distribution of any substance represented to be a drug or alcohol  |
| Indecent conduct, non-criminal sexual misconduct, and/or sexual harassment  |
| Hazing  |
| Possession of drug paraphernalia  |
| Non-felony burglary of school facility or major vandalism to school property  |
| Assault or threatening bodily injury or causing offensive physical contact  |
| Engaging in felony conduct away from school if the principal or designee determines that the student's continued presence threatens the safety or other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process;   |
| Possessing any object that appears to be/is a firearm or weapon   |
| Behavior that threatens the safety of the school environment  |

You will be contacted by school personnel to further discuss this matter. Signature of this document only verifies that you have been made aware of the allegation(s) against your child, and not that of guilt or innocence.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Designee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**BUCKS COUNTY MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**Code of Conduct**  
**School year 2011-12**

I, by signing below, affirm that I have viewed, read and fully understand the BCMCS Student Code of Conduct and, as a parent on behalf of my child(ren) who is/are a student(s) enrolled at BCMCS, agree to adhere to all set conditions and circumstances expressed.

[Parent(s) Name(s) in Print] **Required \*\*\*\***

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[Parent Signatures] **Required \*\*\*\***

---

[Student Signature] Optional

---

[Date] **Required \*\*\*\***

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

*Brian P. Long*

*[BCMCS Designee]*

Brian P. Long  
Principal/CAO