

PreK
Family
Handbook
2026-2027

MPA

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Welcome to PreK at Mounds Park Academy! This class is truly special, with faculty committed to providing the best education full of care, joy, play, and belonging. Our entire community is thrilled to welcome your child as they begin their educational journey. This document serves as a family handbook, which contains essential information about the class and our policies.

Section I: About MPA PreK

MPA PreK admits students ages three to five years old. Children must be three years old by September 1 and able to independently use the bathroom in order to be admitted to the program. The PreK class can accommodate up to 20 students per day. The program operates Monday through Friday and follows the MPA school calendar, with care provided on some non-school days (registration required). The regular school day is 8 AM–3 PM, with before-school care starting at 7:30 AM and after-school care from 3–5:30 PM. Parents/guardians are invited to visit the program at any time it is in session.

PREK PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The MPA PreK class is a welcoming, inclusive community where each person is respected and valued and where warm, nurturing relationships are evident. Through child-led learning experiences, teachers help students gain independence, build confidence, and practice problem-solving skills. We address all areas of the young learner, including cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development. We value parents/guardians as partners in their child's learning by providing regular communication and feedback. Together, we build upon a foundation of trust to provide a positive, joyful beginning to each child's school journey.

Our PreK class is a play-based learning environment that emphasizes opportunities for students to learn through both self-directed and teacher-guided play experiences. These include free choice time, large and small group activities, art exploration, music, and movement. We encourage students to be curious, take risks, and explore their interests.

The classroom environment is carefully planned and organized into learning centers: art and writing, sensory, dramatic and symbolic play, large group, quiet reading, math exploration and blocks, science, and small group areas.

MPA YEAR-ROUND PROGRAM

MPA's PreK summer program is a continuation of the school year experience. The class size is smaller at 10 children, with a 5:1 student-to-teacher ratio (a 10:1 ratio may occur at the beginning and end of the day due to staggered teacher schedules). Though we do not have subject-area specialists during the summer, we continue to use practices that meet the children where they are and challenge them to reach their full potential. With the summer program, we promote the wonders of one's imagination and create a stronger connection to both phonemic awareness and literacy. The summer PreK program is a play-based summer experience that exposes students to the MPA community on a smaller, more personable scale.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND GOALS

While children thrive in a class made up of different age groups and skill levels, curricular differentiation is a hallmark of an MPA education.

Examples of differentiation of individual children:

- Students who are ages three and four focus on emerging number sense, sound-symbol relationships, patterns, counting, and data handling.

- Students who are ages four and five focus on number and letter writing, letter sounds, subitizing, complex patterns, and beginning encoding (writing) and decoding (reading) skills.

Specific skill goals as students transition into kindergarten:

Literacy Skills

- Identify the names and sounds of all 26 letters in the English alphabet
- Can write first name with upper- and lower-case letters
- Effectively use a writing utensil
- Identify parts of a book (cover, title, spine, pages, etc.)
- Understand print directionality (right to left)

Math Skills

- Count from 0-20 (cardinality)
- Create a simple ABAB pattern
- Sort objects by size, color, or shape
- Develop number sense with objects from 0-5
- Identify basic geometric shapes

MPA focuses on educating the whole child. Not only does the program provide opportunities for the academic instruction described above, but we consider other areas of development to be just as important. We promote physical development and well-being through our Phy Ed class and daily outdoor recess. PreK students take part in our CHAMP character development program to nurture their social and emotional growth. The class is designed to provide plenty of free choice time for peer interaction and social skill building in an age-appropriate manner.

SUPERVISION

Proper supervision of children in PreK will occur at all times. When supervising students, teachers are expected to actively engage with students as they learn, play, and explore to provide constant alertness, focused attention, and intentional observation of the children. For our PreK class of 20 students, a teacher-to-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be always maintained, including during all transition times, when visiting other classrooms, in the gym, at lunch, at indoor and outdoor recess, and on field trips (if utilized). Whether students are indoors or outdoors, they will be supervised by sight and sound, except for independent bathroom use, when they will be supervised by sound and regular check-ins. Name-to-face attendance will be taken when moving from one area to another. Teachers carry daily class attendance lists on the class backpack. These will be used to take attendance in each area.

Strategies for active supervision are:

- Set up the environment so teachers can supervise students and always have access to them.
- Position teachers intentionally in indoor and outdoor spaces to always see and hear all students.
- Scan and count continuously so teachers know where students are and what they are doing.
- Listen closely to the children to quickly identify signs of potential hazards.
- Anticipate children's behavior using what is known about the students, their interests, and their skills.
- Engage with students to offer assistance and redirect when necessary.

All staff have an educational background that gives them an understanding of the unique developmental, physical, and emotional needs of young children. This ensures that teachers have an awareness of students' needs, awareness of the environment, and ability to respond immediately to distressing or unsafe situations. All teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid and all staff receive an annual orientation to review emergency procedures and school safety policies.

Section II: What to Know Before School Begins

ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT RECORDS

MPA's PreK is licensed by the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services. Per state rules, MPA is required to gather and maintain information about each child, much of which is done through the enrollment process in TADS. Within this system, parents/guardians indicate their preference for using their child's photo in public relations activities, for participating in educational research at MPA, and for attending field trips. Please note that the PreK class typically does not attend off-campus field trips, but if we were to do so, a special notice and permission slip would be provided.

The following forms must be submitted prior to your child starting school:

- Health Care Summary signed by a physician
- Immunization Form or Records

Students are not permitted to attend school without this documentation. These forms are required to be resubmitted annually if your child will be in PreK for more than one year.

For students who have not received the recommended number of vaccines for his or her age, a signed, notarized statement of parental objection or medical exemption is required. Inadequately immunized or unimmunized children may need to be excluded from class should a virus/illness be present in the school. Additional information regarding those who are not fully immunized can be found in MPA's PreK Policies and Procedures and is available to parents/guardians upon request. We emphasize the importance of vaccination to protect the health and safety of all children and staff in our program.

Students with allergies, special medical needs, or those requiring medication administered at school must submit documentation from a physician and work with MPA to complete an Individual Child Care Program Plan, per state rules.

Prior to the school year, we will survey parents about their student's strengths and opportunities for growth, and some initial goals for their student. We will discuss these goals at Parent-Teacher Conferences and may set additional goals for the rest of the school year as we get to know the student better.

Statement regarding the IDEA Special Education Law

As early care and education professionals, we continually monitor the development of all children in the program through ongoing observation and documentation. The best outcomes are desired for all children. Early care and education professionals are considered primary referral sources for early intervention under the IDEA special education law. As a result, we are required to refer a child who has been identified as having developmental concerns or a risk factor that warrants a referral. While this is a mandate, we will keep open communication with parents/guardians about the child and any concerns we have before a referral is made. We can assist the parents/guardians with the referral process and partner with them throughout the process.

MPA is an equal opportunity provider. For more details, please see the full Civil Rights Statement in MPA's PreK Policies and Procedures, available to parents/guardians upon request.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR PREK

It's normal for children—and their adults—to feel a little anxious about starting PreK. Our faculty are here to ensure this is a positive, joyful experience for all students and their families. Here are a few things parents/guardians can do to help their child before the school year begins.

- Become familiar with MPA: If you haven't already done so, please have your child visit the campus and meet the teachers. Also, prepare your child for a school experience by reading books and discussing what it means to go to school.
- Basic self-care tasks: Each student entering MPA PreK should be fully potty trained (see the Toileting section). Please ensure the students can also maneuver the clothing they will wear as uniforms. Additional skills to practice include putting shoes on and taking them off, putting on their coat, and managing their belongings.
- Separation: Have your child spend some time in the care of other adults so they can practice saying goodbye to you and taking directions from others. Reassure your child that you will always return to them.

Section III: What to Know About the School Day

ARRIVING FOR THE SCHOOL DAY

PreK students may arrive in the classroom beginning at 7:30 AM. Please bring your child directly into the classroom. Upon arrival, students should hang their backpacks and outdoor items in their cubby and wash their hands. The class begins at 8 AM and students who arrive after that will be marked as tardy. Teachers will take attendance as students arrive. If your child arrives late, please check in at the Lower School office.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30-8 AM	PreK Panther Club
8-8:15 AM	Morning Table Activities
8:15-8:35 AM	Circle Time
8:35-8:55	Table Activities and Bathroom Break
9-9:40 AM	Phy Ed or Library
9:40-10:20 AM	Music or Large Group Learning
10:20-10:50 AM	Snack
10:50-11:40 AM	Small Group Learning
11:40-12:20 AM	Choice Time
12:20-12:55 PM	Lunch
12:55-1:30 PM	Recess
1:30-2:30 PM	Rest and Quiet Time*
2:45-3 PM	Closing Circle and Show and Tell
3-5:30 PM	PreK Panther Club

*In later parts of the school year during the nap and quiet time, older children will rest and then work on kindergarten readiness skills in small groups.

SNACKS AND LUNCH

MPA provides snacks and lunch for our PreK students. Snacks are most often a fruit and multi-grain item with 1% milk or water. SAGE Dining Services is MPA's food service provider. Lunch menus are published monthly on the Mounds Park Academy website. Children eat lunch in the cafeteria at 11:55 AM. We offer our children all the components and encourage them to try new things, but do not force them to eat. Each day's offerings include whole grain items, fruits and vegetables, meat-based and non-meat protein, dairy items, 1% milk, and water. Snack is provided in the afternoon for students staying for after-school Panther Care. Please notify teachers of dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions.

There is no additional charge for hot lunch and snacks; they are included in your PreK tuition.

Lunch and snack times offer a rich opportunity for relationship-building as well as conversational skill development. As the year progresses, children develop a remarkable ability to engage in socially appropriate conversation with both peers and adults. Teachers eat lunch with our children and enjoy the daily interaction.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Licensing requirements mandate that we must obtain information about students' allergies upon enrollment. An Individual Child Care Program Plan (ICCPP) will be developed for any noted allergy with the parents/guardians and physician. This plan will be kept in the student's file and will be updated at least yearly or more often if any changes are required. Children's allergy information will be available at all times. All PreK staff are informed of students' allergies and a copy of the ICCPP will be available where food is prepared and served. MPA will contact parents/guardians if an exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or intervention occurs. Emergency care will always be called when epinephrine is administered to a child in our care.

MPA **prohibits foods with peanut and tree nuts** (walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews, pistachios, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, lychee, tamarind, and macadamias) listed as ingredients throughout the school and at all school events. Items that are "manufactured in a facility" or "processed on the same equipment" as food containing nuts are prohibited in Lower School.

These allergens most often linked to anaphylaxis, a life-threatening reaction that can include difficulty breathing, vomiting, and in extreme cases, death. Please abide by the guidelines provided and read food labels carefully. In the MPA spirit of compassion, respect, and inclusiveness, thank you for your support.

WATER BOTTLES

Each student should bring a reusable water bottle to school each day. Please label the water bottle with the student's first and last name. To prevent spills, the bottle must have a secure cap with either a push-button or an automatic seal spout and no straws unless they can be closed. The water bottle may be used only for water. Each day the water bottle will go home with the student to be washed and refilled. During the school day, the water bottles will be kept in the students' cubbies.

OUTDOOR RECESS

At MPA, we believe that regular outdoor activity has many important benefits for children. Weather permitting, 30 minutes of daily outdoor play will be provided. If it is raining, dangerously cold (wind chill of -

10° F or colder), dangerously hot (heat index above 90° F) or the air quality is poor, we will have indoor recess.

Students must have weather-appropriate gear for outdoor play. This will include jackets (required if colder than 50° F), hats, mittens or gloves, snow pants, and boots in the winter. In the summer, students a hat is recommended for sun protection. Please label all items that come to school.

REST AND QUIET TIME

MPA PreK students will have one rest/quiet time after recess in the afternoon. MPA provides individually assigned cots for students to rest, but parents/guardians are asked to send a pillow, blanket, or soft item to have on their cot. During this time, teachers dim the lights and put on soft music. Some students will fall asleep, while others will not. Cots are placed so there is unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side and are not stacked when in use.

After 30 minutes, students who have completed a nap or rested quietly will be allowed to get up and find books to read. After quiet book time, students will be allowed to play quietly for the remainder of the nap and rest period.

DISMISSAL

At 3 PM, teachers will help any students not staying for PreK Panther Care to gather their belongings, including their backpacks, outdoor gear, water bottles, folders, and items from their cubby. Students will remain in the classroom until a parent/guardian or authorized person comes to the door. Students who stay for Panther Care will remain in the classroom. Please come into the classroom to pick up students after 3 PM. On the last day of attendance for the week, any pillows, blankets, or other items from rest time will be sent home with students to be washed.

When arriving on campus, we encourage you to turn your vehicle off rather than leaving it idling in the parking lot, unless needed in extreme temperatures. Idling vehicles are strongly discouraged when utilizing the parking lot or parking in front of the building.

BIRTHDAYS

Students may have a non-uniform day and/or bring a treat to share with classmates on her/his birthday following MPA's Food Allergy Guidelines and Protocol (see above). Following Health Department guidelines, the treats should be bought and not homemade. We also suggest that it be something individually wrapped.

We will celebrate your child's birthday in class by giving them a birthday hat and sticker and giving them a gift item, such as a pencil, to take home.

Parties for groups of children outside of school should be planned to avoid hurting the feelings of uninvited students. Invitations should be distributed in school only if all students in a classroom are included. Please do not have your child bring gifts to school for parties.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

There are many opportunities for parent involvement at Mounds Park Academy. We have an active Parents Association, of which every MPA parent/guardian is a member. They organize volunteer opportunities such as the Book Festival, and the Office of Community Engagement provides opportunities to volunteer on campus

in a myriad of ways. In addition, the Lower School office will survey parents annually to see if they are interested in helping with a variety of tasks. Some parents are interested and able to join us in the classroom occasionally. Please let your child's teachers know if you would like to participate in the classroom. Parents of enrolled children may visit the classroom any time during our hours of operation per Minnesota Statutes, 245A.14, subdivision 15.

UNIFORMS

Just like all MPA Lower School students, PreK students wear uniforms. You can find the guidelines on the [MPA website](#). Please have your child wear comfortable shoes appropriate for large motor play each day (sneakers are required for physical education) and bring appropriate clothing for outdoor activities.

PETS

Out of concern and courtesy for those who suffer from allergies, we do not allow pets as part of our PreK program, though pets may be present in other classrooms on MPA's campus. No dogs are allowed inside the school's facility unless admitted as a guide or therapy dog. At MPA, we guarantee a differently abled person the legal right to be accompanied by a service animal on our school grounds and inside our facility.

SHOW AND TELL

Several times throughout the year, your child will have a turn for show and tell. When it is their turn, the student will be given a show and tell bag to bring home. Parents/guardians should help their child select an item they would like to share with the class.

Please do not send anything alive, any food, any glass, or any violent/scary toys.

The selected item must fit inside the bag. Please help your child understand our procedure:

- The show and tell item will come to school in the bag.
- The bag will be given to a teacher, who will set it aside to keep it safe until show and tell time.
- The item will not be taken out to play with.
- The item will go home with the child and their adult at dismissal. If the student stays for Panther Care, it will be given to them and their adult when they are picked up.
- The item will not be taken out at Panther Care.

If you would like to share something that does not fit in the bag, please reach out to the teachers to coordinate. Due to allergy and safety concerns, we cannot allow animals for show and tell. If you prefer that your child does not participate in show and tell, please communicate with the teachers, and we will remove them from our schedule.

Section IV: Toileting Policy

PreK students will be offered frequent opportunities to use the bathroom throughout the day. Students should be fully potty trained before entering PreK, meaning they have:

- the ability to identify and verbalize the need to use the restroom in a timely manner;
- the ability to manage all self-help/toileting skills independently, including wiping, managing their clothing, and washing their hands; and
- the ability to manage their school day, including rest time without diapers or pull-ups.

We understand that accidents do sometimes occur and are a normal part of PreK life. If a child has an accident while at school, they will be brought to the restroom to complete their toileting. Please keep at least one change of uniform clothing, including underpants, socks, and shoes in your child's cubby at school. A teacher will supervise and give any verbal instructions required for the child to clean up and change clothes. A parent/guardian may be contacted to assist the child if they require additional help. Due to licensing restrictions, teachers are unable to change students or provide extended assistance in the bathroom.

Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and will be sent home at the end of the day. While occasional accidents are developmentally appropriate, frequent accidents at school may require additional discussion about the child's readiness for PreK.

Section V: Health Concerns and Sick Children

If your child is sick, please notify MPA of your child's absence by contacting the Lower School office at 651-748-5562.

A child with any of the following conditions or behaviors is a sick child and must stay home from school. Please keep your child home from school if they have:

- A temperature of 100 degrees F or higher.
- Diarrhea or vomiting.
- An undiagnosed rash or draining sores.
- A stomachache or headache that lasts or returns.
- An earache, or discharge from the ear.
- Redness, swelling, or drainage of eye (possible pink eye).
- Untreated head lice.
- Visible signs of a cold.
- Sore throat with coughing.
- Strep throat or impetigo with less than 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.

If a child shows any of the above symptoms at school, the teachers will isolate the student from the other children but will supervise them at all times. Parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up the child, and emergency contacts will be called if parents/guardians cannot be reached.

Our policy is that the child must be symptom-free for 24 hours to return to school. This includes a temperature below 100° F without fever-reducing medication. Also, they must feel physically well enough to resume all normal daily activities, including outdoor recess. We wish to avoid reinfections and high absentee counts in our classrooms. Children should remain home if they are not able to participate in PreK program activities with reasonable comfort or if they require more care than the teachers can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in our care. If in doubt, please keep them home that extra day.

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES

Parents/guardians are asked to notify MPA within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, when a child is diagnosed by their source of medical or dental care as having a contagious illness. These may include, but are not limited to, influenza, measles, meningitis, and pertussis. Contagious illnesses will be reported to all parents/guardians the same day the information is received.

The staff will share the information with families through Schoology, stating the illness, incubation period, early signs to watch for, and exclusion recommendations. These postings will be updated with each new case of illness. Names of students or identifying information are never shared.

Children should be excluded from the school setting until symptoms improve, or a healthcare provider has determined that the child can return, or children can participate in routine activities with normal staff supervision.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Whenever possible, parents/guardians should arrange to administer medications at home. Non-emergency medication will be kept in the Health Office and administered by MPA's staff nurse (or teacher if nurse is unavailable). Emergency medications, such as Epi-Pens, will be kept in the class backpack that travels with the students.

If your child needs to take medication during the school year or have an emergency medication at school, a medication authorization form must be completed and signed by both the parent and physician and returned to MPA prior to the medication being used.

Section VI: Accidents and Emergencies

MPA teachers and staff work proactively to prevent accidents and emergencies. Should an incident happen at school, the following policy will ensure students are cared for quickly and thoroughly. All MPA PreK staff are trained in emergency plans as well as Pediatric CPR and First Aid. All students must have a Health Care Summary and emergency contact information on file before starting school.

For a minor accident, first aid will be administered, and the parents/guardians will be notified. The teacher will complete an Accident/Incident Report. The teacher will communicate the incident to the parent/guardian.

For a major accident requiring immediate medical attention, first aid will be administered, and 911 will be called. After calling 911, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. MPA Staff will announce a "Hold" over the loudspeaker so that other students and staff are kept inside classrooms and away from the emergency. The child may be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency service if needed. An administrator or teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and stay until the parent/guardian arrives if ambulance transportation is required. If a parent/guardian is unavailable, we will continue to call the child's emergency contacts until an authorized person is reached.

In the event of a school-wide emergency, such as fire, severe weather, or building issues, parents/guardians will be notified through notifications via text, phone, and email. A test will be conducted early in the year to ensure all parents/guardians receive these notifications. Please ensure your contact details are updated via the Lower School office if changes are made.

Our program and MPA staff have developed thorough emergency plans to prepare for many different scenarios that include shelter in place and evacuation. Parents are provided with these plans prior to the start of the school year and may request additional information at any time.

Section VII: Family/School Communication

We value parents as partners in their child's education, and we truly believe that consistent, clear communication is the key to success. There are several ways that parents/guardians will receive communication from MPA. Each Thursday, MPA sends a school-wide newsletter, Panther Post. This will contain important information about things that affect our school community.

Parents/guardians will receive the annual school calendar at the beginning of the school year and a PreK calendar each month throughout the year. Each week, PreK teachers will provide a Week at a Glance, which provides a look at our plans for the upcoming week.

MPA uses Schoology to send group updates and information about our class. Parents can also communicate with teachers through this platform. Parents can expect Schoology posts multiple times per week to share details of classroom activities, keep parents informed of upcoming class activities, and provide fun pictures from our class days. This is so you might discuss with your child what they did that day and/or to use the idea or activity at home and build on it.

Each child will have a daily folder for both teachers and families to use for various written communications. Email communication is always welcome, as are in-person conversations. Please do not hesitate to contact the teachers with questions or concerns. You are the expert about your child and we value and appreciate your communication!

Section VIII: Parent-Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports

In PreK, teachers use a variety of developmentally informed tools and methods such as observations, work samples, and photos to assess students. The goal of these assessments is to understand each child's cognitive, academic, physical, social, and emotional progress. These assessments are primarily **formative**, meaning they are used to guide instruction and support individual growth rather than to assign grades. Our assessment methods include:

Observation and Interaction: Teachers watch and listen to students as they play and engage in activities. Teachers interact and converse with students to understand their play, creations, and thoughts. Observations are documented in each student's record in One Note through notes, checklists, and photos. This process is conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Work Samples: Teachers will collect and/or photograph students' work each week to showcase skill progression. This includes drawings, writing, photos, or other examples of work completed by the student. Some work is shared with parents at conferences, while others (at least one item from each month of school) are kept and included in a summative portfolio sent home at the end of the year. Activities such as name writing, drawing a self-portrait, tracing, and letter recognition are conducted and documented at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to show skill progression.

Play-Based Assessment: Since play is central to learning in PreK, teachers assess children through both structured and free play. Games or classroom activities are designed to assess problem-solving abilities, cognitive development, creativity, social interaction, and use of language. Observations of play, and the skills mentioned here, are documented in each student's record.

Individual Assessment: Teachers assess students individually prior to conferences to assess specific skills, such as math and literacy skills. These are conducted one-on-one with each student using a game or play-based activity to assess a specific skill. Rising kindergarten students use Lexia for 15 minutes per week in the second half of the school year to assess literacy skill development and illustrate instructional needs. Teachers use the feedback from Lexia to inform class instruction and will share these reports with parents/guardians at spring conferences.

Parent/Guardian Input: Teachers gather input from parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year to get a full understanding of their child using the PreK Goals Form. Parents provide information about their child's strengths and areas of growth. They consider academic, social and/or emotional goals for their child, which are discussed and fully developed together with teachers at conferences in the fall. Progress toward these goals is reviewed at conferences in the spring.

Additionally, parents/guardians are encouraged to contribute to the process using *The Inside Scoop Form* to express concerns, share reports from home, and give examples of their child's behaviors and work outside of school throughout the year. This form is always available to families in Schoology to use at any time and will be sent out monthly to proactively request contributions from home. This evidence will be added to the teachers' documentation in the student's portfolio to create a holistic picture of the child's development and progress. Parents/guardians may also share photos or videos of their child's progress with teachers through Schoology or may send physical work samples for us to add to their portfolio.

PreK teachers take the information shared through these two methods and connect it to the learning domains that we assess (see below). We then compare the evidence from home to the formal and observational assessments at school to look for alignment and discrepancies that require further exploration.

Developmental Progress Reports: MPA uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD criteria as a tool for measuring student progress in seven different domain areas: Social/Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, and the Arts. Teachers will use these criteria to mark student progress along a spectrum of development. The score and narrative report in each domain are provided to parents at conferences in the spring and fall and as part of their progress report at the end of each of the two semesters during the school year.

Using Assessment Information: The collection of all these assessments informs and influences the PreK curriculum by showing teachers where students are ready for additional challenges, and where students require additional instruction. Using the information gathered from the methods above, teachers adjust lesson plans to best meet the students' current learning needs and progress toward the desired learning outcomes. PreK teachers create small learning cohorts to provide differentiated instruction in small groups or for individual students. Learning outcomes for these cohorts will be unique to each group as appropriate.

Assessment information may also highlight needs such as additional classroom materials or equipment, professional development for teachers, or external assessments for individual students. Classroom teachers will work with the Program Manager, Lower School Director, and MPA Instructional Coach to review these needs and procure solutions.

If, through observations and interactions, a developmental screening or referral for diagnostic assessment is suggested, teachers will communicate directly with families to discuss options and resources in their area.

We recommend that all children receive an early childhood developmental screening soon after their third birthday. More information on early childhood screening is available from the [Minnesota Department of Education](#).

Assessment data will also help teachers and parents make decisions about a student's subsequent year at MPA. If a child has a birthday in August or September, teachers and parents should discuss the student's readiness for kindergarten. Having these discussions early at fall conferences will ensure that parents and teachers are in agreement about the child's next year at school. If a family wishes to send their child to kindergarten and that child will not be five years old on September 1 of that school year, they must complete the Early Entrance to Kindergarten process by contacting the Office of Admission.

Addressing Developmental Concerns

When the PreK team notices signs that a child may benefit from additional support due to a possible developmental delay or other special need, our first and most important step is connecting with that child's family. These steps outline how the school and family will work together with transparency, respect, and a shared commitment to every child's growth.

This process is not about labeling children. It is about understanding each child's unique profile as a learner, and putting the right supports in place at the right time.

Section IX: Behavior Guidance Policy

A key goal in our PreK program is to provide a classroom environment where each child is valued and where warm, nurturing relationships are evident. Our behavioral guidance plan is tailored to the developmental needs of our students, and we hold the physical and emotional safety and security of our students and staff as our highest priority. Rules in the early childhood classroom should be simple and functional. Most revolve around being safe and keeping the classroom productive and conducive to learning.

We believe that:

1. Children learn from the adults around them, and it is our responsibility to present them with positive models of acceptable behavior.
2. Each child is an individual and responds uniquely to guidance and discipline.
3. Proactive room arrangements and routines can solve most behavioral issues in the classroom.
4. An important step is to redirect the child away from the activity with an invitation to try it again later.
5. We teach children to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior, such as conversation and problem-solving techniques, in order to reduce conflict.
6. We provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior. Natural consequences often provide a learning experience for children.
7. The goal is to help children self-regulate their behavior versus relying on external control from adults.

We promote positive behavior in the following ways:

1. The classrooms are designed to be developmentally appropriate.
2. There are sufficient toys and activities to stimulate children of all age groups we serve.
3. The staff model, encourage and praise positive behaviors by using clear and positive statements of behavior expectations.
4. The curriculum is designed to be stimulating and age-appropriate for the children.

5. The staff appropriately supervises and interacts with the children.

PERSISTENT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

There are certain behaviors that are unacceptable within our program because they negatively affect the students' well-being and classroom environment. These behaviors include persistent disruptive or unsafe actions such as biting, cursing, pinching, kicking, hitting, choking, eloping from the group, prolonged or persistent disruption of the class, or other actions that pose a threat to self, other students, or adults. Such behaviors will be immediately stopped. If our attempts to correct the behavior are not successful, the child may be separated from the group until they are ready to return to the group. Such a separation is communicated to parents in writing and will be documented on the separation log.

If a child is not behaving appropriately, we will use the following positive guidance techniques:

- A. Pay no attention: Not giving attention to a child who is trying to gain it by acting out may be an appropriate response unless it is a behavior that is unsafe.
- B. Redirection/Distraction: This technique offers an alternative to a child, such as suggesting a new activity or different toy, encouraging independent play, or interacting with the child in a different way.
- C. Discussion: Discuss with the child how their behavior is inappropriate and why it is happening. Teachers will guide the child to use other words or methods that would suggest a more appropriate response.
- D. Reasonable Consequences: The staff may implement reasonable consequences, such as taking away a toy if the child used the toy to hit another child.

If positive guidance techniques are not effective, we may involve parents/guardians with the following progressive guidance techniques:

1. Teachers will look for reasons why the behavior is happening and identify patterns or triggers (e.g. hunger, discomfort, bathroom needs) and will attempt methods to minimize or eliminate the behavior.
2. We will inform parents/guardians verbally and in writing what behaviors have been observed and what the teachers have done to try to modify the behavior. Teachers will seek input from parents about possible reasons the unexpected behaviors are occurring.
3. If the disruptive or unsafe behavior continues, the PreK program manager and Lower School director will meet with parents/guardians to develop a written individualized behavior plan to address the behavior and support the student, teachers, and family. We will seek parent/guardian input and agree on steps to attempt to modify the behavior. We may suggest involving outside resources, such as a counselor, physician, learning specialist, or special education professional to assist with the situation. The behavior plan may include (but is not limited to) visual supports, specific praise, transition warnings, social stories, emotional coaching, increased choices, and alternative seating.
4. If the disruptive or unsafe behavior persists, the child may need to take a brief behavioral leave of absence. (Standard attendance rates apply during behavioral leaves).
5. After returning to school, if the child continues to act inappropriately, MPA may recommend an alternative school placement or disenroll the child. We reserve the right to use these progressive guidance techniques at our discretion. It is our goal to work together for a positive outcome of behavior change through student support.
6. The goal of this behavior guidance policy is to limit the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures; however, circumstances may arise when we may disenroll a child if his or her

behavior creates a significant safety risk to themselves, other children, or the staff. This may include persistent biting, cursing, pinching, kicking, hitting, choking, or other actions that cause physical or emotional harm. This decision is not taken lightly and will only be exercised if all other measures have been exhausted, and a safety risk persists. The determination will be made in conjunction with the student's family, mental or behavioral professionals, PreK Program and Admission Manager, the Lower School Director, and the Head of School.

7. MPA maintains relationships with other local childcare providers and will recommend a suitable alternative when families depart MPA. If families would like assistance finding additional resources, MPA will make a referral through Help Me Grow MN. This will connect families with early childhood services near their home. MPA will cooperate with the receiving school or care provider to develop a positive transition plan for the student and receiving school.

PROHIBITED STAFF ACTIONS

At Mounds Park Academy, we believe that positive reinforcement is the best approach to discipline. The following actions are prohibited by or at the direction of any teacher or staff person:

1. The subjection of a child to physical punishment, which includes but is not limited to: rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, spanking, excessive tickling, physically forcing a child to perform an action, or requiring them to remain inactive for long periods of time.
2. The subjection of a child to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to: name-calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family, and using coercive language that intimidates, threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.
3. The separation of a child from the group except within rule requirements.
4. Punishments for lapses in toileting.
5. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.
6. The use of physical restraint other than to physically hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
7. The use of prone or any contraindicated restraint will not be allowed under any circumstances.
 - i) The program must not use a prone restraint on any student in the program, except in the stance of if a person rolls into a prone position during the use of a restraint, the student must be restored to a non-prone position as quickly as possible.
 - ii) The program must not implement a restraint on a student in the program in a way that is contraindicated for any of the person's known medical or psychological conditions. Prior to using restraint on a person, the program must assess and document on the child's ICCPP a determination of any medical or psychological conditions that restraints are contraindicated for and the type of restraints that will not be used on the person based on this determination.
8. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.

All staff will be trained on all current prohibited actions yearly.

Section X: Mandated Reporting Policy

All MPA teachers and staff are mandated reporters and are legally required to report maltreatment. All PreK teachers and substitutes receive annual training on their reporting responsibilities; this training is documented in each person's personnel file. A copy of the Maltreatment for Minors Mandated Reporting Policy is provided to each teacher and substitute. Phone numbers for the Licensing Division's Central Intake

line, County Social Services, and the local police department are posted in the PreK classroom and the Lower School office. MPA follows the Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting Policy from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (formerly DHS), which can be found on the following pages.

651-266-4500

651-777-8191

Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting

This form may be used by any provider licensed by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families, except family child care. The form for family child care providers is [DHS-7634C-ENG](#).

What to report

- Maltreatment includes egregious harm, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substantial child endangerment, threatened injury, and mental injury. For definitions refer to [Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03](#), and pages 3-6 of this document. Maltreatment must be reported if you have witnessed or have reason to believe that a child is being or has been maltreated within the last three years.

Who must report

- If you work in a licensed facility, you are a “mandated reporter” and are legally required (mandated) to report maltreatment. You cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility.
- In addition, people who are not mandated reporters may voluntarily report maltreatment.

Where to report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.
- Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of children, or other violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules, in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families, should be made to the DCYF Central Intake line at 651-539-8222.
- Incidents of suspected maltreatment of children occurring within a family, in the community, at a family child care program, in a child foster residence setting, or in a child foster care home, should be reported to the local county social services agency at
651-266-4500 or local law enforcement at 651-249-2600
- Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of a child related to a Children’s Residential Facility (CRF), Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), or a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment facility should be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Services.
- Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of a child in a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) should be made to the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Health Facility Complaints at health.ohfc-complaints@state.mn.us.

When to report

- Mandated reporters must make a report to one of the agencies listed above immediately (as soon as possible but no longer than 24 hours).

Information to report

- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the maltreatment (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected maltreatment occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.

Failure to report

- A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been maltreated and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from a position allowing direct contact with, or access to, persons receiving services from programs, organizations, and/or agencies that are required to have individuals complete a background study by the Department of Human Services as listed in [Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.03](#).

Retaliation prohibited

- An employer of any mandated reporter is prohibited from retaliating against (getting back at):
 - an employee for making a report in good faith; or
 - a child who is the subject of the report.
- If an employer retaliates against an employee, the employer may be liable for damages and/or penalties.

Staff training

The license holder must train all mandated reporters on their reporting responsibilities, according to the training requirements in the statutes and rules governing the licensed program. The license holder must document the provision of this training in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that the policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under [Minnesota Statutes, section 142B.10, subdivision 21](#).

Provide policy to parents

For licensed child care centers, the mandated reporting policy must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment and must be available upon request. The definitions section (p. 3-6) is optional to provide to parents.

The following sections do not apply to family child foster care per [Minnesota Statutes, section 142B.54, subd. 1](#).

Internal review

- When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care.
- The internal review must include an evaluation of whether:
 - related policies and procedures were followed;
 - the policies and procedures were adequate;
 - there is a need for additional staff training;
 - the reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved; and
 - there is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

Primary and secondary person or position to ensure reviews completed

The internal review will be completed by the PreK program manager . If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, the Lower School Director will be responsible for completing the internal review.

Documentation of internal review

The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner's request.

Corrective action plan

Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan to correct any current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder.

Definitions

Found in [Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03](#)

Egregious harm [\(Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 5\)](#)

"Egregious harm" means harm under [section 260C.007, subdivision 14](#), or a similar law of another jurisdiction.

From [section 260C.007, subdivision 14](#):

"Egregious harm" means the infliction of bodily harm to a child or neglect of a child which demonstrates a grossly inadequate ability to provide minimally adequate parental care. The egregious harm need not have occurred in the state or in the county where a termination of parental rights action has proper venue. Egregious harm includes, but is not limited to:

1. conduct toward a child that constitutes a violation of sections [609.185](#) to [609.2114](#), [609.222, subdivision 2](#), [609.223](#), or any other similar law of any other state;
2. the infliction of "substantial bodily harm" to a child, as defined in section [609.02, subdivision 7a](#);
3. conduct toward a child that constitutes felony malicious punishment of a child under [section 609.377](#);
4. conduct toward a child that constitutes felony unreasonable restraint of a child under [section 609.255, subdivision 3](#);
5. conduct toward a child that constitutes felony neglect or endangerment of a child under [section 609.378](#);
6. conduct toward a child that constitutes assault under section [609.221](#), [609.222](#), or [609.223](#);
7. conduct toward a child that constitutes sex trafficking, solicitation, inducement, promotion of, or receiving profit derived from prostitution under [section 609.322](#);
8. conduct toward a child that constitutes murder or voluntary manslaughter as defined by United States Code, title 18, section 1111(a) or 1112(a);
9. conduct toward a child that constitutes aiding or abetting, attempting, conspiring, or soliciting to commit a murder or voluntary manslaughter that constitutes a violation of United States Code, title 18, section 1111(a) or 1112(a); or
10. conduct toward a child that constitutes criminal sexual conduct under [sections 609.342](#) to [609.345](#) or sexual extortion under [section 609.3458](#).

Maltreatment [\(Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 12\)](#)

"Maltreatment" means any of the following acts or omissions:

1. egregious harm under subdivision 5;
2. neglect under subdivision 15;
3. physical abuse under subdivision 18;
4. sexual abuse under subdivision 20;
5. substantial child endangerment under subdivision 22;
6. threatened injury under subdivision 23;
7. mental injury under subdivision 13; and
8. maltreatment of a child in a facility.

Mental injury (Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 13)

"Mental injury" means an injury to the psychological capacity or emotional stability of a child as evidenced by an observable or substantial impairment in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior with due regard to the child's culture.

Neglect (Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 15)

- A. "Neglect" means the commission or omission of any of the acts specified under clauses (1) to (8), other than by accidental means:
1. failure by a person responsible for a child's care to supply a child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, health, medical, or other care required for the child's physical or mental health when reasonably able to do so;
 2. failure to protect a child from conditions or actions that seriously endanger the child's physical or mental health when reasonably able to do so, including a growth delay, which may be referred to as a failure to thrive, that has been diagnosed by a physician and is due to parental neglect;
 3. failure to provide for necessary supervision or child care arrangements appropriate for a child after considering factors as the child's age, mental ability, physical condition, length of absence, or environment, when the child is unable to care for the child's own basic needs or safety, or the basic needs or safety of another child in their care;
 4. failure to ensure that the child is educated as defined in sections 120A.22 and 260C.163, subdivision 11, which does not include a parent's refusal to provide the parent's child with sympathomimetic medications, consistent with section 125A.091, subdivision 5;
 5. prenatal exposure to a controlled substance, as defined in section 253B.02, subdivision 2, used by the mother for a nonmedical purpose, as evidenced by withdrawal symptoms in the child at birth, results of a toxicology test performed on the mother at delivery or the child at birth, medical effects or developmental delays during the child's first year of life that medically indicate prenatal exposure to a controlled substance, or the presence of a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder;
 6. medical neglect, as defined in section 260C.007, subdivision 6, clause (5);
 7. chronic and severe use of alcohol or a controlled substance by a person responsible for the child's care that adversely affects the child's basic needs and safety; or
 8. emotional harm from a pattern of behavior that contributes to impaired emotional functioning of the child which may be demonstrated by a substantial and observable effect in the child's behavior, emotional response, or cognition that is not within the normal range for the child's age and stage of development, with due regard to the child's culture.
- B. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to mean that a child is neglected solely because the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care in good faith selects and depends upon spiritual means or prayer for treatment or care of disease or remedial care of the child in lieu of medical care.
- C. This chapter does not impose upon persons not otherwise legally responsible for providing a child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, education, or medical care a duty to provide that care.
- D. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to mean that a child who has a mental, physical, or emotional condition is neglected solely because the child remains in an emergency department or hospital setting because services, including residential treatment, that are deemed necessary by the child's medical or mental health care professional or county case manager are not available to the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care, and the child cannot be safely discharged to the child's family.

Physical abuse (Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 18)

- A. "Physical abuse" means any physical injury, mental injury under subdivision 13, or threatened injury under subdivision 23, inflicted by a person responsible for the child's care on a child other than by accidental means, or any physical or mental injury that cannot reasonably be explained by the child's history of injuries, or any aversive or deprivation procedures, or regulated interventions, that have not been authorized under section [125A.0942](#) or [245.825](#).
- B. Abuse does not include reasonable and moderate physical discipline of a child administered by a parent or legal guardian that does not result in an injury. Abuse does not include the use of reasonable force by a teacher, principal, or school employee as allowed by section [121A.582](#).
- C. For the purposes of this subdivision, actions that are not reasonable and moderate include, but are not limited to, any of the following:
 - 1. throwing, kicking, burning, biting, or cutting a child;
 - 2. striking a child with a closed fist;
 - 3. shaking a child under age three;
 - 4. striking or other actions that result in any nonaccidental injury to a child under 18 months of age;
 - 5. unreasonable interference with a child's breathing;
 - 6. threatening a child with a weapon, as defined in [section 609.02, subdivision 6](#);
 - 7. striking a child under age one on the face or head;
 - 8. striking a child who is at least age one but under age four on the face or head, which results in an injury;
 - 9. purposely giving a child:
 - i. poison, alcohol, or dangerous, harmful, or controlled substances that were not prescribed for the child by a practitioner in order to control or punish the child; or
 - ii. other substances that substantially affect the child's behavior, motor coordination, or judgment; that result in sickness or internal injury; or that subject the child to medical procedures that would be unnecessary if the child were not exposed to the substances;
 - 10. unreasonable physical confinement or restraint not permitted under [section 609.379](#), including but not limited to tying, caging, or chaining; or
 - 11. in a school facility or school zone, an act by a person responsible for the child's care that is a violation under section [121A.58](#).

Sexual abuse (Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 20)

"Sexual abuse" means the subjection of a child by a person responsible for the child's care, by a person who has a significant relationship to the child, or by a person in a current or recent position of authority, to any act that constitutes a violation of section [609.342](#) (criminal sexual conduct in the first degree), [609.343](#) (criminal sexual conduct in the second degree), [609.344](#) (criminal sexual conduct in the third degree), [609.345](#) (criminal sexual conduct in the fourth degree), [609.3451](#) (criminal sexual conduct in the fifth degree), [609.3458](#) (sexual extortion), or [609.352](#) (solicitation of children to engage in sexual conduct; communication of sexually explicit materials to children).

Sexual abuse also includes any act involving a child that constitutes a violation of prostitution offenses under sections [609.321](#) to [609.324](#) or [617.246](#). Sexual abuse includes all reports of known or suspected child sex trafficking involving a child who is identified as a victim of sex trafficking. Sexual abuse includes child sex trafficking as defined in section [609.321](#), subdivisions 7a and 7b.

Sexual abuse includes threatened sexual abuse, which includes the status of a parent or household member who has committed a violation that requires registration as an offender under section [243.166, subdivision 1b](#), paragraph (a) or (b), or required registration under section [243.166, subdivision 1b](#), paragraph (a) or (b).

Substantial child endangerment ([Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 22](#))

"Substantial child endangerment" means that a person responsible for a child's care, by act or omission, commits or attempts to commit an act against a child in the person's care that constitutes any of the following:

1. egregious harm under subdivision 5;
2. abandonment under section [260C.301, subdivision 2](#);
3. neglect under subdivision 15, paragraph (a), clause (2), that substantially endangers the child's physical or mental health, including a growth delay, which may be referred to as failure to thrive, that has been diagnosed by a physician and is due to parental neglect;
4. murder in the first, second, or third degree under section [609.185](#), [609.19](#), or [609.195](#);
5. manslaughter in the first or second degree under section [609.20](#) or [609.205](#);
6. assault in the first, second, or third degree under section [609.221](#), [609.222](#), or [609.223](#);
7. sex trafficking, solicitation, inducement, or promotion of prostitution under section [609.322](#);
8. criminal sexual conduct under sections [609.342](#) to [609.345](#);
9. sexual extortion under section [609.3458](#);
10. solicitation of children to engage in sexual conduct under section [609.352](#);
11. malicious punishment or neglect or endangerment of a child under section [609.377](#) or [609.378](#);
12. use of a minor in sexual performance under section [617.246](#);
13. labor trafficking under sections [609.281](#) and [609.282](#); or
14. parental behavior, status, or condition that mandates that the county attorney file a termination of parental rights petition under section [260C.503, subdivision 2](#).

Threatened injury ([Minnesota Statutes, section 260E.03, subd. 23](#))

- A. "Threatened injury" means a statement, overt act, condition, or status that represents a substantial risk of physical or sexual abuse or mental injury.
- B. Threatened injury includes, but is not limited to, exposing a child to a person responsible for the child's care, as defined in subdivision 17, who has:
 1. subjected a child to, or failed to protect a child from, an overt act or condition that constitutes egregious harm under subdivision 5 or a similar law of another jurisdiction;
 2. been found to be palpably unfit under section [260C.301, subdivision 1](#), paragraph (b), clause (4), or a similar law of another jurisdiction;
 3. committed an act that resulted in an involuntary termination of parental rights under section [260C.301](#), or a similar law of another jurisdiction; or
 4. committed an act that resulted in the involuntary transfer of permanent legal and physical custody of a child to a relative or parent under section [260C.515, subdivision 4](#), or a similar law of another jurisdiction.
- C. A child is the subject of a report of threatened injury when the local welfare agency receives birth match data under section [260E.14, subdivision 4](#), from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

Section XI: Grievance Procedures

MPA values open discourse and honest, respectful communication. It is our goal to communicate early and regularly so that issues are thoughtfully and proactively managed. Parents/guardians who have a grievance are encouraged to address it directly with the classroom teachers or the PreK program manager.

If there is a grievance over the PreK program or its procedures, direct contact with the program manager should be made. This can be done either verbally, in a scheduled meeting, or in writing via email. Jennifer Jasinski, PreK Program and Admission Manager can be reached at 651-748-5515 or jjasinski@moundsparkacademy.org.

If the individual making the complaint feels that it is not satisfactorily resolved, or it is of a serious nature, the concern should be brought to the Lower School director. James Ewer, Lower School director, can be reached at 651-748-5542 or jewer@moundsparkacademy.org.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the director will either handle it personally or will consult with the head of school if warranted. The individual has the right to contact the Department of Children, Youth, and Families Licensing Division at 651-539-8222.

There may arise a situation where a parent/guardian has a personal grievance against a teacher or staff member. Due to the personal nature of such a grievance, the Lower School director will gather information from the parent/guardian, then gather information from the teacher or staff member. The Lower School director should involve the director of Human Resources, who will work in conjunction with the Lower School director for the next steps.

1. The Lower School director will communicate to the parents either verbally (phone or in person) or in writing how the problem will be resolved.
2. If the complaint is about the Lower School director and cannot be resolved at that level, the director of Human Resources and head of school will work together to resolve the situation.

Section XII: Schedule Change Policy

Any requests to change your child's regular schedule must be submitted in writing at least two weeks before the desired change.

If space allows, families may add days to their child's schedule on a first-come, first-served basis. A maximum of 20 students may attend each day.

Requests to reduce attendance by one day per week due to financial concerns will be considered. Please submit these requests in writing to Natalie Waters Seum, director of enrollment strategy and communication and Robert Perez, chief financial and operations officer.

All withdrawals are subject to MPA's withdrawal policy.

Section XIII: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA or the Buckley Amendment protects the privacy of students and their parents by restricting access to school records in which individual student information is kept. Only “school officials with legitimate education interest” can directly access a student’s records. The school must define “legitimate education interest” and specify the criteria for deciding who has this interest. FERPA provides parents with access to their child’s school records, including health records, and stipulates that these records may not be released outside the school without specific parental consent except in a few circumstances.

FERPA requires our school to inform parents in writing every year of the school’s policies and administrative procedures regarding student records. Parents also should receive information on the additional protections afforded student health information, the types of school-based or school-linked health services available to students, and the names and phone numbers of the school’s health professionals. In addition, the parental notice should explain in clear, easily understood language the rights of parents and students, the limits of confidentiality, and relevant concepts such as “informed consent.”

MOUNDS PARK ACADEMY PRIVACY POLICY

At Mounds Park Academy, we respect and are committed to protecting families’ privacy with regard to both electronic and print media. The identifiable personal information families provide and records about students’ progress are considered private data. The data may be shared with employees of the school who have a legitimate education interest, which we define as those who require this information to provide the specific service requested. These areas include employees who work with in academic instruction, discipline, student mental and physical support, and financial services. No personal identification information is ever shared with other individuals, organizations, advertisers, or other third parties without explicit permission. All electronic information is stored in password-protected systems. Printed information is filed in locked cabinets and is only accessible by those with a legitimate education interest.

This policy is provided to families through the TADS system at the time of enrollment. Families are required to confirm they have received this document prior to completing enrollment for their student(s). Further, this policy and handbook are available on the MPA website at all times.

Section XIII: Resources for Families

MPA is committed to the health and well-being of each family in our community. Listed below are a few resources that may be helpful for your child’s development, as well as local sources for safety, recreation, and supplemental learning.

Emergency

Poison Help Line: 1-800-222-1222

Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911

Mounds Park Academy

Main number: 651-777-2555

Lower School Office: 651-748-5562

PreK Classroom: 651-748-5573

Health Office: 651-748-5509

Help Me Grow

This organization helps parents/guardians understand developmental milestones and connects them to resources if there are concerns.

www.helpmegrowmn.org

866-693-GROW (4769)

Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties

This non-profit organization helps families connect with resources for food, energy, housing, jobs, transportation, childcare, and more.

www.caprw.org

651-645-6445

YMCA

This organization has many locations throughout the Twin Cities offering summer programs for students.

www.ymcanorth.org

612-230-9622

Soccer Shots

This program is designed as an introduction to soccer for young children.

www.soccershots.com/twincities/

651-331-0134

MacPhail Center for Music

This organization provides music instruction for people of all ages.

Macphail.org

612-321-0100

The policies for parents in this document represent a small portion of the policies MPA is required to maintain for licensing compliance. The entire catalog of policies is available to parents upon request.