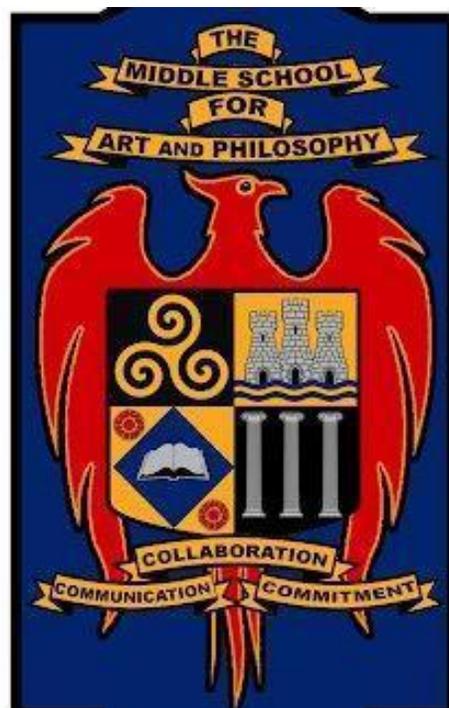


Middle School for Art and Philosophy

Parent and Student Handbook

A Policy and Procedure Guide for 2025-2026



“Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experience of social living.

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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“What’s in our brand?”

Mission Statement

At the Middle School for Art and Philosophy we provide a safe environment and developmentally appropriate and rigorous curriculum in order to foster a community of lifelong learners, productive citizens, and critical thinkers who apply what they learn throughout their lives.

MSAP School Motto

MSAP Eagles S.O.A.R!

Symbols of **O**ptimism, **A**ccountability and **R**esilience

MSAP Student Pledge

At MSAP all members of our school community strive to...

- **apply** what we learn to the present and in our future
- **build** a community of collaboration, respect, and support
- **model** appropriate behavior that reflect positively on ourselves, our families and our school community

MSAP Staff Directory

Administration	Email	Role	Subject/Grades
Danielle Lamb-Ridore	Dlamb2@schools.nyc.gov	Principal	
Lorraine Swearing	Lswearing@schools.nyc.gov	Assistant Principal	
Faculty and Staff			
Joseph Belneau	JBelneau@schools.nyc.gov	Lead Math Paraprofessional	6th grade Math
Veronica Balce	VBalce@schools.nyc.gov	Speech Pathologist	
Lynette Bourne	LBourne4@schools.nyc.gov	Secretary	
Raheem Bradnock	RBradnock@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6-8 ICT Math/SS
Novian Burke	NBurke4@schools.nyc.gov	Paraprofessional	8th grade
Ruby Coombs	RCoombs@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	7 th Math
Lea Denis	LDenis2@schools.nyc.gov	Guidance Counselor	
Monette Dejesus	MDejesus28@schools.nyc.gov	Paraprofessional	8th grade
Sheryl Dixon	SDixon9@schools.nyc.gov	Paraprofessional	7th grade
Jon Ehlers	Jehlers2@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	7th grade ELA Special Education
Jeron Haigler	jhaigler@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6 th /7 th /8 th PE/Health
Chantel Hazell	Chazell3@schools.nyc.gov	Paraprofessional	7th grade
Jeanodell Leon	JLeon7@schools.nyc.gov	Family Worker	
Jean Lafontant	Jlafontant@ms-ap.org	Social Worker	
Dorrothe Jean	djean4@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	8 th Math
Fagan Kuhnmuench	MKuhnmuench2@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	7th grade ELA
Melika Lewis-George	MLewisgeorge@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6th grade ELA Special Education
Niko Lowery	NLowery2@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	Art
Zunaira Mirza	Zmirza@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	ENL
Jeremiah Murphy	Jmurphy27@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6 th /7 th /8 th SC Math/Science
Sasha Persaud	Spersaud20@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6-8 grade Science Special Education
Marnie Ponce	MPonce@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6 th SS/ELA
Victoria Ponder	vponder@schools.nyc.gov	School Aide	
Quindell Ross	QRoss@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	8th grade English
Dawn Saka	dsaka@schools.nyc.gov	School Aide	
Camille Sealy	CSealy5@schools.nyc.gov	Parent Coordinator	
Yolanda Simon	ysimon2@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	8th grade ELA Special Education
Nicole Stevens	nstevens2@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	7 th /8 th Science
Yvette Vozzo	Yvozzo@schools.nyc.gov	Teacher	6th grade Math/Science



PTA Meetings

President..... Ms. Evelyn Wallace
 Recording Secretary..... Ms. Kim Washington
 Treasurer..... Ms. Nakih Gonzalez

PTA Meetings (tentative)

(All meetings start promptly @ 6:00pm)

- September 17, 2025
- October 15, 2025
- November 19, 2025 (In Person - Honor Roll Dinner #MP1)
- December 17, 2025
- January 21, 2026
- February 25, 2026 (In Person - Honor Roll Dinner #MP2)
- March 18, 2026
- April 15, 2026 (In Person - Honor Roll Dinner #MP3)
- May 20, 2026
- June 17, 2026 (In Person - Honor Roll Dinner #MP4)

Parent Teacher Conferences

Students will be dismissed after lunch at 11:30am
on November 13th and March 12th

Conference #	Date
1	Thursday Sep 18, 2025 (Evening only)
2	Wednesday Nov 13, 2025(Afternoon and Evening)
3	Thursday March 12, 2026 (Afternoon and Evening)
4	Thursday May 14, 2026 (Evening only)

On behalf of the PTA Board Members, Faculty and Students, we would like to thank you in advance for your support in making 2025-2026 a successful school year.

SLT Meetings (tentative)
(All meetings start promptly @ 5:00pm)

September 30, 2025

October 28, 2025

November 25, 2025

December 16, 2025

January 27, 2026

February 24, 2026

March 31, 2026

April 28, 2026

May 26 , 2026

June 23, 2026



GRADING POLICY

Our grading system is focused on a student's mastery of the academic knowledge and skills addressed in the course. We separately assess the influence of positive and consistent work habits on student learning.

The more times a student interacts with material, the stronger his/her understanding will be.

Therefore, assessments are weighted heavier the more exposure a student has had to the material. For example, a homework assignment should be weighted less than a quiz because the homework assignment is the first time a student is practicing the material and he/she is likely to make more mistakes than on a quiz.

When teachers create assessments in the Department of Education (DOE) grading system, they must assign the following weights:

Assessments Tasks - 40%

Ex: Instructional tasks, Interim assessments, Essays, Projects, and Performance Tasks

Classwork - 45%

Ex: Notebook organization, stop and jot, do now, independent activity and Exit ticket.

Homework - 15%

Ex: Completion of tasks and extra credit

Report Card Grades

Grades for report cards will be determined using a combination of grades for class work, homework, notebook grades, projects, class participation/discussions, quizzes, and tests. The weighted value of these items have been determined at the school-wide level. Grading for all subjects is to be percentage ratings. According to the NYCDOE, the lowest passing grade is 65 percent. According to the NYCDOE, the lowest failing mark is 55 percent. Report Card grades earned by students must correspond to student performance on standardized test performance.

Honor Roll

All students at MSAP will be celebrated for individual and collective academic and social/community successes. The MSAP Honor Roll is a recognition structure for students who perform at high academic levels. Placement on the honor roll rewards students through public recognition and celebration for their hard work and dedication to academic success.

There are three Honor Roll levels:

Gold Honor Roll - students who earn a numeric average of 90-100 in a marking period will be placed on the school's Gold Honor Roll.

Silver Honor Roll - students who earn a numeric average of 85-89 in a marking period will be placed on the school's Silver Honor Roll.

Bronze Honor Roll - students who earn a numeric average of 80-84 in a marking period will be placed on the school's Bronze Honor Roll.



DISCIPLINE POLICY

School-wide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning

The Middle School for Art and Philosophy is committed to ensuring that our school is a safe, secure, and orderly environment in which teaching and learning take place each day. A safe and supportive school depends upon the efforts of all members of the school community—teachers, students, administrators, and parents. To ensure that all members of the community feel safe and respected, we must know and understand the standards of behavior that all students are expected to honor and the consequences if these standards are not met.

Below outlines a Ladder of Referral of consequences if a student does not meet the standards of behavior expected at Middle School for Art and Philosophy.

Step 5

- Phone call to guardian
- Guidance Intervention
- Superintendent's Suspension

Step 4

- Phone call to guardian
- Guidance Intervention
- Principal's Suspension

Step 3

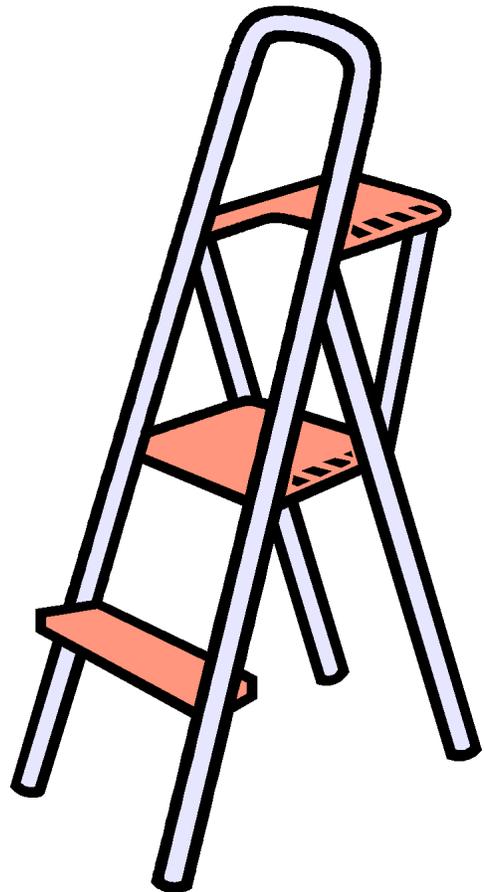
- Phone call to guardian
- Guidance Intervention
- Mediation with guardian and student

Step 2

- Phone call to guardian
- Detention and loss of privilege (Ex: Incentive trip)

Step 1

- Phone call to guardian
- Detention





CELL PHONE POLICY

Our school is committed to fostering a focused, safe, and engaging academic environment for all learners. Beginning September 4, 2025 students will no longer be permitted to access or store internet-enabled devices in their bookbags or on their person during the school day.

Collection and Storage Procedures

To ensure compliance and support of a distraction-free school experience:

- Upon arrival, between 7:30am – 8:00am, students must **turn off** all personal internet-enabled devices.

- Devices will be placed in their homeroom device case and stored in a secure school location.

- Devices will be **returned to students at dismissal (2:20pm)**. If students **attend expanded day (after school) programming**, the cellphone will be returned at expanded day dismissal time which is 5:30pm.

- Students who arrive late or leave early will follow check-in/check-out protocols with designated staff.

- The school is **not responsible** for any lost, damaged, or stolen devices that have **NOT** been submitted for collection.

Communication During School Hours

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please use one of the following school numbers:

1. **Main Office** – 718.342.7563
2. **Parent Coordinator**
 1. Camille Sealy: 718.342.7563 ext. 2060
3. **Expanded Day (Afterschool) Program Director (2:20pm-5:30pm)**
 1. Kyle Richardson/ Lydia Andrews: 718.342.7563 Ext. 1060

Students may also request permission to use the main office phone in **emergencies**.

In case of an emergency, we will communicate you using the DOE GAMA (Grading, Attendance, and Messaging Application) system. It is important that all of your information stays up to date so that you can be reached.

You can update your contact information by logging in to your New York Schools Account (NYSCA) at <https://www.schoolsaccount.nyc/>.

Authorized Use Exceptions

Students may only use personal devices during the instructional day when:

- Required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan (requires documentation from a medical provider)
- Needed for a documented medical reason (requires documentation from a medical provider).

Please contact the Parent coordinator to request an exception by emailing Csealy5@schools.nyc.gov. Exception decisions will be processed within 3-5 business days.

Violations & Consequences (Aligned to Chancellor's Regulation A-413)

Students found with an unauthorized internet-enabled device will face the following progressive consequences:

- **1st Offense:** Device held in the main office and returned to the student at dismissal.
- **2nd Offense:** Parent/guardian must retrieve the device from school.
- **3rd Offense and beyond:** Meeting with school leadership. Additional interventions may apply based on the NYC DOE Discipline Code. May include but not limited to detention, removal from activities, trips, afterschool programming, etc.

Uniform Policy

Our uniform policy intended to help our school promote a more effective learning environment. As stated in clause A-655 of the Chancellor's Regulations, the use of a uniform dress code helps to foster school unity and pride. In addition, it eliminates label competition; simplifies dressing, and minimizes costs to parents. Wearing a uniform teaches children appropriate dress and decorum in school and in their future "work" places/careers. Additionally, wearing a uniform helps to improve student conduct and discipline.

The Official MSAP school uniform is:

- A **black** polo shirt with school crest or the **black** MSAP t-shirt
- Khaki or black pants or skirt. Skirts must be knee-length or longer. Students must wear a belt with their pants.
- Black, flat closed shoes or sneakers
- Undershirts or T-shirts must be tucked in and not visible. Students must wear belts.

The following will not be accepted during the school day:

- Hoodies (Any student who violates this policy will have his/her hoodie confiscated)
- Ripped Jeans / Spandex pants
- Denim Jackets
- Sweaters must be black if worn during the school day
- Head coverings, bandanas, scarves, or hats (except those dictated by religious observance)

Any student who violates this policy will have his/her accessory confiscated

During Dress Down Days, students must be covered from the shoulders to the knees with clothing.

Parents will be notified if a child comes to school dressed inappropriately.



Attendance Policy



The New York City Department of Education requires that all students attend school on a full time basis. Students with less than 90% attendance are more likely to have lower test scores, feel lost academically, fall behind academically, and attend summer school. Students that are continuously late will also fall behind academically, as they will miss their early morning classes. Coming to school late impacts not only the individual student, but the entire community as a whole. We need your help in making sure your child comes to school everyday and on time. We will be in constant communication with you if we notice a pattern of absence or lateness

School starts promptly at 8am. It is expected that students eat breakfast prior to the start of the day. Our breakfast program starts at 7:30am. Students are welcome to come eat breakfast in the morning. All food must be consumed prior to 8am. If your child comes to school after the start time with food, they will be asked to put it in their locker until lunch, or it will be confiscated.

Below is our response to attendance:

- If your child is absent from school, you will receive an automated call from our school community by 11am.
- If your child is late to school, you will receive a direct call. If we notice a pattern of tardiness, there will be a consequence.
- Parent meetings/workshops for continuously tardy and absent students.

GREAT ATTENDANCE EQUALS COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS



Number of Days Absent	Attendance Rate	Instructional Time Loss in Months	Instructional Time Loss in Hours
9	95%	½ Month	49.5 hours
18	90%	1 Month	99 hours
27	85%	1 ½ Months	148.5 hours
37	80%	2 Months	203.5 hours
46	75%	2 ½ Months	253 hours
55	70%	3 Months	302 hours
64	65%	3 ½ Months	352 hours
73	60%	4 Months	401.5 hours



Warning- below the 90% range places your child at risk of repeating the grade.

School Spirit Days

Students will receive one dress down day a month. This day occurs on the last Friday of every month.

Month	Date	School Spirit Day
September	9/26/25	BK ALL Day!! <i>Wear clothes to represent the BEST borough, Brooklyn or the best city NYC!!</i>
October	10/31/25	Superhero/Character Day <i>Dress like your favorite superhero or character</i>
November	11/26/25 *Wednesday before break*	Cultural Heritage Day <i>Represent your culture wearing the colors of your country</i>
December	12/23/25 *Tuesday before break*	Christmas Pajamas Day <i>Wear your coolest/cutest Christmas pajama set</i>
January	01/30/26	Crazy Hair/Hat Day <i>Wear your craziest hairstyle, wig, or hat</i>
February	2/27/26	Old School Day <i>Dress in your favorite old school gear (70's, 80's, 90's) If you need help... ask your parents!</i>
March	3/27/26	Sports Team Day <i>Wear clothes to represent your favorite Sports Team/Player</i>
April	4/24/26	Wacky Tacky Day <i>Dress in your wackiest and tackiest clothes, the wackier the better!</i>
May	5/29/26	Career Day <i>Dress for Success; Dress as the career professional you would like to be when you grow up</i>
June	6/26/26	Twin Day <i>Find a friend, or two, or ten and dress alike!</i>

During our Dress Down Days our Dress Code policy still applies. Parents will be called and asked to bring up proper clothing if a student is not dressed appropriately



Locker Policy

Lockers will be assigned to all students. Each student is assigned one locker to use during morning homeroom, before lunch, after lunch, and at afternoon dismissal. The locker is used solely for storage of outerwear and school related materials. Lockers are not to be used to store items which cause or can reasonably be foreseen to cause an interference with school purposes, educational functions, or forbidden by state law or school rules. **The locker is NOT student property** and school administration and safety have the right to open and inspect the locker.

School authorities **may conduct inspections at any time if a student is suspected of having any prohibited or illegal items in their locker such as but not limited to drugs, weapons, beverages containing alcohol, any flammable substance, bomb, or explosive device, stolen items, or obscene materials.**

Students are expected to keep lockers clean and free from damage. Inappropriate stickers and other items are not allowed to be placed on lockers. Students are responsible for purchasing their own **combination only locks** and remembering their combinations. They must also provide their homeroom teacher with the combination. Students may only use locks with combinations, **locks that require keys are not allowed.** Unauthorized locks will be clipped and removed from the locker.

Students should not share their lockers or locker combinations with other students unless they receive consent from the homeroom teacher. The school is not responsible for any valuables left inside the lockers. This includes cell phones, iPods, mp3 players, jewelry, cash, etc.



Student Expectations

We expect all of our students to meet the following expectations:

- **One Mic, One Voice**

- **Be prepared**
 - Come with your materials, have a positive attitude, and a positive growth mindset. Wear appropriate uniform attire

- **Use technology as a tool, not a toy**

- **Respect for all at all given times**
 - Respect students' and staff's unique physical, emotional, and social boundaries. As well as opinions and ideas

- **Hold yourself accountable at all times**
 - Be the best that you can be. Be Self aware and Be Yourself.



Parent Expectations

1. Stay in constant communication with the Middle School for Art and Philosophy staff. Call or email if there is a question or concern and return calls and emails from staff. Keep us up to date with your contact information.
2. Actively listen to all school messages to stay informed of school events.
3. Maintain scheduled meetings with staff on the progress of your child. Attend all Parent Teacher Conferences to stay informed of your child's academic progress.
4. Actively participate in celebratory events, attend at least 3 events per year.
5. Attend at least 6 targeted parent workshops/trainings.
6. Complete at least 5 hours of volunteer time at the school.
7. Agree to attend parent meetings if there are incidences that need your attention.
8. Sign the parent handbook contract sheet stating that you will adhere to the policies in this handbook.

Date	Weekday	Event
September 4	Thursday	First day of school
September 17	Wednesday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for elementary schools and Pre-K Centers
September 18	Thursday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for middle schools and D75 schools
September 23–24	Tuesday–Wednesday	Rosh Hashanah, schools closed
September 25	Thursday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools
October 2	Thursday	Yom Kippur, schools closed
October 13	Monday	Italian Heritage/Indigenous Peoples' Day, schools closed
October 20	Monday	Diwali, schools closed
November 4	Tuesday	Election Day; students do not attend school
November 6	Thursday	Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for elementary schools; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
November 11	Tuesday	Veterans Day, schools closed
November 13	Thursday	Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for middle schools and D75; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
November 20	Thursday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools
November 21	Friday	Afternoon Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
November 27–28	Thursday–Friday	Thanksgiving Recess, schools closed

December 24–January 2	Wednesday–Friday	Winter Recess, schools closed
January 19	Monday	Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, schools closed
January 20–23	Tuesday–Friday	Regents Administration
January 26	Monday	Professional Development Day; students that attend high schools and schools that serve only grades 6-12 are not in attendance. All other students attend school.
January 27	Tuesday	Spring Semester begins
February 16–20	Monday–Friday	Midwinter Recess, schools closed
March 5	Thursday	Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for elementary schools and Pre-K Centers; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
March 12	Thursday	Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for middle schools and D75 schools; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
March 18	Wednesday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools
March 19	Thursday	Afternoon Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools; students in these schools dismissed three hours early
March 20	Friday	Eid al-Fitr, schools closed
April 2–10	Thursday –Friday	Spring Recess, schools closed
May 6	Wednesday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for middle schools and D75 schools
May 7	Thursday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for elementary schools and Pre-K Centers
May 20	Wednesday	Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences for high schools, K–12, and 6–12 schools
May 25	Monday	Memorial Day, schools closed
May 27	Wednesday	Eid al-Adha; schools closed
June 4	Thursday	Anniversary Day/Chancellor's Conference Day for staff development; students do not attend school
June 5	Friday	Clerical Day; no classes for students attending 3K, Pre-K, elementary schools, middle schools, K–12 schools, and standalone D75 programs.
June 17–26	Wednesday– Friday	Regents Administration (No exams will be held on June 19)
June 19	Friday	Juneteenth, schools closed
June 26	Friday	Last day of school for students



THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
David C. Banks, *Chancellor*

Middle School for Art and Philosophy
1084 Lenox Road Brooklyn, NY 11212
Celeste Terry, *Superintendent, CSD 18*
Website: www.ms-ap.org

Danielle Lamb-Ridore, *Principal*
Lorraine Swearing, *Assistant Principal*
PH: 718-342-7563 FAX: 718-342-8131



PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

After reading the Parent Handbook, please sign the appropriate lines below and return the form to the Middle School for Art and Philosophy.

I, the Parent/Guardian of _____ in grade _____ have read and understand the contents of the Parent Handbook. We agree to follow the policies outlined in the Middle School for Art and Philosophy Parent Handbook. We understand that the school reserves the right to amend policies and procedures when necessary, and that we will abide by changes. Any changes made to the Handbook will be distributed by the School.

Parent Guardian Name (Please Print) _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____