



BOARD POLICY

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MOLLY SPARKS ACADEMY

SECTION I: MISSION

Molly Sparks Academy, a ministry of Lifeline Children and Family Services, is a Christ-centered educational community dedicated to nurturing the whole child—spiritually, academically, emotionally, and socially. Guided by biblical truth and a commitment to excellence, we empower students to discover their God-given purpose, develop strong moral character, and pursue lifelong learning. Our mission is to equip every learner to become a servant leader who transforms the world through faith, knowledge, and compassionate action in the name of Jesus Christ.

SECTION II: GOVERNING AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

The Board of Directors of Lifeline Children and Family Services, Inc. serves as the governing authority of the Molly Sparks Academy and exercises oversight consistent with its Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Statement of Faith. The purpose of this Board Governance Policy Manual is to establish clear expectations for governance, define roles and responsibilities, ensure fiduciary accountability, and maintain alignment with the Academy's Christian mission and strategic direction.

Molly Sparks Academy exists to provide Christ-centered education for students in Pre-K3 through 12th grade, integrating biblical truth with academic excellence. The Board shall govern in a manner that protects and advances this mission.

SECTION III: GOVERNANCE MODEL

The board operates under a policy governance model, meaning it governs through written policies and strategic oversight rather than involvement in daily administrative operations. The Board delegates operational authority to the Executive Director/CEO while retaining responsibility for mission integrity, financial oversight, legal compliance, and long-term sustainability.

Board members shall avoid direct management of staff or daily academy functions unless specifically authorized through formal Board action.

All board members confess Jesus Christ as their only Savior and Lord and shall personally believe, adhere to, and support the infallible and inerrant Word of God, exhibit a lifestyle consistent with that confession, and be a member of and regularly attend a church that adheres to these stated creeds and confessions. All board members must agree with the MSA's statement of faith.

The board will direct and control MSA through the careful establishment of written policies reflecting the board's perspectives and expectations of the results to be achieved and/or the processes and limitations to be followed.

The board will act as the final arbiter in any grievance brought between employees, others and the administration. The Board of MSA will act in such a capacity only after the grievance procedure outlined in the academy's handbooks has been satisfied. Should a constituent, employee, parent, or other academy supporter have a grievance with the board member or any board decisions, they shall first make contact with the board chairperson. Should they feel the issue has not been resolved by meeting with the board chairperson, the board chairperson will set up a meeting with the executive team (e.g., chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and one member at large) Should the grievant feel the issue has not been

resolved by the executive team, they may request a meeting with the board of directors. This meeting with the board of directors must be approved by a majority vote of the executive team. Any decision made by the executive team and/or the board of directors is considered final.

SECTION IV: BOARD ROLES AND OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

- The **Board Chairperson** provides leadership to ensure effective governance. The Chairperson presides over meetings, collaborates with the Administration in agenda development, facilitates strategic discussion, and represents the Board in official capacities.
- The **Vice Chairperson** supports the Chairperson and assumes leadership responsibilities in the Chairperson's absence. The Vice Chairperson may oversee board development initiatives or special governance assignments.
- The **Secretary** ensures accurate documentation of board meetings and maintains permanent governance records, including minutes and official resolutions.
- The **Treasurer** provides oversight of financial integrity. The Treasurer reviews financial statements, monitors budget performance, ensures internal controls are functioning properly, and supports the annual audit or financial review process.

All Board members actively participate in meetings, engage in strategic planning, exercise fiduciary duties, and serve as ambassadors for Molly Sparks Academy in the community.

Additional qualifications:

- Has no conflict of interest with employees or other members
- Is not a near relative to an employee or near relative to a board member (a near relative is defined as having a connection between persons by blood, marriage, adoption, domestic partnership, or other close personal relationship; in-laws are considered near relatives)
- Is not an employee of the Molly Sparks Academy (except in a part-time, non-supervisory role such as an occasional substitute teacher)
- Is not a near relative of a board member with whom there would be an overlapping term of service
- Gives signed agreement to the Molly Sparks Academy Board of Directors Code of Commitment and Ethics
- The longest period a board member may serve is six years at a time (two consecutive three-year terms), followed by three years off, and then the possibility of six more years (two consecutive three-year terms), with this pattern having the possibility of being repeated indefinitely.

SECTION V: FIDUCIARY DUTIES AND ETHNIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- Board members shall fulfill the duty of care by preparing for meetings, reviewing materials in advance, and making informed decisions based on appropriate data and prayerful consideration.
- Board members shall fulfill the duty of loyalty by placing the interests of Molly Sparks Academy above personal or professional interests. Conflicts of interest must be disclosed promptly, and members shall abstain from related deliberations and votes.
- Board members shall fulfill the duty of obedience by ensuring that the academy operates in accordance with its Christian mission, governing documents, nonprofit law, and all applicable state and federal regulations.

- The board shall hear/read any signed correspondence addressed to the board, determine the appropriate response, and record the action in the board minutes.
- The individual director has no authority and may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization, except as explicitly set forth in board policies.
Gives signed agreement with MSA, the Board of Directors will adhere to Code of Commitment and Ethics
- The board shall place the educational and spiritual needs of the children first.
- The board as a whole must vote to initiate new policies or amend existing policies.
- The board as a whole must vote to authorize any exception to an existing board policy.
- The following are decisions that only the board shall make:
 - Approval of the annual budget
 - Approval of major capital projects
 - Sale or purchase of property
 - All recommendations, including amendments to the covenant and qualified candidates for the board Appeals from individuals or groups on decisions made by academy personnel
 - Establishing goals and priorities for the academy
 - Evaluating the ED/CEO and holding him or her accountable Adding, discontinuing, and/or significantly changing an academic program/curricular area in the academy's offerings

The board commits itself to the individual and collective participation of its boards to ensure leadership success. Therefore, each board member is expected to participate in the following ways:

- Attendance. Since board contemplation, deliberation, and decision-making are processes that require wholeness, collaboration, and participation, attendance at board meetings is required of members.
- Board members may not be absent from more than three of the board's regularly scheduled meetings in any fiscal year without reasonable cause. Any absence that exceeds this allotment will be interpreted as that member's resignation from the board. The board may, by a majority vote, reinstate a member.
- Preparation and Participation. Member will prepare for board and team meetings and will participate productively in discussion, always within the boundaries established by the board. Each member will contribute his or her own knowledge, skills, and expertise to the board's efforts to fulfill its responsibilities.
- Board Members as Individuals. The Executive Director/CEO is accountable only to the board as an organization, and not to individual members. Accordingly, the relationship between the Executive Director/CEO and individual member of the board, including the board chairperson, is collegial, not hierarchical.
- Volunteerism. As the functioning and success of the organization depend largely on the involvement and dedication of volunteers, all members are required to publicly support the academy and encouraged to contribute volunteer hours. In view of the responsibility of the administration for operational activities and results, members of the board acting as operational volunteers are subject to the direct supervision of the administration or responsible staff person.
- Financial Contributions. Each member is encouraged to contribute generously within their individual means and make an annual financial contribution to MSA. The demonstration of support, rather than the amount of contribution, is of principal importance; members are expected to contribute only within their individual means.
- Fundraising. The board will be involved in raising funds as it may from time to time deem necessary.

- Prayer. Members will commit to regularly pray for the academy.
- Loyalty. Members must commit to the interests of the academy and those for whom the academy's mission is pursued. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty, such as to advocacy or interest groups, and membership on other boards or staff. It also supersedes the personal interests of any member acting as a consumer of MSA services.

Molly Sparks board are to carry out their duties for the sole benefit of the academy; anything less can be deemed a conflict of interest, which the academy defines as a board member using his or her position to seek gain or potentially seek gain, financially or otherwise, for self, interest groups, companies, organizations that have the potential of being a competitor, and any other groups and/or organizations determined by the board of members.

- Members must not use their positions to obtain employment for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a member desire employment, he or she must first resign from the board before submitting an application for a academy position.
- Members must avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
- There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any member and the organization, except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to inside information.
- Members will annually disclose their involvements with other organizations, vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict of interest, including:
- Ownership by a board member or his/her family of a significant interest in any outside enterprise that does or seeks to do business with or is a competitor of the academy—including serving as a director, officer, partner, consultant, or in a managerial or technical capacity with such an outside enterprise.
- Acting as a broker, finder, go-between, or otherwise for the benefit of a third party in transactions involving or potentially involving the academy or its interests.
- Any other arrangements or circumstances, including family or other personal relationships, that might prevent those involved from acting in the best interest of the academy.
- In dealing with specific individual issues, board are expected to disclose to the rest of the board a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest regarding the issue before the issue is deliberated or as soon as they become aware of the potential conflict of interest. The board should discuss the member's potential conflict of interest and determine the appropriate action to take. Most often, this action will be to dismiss the member from deliberation and vote on the issue.
- When the board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall recuse herself or himself from not only the vote but also from deliberation.

At the beginning of each academy year, each board member will read, sign, and give unconditional acceptance to the Board of Director Code of Commitment and Ethics before given the authority and privileges of membership.

- The board shall comply with all requirements of government agencies, insofar as those requirements apply and do not conflict with the aim, philosophy, and purpose of the Christian academy or of the academy's understandings of the teachings of Scripture.
- Each board member shall ensure that they follow all academy policies and encourage others to follow all academy policies as well.
- Upon hearing of any complaint regarding any employee of the academy or any academy-related matter, each member shall direct the complainant to communicate with the administration or another appropriate person at the academy. The member shall inform the administration of any

situation where a constituent may be in contact. The member shall only listen to the complainant to the extent that they are able to direct the complainant to the administration or another appropriate person at the academy. The member shall inform the complainant that the member's role is one of visionary governance through policy and that the administration is charged with the management and operations of the academy. The member may follow up with the administration regarding the complainant. Complainants may appeal to the executive team and then the full board if the problem is not resolved.

- The administration shall outline a process that a constituent and/or parent may take to appeal any decisions and/or actions made by the administration, first to the executive team and then to the full board.

The board may remove a present or newly appointed board member from office.

- The board may use the following conditions for removal of a member from office:
- Should the member not meet minimum qualifications to be a member, as stated in board policies
- Should the member, in the opinion of the board, no longer meet minimum standards of ethics, lifestyle, or behavior
- Should the member be charged with a felony
- Should the member, in the opinion of the board, be a detriment to the mission of the academy and its operation
- The board will follow the process to remove a present or newly appointed member.
- The executive team is authorized to investigate the evidence for the accusation. The executive team may meet with the accuser and/or the accused to gather information. If, in the opinion of the executive team, there appears to be enough evidence to consider removing the member from office, the executive team will recommend that the board consider the issue.
- The accused member should be informed in writing of the cause(s) for consideration of removal.
- The accused member will be invited to give written or oral explanations or defense to the board at the meeting considering removal. The members may not be present during the deliberation or vote on this issue.
 - The board must vote by paper ballot.
 - To remove the member, a minimum of 80% of the board present at the meeting must vote in favor of removing the member. A quorum of the board must be present.
 - The result of the board decision will take place immediately, either removing or keeping the member.
 - The board will attempt to inform the members in writing within three working days as to the board's conclusion.

SECTION VI: MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING

- The Board of Directors shall meet regularly as defined in the Bylaws to conduct governance business. Meetings shall include review of financial reports, strategic updates, Administration reports, and committee recommendations.
- A quorum shall consist of the number or percentage specified in the Bylaws. Official actions require a majority vote unless otherwise required by governing documents.
- Minutes shall be recorded and maintained as part of the academy's permanent records
- The board will follow the annual agenda in order to accomplish its purpose and responsibilities. The board's annual agenda for conducting business begins in the month of August (start of the new academy year)
- The annual board agenda will include reports, evaluation items, and other issues, as determined by board policies or board decisions.
- The annual board agenda will include occasions for board self-examination and training.

- The annual agenda will ensure the board regularly reviews the Mission-Directed Governance philosophy and board policies for awareness, understanding, and determination if there are gaps, overlap, or inconsistencies.
- Establishing goals and priorities for the academy personnel
- Evaluating the Executive Director/CEO and holding him or her accountable
- Adding, discontinuing, and/or significantly changing an academic program/curricular area in the academy's offering.

SECTION VII: CODE OF CONDUCT

Board members shall conduct themselves with integrity, professionalism, and Christian character. Members shall maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information and shall avoid actions that could harm the Academy's reputation.

Board members shall speak with unity once decisions are made, even when differing views were expressed during deliberation.

SECTION VIII: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board members are to have no conflict of interest with employees or other board of directors.

BOD members Must not a near relative to an employee or near relative to a member of the Molly Sparks Academy (a near relative is defined as having a connection between persons by blood, marriage, adoption, domestic partnership, or other close personal relationship; in-laws are considered near relatives) BOD member Is not an employee of The Molly Sparks Academy (except in a part-time, non-supervisory role such as an occasional substitute teacher)

The longest period a board member may serve is six years at a time (two consecutive three-year terms), followed by three years off, and then the possibility of six more years (two consecutive three-year terms), with this pattern having the possibility of being repeated indefinitely.

The academy shall maintain a written Conflict of Interest Policy. Board members shall complete an annual disclosure statement identifying potential conflicts. Members with conflicts shall recuse themselves from discussion and voting on related matters. Disclosures and requests shall be documented in meeting minutes.

SECTION IX: BOARD DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

New Board members shall participate in a structured orientation process that includes review of the mission, Statement of Faith, Bylaws, strategic plan, and fiduciary responsibilities.

The Board shall engage in ongoing training to strengthen governance effectiveness and shall conduct periodic self-evaluations to assess performance and identify areas for growth.

SECTION X: STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT

The Board shall adopt and monitor a Strategic Plan or Academy Improvement Plan that includes measurable goals in education, finance, operations, facilities, and spiritual development. Progress toward these goals shall be reviewed annually.

SECTION XI: RECORD RETENTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Academy shall maintain official records, including governing documents, minutes, financial statements, and policy manuals. Records shall be preserved in accordance with legal requirements. Confidential student, personnel, and financial information shall be protected at all times.

SECTION XII: POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The Lifeline Children and Family Services, Inc., that governs the Molly Sparks Academy Policy Manual which will be reviewed annually. Amendments may be adopted by majority vote of the Board, provided such amendments remain consistent with the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Statement of Faith of Molly Sparks Academy.

SECTION XIII: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

The Board hires, supports, and evaluates the Executive Director/CEO. The Executive Director/CEO is responsible for implementing Board policies, managing academy operations, supervising faculty and staff, overseeing curriculum and assessment, ensuring student discipline, and maintaining compliance with Texas educational requirements.

The Board of Directors shall conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director/CEO based on mission alignment, academic leadership, financial stewardship, enrollment growth, staff development, and strategic plan implementation.

Individual board members shall not direct staff or interfere in administrative operations. All communication regarding operations shall flow through the Executive Director/CEO.

SECTION XIV: ADMISSIONS

In covenant with all parents and families, the Molly Sparks Academy will educate children from a biblical perspective that honors first and foremost God. The academy seeks to prepare students to reflect the character of God in society, see their life in the context of the Kingdom of God, show the way to total commitment and surrender to Jesus Christ, and guide them in understanding how their beliefs affect all areas and relationships in life.

Students returning and new families must meet the admission criteria as set forth by the board, including:

1. At least one parent/foster parent/guardian must have a clear testimony of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, be a member or regularly worshiping in a local Bible-believing church, affirm the academy's statement of faith, and adopt a lifestyle morality consistent with the Christian faith.
2. Students demonstrate needs in behaviors and academics that can be met by the academy.
3. Students Demonstrate a positive, Christian attitude, in and out of academy, including evidence that the student is not a safety concern.
4. Ensuring the student meets the appropriate age, grade placement, residence, and status requirements, as follows:
 - a. Kindergarten students must be at least 5 years of age or before. September 1st and must be fully potty trained by the summer for which entry is sought.
 - b. Students must reside with their parent(s), foster parent(s), guardian(s), or in a home approved by their parent(s), foster parent(s), or guardian(s)

- c. Grade placement is determined by the administration.
- 5. The Administration is to ensure that parents sign a statement acknowledging they agree to the following limitations and conditions:
 - a. That they understand and acknowledge that their child(ren) will be taught from a biblical Christian perspective consistent with the philosophy and statement of faith of MSA.
 - b. That they truthfully meet all of the requirements of admission.
 - c. That they will support the philosophy and statement of faith of the academy and will adhere to the policies and procedures established in board and administration policies.
 - d. That they acknowledge and will meet the financial commitment and understand that the student may be suspended or expelled if the parents fail to meet financial obligations and that the students may not be allowed to re-enroll the following academy year unless all bills are paid or alternate arrangements are made with the academy.
 - e. Church and Behavior Exception
 - i. The administration has the discretion to determine whether a student may be admitted who family has recently moved into the community/transitioning or have a previous unsatisfactory behavior history at a prior academy.
 - f. Admissions Restrictions Due to Class Size
 - i. The administration shall make every effort to enroll as many students as whose families desire them to attend. The administration shall admit the following eligible students, even if maximum projected enrollment is reached:
 - a. Students enrolled in the current year.
 - b. Students of employees and board members.
 - g. If projected enrollment is reached, the administration shall explore all other possible options before a wait list is created. Should a wait list be needed, the following priorities will apply:
 - i. families with children already in attendance the academy, if the new student meets admittance standards.
 - ii. Others as determined by administration.
- 6. In the process of admitting students, the Executive Director/CEO and Principal must promote and comply with the policies of nondiscrimination, including the following:
 - i. Enforcing the following policy of nondiscrimination: Subject to the United States Constitution, and all applicable state and federal laws, MSA does not discriminate in its employment or admissions practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the academy's Executive Director/CEO, Dr. Ricky Walter 903-215-8230. LCFS/MSA reserves the right to institute hiring and enrollment practices based on the academy's mission statement and philosophies.
 - ii. Federal and state regulations require that the nondiscrimination policy, the identity, address, and phone number of the local educational equity

coordinator, and notification about the existence of the grievance procedure be disseminated annually or on an ongoing basis to students, parents, and employees.

- iii. A rationale for multicultural, nonsexist education includes the following:
 - a. MSA seeks to reduce and eliminate
 - b. stereotyping and bias on the basis of race, national origin, disability, and age. Our educational program will motivate students and staff to examine their own duties, responsibilities, and rights in a multicultural, nonsexist society. If the respect and appreciation for the diversity in our country and the awareness of the interdependency in our world is to emerge, this commitment in theory must be accompanied by an even greater commitment in practice.
 - c. It must be realized that a multicultural, nonsexist education does not benefit just one group of students at the expense of others. All students, regardless of their race, national origin, disability, or age, need to see themselves reflected in the curriculum in a realistic and positive way if they are to develop strong, healthy self-concepts.
 - d. Besides providing a basis for a positive self-concept in minority students, girls, and students with disabilities, it helps to prevent majority and male students from developing a false sense of superiority that may often lead to prejudice and discriminatory behavior later in life.
 - e. Given the degree of mobility in the present society and the ever-increasing interdependency between peoples and nations, the lack of minority group representation in the community and/or academy is not a valid reason for failing to implement a multicultural educational program. The impact of our academy's educational program will be felt far beyond the boundaries of the academy. If we do our job well, the educational program will assist staff and students to examine their prejudices, clarify their values, and change their behavior, where necessary. All students should graduate from our academy with a healthy respect and appreciation for diversity, rather than with a fear of it.
 - g. Our Christian status as a member of God's family transcends all other distinctions among believers. In Christ, we are one family with no walls of racial, economic, or political differences separating us. (Phil. 16; Eph. 2:14-22)
- 7. The Executive Director/CEO shall make all arrangements for a successful registration process, which may include a pre-registration process each spring and a registration process each fall.
 - i. Any child whose parents have completed the yearly registration process and requirements of the MSA is officially enrolled. Documentation will include the academy's attendance records and class lists.

SECTION XV: EMPLOYEE AND STAFF

The Executive Director/CEO shall make every effort to employ mature, Christian, qualified

people who can accomplish their areas of responsibility, those who have outstanding personal and professional qualities. Employees must have a high sense of Christian principles and values and a dedication to Christian education.

All employee and staff must be able to defend Christian education and champion it.

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the academy, and to provide a biblical role model to the MSA students and community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the academy in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by the policies of the academy and affirm and follow the statement of faith. The strength and effectiveness of the academy will be found in the staff that is hired. Every position must be carried out to promote the highest quality of Christian education. Every position is important.

The Executive Director/CEO shall demonstrate compassion and care, providing assistance and accountability as they support all members of our academy community in their desire to live consistently with the Bible's teaching. Above all, an individual working at the academy must be for the benefit of students and in the students' best interests.

Accordingly, the Executive Director/CEO shall ensure employees meet certain qualifications and conditions of employment.

- Employees must not participate in practices that would be considered illegal or considered by MSA as immoral or inconsistent with a positive Christian lifestyle, in accordance with the statement of faith and the Christian code of conduct.
- Each employee is required to sign a statement that he or she agrees to support and promote the MSA mission statement, statement of faith, Christian code of conduct, policies, and procedures and agrees to adhere to board and administrative policies that guide and restrict employee communication and behavior, whether or not associated with academy duties. The statement should also indicate that violation of policies will have consequences that may include immediate dismissal from employment at MSA and/or legal action.
- Christian Code of Conduct - The academy's code of conduct is consistent with the following:
 - The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17)
 - The Great Commandments, as stated by Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-40)
 - The Academy's Statement of Faith

Criminal Activities/History Records/Background Checks

Prior to employment, all employees must submit to a comprehensive state and federal background check. All applicable databases will also be checked to verify licensure status and/or potential past reprimands. Background checks will remain on file within individual employee personnel files. An offer of employment may be rescinded depending on the results of the background check. All employees must pass a background check in order to work at the academy.

MSA and Texas requires fingerprint-based background checks for substitute teachers, full-time teachers, educational aides, and other academy employees and contractors who have direct contact with students. It requires name-based searches for volunteers and student teachers. The law automatically disqualifies registered sex offenders and candidates convicted of a felony against a minor under Texas Penal Code Title 5 (crimes against persons) from employment within a academy. MSA may enact additional standards limiting who can work with students.

Vital legal requirements include:

- **Mandatory Criminal History Review:** All certified educators and applicants for certification are subject to a national criminal history record information review.
- **Fingerprinting:** The Code stipulates that fingerprint-based criminal background checks are conducted through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- **Pre-Employment Affidavits:** Prospective academy employees must submit a pre-employment affidavit disclosing any criminal record or charges pending at the time of application.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** MSA must continually monitor their employees' criminal records, allowing prompt action if an educator is arrested or charged with an offense.
- **Reporting Requirements:** MSA must report specified conduct to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), which includes offenses involving moral turpitude

Personal Conduct:

- All persons connected with the academy community, be they employees, volunteers, or board members, shall hereinafter be referred to as academy community members. All such academy community members must conduct their personal affairs so there can be no opportunity for unfavorable reflections upon the Christian beliefs and mission of the academy, either expressed or implied. The use of common sense, good ethical standards, and discretion will guide all who are called into community with the academy in proper conduct.
- Failure to maintain reasonable standards is subject to discipline up to and including term Inappropriate Conduct. Violation of academy rules and policies may result in an oral warning, a written warning, and/or termination of a member's role in the academy community. There is no requirement that discipline be progressive or that a warning be given prior to demotion or any other disciplinary action, including discharge from the academy community. Set forth below are some examples of misconduct which will not be tolerated by the academy.
- This list is not exhaustive, and examples are not listed in order of seriousness.
- Prohibited personal conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, unlawful drugs, or abuse of prescription drugs
 - Smoking or using any kind of tobacco or smoking device (including vaping) on academy property or at a academy event (either on campus or off campus).
 - Profanity in the workplace or in public.
 - Actual or threatened violence toward another person.
 - Falsification of forms, records, or reports, including application materials, expense reports, student records, or timesheets.
 - Unauthorized possession, replication, misappropriation, theft, or removal of academy property, monies, records, or student materials.
 - Willfully destroying or damaging academy property or the property of any academy community member.
 - Misrepresentation of MSA or MSA students and families through unauthorized use of academy stationery, postage, phone services, Internet or email communications, fax cover sheets, business cards, social media, and/or promotional materials.
 - Using academy facilities for personal purposes or gain, unless otherwise authorized. Conduct that is injurious to the operation or reputation of MSA.
 - Harassment in any form, including sexually harassing employees, students, or others.
 - Romantic or intimate relations with a student, or the appearance of such, or having sexual relations with anyone other than one's spouse.
 - Excessive absences or tardiness.

- Misuse of confidential information.
- Violation of technology policies by inappropriate use of Internet, social media, and/or email.
- Rudeness, discourtesy, or lack of cooperation.
- Failure to follow instructions or academy policies, rules, procedures.
- Failure to follow established safety, health, or security policies, rules, or procedures.
- Theft or dishonesty.
- Public endorsement of beliefs, attitudes, or conduct contrary to those expressed or implied by the academy and mission.
- Failing to report student violation of academy policies.
- Gambling on academy premises or while conducting academy business.
- Sleeping on the job or leaving the job without authorization.
- Participating in or advocating practices considered by the academy as immoral or inconsistent with a positive Christian lifestyle, including but not limited to, cohabitating without marriage, having sexual relations with someone of the same gender, adultery, fornication, engaging in sexual acts and/or relationships outside the confines of biblical marriage between one man and one woman, attempts to alter one's sex and wearing unprofessional or inappropriate styles of dress (including dressing in such a way to willfully reject one's sex assigned at birth), and use of pornography.
- Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon on academy property, or while conducting academy business, unless prior administration approval has been granted.
- Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or wellbeing of the academy and/or its students, employees, or property.
- Participating in, or promoting others to participate in, or publicly or privately advocating, loss of human life, including abortions of the unborn and euthanasia, even if such practices are legal.
- As it pertains to transgender behavior, adopting an identity discordant with one's biological sex.
- Dating, or otherwise becoming romantically involved with, anyone under legal age.
- Engaging in any activity which a academy community member knows, or has reason to know, will adversely affect the mission of the academy.
- Engaging in behavior that suggests a willful violation of the religious beliefs and practices of the academy.
- Engaging in criminal conduct.
- Insubordination, including but not limited to, failure or refusal to obey the orders or instructions of a supervisor, teacher, or other academy leader, or the use of abusive or threatening language toward a supervisor, teacher, or other academy leader.
- Failure to notify a supervisor when unable to report to work.
- Using abusive language at any time on academy campus.
- Committing a fraudulent act or a breach of trust under any circumstances.

If an Academy community member has any doubt about whether certain conduct will constitute misconduct or behavior that suggests a willful violation of the religious beliefs and practices of the academy, the community member should ask an appropriate academy leader.

The academy reserves the right to open and inspect lockers, desks, vehicles, computers, computer files, accounts, and any other academy equipment/property (physical or digital) made available to employees and students, as well as any contents, effects, or articles that are in such lockers, desks, vehicles, or other

equipment. Inspection can occur at any time, with or without advanced notice or consent, and during, before, or after working hours by any person designated by the academy or the academy

In the process of hiring or placement of an employee, the administration must comply with the policies of nondiscrimination.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

- Subject to the United States Constitution, and all applicable state and federal laws, MSA does not discriminate in its employment or admissions practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the academy's Executive Director/CEO, Ricky Walter 903-215-8230. MSA reserves the right to institute hiring and enrollment practices based on the academy's mission statement and philosophies.
- MSA reserves the right to use religion and creed as hiring criterion for all positions, due to the mission and nature of Academy as a faith-based institution, with all jobs necessary to further MSA's religious mission. All employees are responsible for complying with the academy's equal employment opportunity policy.
- The academy reserves the right to use sexual orientation and gender identity as hiring criterion for all positions, due to its mission and statement of faith of the academy as a faith-based institution. All employees are responsible for complying with the academy's equal employment opportunity policy.
- ADA/Disability Accommodation - In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state law, MSA will not unlawfully discriminate against qualified applicants or employees with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of their jobs with or without reasonable accommodations. The academy will not discriminate based on disability or perceived disability in hiring, promotion, discharge, compensation, job training, benefits, classification, referral, or any other aspects, terms, or conditions of employment.
- The administration is to ensure that any employee who signs an employment agreement/contract is aware of the following limitations and conditions:

All employees work for the academy on an at-will basis. At-will employment means that either the employee or the employer may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, for any reason or for no reason at all. Nothing in the policy handbooks or in any document or policy statement or in any verbal agreement or comments made by any person limits the right of either the academy or the employee to terminate employment at will.

The Executive Director/CEO is to ensure that any employee who signs an employment agreement/contract is aware that these contracts are for a one-year term. All contracts are considered contingency contracts. There is no requirement on the part of the academy to offer a contract to the employee in following years.

SECTION XV: FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND STEWARDSHIP

The Board shall approve an annual balanced budget prior to the start of each fiscal year. The Board shall review monthly financial statements and monitor revenue, expenses, cash flow, and reserve levels. The Academy shall maintain internal financial controls, appropriate separation of duties, and sound accounting practices. An annual financial review or audit shall be conducted by an independent Certified Public Accountant.

The Board shall ensure compliance with nonprofit reporting requirements and maintain transparency with stakeholders.

MSA maintains consistent and transparent financial reporting practices to support effective oversight and informed decision-making. Monthly financial statements are generated for internal use and reviewed by administrative leadership and the governing body to monitor financial performance, ensure budget compliance, and identify trends or variances in a timely manner.

MSA contracts with Gen-Solution and Backoffice for Social Services to provide a myriad of services. They generate accounting reports of monthly income and expenditures. The academy provides annual financial reports to appropriate constituencies, including the governing body and other stakeholders, in a manner consistent with legal requirements, accreditation expectations, and best practices for transparency and accountability. These reports reflect the academy's commitment to faithful stewardship and open communication.

The academy also prepares and submits additional financial reports as mandated by the governing body, ensuring that leadership has access to accurate and relevant financial information necessary for governance, planning, and fiduciary oversight.

Through regular reporting, review, and accountability, the academy demonstrates sound financial management, transparency, and alignment with its mission and operational goals. Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall be relatively in accord with the board's priorities and conservative fiscal practices and shall be derived from a multi-year plan. The fiscal year runs from August 1 to July 31.

MSA is to practice stewardship of its resources and maintain fiscal responsibility by having an annual board- and society-approved budget.

The budget is the official financial guide for the academy, listing all proposed expenditures and anticipated income. It may be described as a translation of existing educational policies and practices into money. The budget reflects the academy's mission and the board's vision. The board accepts the responsibilities of stewardship in determining the needs of the academy and by providing ways and means to meet such needs. The budget is a financial control of the board on the head of academy to make certain that the academy is operated in a fiscally, ethically, efficiently, and stewardly manner. The board gives the head of academy the authority and responsibility to operate the academy within the approved budget.

SECTION XVI: COMMITTEES

The Board may establish standing committees to assist in governance responsibilities. These may include a Finance Committee, Governance Committee, and Development Committee. Committees shall operate under written charters approved by the Board and shall report recommendations for Board action. Ad hoc committees may be formed for specific initiatives such as strategic planning, accreditation preparation, or facilities expansion.

SECTION XVII: TEXAS SCHOOL WEEK

Molly Sparks Academy will recognize and observe Texas Public School Week, commonly known as Texas School Week the first week in March each academic academy year as an opportunity to celebrate public education, promote family engagement, and strengthen partnerships between the academy and the broader community.

The Board affirms that Texas School Week provides an intentional time to highlight student achievement, honor educators and staff, and communicate the academy's mission, vision, and educational excellence to parents and community stakeholders.

The Administrative leadership will plan and implement meaningful activities during Texas School Week that:

- Invite parents, guardians, and community members to visit and observe instructional programs; showcase student academic work, fine arts, co-curricular, and extracurricular achievements; Recognize the contributions of teachers, support staff, volunteers, and board members; Promote positive public awareness of the academy's programs and outcomes; and the academy shall provide advance notice of scheduled events through appropriate communication channels including newsletters, website postings, social media, and direct parent communication.

SECTION XVIII: STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- We exist as an academy to serve students. Part of serving students is guiding, enabling, and equipping them for discipleship, which leads to discipline. Discipline is the process by which one learns to live consistently according to the demands of Christ. Discipline leads to discipleship, the call to serve. The goal of discipline is one of nurturing, encouraging, and enabling children to live in accord with God's will. All children are created in the image of God and must be respected accordingly. Christian discipline begins with a common goal – service to God and neighbor – and is dependent upon directives that enable the child to move toward the goal. The goal of this policy is that students learn to become self-disciplined in order to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in the Kingdom of God and the society in which they live.

Discipline is a Biblical Mandate

- Discipline is essential for the glory of God and the honor of His name (II Tim. 2:19). It is imperative that we are becoming models of obedience and that we are able to deal effectively with the areas of disobedience that grieve our Lord.
- Discipline benefits the individual (Heb. 12:4-13). Our goal is to admonish each one and teach each one with all wisdom, that we may present each one complete in Christ. (Col. 1:28).
- Discipline is exercised to keep the Body of Christ pure. Jesus used leaven to illustrate the effect of sin in the individual's life. Paul describes the contagion of sin in a group in I Corinthians 5:6-7. James 4:17 makes it clear that sins both of commission and of omission are to be avoided: anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins
- Christians are called to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

MSA students take upon themselves the responsibility of defending and promoting the ideals of the academy by their actions and words. Attending a Christian academy is a privilege. Students are to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with that expected of a Christian and to conduct their lives so as to bring honor and respect upon themselves and their academy. They are to behave in a manner that promotes the witness of their Lord and Savior. Students are expected to obey and show respect for those whom God has placed in authority over them. Students are expected to demonstrate loving respect for their fellow students at all times.

The Academy is interested in and responsible for promoting values and behaviors that are consistent with the Kingdom of Christ. The academy has obligations both to the individual student and to the education

community. The academy is interested in both preventing problems as well as helping those who may need help in dealing with problems. Therefore, the Executive Director/CEO and Principal shall:

- Ensure students are taught the purpose of discipline is the Christian's pursuit to make his or her whole being reflect joyful obedience to God, expressed in love and service toward his or her fellow man. Students should understand that discipline is an act of love, and that MSA loves students enough to discipline them. It is important that the student appreciates the value and contribution of others as image-bearers of God and members of this community. Together, we strive to bring honor to Christ in both our Christian education and in the relationships in which we live.
 - The academy promotes self-control in living according to biblical principles and encourages students in conducting themselves in a manner that promotes the witness of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
 - As Christians, we live in a community. It is necessary that each person helps and is helped by the community in maturing as a disciple of Christ.
 - Students are expected to obey and show respect for those whom God has placed in authority over them, including teachers, administrators, and other academy personnel.
 - Students are expected to demonstrate loving respect for their fellow students at all times.

The Executive Director/CEO and Principal shall establish administrative policies and procedures for student behavior expectations that both promote an orderly academy organization and encourage student conduct that supports Christian relationships and enhances the academy's philosophy and goals. The policies and procedures shall include those taken for handling student misconduct.

- The academy has the right to discipline or to require a student to withdraw for any reason. A student's failure to comply with expected standards of conduct will subject the student to potential disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or dismissal.
- Such policies at academy or academy-sponsored events shall include, but not be limited to:
 - The academy reserves the right to search all vehicles, lockers, backpacks, purses, duffle bags, other personal items, and persons for drugs, alcohol, and contraband of all types when on campus or in conjunction with a academy-sponsored activity, including reserving the right to use professionally trained enforcement means, such as dogs or use of a breathalyzer.
 - Student personal property may be seized by administration authorities if the items are illegal, stolen, or are reasonably determined to be a threat to the health, safety, or security of others. Items that are used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be temporarily removed from student possession.
 - Administration authorities may also search a student's person, in exercise of the duty to enforce academy rules, if such authorities have a reasonable suspicion that illegal or stolen items are likely to be found on a student's person or in their possession. All protocols shall follow the search and seizure procedures and principles outlined in Texas law.
 - The Executive Director/CEO will ensure that, while under the supervision of the academy, students will wear appropriate attire, in accordance with the academy's dress policy.
 - The student is to use the restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities conforming to one's biological gender.

Discipline policies may allow minor infractions of the rules of the academy or classroom to be dealt with by the teacher. If the problem becomes repetitious, or is of a more serious nature, it will then involve the parents and the academy administration.

A variety of penalties may be imposed by the administration, including detention before or after academy, fines, a requirement of service hours, and/or suspension.

The administration may develop a system of noting successive student behavior infractions and may then, upon a certain amount of accumulation of infractions, involve more severe penalties and communication with parents.

An infraction may be issued by the administration for disrespect, the continuous repetition of a minor offense, tardies, unexcused absences, or for disregard for academy regulations.

- The penalties for accumulated infractions can include suspension, loss of participation in extracurricular activities, and, eventually, expulsion.
- Staff should make every effort to provide a consistent and loving atmosphere. The use of any of these or any other equally negative techniques is grounds for immediate dismissal of employment. Unacceptable punishment includes:
 - Corporal punishment, such as shaking, slapping, hitting, or spanking a student, is not permitted by the academy, even with the permission of the parent. Physical force may be used only in those extreme cases when it is deemed essential for the purpose of protecting self, the student, or others.
 - Punishment is not permitted that includes personal humiliation, including sarcasm and anger.

For offenses of a very serious nature, the Executive Director/CEO and Principal may suspend or expel the offender.

- Students who exhibit defiance or serious violation of rules and standards. Suspensions can be given for such infractions as disrespect to teachers, administrators, staff, or fellow students; fighting; sexual harassment; skipping classes; cheating; damaging academy property; profanity; or the use or possession of a controlled substance.
 - During the time of suspension, academic credit is normally awarded for academy work that is completed according to the regular class schedule. The teacher will not demand assignments that require the student's presence. The teacher may require alternative assignments.

The Executive Director/CEO and Principal may deem it necessary to expel for infractions of seriously unacceptable behavior that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Use, possession, attempting to purchase or sell, contributing to the use of, or giving the appearance of using or demonstrating symptoms of using non-prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco, other controlled substances, and/or paraphernalia.
- This includes:
 - misuse of prescription drugs or legal substances as intoxicants, includes tobacco, smoking, electronic cigarettes, vaping, or chewing tobacco on campus, in all transportation vehicles, and during all academy activities, possession of a weapon, explosive, other dangerous devices, or facsimiles of such weapons or devices. Weapons and other dangerous objects cause material and substantial disruption to the academy environment, threatening, attempting, or encouraging others to threaten or attempt to cause injury of any academy person or their property within the jurisdiction of the academy
 - Sexual harassment, bullying, including, but not limited to, name-calling in any situation, pushing or shoving others, teasing, making fun of clothing or appearance, and any form of cyberbullying, Deliberately and falsely setting off a fire alarm or calling emergency vehicles, causing or attempting to cause material damage to academy or private property, stealing or attempting to steal academy or personal property, including cheating and plagiarism, committing an obscene act or the repeated use of profanity or vulgarity, repeated infractions of minor offenses, disrespect, or challenging board of members or administrative policies.

- Sexual misconduct (fornication, homosexuality, rejection of one's biological sex, use of pornography), Infractions are considered especially serious if accompanied with a casual or defiant attitude, or if the student repeatedly exhibits an attitude and behavior that is opposed to the philosophical, religious, and organizational standards of the academy.

The Executive/CEO and Principal will respond to serious offenses that occur either at academy or outside of academy and/or at academy-sponsored events in which the administration deems it necessary to take action.

The Administration may indefinitely suspend or expel students from academy classes and extracurricular events.

- It is expected that the student will not return to MSA unless the student exhibits a commitment to change. The family may submit a written plan to the administration establishing how the student will restore relationships, with the plan including how the family will ensure that the student will not be a repeat offender or a detrimental influence on others.
- The Administrator may withhold expulsion upon acceptance of the written plan and when considering the student's broader previous general contribution to a Christian academy environment and culture, positive service and influence, academic success, attitude of cooperation, and spirit of repentance.
- If the infraction was for a violation involving drugs, the student may not be readmitted until a test is conducted by a qualified, academy-approved physician or laboratory and the test results made available to the academy are negative.
- A parent of an expelled student may submit an application for admission for the following academy year.
- To be readmitted the following academy year, the Administration must ensure the measures that the academy environment is conducive to learning and the expelled student can be readmitted based on conditions set forth by the administration
- the administration is under no obligation to readmit the student and is not required to state a cause.

Parents may appeal to the board of director for decisions taken by the administration that directly affect the student(s) of those parents.

- Appeals must be submitted in writing and addressed to the president of the board of members. The board president shall indicate receipt of appeals to the administration and shall allow the administration to read all appeals being brought to the board of members. The board president shall bring the appeal to the next scheduled board of members meeting. Parents will be invited to the board meeting to plead their case. The board shall discuss the issue and then make a decision in executive session. The board president will then communicate the decision to parents. All board decisions are final.

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Health Services

- Providing a healthy atmosphere through health services is important to the academy so that the academy can help each student protect, improve, and maintain their physical, emotional, and social wellbeing.
- Children enrolled must comply with the immunization laws of the Texas, or their parents are required to sign a statement if immunization is contrary to their religious convictions. It is the responsibility of parents to do all within their power to maintain the health of their children, for the welfare of others at academy. The administration will not allow a child who is not compliant with the required immunization schedule to attend classes or any other academy activities.

Academy personnel will complete, coordinate, and maintain the records required by the Texas in regard to prevention, control, and containment of communicable diseases in academies.

- The Academy offers several services, including immunization records, hearing screening, and vision screening.
- When a student becomes ill or injured at academy, the student's parents shall be notified by the office personnel, academy nurse, teacher, or the administration as soon as possible after these individuals are made aware of the incident. While the academy is not responsible for the treatment of an ill or injured student, it will have authorized academy personnel present to administer emergency or minor first aid, if necessary. An ill or injured student will be turned over to the care of the parents, designee, or qualified medical personnel as quickly as possible.
- For those students requiring medication during the academy day, medication shall be administered only by qualified designers, who have been trained and certified by the State Department of Health guidelines. No medication will be administered without written authorization from the parent and the child's physician. A written record of the administration procedure must be kept for each child receiving medication. Medication on academy premises shall be kept in a locked storage space, which shall be accessible only to appropriate personnel.
- All hazardous substances shall be stored as required by state law. Students who will be working with hazardous chemicals as part of the instructional program will be properly instructed regarding the use of such chemicals prior to the activity.
- Students with acute or chronic health problems will be supported on an individual basis. However, if such a condition exists or develops, academy personnel shall be informed in writing from a physician explaining the medical condition, medication used, and emergency procedures that may become necessary. This and additional pertinent information will be kept in the student's file at academy.
- will work cooperatively with local, county, and state agencies to enforce and adhere to health codes for prevention, control, and containment of communicable diseases in the academy. Students who are suspected or diagnosed to have a communicable disease, or whose exposure to a communicable disease may threaten the wellbeing of a student or those with whom he/she comes into contact, may be suspended from attending academy and/or academy-sponsored activities by the administration. The decision to close academy due to a communicable disease outbreak will be made at the discretion of the administration.
- Diseases that may be communicable and may call for special consideration, but are not limited to:
 - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
 - Aids Related Complex (ARC)
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
 - Hepatitis B.
 - Each communicable disease will be considered by the individual symptoms and consequences with which it is associated. Blood or any other body fluids, vomitus, and fecal or urinary products of any individual must be treated with

caution. Disposable gloves must be worn when cleaning up any body fluids. All individuals shall follow proper procedures related to bloodborne pathogens.

- Decisions pertaining to education management should be shared, utilizing the expertise of the physician, parent or guardian, public health personnel, and those associated with the educational setting.
- Notification to the academy should be through the academy's business office, who will report to the Executive Director/CEO and Principal. The administration will notify only those necessary to assure optimal management. Notification will be via a process that maximizes confidentiality.

Activities and Social Events

- Students will be engaged in off-campus learning that complements the curriculum.
- Parties for any occasion are scheduled during academy hours and must be approved by the administration.
- The administration shall ensure that student activities are in harmony with the character, mission, policies, statement of faith, and philosophy of the academy.
- The administration shall provide student activities that meet the interests and needs of students.

Student Records, Promotion, and Retention

- The administration shall establish administrative policies for attendance and punctuality, ensuring that all policies comply with all state and federal laws and regulations.
- The administration shall ensure that the academy has accurate records of student attendance, including absences.
- The administration shall ensure that accurate cumulative and permanent records of student academic achievement and other data are maintained according to Texas laws.

SECTION: HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

Child Abuse Policy

Molly Sparks Academy maintain zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect in any form. All employees, volunteers, and contractors are mandated reporters and must immediately report any suspicion or disclosure of abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and the appropriate administrator. Staff shall receive annual training in recognizing, preventing, and reporting abuse and neglect. Confidentiality will be maintained in all cases in accordance with state law.

Right to Know Policy

In accordance with the Texas Right-to-Know Law, employees have the right to be informed about potential hazards in the workplace. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) will be available for all hazardous materials used on the premises. Employees shall receive training regarding proper handling, storage, and disposal of such materials. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that safety practices are followed to protect staff, students, and visitors.

Accident Policy

All accidents or injuries involving staff, students, or visitors must be reported to the administration immediately. First aid will be administered by trained personnel, and emergency services will be

contacted when necessary. Accident reports must be completed within 24 hours of the incident. The administration will review all reports to identify safety improvements and prevent recurrence.