



MIDTOWN  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL

**2022-2023 K-8th Grade Student  
and Family Handbook**

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## ABOUT THE SCHOOL

### Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Midtown International School serves gifted and academically superior students who thrive in small class environments. The globally-minded curriculum and problem-based instruction create a community of engaged global leaders dedicated to the values of respect, responsibility, citizenship, and justice.

The school immerses students in a diversity of viewpoints that transcend national, ethnic, and socio-economic boundaries. Problem solving and critical thinking are the foundation of our integrated curriculum, developing inquisitive, flexible, and collaborative thinkers who will be successful in an ever-changing global society.

MIS ignites the educational and social learning of gifted students through advanced instruction in science, math, social studies, English, and technology; arts integration across the curriculum; development of student leadership and peer collaboration; strategic community partnerships; and international travel for all middle, and high school students.

### Proclamation on Equity and Justice

It is our moral imperative as human beings on this earth to be brave and true in celebrating the beauty and dignity in each life. We acknowledge and actively work to remedy historical injustices that have systematically marginalized communities around the world.

We promote understanding through courageous conversations;

We address and fight bias within ourselves and anywhere we find it;

We are unafraid to champion equity in our pursuit of justice;

We respect individual experiences and practice unconditional positive regard;

We foster an ethic of global citizenship that recognizes the inherent interconnectedness of the people and nations of the world;

We embrace the responsibility of empowering generations of thinkers to recognize their intellectual and moral blindspots, thoughtfully challenge the status quo, critically think through potential local and global solutions, and positively contribute to the betterment of the world around them.

MIS stewards these principles by providing safe spaces conducive to growth through conscientious practices that include:

*Facilitating identity workspaces*

*Designing culturally responsive classrooms and instruction*

*Implementing inclusive recruiting and hiring practices*

*Delivering intentional counseling lessons*

*Fostering growth mindsets*

*Minimizing bias in gifted identification*

*Building authentic relationships with students and families*

*Eliminating barriers to equity and access through scholarships*

*Creating a community of curious co-learners between teachers and students*

As part of our commitment to see learning as a limitless journey, MIS views this proclamation as an ever-evolving framework, subject to constant re-evaluation and

expansion according to new insights gained from our work as members of the global community.

### School Levels

MIS serves students in grades K-12 during the 2022-2023 school year.

**Elementary School:** Grades K-5

**Middle School:** Grades 6-8

**High School:** Grades 9-12

### School Hours

School hours are

**Grades K-5:** 8:30am-3:30pm

*Morning Arrival 8:15-8:30am*

*Afternoon Dismissal 3:30-3:55pm*

**Grades 6-12:** 9:00am-4:00pm

*Morning Arrival 8:30-8:55am*

*Afternoon Dismissal 4:00-4:15pm*

*\*\*Families or carools with students in multiple school levels should pick up all children during the dismissal time for the eldest child. They may drop off all students at the earliest arrival time.*

*\*\*Please see "Dismissal Procedures" Under "Policies and Procedures for Families" for additional carpool expectations and guidelines.*

Updated school calendars are available on the website (<http://www.misatl.org>) and outline school closures and breaks.

State guidelines require schools to provide the yearly equivalent of 180 school days with a minimum of 4 hours of instructional time each school day. MIS exceeds the minimum amount of instructional time for students each school year.

### Morning and After Care

K-8th grade students may arrive as early as 8:15. Upon arrival, all K-5 students should report to their homeroom. 6th-8th grade students will report to designated grade-level common areas on the 2nd floor.

Families are able to sign their students up for after school activities. Information on sports, clubs, and classes offered is available on the school website under the "Programs" heading.

The 2022-2023 rate for after care is \$30 per afternoon. The MIS After Care Program is designed to balance work, play, and learning in a fun and engaging environment. Rates for after care are updated on the MIS website under “After School Programs”. Only current students may participate in after care. Billing takes place at the beginning of each week for prior week’s attendance.

Under no circumstances will sports or other after school activities be allowed to drop off students at After Care without advanced written parent consent, copying [carpool@midtowninternationalschool.com](mailto:carpool@midtowninternationalschool.com). Parents who authorize a scheduled after school activity to drop off their student at After Care will pay the full After Care rate of \$30.

After Care ends at 6:00pm. All students participating in After Care should be picked up no later than 6:00pm. Late pick up from After Care will be billed at \$5/minute.

MIS After Care is exempt from child care licensing requirements.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR FAMILIES

### Parents and Guardians

Throughout this handbook and in other communications from MIS, parents and guardians may be referred to as *parents* for ease of communication and conversation.

### Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential to meet student and school goals. Please inform the school at [absences@midtowninternationalschool.com](mailto:absences@midtowninternationalschool.com) and the teacher(s) in writing when a student will be absent or tardy. Acceptable reasons for **excused absences** include:

- Personal illness of the student,
- Serious illness or death in student’s family,
- Court order mandating student’s absence,
- Religious holiday,
- Hazardous or inclement weather situations,
- Registering to vote and/or voting.
- Other absences to be determined by, and at the discretion of MIS. Please provide advance notice when possible.

Students with a temperature above 100 degrees or exhibiting any COVID-19 related symptoms should be kept at home. Those who exhibit these qualities during the school day will be referred to the Wellness Coordinator and will need to be picked up promptly by a parent or other authorized person.

Students are allowed five (5) unexcused absences per year. A doctor’s note will be required for absences due to doctors’ appointments and for students who miss three (3) or more

consecutive days of school due to illness. Failure to provide appropriate documentation within three (3) days of the absence will result in an unexcused absence. Parents will receive a notification once students have accumulated three (3) unexcused absences. **Please note that the necessary local agencies may be contacted for students who accumulate five (5) or more unexcused absences per semester.**

Tardiness is recorded as of 8:45 for elementary school students and 9:00 for middle and high school students. We appreciate timely attendance because each segment of the day is planned and scheduled for continuity and to maximize learning for all students. Please note that the necessary local agencies may be contacted for students with excessive unexcused tardies per semester.

### Missed Learning/School Work Policy

For students in grades 6-8, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with their instructors to make arrangements for any missed assignments or lessons. For students in grades K-5, make-up work plans will be created by the teacher and shared with students and parents. For small absences, these plans will be communicated within two days of a student's return to school. Timeframes may vary based on the situation for extended or excessive absences. Please note that teachers may but should not be expected to provide make-up work in advance. The hands-on, collaborative, and exploratory nature of learning at MIS works best at school.

#### Protocols for Missed Work and Assignments for Excused Absences

- In most cases, for excused absences, students will receive the same number of days to complete missing assignments equal to what they missed.
- Adjustment to assignment expectations beyond this guideline will be at the teacher's discretion.
- Please note that it is at the teacher's discretion to determine whether assignments will need to be completed at school or home.

#### Protocols for Missed Work and Assignments during Extended or Excessive Absences/Tardies

To account for missed work and instructions due to excessive excused and/or unexcused absences (either full day or a pattern affecting a particular course), the school may recommend or require a combination of the following options:

- The family locates and hires a tutor who meets with and works with teachers to catch the student up outside of school,
- The student uses online courses provided through an approved and accredited program to learn and show mastery in a baseline of basic skills that align with MIS trajectories,
- Student pursues school-approved intensive academic summer programs to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of trajectory skills,
- A student may receive an incomplete on their report card or transcript,
- Family withdraws student to pursue a homeschool option with the possibility for re-application or re-enrollment after submitting a portfolio of work.



Courses may need to be repeated if any of the above routes are not pursued. The repeating of courses or grade levels may or may not be possible at MIS due to the school's course structures and scheduling.

### Dismissal Procedures

K-5th Grade: The school day ends at 3:30pm; Pick-up from 3:30-3:45pm.

6th-8th Grade: The school day ends at 4:00 pm; Pick-up from 4:00-4:15.

Elementary families should not queue in the carpool lanes prior to 3:20. Middle and high school families should not queue in the carpool lane prior to 3:55. **Please note: Drivers arriving prior to their designated time may be asked to park or return later.**

Families with students in multiple divisions should use the carpool time assigned to their oldest student.

Middle and high school caregivers wishing to pick-up a student prior to their assigned dismissal *should not* do so through the elementary carpool line. Please park and follow the procedures for early check-out and pick-up your child prior to the start their carpool (3:30/4:00) whenever possible.

Each student has a password for dismissal. Please let the school know of any last-minute changes in pick-up routine or after-school activities or plans by emailing your child's homeroom teacher (elementary), principal (6-8th grade), and [carpool@midtowninternationalschool.com](mailto:carpool@midtowninternationalschool.com).

Updates to the Authorized Pick Up list in MyMIS can also be made by reaching out to your student's principal. Parents of students ages 13 and up may sign the student self-checkout waiver allowing the student to leave campus after dismissal is over (at 4:00pm). Please see the Self-Checkout Waiver (Appendix A) for details.

***After dismissal, students remaining in the building must be enrolled and engaged in an after-school activity, after care, or in a designated, supervised area.***

### School Closings and Emergency Notifications

Midtown International School is closed on most national holidays, as well as an extended break for winter and spring. Refer to the school calendar posted on the website for exact dates of planned breaks.

Emergency notifications and closings for inclement weather will be announced via email, robo-call, text message, posted on the website, and/or listed on major TV channels such as WSB2 and 11Alive. Communications will be sent according to the information provided in the MyMIS profile for each student and family. Text messaging rates may apply when choosing to receive such notices.

In some cases, virtual classrooms may take the place of on-campus classes when travel to or from the school may be hazardous. This flexibility in our learning environment allows us to minimize the need for make-up days for instruction. Students will be counted present or absent from these virtual lessons based on completion of work and/or participation.

If closures for inclement weather or other emergencies drop the instructional time below the minimum required for the year, make up time may be added to the calendar at the school's discretion.

### Visitor Policy

All visitors to MIS must wear face masks, and visitors feeling unwell or demonstrating any COVID-19 symptoms should not enter the building.

All visitors will check-in at the front desk and receive a visitor's badge that should be worn for the duration of their visit and returned when they sign-out to leave. After signing in, all visitors will proceed to our Learning Lounge (to the left of the front desk) to wait for their child or their appointment. Beyond the front desk and Learning Lounge, all visitors should have an MIS staff or employee escort.

At this time, all visitors must have an appointment, made in advance, with the exception of those dropping off or picking up students or items for students. Appointments will be held in the Learning Lounge.

### Campus Security

MIS campus is closed to the general public yet accessible to students, staff, faculty, and authorized visitors. Exterior doors remain locked and visitors will be buzzed in the front entrance after identity is confirmed. Students, faculty/staff, and volunteers/guests are not allowed to open side or back doors for visitors or prop open exterior doors for any reason. Please let a member of the school administration know if a new face will be visiting campus. Please see the "Visitor Policy" section for more information on arranging appropriate visits to campus.

To provide for the safety and security of employees, students, and the facilities at Midtown International School, only authorized visitors are allowed in the school. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures the security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances.

### Dress Code

How we dress is a form of social communication and part of becoming college and career ready. As such, we ask that student shoes and clothing are:

1. Free from derogatory language, profanity, explicit images.

2. Covering the midriff, chest, and undergarments. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should extend at least over the top of students legs, even when sitting down.
3. Not distracting to the student or other students. For example, hats are allowed, but should not impede a student's, their peers', or their teachers', sightlines. Cologne/perfume should be limited out of respect for the sensitivities of others.
4. Weather appropriate. For example, sweaters, coats, etc.
5. Appropriate for a school environment that includes sitting on the floor and participating in art and physical education.
6. Clothing should be in line with safety guidelines for specific activities as needed. For example, long sleeves and long hair may need to be pulled back during an experiment, close-toed shoes may need to be worn to operate certain equipment, etc. Teachers will inform students and parents of any such requirements in advance.
7. Shoes must be worn at all times for general safety and in case of an evacuation.

*\*PE happens every day for students in K-5 and Monday-Thursday for students in 6th-8th. We recommend students dress for the whole school day in a manner that is appropriate for PE; however, students will be allowed to change for PE if necessary. They will miss some portion of class as this time is not built into the schedule. This privilege may be adjusted if too much classtime is being used.*

The dress code for PE includes:

- a. Closed-toed shoes without a heel or platform appropriate for athletic activities;
- b. Shorts or leggings to wear under skirts;
- c. Pulled back hair and removal of large jewelry, pins, badges, or other items that may get caught or snagged;
- d. Ensure that pants have enough give for running and jumping.

Students in violation of the dress code may be asked to change clothes.

For elementary students who might have an accident or otherwise render clothing unwearable, a small collection of clothing in a variety of sizes will be available in the principal's office to change into. If this is likely to happen to your child, we recommend sending in clothing to be stored in the office.

## Code of Conduct

We expect students to be active, engaged, positive members of our learning community. Students, administrators, teachers, parents, and guardians at Midtown International School work together to support the mission of the school and uphold our values. Expectations for conduct for all stakeholders in our community come back to upholding and modeling our four core values of **respect, responsibility, justice, and citizenship** and contributing to a school environment that is physically, emotionally, and socially safe.

**Please note that disciplinary records are private and confidential. Students and families have access to and will stay informed of their own records, but the discipline of other students will not be shared.**

### Elementary School Code of Conduct (Grades K-5)

Faculty members are committed to maintaining safe classroom environments. Students

should report to an MIS staff or faculty member any behavior that is unsafe. Faculty members will also clearly establish rules and expectations for behavior in the classroom that are consistent and with clearly communicated logical consequences. Here are a few examples of rules grounded in our core values:

<u>You can...</u>	<u>You can't...</u>
Play with your friends	Hit, kick, or hurt others (even as just play-fighting), or use insults or insults intended as jokes.
Share your ideas	Interrupt learning time or belittle the ideas of others.
Tell others how you feel	Use mean or hurtful words.
Have strong feelings and opinions	Use bad words or aggressive tone of voice.
Tell trusted adults if you feel unsafe	Touch or threaten your classmates.
Enjoy school materials	Damage or destroy any school materials, refuse to participate in routines to pick up the classroom and keep it organized, or use the materials at times when they should be put away.

\*Note that this is not an exhaustive list of examples.

#### Progressive Discipline:

Our progressive discipline plan is rooted in our core values and follows a restorative justice model in order to communicate how decision making and accountability influences our role as citizens in our community.

1. Student receives a verbal warning, with clearly outlined consequences for further choices. Choice is given to self-regulate or receive a logical consequence.
2. If the behavior continues, student receives logical consequences.
3. On the third offense, the student uses reflective guiding questions to unpack their choices, identify where they need support, and make a plan for how to restore the situation. These plans will often be written and referred to as a "reflection" and shared with parents/guardians.
4. If the behavior continues, student visits the coordinator to develop a plan for making better choices moving forward and rejoining activities where applicable.
5. On the next offense, Elementary School Principal will discuss appropriate consequences with parents, which may include an at-home or in-school suspension.

In cases where student behavior is making the school or learning environment unsafe for themselves or others physically or emotionally, parents will be notified to pick up for at least a half-day of home suspension and/or to pursue appropriate emotional health care. At the school's discretion, the discipline process may be accelerated depending on the severity of the behavior. Students are expected to immediately report to the teacher, coordinator, or

counselor any action that they feel creates an unsafe environment. The Progressive Discipline plan may, but does not have to, be followed separately for separate behaviors.

Discipline may progress through these steps through the larger lens of a student's overall decision making process as we work to help students develop into respectful, well-rounded citizens.

Three instances of suspension in one school year could lead to dismissal from school.

### **Middle School Code of Conduct (Grades 6-8)**

Faculty members are committed to maintaining safe classroom and school environments. All students must review and sign the Code of Conduct. MIS has clear expectations of student behavior:

Faculty members are committed to maintaining safe classroom environments. Students should report to an MIS staff or faculty member any behavior that is unsafe. Faculty members will also clearly establish rules and expectations for behavior in the classroom that are consistent and with clearly communicated logical consequences. Here are a few (but not exhaustive) examples of rules grounded in our core values:

Students should:

- Demonstrate kindness and respect for classmates, teachers, and other individuals at school;
- Protect and respect school property, community spaces, and the property and privacy of others;
- Respect the learning goals and learning environment of their classroom communities;
- Take responsibility for their actions and belongings;
- Adhere to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy;
- Immediately report any behavior that is unsafe to administration;
- Practice healthy behaviors and maintain personal hygiene;
- Arrive to classes on time;
- Follow instructions from faculty.

Students may NOT:

- Fight (including play wrestling or other imitations of fighting), push, hit, or kick others or their property;
- Use insults against one another or themselves, even when intended as a joke.
- Vandalize or steal school or others' property;
- Plagiarize or copy the work of others;
- Harass, intimidate, bully, or cyberbully another student;
- Have excessive tardiness or truancy;
- Possess weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other materials that are inappropriate for school.

\*Note that this is not an exhaustive list of examples.

## Progressive Discipline:

Our progressive discipline plan is rooted in our core values and follows a restorative justice model in order to communicate how decision making and accountability influences our role as citizens in our community.

1. Student receives a verbal warning, with clearly defined consequences for continued behavior.
2. On second offense, student reflects on their decision making process and turns in a written plan (often referred to as a *reflection*) to stop future offenses. These plans may sometimes be completed verbally in collaboration with and noted by school faculty.
3. If the behavior continues, or three reflections are written, student meets with the Middle School Principal to discuss decision making and consequences, serves a scheduled Lunch Time Detention, and parents are contacted. The count of three reflections will reset at each new semester.
4. On the next offense, the Middle School Principal will discuss appropriate consequences with parents, which may include an at-home or in-school suspension.
5. If the behavior(s) continue after the suspension or other consequences decided upon in step four, the process will return to step four.

Discipline may progress through these steps through the larger lens of a student's decision making process as we work to help students develop into respectful, well-rounded citizens. The Progressive Discipline plan does not have to be followed separately for separate behaviors.

In cases where student behavior is making the school or learning environment unsafe for themselves or others physically or emotionally, parents will be notified to pick up for at least a half-day of home suspension and/or to pursue appropriate emotional health care. At the school's discretion, the discipline process may be accelerated depending on the severity of the behavior. Students are expected to immediately report to the teacher, coordinator, or counselor any action that they feel creates an unsafe environment.

Three instances of suspension in one school year could lead to dismissal from school.

Students are responsible for *always* reporting knowledge of any of the following:

- Self-harm of any type or threats of self-harm or suicide.
- Possession of drugs, weapons, alcohol, or illicit materials on school property,
- Harassment, Bullying, or unwanted sexual advances,
- Cyber-bullying or social media attacks, and
- Threats or actions of violence or other forms of harm

## Bullying

MIS does not tolerate bullying or cyber-bullying and treats bullying behavior as behavior that

makes the school or learning environment dangerous. As such, parents will be notified for at-home suspension, in accordance with the MIS Code of Conduct. Three suspensions will result in expulsion from school.

Not all mean words or behaviors constitute bullying: Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or evidence supports that it has the potential to be repeated, over time (from [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov)).

### Personal Technology Policy

Students in grades K-5 should not have personal devices, including cell phones at school. If caregivers would prefer that their student bring such a device at school, we are happy to hold it safe at the front desk or in the homeroom teacher's desk. Please make sure that the device is labeled with the student's name and drop-off with a carpool team member in the morning or at the front desk if bringing a student in after carpool hours.

MIS allows students in grades 6-8 to have personal cell phones at school only for use before and after school hours: Prior to 8:55 and after their carpool pick-up. Cell phones should be powered off and kept out of sight in students' lockers or bags during the school day, except when allowed for educational purposes as approved by teachers on a case-by-case basis. No other personal electronic devices are allowed at school, including personal laptops, video games, etc.. If this privilege is misused, these devices will be removed from a student's possession for the remainder of the day. MIS reserves the right to require students to leave their personal devices at home or at the front desk should they impede the student's ability to fully engage in school.

Parents should not call or text students' personal devices during the school day but may call the school with messages for their student in case of emergency, with changes to pick-up plans, etc.

If a student needs to contact their parents, they will be assisted by school personnel from a school phone line, or with teacher permission, their school-issued gmail account. If a parent receives a call/message from their student during the day that the school may be unaware of, we appreciate them reaching out to partner with the school to make sure the student is safe and well-cared for while at school.

In order to comply with the spirit and purpose of the personal technology policy, smartwatches should be set to airplane mode during the school day.

There may be some contexts and circumstances where technology-based accommodations have been identified as a way for the school to best serve a student's individual needs. We are happy to help! But, please reach out to the school counselor first in order to discuss the creation or adaptation of the student's Academic Action Plan in order to receive such accommodations for a student.

### School Technology and School-Issued Devices

All students will be issued a school-owned device for use during the school year. Parents and students accept the terms of the technology policies upon enrollment and re-enrollment

(See the MIS Acceptable Use and Maintenance policies and Technology Agreement in Appendix B).

### Public Displays of Affection

MIS students are expected to treat their peers and faculty with respect. Romantic public displays of affection on school grounds are not appropriate..

### Harrassment Policy

MIS is committed to maintaining a positive and safe learning environment that is free from harassment, sexual misconduct, abuse, intimidation, and assault. No student shall engage in any activities of harassment, abuse, sexual misconduct, assault, or intimidation of another student. Any student found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. There may be legal and criminal implications that can be reported to appropriate authorities.

### Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug Policy

MIS students are prohibited from using any illegal drugs, alcohol, and smoking/tobacco products without exception. Use or possession of any of these substances will be reported immediately to parents and the appropriate authorities and may result in immediate expulsion from MIS.

Smoking includes traditional tobacco products such as but not limited to cigarettes and chewing tobacco. Vaping and juuling products are also prohibited. In addition, tampering with smoke detectors is a crime.

Possession and/or distribution of illegal drugs or prescription medication, and underage consumption of alcohol is a crime. In cases where the school has physical evidence of criminal behavior, the crime will be reported to the appropriate authorities, and the student will begin due process proceedings with MIS for expulsion.

Prescription medication is intended for the patient to whom it was prescribed only. Students should not share prescription medication, and reports of such activity will result in immediate intervention. In cases where the school has evidence of criminal activity related to prescription medication, the crime will be reported to the appropriate authorities and the student will be expelled from school.

Students may *not* carry any medications, prescription or over-the-counter, during the school day with the exception of inhalers, epipens, diabetic supplies, and other similar life-saving tools. Any other medications should be submitted by the parent to the wellness coordinator.

In cases where the school is made aware of students engaging in illegal activity outside of school, the administration or school counselors may call for a meeting with parents and the students to discuss consequences and create an intervention plan.



### Academic Performance Expectations

Continued enrollment at MIS is contingent upon satisfactory academic performance. Because our students engage with academic content through problem solving and critical thinking, satisfactory performance is defined as an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher. Struggling students and their parents should meet with teachers to craft a support and improvement plan. At the end of any school year, students with a cumulative GPA of lower than 2.0 may be required to repeat the grade or be dismissed from school.

School refusal (choosing not to attend school or parts of the instructional day) or work refusal (choosing not to do or participate in school work for any subject area) is an indication that the student is unprepared for academic life at MIS. In cases of school or work refusal, parents, teachers, and administrators should meet and discuss specific plans, goals, and timelines for full school participation. In cases where the school refusal persists, the student may be dismissed from school.

**Sixth through Eighth Grade students will each have three extension passes per semester, across all classes and subjects, to extend a deadline for submitting work.** After students have exhausted their three passes, a late work penalty will apply to their grade. Extensions MUST be requested by the student in advance to be honored. The extended deadline remains at the discretion of the teacher and work may need to be completed outside of class time. A student needing extensions due to extended time accommodations will receive their accommodations first (see your student's AAP for individual accommodations as applicable), and then may request an additional extension to further adjust the deadline using one of their extension passes. Extensions due to excused absences equal the number of days missed and do not count as an extension pass unless that deadline cannot be met. Extensions are communicated through official notes in MyMIS.

### Food and Celebrations

We love celebrating birthdays and other special events, including holidays, at MIS! While many cultural expectations may lead us to want to celebrate with food, at MIS we believe that learning how to create and foster a celebratory atmosphere without food and drinks is healthier and more appropriate for school. We also recognize that a variety of family dynamics, availability, and finances affect how birthdays are celebrated. From an equity standpoint, we do not want to create a culture of expectation around big parent-hosted birthday celebrations at school. We want to make sure that we establish a culture of celebration that sets reasonable expectations for families so that no one should feel pressured to plan or execute any thing in particular, but so that all children feel loved and celebrated.

The MIS Birthday Crew is a middle and high school group of volunteers that ensures that all students K-8 will receive a decorated locker/cubby and special treat/recognition for their birthday! If your 6-12th grade student would like to volunteer, please have them reach out to the K-8th grade principal. If you know that this type of attention would be unwanted by your student, please reach out to the K-8th grade principal to opt out. Summer birthdays

will be celebrated in May (June) and August (July/August).

Please follow these guidelines if you would still like to celebrate a birthday special event at school:

- Collaborate with the classroom teacher and/or administrator for the best time for a celebration.
- Do not bring food or drinks for the celebration.
- Consider a brief activity to share with the class.
- Birthday parties and other class parties should be held outside of school.

Any food or treats brought into school without notice or not in compliance with this policy will not be served in class.

### Lost and Found

Families should label all student belongings. Lost items will be held in the designated Lost and Found area. Once a quarter, a deadline will be established and communicated for claiming lost items. After the established date, all items will be donated. Students may visit the lost and found at any time with permission of their teacher, and parents may visit the lost and found upon request.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Calendars

The online school calendar is a great source for updated information about school events, meetings, and closings. The school calendar can be added to mobile devices and personal calendars by clicking the + button on the calendar on the school website. The MyMIS Parent Portal keeps updated school announcements, events, and calendar items in a newsfeed on its main page.

### Connections Newsletter

Each week our school newsletter is sent out with event reminders, updates, news, and photos. All communications at the school-wide level are sent in the Connections newsletter, and parents should browse the correspondence from the school each week to stay informed of school events. Connections should act as a first resource for information about school news and events.

### Communications with Faculty

Teachers make use of MyMIS, email, and other school-issued digital tools to share classroom reminders, assignments, photos and other updates regularly with both students and parents. Faculty members are expected to return calls and emails to parents by the end of the following school day.

All parents and guardians are expected to review myMIS and gradebook updates regularly in addition to weekly communications from grade level teachers and/or teaching teams.

Excerpt from *Better Together: How to Enhance your Child's education by Joining Forces with your Independent School* by the National Association of Independent Schools

### **Communication Do's and Don'ts**

Good communication is important - as is know the right time and place to communicate. Your school probably has guidelines, and your children's teachers will be happy to tell you what they are. But they boil down to this advice

- Do be patient when teachers don't reply instantly. Recognize that they may have to take time from their nights and weekends to answer your messages. It IS legitimate to ask for a timeframe in which you can expect a reply.
- Don't bombard teachers with texts and emails.
- Do recognize that as your children advance through middle and high school, the school will want them to do their own communicating. It's part of teaching them to advocate for themselves.
- Don't forget that the school parking lot is *not* the right place for a parent-teacher conference.
- Do make sure you don't scapegoat or gossip.
- Don't overlook the value of perspective. If your children say something bad happened, approach it with a grain of salt - the same thing you want teachers to do when your children tell them what happens at home.
- Do respect the school's judgment about the teacher assignments.
- Don't do end-runs. When your child has a problem, speak first to the teacher who knows the child best and with the assumption that you are in it together.
- Do be careful not to confuse educational rigor with workload.
- Abide by the Golden Rule.

Pages 5-7

### [Parent-Teacher Conferences and Student Goals Meetings](#)

Parents should plan to attend two conferences each year to ensure a healthy and open school-home partnership. The fall conferences will take the form of a student goals meeting and the spring meetings will take the form of student-led conferences.

Conferences at other times of the year or with the school counselors are also welcome and can be scheduled upon request and based on teacher availability.

### [Escalation Policy](#)

When a concern arises, please adhere to the following procedures:

1. Thoughtfully reach out to the specific faculty or staff member involved to collaborate on problem-solving. Reaching out to the specific individual(s) involved first is important and offers the most effective and efficient likelihood of positive outcomes. You can expect prompt,

thoughtful, and respectful follow-up from our faculty and staff.

2. If you are still struggling with the same issue or concern after working with the faculty or staff member to problem solve multiple times, bring the issue to your grade-level principal (academic/logistical) or counselor (social/emotional) for additional support while still keeping the original faculty/staff member informed. Clear communication that keeps all parties on the same page is valuable in finding a resolution.

3. If after working through problem solving protocols with both the specific parties involved and the corresponding principal or counselor, a reasonable solution has still not been met, the principal can help you to escalate your concern to the appropriate director (academics, student life, business, etc) for additional support.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Medications Policy

Students *may not carry medications*, prescription or over-the-counter, with them during the school day with the exception of inhalers, epipens, diabetic supplies, and other similar life-saving tools. The Wellness Coordinator should be informed of any students carrying these items with them. Prescription medications should be submitted by the parent to the Wellness Coordinator in its original packaging and include doctor's instructions. Prescription and over-the-counter medications may be dispensed at school only by school personnel with permission and instructions from the parent and in accordance with package directions. Prescription medication should include doctor's instructions. All medication must be in its original packaging. Lists of medications can be updated through the myMIS portal.

### Allergy Policy

MIS accommodates for food allergies on a class-by-class basis. Procedures and limitations may be placed on individual classes according to the specific food allergies and their severity in each class. Students with any allergies should complete an allergy action plan with their physician and ensure that all appropriate medications are fully stocked and up to date.

The party and event policy asks parents and volunteers to refrain from bringing food to school.

MIS faculty attends Allergy Safety Training at the beginning of every school year to practice epi-pen use and get up-to-date information on food allergy best practices.

### Sick Policy

Students with a temperature above 100 degrees or exhibiting any general contagious symptoms or any COVID-19 related symptoms should be kept at home. Those who exhibit these qualities during the school day will be referred to the Wellness Coordinator and will need to be picked up promptly by a parent or other authorized person.

For anyone demonstrating COVID-19 symptoms that are actually another medical diagnosis or condition, families should have a doctor's note supporting this.

The Wellness Coordinator will communicate with parents about positive cases. If necessary, learning will go 100% virtual for any impacted classes. In the event the Wellness Coordinator is unavailable, the School Level Principal will communicate with families.

### Lice Policy

When a faculty or staff member suspects head lice, the parents of the student will be notified and informed of treatment options and parents should ensure proper treatment of head lice. Communication will also be sent to classmates of students with suspected head lice encouraging an at-home check. (Policy based on CDC recommendations.)

### First Aid

Teachers have CPR/ First Aid Certification. Basic first aid needs will be addressed as needed in the classroom by school faculty/staff or in the Wellness Center by the Wellness Coordinator. For injuries that require more intervention or monitoring, parents will be contacted by the Wellness Coordinator, teacher present, or a school administrator..

### Medical Emergency

As a part of the enrollment agreement, parents and guardians authorize MIS personnel to obtain emergency medical care for their child when they are not available. Unless otherwise specified or redirected by emergency personnel, the Children's Hospital at Egleston is the default facility for medical care. Parents are notified immediately of any emergency situation involving their students.

### Safety Drills

To ensure student safety, drills are conducted regularly. Teachers inform students of proper procedures for each type of drill conducted. Shoes must be worn at all times in the school building for general safety and in case of an evacuation.

Practicing appropriate safety and evacuation procedures is a part of the Safety and Security Plan at MIS. When the fire alarm sounds, all occupants must exit according to the evacuation plans posted in each room. The occupants may re-enter the building once the drill is complete or fire department personnel deem the building safe.

In the event of a tornado (or tornado drill), students and occupants move to the designated location for their zone and sit/kneel according to procedures for each zone.

In the event of an intruder alert (or drill), faculty and staff are trained in and will assume the appropriate ALICE procedures and attempt to evacuate students from the building when

possible. Students and other occupants should not crowd together during an intruder alert.

### Loss of Electricity / Plumbing / Facilities

In the event that plumbing, facilities, or electricity is lost during the school day in a manner that the school believes precludes it from being operational, parents will be contacted by phone, email, and/or text with a designated pick-up location.

### Pandemic Outbreak

The school follows CDC guidelines for dealing with pandemic outbreaks. Because of the changing nature of epidemics, the school will keep up to date on the latest policy recommendations by the CDC and update parents regularly should the community be at risk.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES

### Books and Materials

Textbooks, curriculum materials, and literature are provided by Midtown International School and should be returned in good condition upon completion of the course or unit. Families will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost, defaced, or damaged school materials or facilities.

### Library

All library books are checked out on a two-week basis. Students, parents, and faculty who borrow library books should return them in good condition within two weeks. Library materials can be perused online, and ebooks can be checked out through any compatible device.

Borrowers are responsible for the cost of replacing lost, defaced, or damaged library books or materials.

### School Supplies

All necessary school supplies are provided by the school. Students are also welcome to bring their personal notebooks, journals, pens, and pencils, etc. Additional supplies, not provided by the school, that students should bring each day include a small backpack or messenger bag, water bottle, and lunch box. All students will be provided with either a cubby or a locker for storing personal items. No locks are permitted on these storage areas.

Upon graduation or when withdrawing from school, all library books, textbooks, and school-issued devices and chargers must be returned to the school in good condition. Records will not be released until all school property is returned. Fees apply for lost or damaged devices or chargers.

## ACADEMIC LIFE: EXPECTATIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, and POLICIES

The student experience at MIS is engaging and collaborative. The gap between opportunity and potential in an MIS classroom is eliminated with emphasis on advanced materials, complex thinking strategies, sophisticated instruction, and authentic learning experiences. With our small students to teacher ratio, students are able to lead and collaborate in a variety of group sizes and with their peers in other states and countries. Despite, and most likely due to, the rigor and structure of the planning and curriculum mapping process, student learning takes place in a highly organic, critically creative, and spontaneous manner.

### Homework

All student experiences with the school are planned to maximize student learning opportunities. We believe that the purpose of homework is twofold: 1) to get students to think more about the lessons they have covered or are going to cover, and 2) to open dialogue about the curriculum content with family. Families should expect to see homework designed to prepare students for in-class participation, learning activities, and assessments rather than homework that serves as a summative assessment of learning and grade value. Students may have homework that involves reading, writing, reflecting on their own understanding of a topic or lesson, watching a video on class content for the following day, or otherwise previewing or reviewing the content of a lesson. This allows class time to be used for collaboration, discussion, productive work, and problem-solving, and removes the need for us to focus extensively on basics during instructional time. Students may be asked to practice routine skills at home to become more familiar and fluent with the content. Homework time might also be used to complete make-up work after an absence, work on an assignment with an extended due date, make use of approved extended time where applicable, or finish incomplete work if a student's choices kept them from using class time appropriately.

When parents or students have a question about homework, they are encouraged to reach out directly to the assigning teacher or refer to myMIS or the course syllabus for more information.

### Lunch and Snacks

Students are expected to bring a lunch from home every day. If the school elects to partner with an outside lunch provider, that opportunity will be communicated via the Connections Newsletter

Picnic style lunches outside are held as frequently as the weather allows. Students may want to bring a towel, blanket, or yoga mat for sitting on the ground. Students do not have access to refrigerators or a microwave unless a related medical need has been expressed. In such situations, a student may use those devices with the guidance of the Wellness Coordinator. Otherwise, families are encouraged to use ice packs, insulated lunch bags, and hot/cold thermoses for packing student lunches and keeping them warm or cold accordingly.

If a student forgets their lunch, they may choose a couple of items from a selection of healthy and allergen-friendly snacks in the Wellness Clinic. Students may not order lunch for delivery for themselves. Please avoid food deliveries for your student. If a parent/guardian still chooses to have food delivered for their student, they should do their best to have it delivered within the student's scheduled lunch period. Food deliveries received outside of scheduled lunch times will not be delivered to students during instructional time.

Students may bring healthy snacks with them to school to eat before or after school, during scheduled snack time for elementary school students, and with teacher permission for K-8 students. All students should respect the potential food allergies of their classmates and that they may not always be able to consume their snack based on time and place and whether or not it may be interfering with learning goals. Students may not share snacks.

Students are expected to bring water bottles to carry with them throughout the school day.

### Field Trips and Special Guests

When able to do so, classes take field trips to venues that supplement and enrich the curriculum. There is no additional charge for admission to partner institutions or most field trips. Sometimes, students may be allowed and wish to purchase food items or souvenirs from longer field trips, and parents will be notified in advance if any additional spending money is permitted. The enrollment agreement covers the consent for these trips, and additional consent will be requested from parents as needed for venue-specific releases. Parents will always be informed of travel plans that make the community our classroom.

Special guests and content experts also may the school to provide hands- on and authentic learning experiences for the students. The guests are selected to align with the curriculum content and goals.

### Student Assessment

Midtown International School has designed a research-based student assessment process aligned with its curriculum and instructional goals. In addition to narrative reports on midterm progress reports, the school uses a 4-point grading scale that is customized for each formally assessed, rubric-based learning experience. The template below acts as a framework for the expectations of each level of learning engagement.

**1: Retrieval** - Student recalls information and demonstrates knowledge and skills in the content area.

**2: Comprehension** - Student demonstrates understanding of content, and can articulate the depth and complexity of material in content area.

**3: Analysis** - Student can logically analyze subject matter with abstraction, evaluations, and interdisciplinary comparisons.

**4: Problem-Solving** - Student engages in thoughtful, creative, or collaborative problem- solving with the content, and reflects on learning processes to foster continued growth.

For early elementary grades (k-1st) mid- and end-of-term reports may be accompanied by



skills checklists identifying students' progress in obtaining basic skills. The inclusion of these checklists and how to find them will be notated as a comment on the progress report and/or report card when applicable.

For K-5th grade classes that meet less than twice a week, all assessment-based feedback will be narrative rather than numerical on mid and end-of term reports. For 6th-8th grade electives, instructors may choose for assessment to be numerical and narrative or narrative only. These designations will be indicated in the course syllabus.

### Student Advocacy and Support

Psychological testing results must be provided to the school for the school to implement and support classroom accommodations. Testing results must be submitted to the School Counselor in order to begin the process of creating or updating Academic Action Plans (AAPs) or Social/Emotional Learning Plans with the counselor and/or Instructional Coordinator and principal. With a release of permission, the counselor can also collaborate with outside therapists.

Occupational, speech/language, and other therapy is not provided by the school, but we welcome outside therapists working with our learners to do so at school. If a student is receiving one or more of these external services, please notify the Instructional Coordinator and set up a time with them for the service provider to work with the student that does not conflict with their schedule. Please reach out to the instructional coordinator or an administrator if you would like recommendations for service providers or screeners, to be procured at the family's expense.

Some MIS teachers are available to tutor MIS students for pay outside of school hours; however, these teachers are not permitted to tutor students currently enrolled in their classes. Teachers will offer office hours within the established school hours to support the students currently on their rosters. These times for extra support will be communicated via syllabi.

### PARENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### Scholarships

MIS is committed to providing at least 15% of our students each year with financial aid and scholarships. The scholarships enhance our student body, embrace socioeconomic differences, and supplement the already present international, cultural, and language diversity of the program. If you would like to donate to the scholarship fund, consider redirecting your state income tax dollars to MIS through the link on the website, or contribute directly to the Scholarship Fund.

#### Philanthropy

MIS believes in maintaining an operating budget funded by tuition and programs. As a

result, there is only one fundraising endeavor that takes place every school year: the Annual Fund. In order to secure some of the best-suited grants for additional programs and facilities, we ask for 100% participation from our stakeholders. The Annual Fund purchases substantial items that enrich the school experience for our students and faculty.

In some years, as MIS grows and improves its facilities, the school may take on a Capital Campaign to support multi-year capital improvement projects and development.

### MIS Parent Organization

Our parent organization at MIS, *Midtown International Parents (MIP)*, manages volunteer opportunities and community building activities at the school. Meetings are posted on the school calendar and in the Connections Newsletter.

### Community Outreach

An important component of the school's philosophy is to make the world our classroom. MIS has and is continuing to grow partnerships with local, national, and international organizations to achieve this goal. Parents are strongly encouraged to get involved in these endeavors as well, modeling responsible global citizenship for our learners. Opportunities to get involved will be posted in the Connections Newsletter.

### Recycling

Midtown International School supports environmental awareness by encouraging the MIS community, staff, and students to recycle. This support includes a commitment to the purchase, use, and disposal of products and materials in a manner that will best utilize natural resources and minimize any negative impact on the earth's environment. Parents are encouraged to support recycling and composting programs.

## BUSINESS POLICIES

### Anti-Discriminatory Statement

It is the policy of the Midtown International School not to discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or handicap in its employment practices.

### Confidentiality of Student Records

Student records at MIS are confidential. Parents or guardians will be afforded an opportunity, upon request, to inspect and review all educational records during school business hours. Records must remain in the school office. The parent or guardian has the right to an explanation of these records, to obtain a copy of the records and to have a family

representative view the records within a reasonable time of such request. The school presumes that a parent or guardian has authority to inspect his or her student's records unless the school has been advised otherwise through applicable court documents governing such matters as guardianship, separation, and divorce.

Requests to send student records to other educational institutions or professionals should be made in writing and include address, email, and/or fax number of the recipient school or professional.

### Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment for the following school year begins in January. During this time, parents are sent reminders with detailed instructions to complete re-enrollment for the next school year. All steps, including the payment of the tuition deposit must be completed by the noted deadline. The deposit is fully credited towards tuition. The deposit is non-refundable.

**Families will not be released from their tuition contract after the contract opt-out date.**

### Payment

Payments by check or credit card may be made through SmartTuition. Tuition and incidental billing is managed through Smart Tuition, and families set up automatic debiting for these payments.

Tuition, after care, and extra-curricular activities provided by the school will be invoiced through SmartTuition. Please notify [billing@midtowninternationalschool.com](mailto:billing@midtowninternationalschool.com) or Smart Tuition of any changes in financial responsibility or payment method.

Families must be current with their tuition payments to retain enrollment at MIS. Payment delinquencies of more than 60 days may forfeit enrollment.

Transcripts and report cards are not released until payments are up to date.

### Withdrawal from School

Please notify the school in writing as soon as possible for a school withdrawal. The notification should state the child's last day, forwarding address, and the name of the new school (address, email, phone, fax). Include in the notification permission to send student records to the new school. Per the enrollment agreement, families are responsible for full school tuition for the contracted school year, even upon withdrawal midyear and relocation. Transcripts and report cards are not released until payments are up to date.

### Changes in Policy

The school reserves the right to change school policy and this Parent and Student Handbook at its discretion, especially to retain alignment with the applicable local and state

laws, accrediting guidelines, and researched best practices. Stakeholders will be notified of any such changes. Completion of the enrollment contract includes agreement and understanding all sections of this handbook.

## Appendix A: **MIS TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE, CARE AND MAINTENANCE POLICY**

The School is responsible for

- Setting up each new device with restrictions appropriate for the user;
- Issuing the device, cover, and charging cables; and,
- Purchasing and installing software and apps necessary for using the equipment as an instructional device.

Users are personally responsible for

- The security and safety of their assigned device;
- Full repair or replacement cost if the device is damaged or made inoperable;
- Following the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines for care and use of the device;
- Supplying headphones or earbuds to use with the device;
- Updating software as new updates are available;
- Regularly backing up the device to the cloud;
- Returning the device by the last day of school or last day in attendance;
- Logging in to the authorized @misstudent.com email account.

### **Basic Guidelines for Device Safety**

The equipment should not be transported as checked luggage on public transportation (airplanes, trains, and buses). The user will keep the equipment in their possession at all times while traveling.

Carrying cases should be labeled with the user's information such that in the event of loss the equipment might be returned.

Do not store devices in a locked car or car trunk, as severe temperatures may damage electronics.

Users may supply their own cases, keyboards, screen protectors, etc. insofar as these accessories do not interfere with the instructional uses of the device.

In case of theft outside of school, and to receive a replacement device, a police report must be filed and a copy of the police report provided to the school within seven days of the incident.

Do not share your device or any password. Users are responsible for all damage caused to the device, even if the damage occurs when not in their possession.

Improper or inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action which may include confiscation of devices, suspension, and/or expulsion. Screens can be damaged easily if not properly cared for. There is a minimum \$50 charge for a broken screen on any device. Simple guidelines include:

- Do not lean on the top of the device,
- Do not place anything (pens, pencils, books) on top of the device,
- Do not put the device inside a binder,
- Do not touch the screen with pens, pencils, keys, etc.
- Do not close the device when there are items between the screen and the keyboard/ cover.
- Do not jailbreak the device or attempt to alter the restrictions set up by the school.

### **Software Guidelines**

Additional software should not be loaded onto the device unless approved by a faculty or staff member.

Do not download or install programs under any circumstances that may promote and facilitate copyright infringement, promulgate spyware, popups, or corrupt the basic computer registry.

Under no circumstances will violent, explicit, or pornographic games, music, or other such software be allowed to be loaded or used on the device. This includes, but is not limited to, websites, games, music videos, music with vulgar lyrics or titles, pictures, word documents, presentations, etc. If a device is found to have any such games, music or images, it will be removed without notice and at the sole discretion of the School.

MIS maintains the licenses for the software that is installed on its devices. The School may from time to time purchase and install additional software for the device. All software on MIS-owned equipment is the property of Midtown International School. Software may be added, modified, changed, or deleted at the sole discretion of the School and without prior notification.

Devices must be returned by the last day of school, and all data will be wiped to prepare the device for its next user. Please back up all personal photos, videos, documents, etc. prior to returning equipment. The School is not responsible for lost data, photos, videos, documents, etc.

### **Limitations of Liability**

Midtown International School makes every effort to ensure a safe and reliable network but makes no guarantee that a device will function and /or the services provided by or through the network will be error-free or without defect. Midtown International School is not liable for any damage suffered, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.

The School is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on its system or devices. Use of any information obtained from the Internet is at the risk of the user.

Use of programs not installed by Midtown International School is at the risk of the user. Midtown International School is not liable for financial obligations arising through use of the device.

Students may not bring non-school issued computers, tablets, or other devices to school. The School is not responsible for software, hardware, damage, or any loss related to the student's possession of a personal device at school, and the personal device may be removed from the student until the end of the school day.

The student agrees to abide by all acceptable use policies while engaged in any school activity or while on school grounds for any reason.

## Technology User Agreement

1. I agree that I will be responsible for repair or replacement of the school-issued device and accessories due to any loss, damage, or theft. If others use it while I have it assigned to me, I understand that I will be held liable for any loss, damage, theft or criminal acts that may occur. I understand that replacement cost of the iPad is approximately \$500 and charging plug and cable cost is approximately \$50. MacBook replacement cost is \$1200 and charging cable is \$90. Chromebook replacement cost is \$400 and charging cable is \$50.

2. I understand that the repair and replacement costs of any accessories will be the actual cost of labor and/or parts billed to the school.

3. I understand if I fail to return the device and components by the last day of school, the family will be billed for the full replacement cost of the device and unreturned components.

4. I understand that the School is not responsible for any damage or loss of data that may occur due to malfunctioning hardware/software.

5. I understand that I am responsible for regularly backing up personal documents and data to the cloud or a personal computer.

6. I agree to adhere to the School Technology Acceptable Use, Care, and Maintenance Policy, as above and as may be amended from time to time.

7. I understand that my device may be removed from the user's possession indefinitely if there is a violation of the acceptable use policy or for related violations of the school's code of conduct.

8. I understand that MIS is not responsible for information, photos, documents, music, and any other personal data or files stored on the device.

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Student Name (Printed)

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Date

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Student Signature