



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT / PARENT  
HANDBOOK

2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR



TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE #
WELCOME FROM PRINCIPAL	3
FACULTY, STAFF, AND POINTS OF CONTACT	4
GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions Policy</li> <li>• Communication flow chart</li> <li>• Daily Schedules</li> <li>• 6-8 Full Block</li> <li>• Federal Section 504</li> <li>• FERPA</li> <li>• Lunch Information</li> <li>• Non-Discrimination Policy</li> <li>• Portrait of a Graduate</li> <li>• School Calendar</li> <li>• Stay Informed</li> <li>• Student Records</li> </ul>	5-8
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A.L.I.C.E.</li> <li>• FIRE / EVACUATION</li> <li>• TORNADO</li> <li>• WEATHER RELATED EMERGENCIES</li> </ul>	8
STUDENT HEALTH / SAFETY PROCEDURES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check In / Out Procedures</li> <li>• Daily Security / Visitors at School</li> <li>• Illness or Injury</li> <li>• Pets at School</li> <li>• Physical Force</li> <li>• Search and Seizure</li> </ul>	8-9
COUNSELING DEPARTMENT INFORMATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding or Dropping Classes</li> <li>• Exploratories</li> <li>• GPA and Class Rank</li> <li>• Graduation Requirements</li> <li>• Homeschool Guidelines</li> <li>• Student Support Services</li> </ul>	9-10
HOMEWORK, GRADING, and ASSESSMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Honors</li> <li>• Grading Scale</li> <li>• Homework and Assessment</li> <li>• Iowa Assessments</li> <li>• Late Work</li> <li>• Report Cards and Transcripts</li> <li>• Semester Finals</li> <li>• Instructional Materials</li> </ul>	11-13



TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE #
POLICIES & PROCEDURES - STUDENT BEHAVIOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● DMCS Student Code of Conduct</li> <li>● Accountability Measures</li> <li>● Specific Expectations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tier 1 Behaviors (Attendance, Dress Code, Technology, Etc)</li> <li>○ Tier 2 Behaviors ( Bullying, Cheating, Lying, Drugs/Alcohol)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	13-19
STUDENT EXPERIENCE- ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Academic Eligibility to Participate</li> <li>● Athletic / Activity Fees</li> <li>● Athletic Documents</li> <li>● Good Conduct Rule</li> <li>● Music at Events and Practices</li> </ul>	19-21
MISCELLANEOUS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Address Changes</li> <li>● Benevolence / Charitable Acts</li> <li>● Field Trips</li> <li>● Lost and Found</li> </ul>	21-22



## Middle School Student Handbook 2019-2020

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! I am so excited for another year of equipping minds and nurturing hearts to impact the world for Christ. My staff and I consider it a real privilege to be able to join arms with you in the education of your child. Thank you for trusting us in this important work.

This year, as we launch a new master schedule and new middle school policies and practices, I want us to focus on the theme of “together”. We are making big changes this year to unify the middle school department and continue to strive towards making 6th-8th grade a place where all students feel like they belong. Change- especially big changes like we are experiencing this year-can be difficult and a growing process. As we navigate these changes, I look forward to seeing how God continues to weave our middle school together and pray that each day student will know that they belong to God, they belong here and we belong together.

Many of the updates that you will see in this year’s handbook come after years of research around best practices for middle level learners. In addition to research, teachers and administration went on school visits last year to learn more about middle school best practices. I am excited about the changes and steps forward that we are making in the middle school this year. My staff has worked so hard planning and brainstorming for the new schedule as well assisted in reworking behavior and semester exam policies. Together, we are committed and determined to make your student’s middle school experience once where their mind is equipped and heart is nurtured.

Becky Parks, Middle School Principal

The following sections were updated from previous handbook editions:

- Daily Schedules
- 6-8 Full Block Schedule
- Exploratories
- Student/Visitor Check-In/Check Out
- School Calendar
- Chapel
- Semester Exams
- School Counseling
- Policies and Procedures- student behavior
- Policies and Procedures- excessive tardies
- Policies and Procedures- lunch
- Tier II Behaviors
- Bullying and Harassment
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Pranks
- Truancy
- Student Experience-Athletics/Activities




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## FACULTY / STAFF / POINTS OF CONTACT

### DMCS LEADERSHIP TEAM

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| • Cade Lambert   | Superintendent   |
| • Becky Parks    | Middle School Principal                                |
| • Cory Nikkel    | Director of Spiritual Formation/MS Assistant Principal |
| • Jon Muller     | Director of Student Activities/HS Assistant Principal  |
| • Jahna Duda     | High School Principal                                  |
| • Heather Nerem  | Early Education Director                               |
| • Karla Lowe     | Elementary Principal                                   |
| • Julia Veenstra | Director of Advancement                                |
| • Anne Soppe     | Director of Finance and Operations                     |

### MIDDLE SCHOOL FACULTY / STAFF

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| • Stacey Bailey     | Study Hall Associate  |
| • Matt Fynaardt     | Physical Education, Health, Outdoor Education                               |
| • Jeff Johannsen    | Vocal Music   |
| • Andrew Hamer      | 6th grade Science, 7th grade Life Science                                   |
| • Carroll Hardy     | 5/6 Band  |
| • Bethany Heath     | 7th grade Global Studies, 7th grade Language Arts, Current Events           |
| • Kate Kremer       | 6th grade Social Studies, 7th grade Global Studies, Family Consumer Science |
| • Rob Lane          | 7/8 Band  |
| • Renee McGill      | 8th grade civics, Creative Technology                                       |
| • Carolyn Oakes     | MS School Counselor   |
| • Julie Pickard     | 6th grade Bible, Art  |
| • Mike Reeder       | 7th grade Life Science, 8th grade Earth Science                             |
| • Sandra Saxton     | MS Administrative Assistant   |
| • Larry Schrock     | 6/7 Math  |
| • Ashley Skinner    | 7/8 Language Arts   |
| • Angela Veenstra   | Pre Algebra, Algebra 1  |
| • Stephanie Veurink | Bible 7, Bible 8  |
| • Shari VerSteeg    | School Nurse  |
| • Chelsea Vetter    | Business Bootcamp   |
| • Kathy Wagner      | 6th grade Language Arts, Speech and Drama                                   |
| • Arianysis Todd    | Spanish, Bible 8  |

**GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION** *(In alphabetical order)*

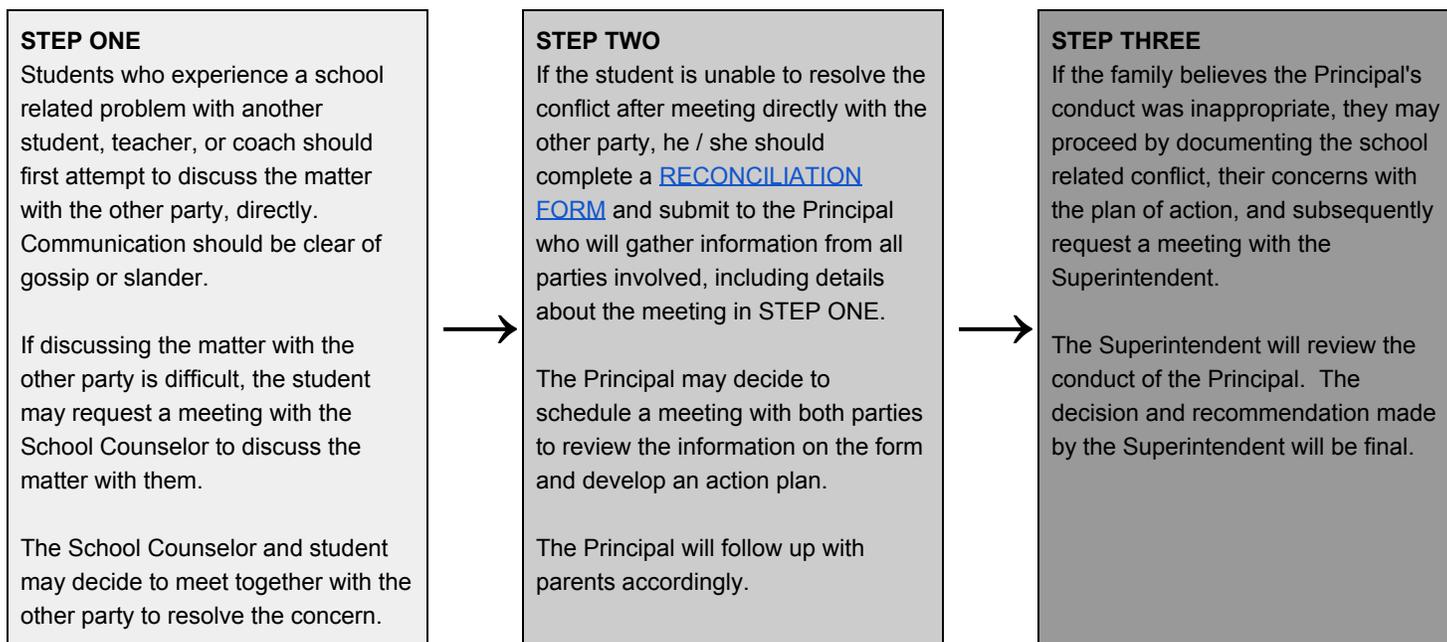
**ADMISSIONS POLICY** - Admission criteria is based on a partnership between Des Moines Christian School and Christian families.

The following criteria are used to determine admissions:

- At least one parent or guardian has a credible personal testimony of a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- There is membership in, or regular attendance at, a church in which the Bible is sincerely believed to be the inspired word of God and is therefore the basis for all life and learning.
- There is an understanding of and agreement with the mission of Des Moines Christian School to provide students with a Christ-centered education in which Jesus Christ is acknowledged in every area of life.
- There is a commitment on the part of the parents to support the work of Des Moines Christian through prayer, volunteer work, and faithfully meeting all financial obligations.
- Each student gives evidence of a commitment to the learning process based on past records and entrance interviews.
- Each student gives evidence of or potential for emotional stability, a satisfactory behavior record, and adequate social adjustment.

**COMMUNICATION FLOW CHART** - Healthy and God-glorifying relationships are the focus of our community. We will be honest with each other while always being kind. When a relationship becomes broken, we will strive to restore it through repentance and forgiveness. DMCS is committed to sustaining a positive environment in which home and school work constructively together. A process has been established as a foundation for providing a school community that:

- Provides opportunities for reconciliation to occur quickly, fairly, and without retaliation.
- Improves communication and understanding between / among parties involved.
- Supports a positive school community by allocating teachers and principals responsibility for preventing and resolving conflicts and complaints.
- Ensures confidence in teacher or principal decisions by providing a mechanism whereby conduct can be objectively reviewed.



**DAILY SCHEDULES** - The middle school day is 8:05 am - 3:05 pm with the exception of Early Bird classes that begin at 7:15 am. Students who arrive prior to 7:55 am or leave after 3:00 pm may sit in collaborative spaces in the middle school and high school. Once

*Please note that DMCS reserves the right to amend this handbook from time to time and revise policy in accordance with local, state, and federal law. Updates will be communicated to students / parents & the most up-to-date copy posted on the website.*



students arrive at school, they need to stay in the building. The HS and MS office is open from 7:30 am - 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. There are a few occasions where offices may be closed for holidays, etc.

- **6-8 FULL BLOCK SCHEDULE-** In the fall of 2017, 6-8th grade was brought together to make a new department at DMC, the middle school. For the last two years, teams of teachers, parents and students have come together to learn, share and plan for a new middle school daily schedule that would unite grades 6th-8th. After much prayer, we are excited to launch a new master schedule for the 2019-2020 school year. I am confident that our new full block schedule is the most developmentally appropriate for middle level learners and will help equip, nurture and impact the whole child. [Here is a link to our 2019-2020 schedule.](#) Below are some schedule FAQs:

- *Why did you switch to longer class periods?*

The class periods are longer (80 min blocks) to allow more time for deep engagement in curriculum through hands-on labs, simulations, discussions, etc. By having a longer block of time, teachers will be able to switch between 3-4 different learning activities, giving students multiple opportunities to engage with material and tough concepts. Additionally, extending the class periods allows for fewer core classes a day, taking out multiple transition times and 8 classes worth of homework in one day.

- *Why are chapel and advisory on Fridays? Will my student need to wear chapel wear on Fridays now?*

In order to have a block schedule that rotates in a A/B format (BLUE/WHITE for us) we needed to move chapel and advisory to our "traditional 8 period day" which is Friday. We are excited to have advisory after chapel to be able to incorporate concepts from the chapel message into advisory discussions. Finally, chapel wear will be required on Fridays.

- *What is WIN time?*

WIN time stands for "Whatever I Need" and is a time at the end of Monday- Thursdays for students to be able to check in with teachers for re-teaching, extension and homework help. Throughout the course of the year students will be learning about how to prioritize what assignments/tasks according to their academic, social and emotional needs.

**FEDERAL SECTION 504** - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. DMCS does not receive federal funding and therefore, is not legally bound to follow or comply with Federal 504 legislation. However, we do believe in providing (to the best of our ability) the necessary educational supports for students who need minor accommodations and will document said needs through a DMCS Accommodation Plan.

What is the process to provide a DMCS student with an accommodation plan?

DMCS provides accommodations for students within the classroom setting. A parent, teacher, student or school staff member may inquire the need for an accommodation plan. To determine if a student is eligible to receive an accommodation plan the school staff will complete an evaluation. This may include an intervention or additional testing to collect more data. Accommodations will be provided to help students participate in the educational environment; however, it is the student's responsibility to work to the best of their abilities.

What is required to be eligible for an accommodation plan?

- A diagnosis of a physical or mental impairment from a medical doctor or psychologist
- Multiple sources of data within the school proving there is a significant discrepancy from peers
- On standardized assessments this can be seen on scores that are 1.5x or greater discrepancy from peers, a 23 (or less) standard score, or scores falling at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile or less
- Displayed need within the school setting
- All of the above are required

What is not covered by the accommodation plan?

- Modifications to the DMCS curriculum
- Support that is regularly provided to all classroom students
- Resources outside the limitations of the school
- A health plan written by the school nurse may accompany an accommodation plan, however, it will be considered a separate document

How will accommodations be written after a student is found to be eligible?

The school team will utilize the data collected from the evaluation and intervention to make decisions about the best accommodations to support the student. At this time the school staff and parents will meet to discuss the plan. While



doctors/psychologists may provide a list of suggestions for accommodations, it is the responsibility of the educational experts at DMCS to determine what accommodations will be provided to the student. Accommodations will be written based on data collected and will be adjusted over time to increase student independence. Incoming 504 documents will be re-evaluated to determine eligibility and need.

When will a student's accommodation plan be updated?

- Every year the plan will be updated and assessed to assure appropriate accommodations are being provided and progress is being made.
- Every 3 years the plan will be re-evaluated to determine if the student is still eligible to receive accommodations.
- When the resources necessary to support a student go beyond the means available at DMCS or progress is not being made, a meeting will be held to discuss a more suitable setting for the student.

**FERPA** - Information regarding a particular student (grades, social / emotional health, etc) shall not be shared with anyone other than the student's parent.

**LUNCH INFORMATION** -DMCS has a cold prep only kitchen. Our hot lunches are provided by Hy-Vee. Milk or water is included with each hot lunch. DMCS kitchen provides cold lunch options of boxed lunches (K-5), wraps, and subs (6-12). Hy-Vee hot lunch and DMCS cold lunch must be preordered. We also have a large variety of a la carte items that can be purchased at lunch and throughout the day. Lunch accounts are created for each student and a lunch account number is assigned. This account operates like a checking account where funds are deposited to be available for preordering Hy-Vee hot lunch, DMCS cold lunch or purchasing a la carte items. Each student is assigned a pin number that is used in the lunchroom to pick up preordered lunches or purchase a la carte items. Visit the Des Moines Christian School App to order lunch to see monthly menus and more for detailed information on lunch.

**NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY** - DMCS admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin with all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic or other school administered programs.

**PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE** - The Portrait of a Graduate reflects Des Moines Christian School's desire for each student to be impacted by the educational experience. God is never done working in us, and graduation is not an end but another beginning. By the grace of God, and in partnership with our parents, our goal is to see our children grow during their experience at Des Moines Christian School and throughout their adult lives.

We desire to see students who are:

- Servant Hearted Leaders
- Critical Thinkers and Effective Communicators
- Accomplished Learners
- Passionate Apprentices of Christ

Each programming decision we make for curriculum, instruction, assessment, athletics, fine arts, or student experiences is made in light of these outcomes and aligned with the mission of DMCS to equip minds nurture hearts to impact the world for Christ.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR** - The 2019-2020 Year at A Glance Calendar and DMCS app are valuable tools for families to stay informed of school events, game schedules, etc.

**STAY INFORMED** - There are several ways for parents to stay informed about the day-to-day activities in high school.

DMCS App- Starting in fall 2019 Des Moines Christian launched an app that holds Principal Newsletters, lunch information, daily schedules and so much more. The app can also personalize reminders based on your student's grade level and involvement.



**STUDENT RECORDS** - DMCS maintains records on each student in order to facilitate the instruction, guidance and educational progress of the student. The records contain information about the student and his/her education and may include but are not limited to the following types of information: identification, attendance, record of achievement, family background, aptitude tests, educational and vocational plans, honors and activities, discipline, objective counselor or teacher ratings and observations, and external agency reports. Student records shall remain confidential, except according to the 1974 Privacy Act. The records of each student are located in a fireproof file at the school, which s/he is attending. The following information may be released to the public: name, address, telephone, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, dates of attendance, awards received, the previous school attended by the student, and other similar information. Any student, parent or guardian not wanting this information released to the public must make objections in writing to the respective principal, and this objection must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

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## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (In alphabetical order)**

**A.L.I.C.E.** - DMCS has become an A.L.I.C.E. trained school. Communication with parents about a lockdown and/or implementation of A.L.I.C.E. procedures will be made using the most efficient mode possible. It is imperative that students need follow directions from teachers to assist in barricading a door, evacuating the building, or countering an intruder.

**FIRE / EVACUATION** - Teachers will assist students in identifying exits from each classroom, the cafeteria, gym, and chapel. It is the responsibility of students to know ALL emergency procedures for each room in which s/he has class.

Teachers will assist students in identifying exits from each classroom. It is the responsibility of students to know ALL emergency procedures for each room in which he / she has class.

- Walk single file out of the assigned exit in an orderly manner. Do not stop for belongings.
- Students should be quiet during drills or evacuations and listen to directions.
- Once outside, students will report to their assigned location as an Advisory group and line up single file facing the building.
- Attendance will be taken promptly and reported to the Admin Assistant or designated school official.
- The signal to return to the building will be given when all is clear.

## **TORNADO**

- A series of short blasts will indicate the beginning of a tornado drill.
- Students from class will be directed to the safe zone by their teacher.
- Students must remain quiet and follow further directions from their teacher.
- Lunchroom students will go to the gym locker rooms and storage areas.
- Students should not be in front of doors.
- Students must be in a formed shelter area within 2 minutes.
- A signal will be given when all is clear.

**WEATHER RELATED EMERGENCIES** - The closing (or early dismissal) of DMCS due to inclement winter weather or other unexpected events will be announced through various sources including DMCS social media (Facebook/Twitter), the school website ([www.dmcs.org](http://www.dmcs.org)), Des Moines Christian School App, WHO 1040 AM Radio, WHO TV 13, KCCI TV 8, and the Des Moines Register website. Parents are asked to follow one or more of these information sources should the weather deteriorate during the day.

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## **STUDENT HEALTH / SAFETY PROCEDURES (In alphabetical order)**

**CHECK IN / OUT PROCEDURES** – To ensure DMCS can account for the whereabouts of students in their care at all times, students must sign in / out in the office AND parents must notify the office that the student has permission to leave prior to them leaving campus (phone call, note, or email). If you need to contact your student during school hours, please call the office and we will get a message to them/ get them out of class. Your student will not have access to personal cell devices during class to be able to receive messages from you.



**DAILY SECURITY / VISITORS AT SCHOOL** - All DMCS entrances will be locked during the school day. Students / families / visitors need to press a small buzzer outside the entrance and wait for admittance into the building by the office staff. All visitors must sign in at the Middle School Office using our updated security program entitled Visit U, which requires a photo ID and background check. Visitors will wait in the office until teachers / students are available to meet them. Students from other schools and/or alumni may not come to “hang out” during the school day.

**ILLNESS OR INJURY** - Parents must not send children to school who are ill. Students who become ill at school should notify their teacher and report to the school nurse. Students should not use their own phone to call or text their parent to inform them of their illness. A parent, adult guardian or authorized emergency contact must sign the student out in the Middle School & High School Office prior to leaving for the day. High school students may sign themselves out if the Office has received authorization from a parent. The school nurse will have final say as to whether an ill student is fit to drive home. The school nurse may administer up to 5 doses of ibuprofen or acetaminophen without a doctor’s order, with parental permission. All other medication must come to school in the bottle obtained from the pharmacy with the correct prescription label. Over the counter medications must come to school in the original manufacturer’s container and with an authorization from the parent and licensed health professional.

**PETS AT SCHOOL** - Pets brought from home must have proof of rabies vaccination with them AND have prior permission to be on campus from the principal. Students / families must be mindful that some students may have severe pet allergies and cannot have the academic environment contaminated with pet dander, etc. Pets should remain in your vehicle during car line.

**PHYSICAL FORCE** - Physical force (although not corporal punishment) may be used by school officials in the following situations: To prevent harm or injury to school personnel; To prevent harm or injury to the student; To prevent harm or injury to other students; To prevent vandalism or destruction of school property.

**SEARCH OF SCHOOL LOCKERS / SCHOOL FACILITIES** - In the interest of maintaining the health, safety, and good order of the school environment, students shall not have prohibited items in their possession or control on school grounds, on school vehicles, or while attending / participating in school activities or events. Prohibited items are such things as tobacco products, beer, wine, alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, controlled substances which have not been validly prescribed, “look alike” tobacco / alcoholic beverages / controlled substances, apparatus used for the administration of controlled substances, weapons, explosives, toy weapons or explosives, poisons, stolen property, or other devices or materials which are intended to interfere with school order. School officials may at any time conduct searches that are essential to the security, discipline, and sound administration of the school and may, without warrant, search a student, student’s belongings, student lockers, automobiles on school property, desks, facilities, or work areas under the circumstances outlined below: a) eye witness observation by school personnel; b) information received from a reliable source; c) suspicious behavior by the student; d) the student’s past history; e) articulable circumstantial evidence.

Authorized personnel may ask a student to open and / or empty his / her pockets, handbag, briefcase, backpack, or other personal belongings when there is reasonable suspicion that the student has prohibited items in his / her possession. If the student fails to comply, an administrative staff member or his / her designee may search the student or the student’s belonging in the presence of another adult. Searches, which involve the removal of clothing such as jackets or socks, shall be conducted by a person of the same sex. Except in cases of emergency (it is believed the student may harm himself / herself or others), other staff members shall not conduct a search. If a prohibited item is found in a personal search, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Items, which may be illegal to possess, may be turned over the proper authorities.

Periodic inspections of lockers, desks, or other facilities and spaces remain at all times property of DMCS, even though they may be temporarily assigned as a courtesy to students. These facilities are subject to unannounced inspections and students have no legitimate expectations of privacy in these facilities even though they may be locked. Written notice shall be given annually in the form of this handbook to each student and his / her parent or guardian that DMCS may conduct periodic inspections without prior notice of all or a randomly selected number of lockers, desks, or other spaces owned by DMCS. The inspection shall occur in the presence of the student or at least one other person. If prohibited items are found in a periodic search, the student may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and items which may be illegal will be turned over to the proper authorities.



## SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT INFORMATION *(In alphabetical order)*

**ADDING OR DROPPING CLASSES** - Students have 5 school days to ADD a course; and 10 school days to DROP a course without penalty. Courses dropped after 10 days will result in a grade of “F”. The student will be assigned a study hall in place of dropped courses. Full-time students must maintain a minimum course load of five academic courses. If an instructor and the administrator recommend a student withdraw from an academic course later than the tenth day of the semester, the student may withdraw from a course without a grade. In addition, if for medical reasons, a student must drop a course, it may be dropped without a grade.

### TO ADD OR DROP A COURSE

- Obtain a [drop / add form](#) from the School Counselor
- Changes must have parent signature
- Return the form to the School Counselor within the timeline outlined above

Once courses are selected and scheduled, adjustments will be made on a limited basis. The Principal or School Counselor may adjust schedules for reasons deemed appropriate such as unbalanced sections, incomplete schedules, teacher recommendation, computer/clerical error, etc. Schedules will not be changed for the following: a) to accommodate students who want to be with friends; b) to accommodate students who prefer another teacher of the same course; c) if the change would overload a class or section.

**Exploratories-** Exploratory classes complement the learning experience for middle school students in Grades 6-8 in a flexible learning environment that foreshadows course offerings in high school. Exploratory classes are 12 weeks long and use the DMCS grading scale.. Below are the are Exploratory classes for middle school students:

- Art
- Current Events
- Creative Technology- web based
- Creative Technology- hands-on
- Speech/Drama
- Family Consumer Science
- Business Bootcamp
- Spanish
- Outdoor Education
- Choir (full year)
- Band (full year)
- Show Choir (7-8 only)

8th grade only:

- Career & Calling

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** -The high school counselor meets with all 8th grade students at the end of their 8th grade year to review four year plans and graduation requirements. The high school counselors are available throughout the school year to meet with any middle school student

**HOMESCHOOL GUIDELINES** – DMCS allows students to homeschool courses and apply them toward high school graduation requirements as deemed appropriate by the Administration. The school reserves the right to test the student’s mastery of material prior to awarding credit. Students who wish to graduate from DMCS may be asked to repeat a course or complete additional coursework to satisfy competency in a subject area. All homeschool courses taken to fulfill DMCS graduation requirements must meet the curriculum standards set by the school. The following information for each homeschool course must be submitted to the Counselor’s Office and approved by Administration before the course will be added to the transcript.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

- CREDIT LIMITATION- Only 2 non-DMCS credits may be earned during a DMC’s middle school student career (6-8 grade). Exceptions may be made by Administration with documented PEP, IEP, or accommodations plan.
- TOTAL HOURS – The total number of instructional hours and homework hours per week.



- EVIDENCE OF LEARNING – Provide evidence of student learning such as homework, tests, or journals.
- PASS / FAIL ONLY – Homeschool courses taken under the supervision of a parent will only be counted on a Pass/Fail basis, which does not impact high school GPA.
- P.E. SPECIFIC – Homeschool PE courses must meet the following time requirements. To earn 0.5 credits per semester, the student must log 40.5 hours of activity (Equivalent to Early Bird PE). To earn 1.0 credit per semester, the student must log 67.5 hours of activity (Equivalent to daily HS PE classes).
- BIBLE- Students are not permitted to homeschool Bible. This must be taken at DMC.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES** - Each student is created with a unique set of gifts, abilities, and needs as a learner. Student Support Services in Grades 6-12 are designed to enhance gifts and abilities as well as partner with teachers to provide for the individual needs of each student in the classroom.

**EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAM (ELP)** - To meet the needs of gifted learners who may be ready for additional academic challenges beyond what occurs in the regular classroom, DMCS offers services through the ELP for qualifying students in Grades 6-12. The Middle School Counselor can help serve as an advocate for students and assist them in identifying and securing appropriate coursework.

**RESOURCE** - The resource program is coordinated by the 6-12 resource teacher to meet the needs of learners who benefit from academic accommodations or additional support with study skills. The resource teacher utilizes a variety of instructional strategies to reach the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles and collaborates with teachers to provide classroom supports in the regular classroom.

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## HOMEWORK, GRADING, & ASSESSMENTS *(In alphabetical order)*

**ACADEMICS HONORS** - An “Honor Roll” is published at the end of each semester. Students with a semester grade point average of 3.0 to 3.49 qualify for “Honors.” Students with a grade point average of 3.5 or above qualify for “High Honors.”

**GRADING SCALE** – DMCS uses the traditional grading scale below; however some courses are weighted. Advanced Placement (AP) courses or college-level courses (dual credit) are given an additional weight of one point. For example, an “A” on the standard scale is worth 4 points; an “A” in a weighted course is worth 5 points.

Grade	Range	Standard GPA	Weighted GPA
A+	98-100	4.33	5.33
A	93-97	4.00	5.00
A-	90-92	3.67	4.67
B+	88-89	3.33	4.33
B	83-87	3.00	4.00
B-	80-82	2.67	3.67
C+	78-79	2.33	3.33
C	73-77	2.00	3.00
C-	70-72	1.67	2.67
D+	68-69	1.33	2.33



D	63-67	1.00	2.00
D-	60-62	0.67	1.67
F	59 or ↓	0.00	0.00

**HOMEWORK & ASSESSMENTS** – The DMCS framework for assessing a student’s progress stems from our desire to satisfy the multiple learning styles of each of our students. We employ various types of assessment tools to accomplish this, such as: homework, projects, research papers, collaborative activities, and written tests.

**IOWA ASSESSMENTS** - Iowa Assessments are administered in the spring to students in Grades 6-10.

**LATE WORK** - DMCS employs a gradual release of responsibility from Middle School to High School in the acceptance of late work. In middle school (for example), teachers may allow late work, but the late work policy will vary by teacher. In high school, teachers may not accept late work. Students are encouraged to read each teacher’s syllabus and become familiar with expectations in each class.

**REPORT CARDS / TRANSCRIPTS** - Report cards are posted to Net Classroom for viewing at the end of each semester. Semester grades will not be changed, except for clerical errors.

## SEMESTER FINALS

### ABOUT SEMESTER FINALS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL:

- Semester finals are given to summatively assess and reinforce learning from the entire semester. These finals will be given through projects, presentations, simulations or paper/pencil tests.
- There will be an adjusted schedule for finals weeks which will be communicated in principal newsletters and in the DMCS app.
- Middle school students will only have exams for core classes and will not be allowed to come and go during exams. Every Core class will have an exam, presentation or project that will be worked on/presented during their exam period.
- Semester finals will comprise different amounts of a student’s semester grade throughout the course of their middle school career. See weight of semester exams below:
  - 6th - 5% of semester grade
  - 7th - 10% of semester grade
  - 8th - 15% of semester grade

**MISSING SEMESTER FINALS** – Due to the fact that semester finals comprise a percentage of a student’s semester grade-attendance is mandatory. Families may request an alternate finals schedule for their student by completing the [REQUEST TO RESCHEDULE FORM](#), which must be submitted to the Principal for approval **30 days prior** to finals. Requests submitted after this deadline may be denied.

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS** - Des Moines Christian School has established a curriculum review process for the selection of instructional materials that meet the school’s educational goals. Administration recognizes parents may have concerns about instructional materials used in the classroom and therefore, has provided an opportunity for parents to request that the school reconsider the use of certain instructional materials.

A [Parent’s Request for Reconsideration of Educational Materials](#) may be submitted to the principal regarding the use of instructional materials. No action will be taken prior to receipt of a completed and signed Parent’s Request for Reconsideration of Educational Materials. The principal will notify the superintendent and establish a committee to review the objection. While input from the community is appreciated, the school believes professional educators are in the best position to determine whether a particular instructional material is appropriate for the age and maturity of the students and correlates with the subject matter being taught. The challenged material will remain in active circulation until a final ruling on the complaint is made.



If the principal or the committee determines that any material violates school policy or undermines efforts to instill a biblical worldview, the principal or the committee will either remove the material from instructional use or accommodate the particular student or parent. The decision of the principal or committee may be appealed to the superintendent. The decision of the superintendent will be final.

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## **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES - In alphabetical order**

**ABOUT** The Middle School Counselor works with school staff and all students to plan, implement and evaluate a comprehensive developmental counseling program. The program assists in fully developing each student's academic, spiritual, career, personal and social abilities and addresses the needs of the student population, as we create Servant-Hearted leaders, Critical Thinkers, Effective Communicators, Accomplished Learners and Passionate Apprentices of Christ.

**DELIVERY**-The program goals are delivered through weekly advisory curriculum, small group counseling and activities, Individual proactive and responsive counseling, Career and Calling Encore class (8th grade), , 6th Grade guidance lessons, Counselor's Corner Newsletter, and our annual Middle School Career Fair.

**PARENT ASSISTANCE**-The Counselor may be of service to you as a parent/guardian for the following services:

- Conference with individual parents/ guardians regarding their child's social, spiritual, academic, and emotional well-being.
  - Connect parents/guardians to outside community resources and agencies.
  - Develop Accommodation Plans with the support of the Resource Teacher, classroom teachers, administrators and parents
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## **SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM - In alphabetical order**

**ADVISORY** - Students will gather in age specific small groups on Fridays to pray, complete learning activities and share life together. Faculty and staff advisors use a curriculum focused on issues that middle schoolers face on a daily basis, such as: gossip, peer pressure, failure, etc. The advisory group is meant to be one more place where students can experience unique belonging at Des Moines Christian.

**CHAPEL**- Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in chapel weekly on Friday mornings. Our chapel series for the 19-20 school year will be centered around the theme of "I belong to God." Chapel services are structured to keep the middle level learner engaged, including worship, student panels, guest speakers and teacher testimonies. Middle school students have the opportunity to be a leader in chapel by participating in welcome team, worship team and tech team.

**SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS** - Spiritual Emphasis is planned to focus nurturing hearts and impacting the world for Christ. For two days, middle school students take a break from the regular routine to serve in the metro community and participate in spiritual retreat of sorts with a main session speaker and general breakout sessions. The event provides great opportunity to build unity and community amongst the student body to enhance the student experience and fulfill the mission of the school.

**WORLDVIEW** - Worldview is similar to Spiritual Emphasis and students are provided a break from the normal routine to listen to a worldview speaker discuss a challenging topic of our culture. Recent worldview speakers include Brett Kunkle from Stand to Reason and Mark Vance from Cornerstone Church.

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## POLICIES & PROCEDURES - STUDENT BEHAVIOR

**DMCS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT** -Upon enrollment, families choose to enter into a partnership with Des Moines Christian School as stewards of the mission. Since students may be at different phases in their spiritual formation, behavior expectations and policies are focused on growing and promoting followers of Christ who become passionate about a positive school culture & climate. As Christ followers, we are committed to:

- **DEMONSTRATING PROPER RESPECT** for God, for others, for school policies / procedures, and for school property.
- **BEING HONEST** in all situations, including the completion of classroom assignments, taking of tests / assessments, and in relationships that are part of our school community.
- **ACTING WITH INTEGRITY** by using language and displaying character that demonstrates we are followers of Christ.
- **COOPERATING** with faculty and staff in achieving the goals of DMCS regarding conduct, performance, and attitude.
- **PUTTING FORTH EFFORT** and using the gifts God has given us to the best of our ability in accordance with God's will for our lives.

Aligning to these commitments is a choice. Families who are unwilling to partner with Des Moines Christian and / or students who demonstrate a pattern of behavior or attitude that reflects an unwillingness to comply with the Student Code of Conduct will be asked to withdraw or be faced with expulsion. In the event that a student chooses to withdraw prior to a recommended expulsion or is expelled, he / she may reapply for admittance after one full semester has passed. A probationary period may be used as a condition of readmittance.

**DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES** - Student conduct at DMCS is divided into two categories - Tier I and Tier II. Tier I behaviors are considered serious because they threaten the safety and security of others within the school community and expose our culture to mockers and scorners of the Christian faith. Tier II behaviors are still serious but can often be corrected through discipline and guidance from advisors, parents, and mentors. Students who violate standards in either category will be subject to discipline as deemed appropriate by the administration.

- **WARNING:** Many student behaviors can be addressed through conversations between teachers and students in which warning are issued, expectations are clarified, and students are coached on appropriate behaviors as Christ followers. These are mentoring in nature and may include the Advisor, Guidance Counselor, or Principal. Warnings are recorded in the student database to track patterns of behavior. If the behavior continues after several warnings, a detention will be issued and a parents will be notified.
  - Generally, 3 warnings=detention
- **DETENTION:** Detentions are scheduled for 30 to 60 minutes and served on Tuesdays and Thursday after school, regardless of the student activity.
  - Three (3) detentions (per semester) =student/parent/teacher conference and 1 day ISS.
  - Five (5) detentions (per semester) = 2 days In-School Suspension (ISS). After ISS is served, a student/parent/teacher/principal conference is scheduled to set up a Behavior Plan.
  - Seven(7) detentions (per semester)=2 days Out Of School Suspension( OSS). Behavior Probation Status may be initiated.
  - 8 detentions (8) or higher will be Behavior Probation as well as decisions made by administration.
- **PROBATION:**
  - **BEHAVIOR PROBATION** - Students who repeatedly violate the Student Code of Conduct will be placed on Behavior Probation for one semester. Specific terms of probation are determined by Administration and will include loss of privileges such as open campus, leadership / captain roles, positions on Student Council or Worship Team, denial for



mission trip or senior trip travel, etc. Students who do not meet the terms of probation will not be invited to return for the following semester.

- **ACADEMIC PROBATION** - Students who have poor grades (D or F) in more than one class at the end of a term will be placed on Academic Probation for one semester. Specific terms of probation are determined by Administration. Students who do not meet the terms of probation will not be invited to return for the following semester.

- **SUSPENSION:**

- **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)** - Students separated from others and required to complete all schoolwork they miss while suspended. The homework is due the day the student returns to class after the suspension.
- **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)** - Students are removed from school property while conversations take place about whether or not they may return. Any work missed during OSS may be made up for full credit and is due the day the student returns to class after the suspension.

- **EXPULSION** - Administration may, at any time, determine a student (or family) is not in unity with Des Moines Christian School and recommend expulsion to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision is final.

<b>TIER I BEHAVIORS</b>	
In general, the following would result in warnings from faculty or staff before progressing to detentions and further disciplinary action; however, the administration reserves the right to assign consequences they deem appropriate based on student or family responses to warnings.	
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<p>Independent Accreditation assurances through the State of Iowa require attendance of all regularly enrolled students for the entire time when school is in session during the regular school year. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and be on time in order for them to receive maximum benefits of the educational program, develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility, and to assist in minimizing disruptions to the educational environment. When a student must be absent from school, a parent or guardian must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phone the office before 9:00 am of the day the student is absent. Messages may be left on voicemail OR submitted on the form via DMCS app.</li> <li>2. The parent or guardian should give the following information when calling: their name, student name &amp; grade, hours of absence, and one of the following reasons for the absence.</li> </ol> <p><b>EXCESSIVE ABSENCES</b> - When a student has reached an excessive number of absences (10 days in one class period), Administration will examine the reason(s) for the absences and identify interventions to support better attendance. If it is determined further support is needed, Administration will notify parents that documentation is necessary to excuse absences. Documentation includes notes from medical professionals verifying an illness or appointment.</p> <p><b>EXCUSED ABSENCE</b> - Students may be excused from attendance for illness, family emergency, medical appointments which cannot be scheduled outside school hours, or other reasons which can be justified from an educational standpoint and for which approval is given by the student's parents and administration, including family vacations. Parents shall verify consent to the absence via email or by telephone. Excessive absences could result in a behavior probation.</p> <p><b>MAKE UP WORK FROM ABSENCES</b> - All work missed due to absences, excused or unexcused, may be completed for credit. A reasonable deadline of 1-2 days will be expected for work to be turned in (including vacation). Teachers may choose to extend the deadline for prolonged illnesses. If the work is not completed in a timely manner, the student shall receive a "0" for the work.</p> <p><b>SCHOOL ACTIVITY</b> - Assigned when students are absent for school athletics or activities such as Basketball, Show Choir, Victory, etc.</p> <p><b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCE</b> - See TRUANCY section in Tier I.</p>
<b>DRESS CODE</b>	<p><b>GENERAL EXPECTATIONS</b> - Students are expected to dress and groom themselves in a way that is gender appropriate, not offensive, not distracting to the learning environment, and not in a way that draws undue attention to himself / herself detracting from the oneness of community. Clothing must serve the purpose of protection and privacy at school and school sponsored events such as dances, games, concerts, etc. For safety purposes, shoes must be worn at all times.</p>

Please note that DMCS reserves the right to amend this handbook from time to time and revise policy in accordance with local, state, and federal law. Updates will be communicated to students / parents & the most up-to-date copy posted on the website.

# DMCS

DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

	<p><b>CHAPEL</b> - Chapel attire is worn for the entire school day and cannot be covered by outerwear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BOYS – Khaki pants or shorts with an official DMCS Land's End item.</li> <li>• GIRLS - Khaki pants, capris, or shorts (minimum 4" inseam) with an official DMCS Land's End item.</li> </ul> <p><b>CLOTHING THAT MAY <u>NOT</u> BE WORN</b> - Examples are provided but are not all inclusive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing which promotes illegal use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or look alike substances.</li> <li>• Clothing which displays obscene material, profanity, vulgar statements, satanic symbols, gang symbols, hate messages, sexual innuendos, suicide, violent messages, non-Christian values, or other messages interpreted as being inappropriate or offensive.</li> <li>• Clothing that calls attention to anatomical details such as bodysuits, tight t-shirts, tank tops with straps less than 3 fingers wide, leggings (unless worn under dresses or skirts with a minimum 4 inch inseam), or knit joggers..</li> <li>• Clothing that exposes underwear such as bras, bralettes, or boxers.</li> <li>• Shirts that expose the midriff or are backless, strapless, halter top, open mesh or sheer (unless worn with proper tank - see above)..</li> <li>• Bottoms that are shorter than a 4 inch inseam including track shorts, athletic shorts, and mini skirts or jeans with holes above the knees (unless they have patches underneath).</li> <li>• Masks, hoods, hats, and sunglasses <i>during the school day</i>.</li> <li>• Gauges, earrings for boys, or facial piercings.</li> </ul> <p><b>HAIR</b> - Hair must be clean, well groomed, and kept out of the face for both male and female students.</p> <p><b>PE, REHEARSALS, &amp; PRACTICES</b> - Clothing may be activity-specific and activity-appropriate. Spandex may not be worn as the sole garment but may be worn under shorts; girls may not wear shirts that show sports bras or leggings; boys may not wear ripped shirts that show midriffs, sides, etc.</p>
LOCKERS	<p>Students must assume personal responsibility for the safekeeping of all personal articles brought from home as well as those assigned to them by the school. Tops of lockers will be cleared at the end of each school day. Items left at the end of the week will be thrown away.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't bring money except for school purposes.</li> <li>• Lock your lockers. Only school-issued locks can be used. They can be requested and checked out from the office. A fine will be charged at the end of the year if the lock is not returned.</li> <li>• Report lost or stolen articles to the classroom teacher immediately.</li> <li>• Clearly mark all personal possessions for easy identification.</li> <li>• Don't bring athletic equipment from home unless requested to do so by a teacher or coach.</li> </ul>
TARDIES	<p>Students are expected to be in classes on time, including Early Bird. A tardy is defined as being up to 15 minutes late to class. Students may be assigned a TWP when they are arriving from an appointment, they are kept late by another teacher, the community is having widespread weather / traffic issues or other reasons as determined by Administration. After 15 minutes, the tardy would become an absence (see attendance category above).</p> <p><b>EXCESSIVE TARDIES</b> - When a student has reached an excessive number of tardies (10 in all classes combined) , per semester Administration will examine the reason(s) for the tardies and identify interventions to support better attendance. If it is determined further support is needed, Administration will notify parents that documentation is necessary to excuse tardies. Documentation includes notes from medical professionals verifying an illness or appointment. Excessive tardies can result in a behavior probation.</p> <p><b>UNEXCUSED TARDY (UT)</b> - Any tardy not approved by the classroom teacher or administration shall be treated as an unexcused tardy and subject to discipline.</p>
TECHNOLOGY	<p>Students are responsible for positive, honorable, and mature use of technology (personal and school owned devices). At no time are students or visitors authorized to video capture, photograph, or audio record others in the school building, on school property, or at school activities (unless recording a public performance such as a game, play, concert, assembly, etc) without the consent of a teacher, coach, or administrator. Video, pictures, or audio of the locker room or restroom is strictly prohibited.</p> <p><b>CELL PHONES</b> -Cell phones may not be used during class (this includes listening to music). They must be kept out of sight (in backpack or locker). They may not be kept in pockets of pants. Cell phones may be checked and used during passing periods and will not be allowed at lunch. <i>Note- smart watches are considered a cell phone when used for texting or calling</i>. Phones confiscated during class will be sent to the office.</p>



	<p><b>BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)</b> - The student is fully responsible, at all times, for the personally owned device brought to school. DMCS is not liable for any loss/damage/theft of a personally owned device. The student is responsible for proper care of his / her personal device, including costs of repair, replacement, or modifications needed to use the device at school.</p> <p><b>SCHOOL LEASED DEVICES</b> - The student is fully responsible, at all times, for the use of the school leased device (including charger &amp; extension cord). The student is responsible for proper care of the school issued device, including costs of repair, replacement, or modifications needed. Since this is school property, laptops may not be personalized with stickers, etc. Students may purchase covers to decorate.</p>
<p>LOUD, BOISTEROUS CONDUCT / PROFANITY</p>	<p>Loud or boisterous conduct disturbs the learning environment and threatens Christian community. This includes temper tantrums, disturbing classes or meetings, running in hallways or stairways, verbal or physical behavior which results in inappropriately exuberant, disorderly, or rowdy actions or reactions, profanity, or vulgar language within the building at DMCS as well as away games, etc.</p>
<p>LUNCH</p>	<p>All students in Grades 6-12 will eat lunch in the Great Room (formerly known as the MPR). Classrooms <b>WILL NOT</b> be open at lunch. Class meetings or other faculty / student gatherings will be held in the Garage, located on the north side of the Great Room. Students are expected to be good stewards of the facility and clean up after themselves.</p>

<p><b>TIER II BEHAVIORS</b> The following may result in suspension and/or expulsion and Academic and Behavior Probation. However, the administration reserves the right to assign consequences they deem appropriate based on student or family situation and responses to disciplinary actions.</p>	
<p>ALCOHOL</p>	<p>The distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol, or "look alike" substances that appear to be beer, wine, or alcohol by students is prohibited. "Possession" includes being in the presence of a prohibited substance if the student has either direct or shared control of the substance, or has knowledge of the presence of it and fails to promptly act to remove himself or herself from the offending premises.</p>
<p>BULLYING / HARASSMENT</p>	<p>We at Des Moines Christian School understand that each person is created in God's image and is therefore deserving of dignity and respect. As a Christian community, we strive to ensure a safe, nurturing, and encouraging learning environment for each student and to follow Jesus' command in Matthew 22:37-39 to love God <i>completely</i>, love others <i>compassionately</i>, and love ourselves <i>correctly</i>.</p> <p>In order to maintain such a community, the school has adopted the following policy regarding how we are to treat and respect each other as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.</p> <p><b>Statement of Policy:</b> Bullying will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with our discipline policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School employees, volunteers, and students in school, on school property, or at any school function or school-sponsored activity shall not engage in harassing and bullying behavior.</li> <li>● School employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or an individual who has reliable information about such an act of harassment or bullying.</li> <li>● School employees, volunteers, parents or guardians, and students are expected to act in a timely and responsible manner to prevent, report, and facilitate the investigation of suspected harassment and bullying.</li> </ul> <p><b>Definitions:</b> Harassment and Bullying are defined as any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and</li> <li>● Creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.</li> <li>○ Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.</li> <li>○ Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Responsibilities of ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote and create an environment in which each student is treated with dignity and respect.</li> <li>○ Immediately stop and bullying behavior.</li> <li>○ Report bullying and harassment behavior to the principal within 24 hours.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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# DMCS

DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Take some form of preventative action if present when bullying occurs.</li> <li>○ Report the incident or suspected incident to a teacher, counselor, or principal to help break down the code of secrecy.</li> <li>● <b>Parents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Watch for signs of unusual behavior or distress in their child, such as not wishing to attend school, missing equipment, damaged clothes, or bruising.</li> <li>○ Monitor their child's cell phone and social media activity.</li> <li>○ Advise their child to tell a staff member about any incidents of bullying. If possible, parents should allow him/her to report and deal with the problem. If the child will not report the incident, parents should inform the school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Reporting:</b> Suspected incidents of harassment and bullying should be reported to a teacher or to the Principal within 24 hours. The Principal is responsible for receiving reports and ensuring the Anti-Harassment / Anti-Bullying Policy is implemented.</p> <p><b>Investigation:</b> Suspected incidents of bullying and harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Principal or his / her designee. Investigators will consider the totality of the circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes harassment or bullying under this policy.</p> <p><b>Consequences for Violators:</b> Individuals responsible for conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to consequences and remedial action. The sanctioning guidelines of the Good Conduct Policy apply to violations of this policy.</p> <p><b>Publication:</b> This policy shall be published in the parent/student handbook and the faculty/employee handbook.</p>
CHEATING / PLAGIARISM	<p>Academic integrity is taken seriously at DMCS and includes cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is defined as acting dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage. Plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. The following are examples of cheating and/or plagiarism: copying someone else's assignment and turning it in as your own, copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit, failing to put a quotation in quotation marks, giving incorrect information about the source or quotation, changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit, or copying the majority of your work from another source, whether you give credit or not.</p> <p>Consequences for Cheating/Plagiarism:  1st offense: 0 on the assignment and "homework detention" in which the assignment is re-done with the teacher.  2nd offense: 0 on the assignment and 60-minute detention  3rd offense: 0 on the assignment and possible suspension and/or Academic Probation</p>
DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY	<p>DMCS students are expected to be good stewards with school property and the items of its community members. Damaging the property of the school or other individuals is unacceptable. This includes writing, making marks or drawing on walls, furniture, fixtures, lockers, etc. The school may require the student to make restitution for damaged property.</p>
DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR	<p>Racial, ethnic, sexual, or cultural slurs, derogatory or disrespectful statements are damaging to Christian community and is not acceptable. This includes behavior within the building at DMCS as well as the way we treat others at away games, etc.</p>
DRUGS	<p>The distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of over the counter or prescription drugs when used for improper purposes, other controlled substances, or "look alike" substances that appear to be controlled substances by students is prohibited. "Possession" includes being in the presence of a prohibited substance if the student has either direct or shared control of the substance, or has knowledge of the presence of it and fails to promptly act to remove himself or herself from the offending premises.</p>
EXCESSIVE DISCIPLINE	<p>Excessive behavior problems is defined as repeated detentions, in-school suspensions, or other school related discipline related to Student Code of Conduct.</p>
FIGHTING	<p>Fighting is defined as the act of fighting or displaying aggression with another student and / or school employee.</p>
INTERFERING WITH SCHOOL PURPOSES	<p>Malicious activities that interfere with school purposes will be subject to discipline. Examples of said malicious behavior include, but are not limited to: making a false fire alarm or pulling the fire alarm, conveying bomb threats, setting fire to items within or around the school..</p>
LYING	<p>Trust is essential to Christian community and being honest with the teacher or principal when being questioned is expected.</p>



PRANKS	Although pranks have the opportunity to create positive school memories (i.e. Senior prank), they can become malicious and qualify as criminal mischief. Pranks off school campus, such as toilet papering, against individual students / families can be reported to local law enforcement for further investigation. Any prank against the school must be pre-approved by Administration to ensure illegal or criminal behavior does not occur such as destruction to school or personal property which would jeopardize a student's continued enrollment at DMC.
THEFT	Theft is defined as taking the school's property or someone else's property without permission.
TOBACCO	DMCS facilities and grounds, including school vehicles and personal vehicles while on DMCS grounds, are off limits for tobacco use. This requirement extends to students, employees and visitors. This policy applies at all times, including school-sponsored and non-school-sponsored events. For purposes of this policy, "tobacco" is defined as any product that is made from or derived from tobacco, or that contains nicotine, that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus. 'Tobacco' also means electronic smoking devices and any component or accessory used in the consumption of a tobacco product, such as filters, rolling papers, pipes, and substances used in electronic smoking devices, whether or not they contain nicotine. "Electronic Smoking Devices" means any device that can be used to deliver an aerosolized solution that may or may not contain nicotine to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, e-hookah or other simulated smoking device. The distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of tobacco, nicotine products, e-cigarettes, or "look alike" substances that appear to be tobacco by students is prohibited. "Possession" includes being in the presence of a prohibited substance if the student has either direct or shared control of the substance, or has knowledge of the presence of it and fails to promptly act to remove himself or herself from the offending premises.
TRUANCY	<p>Truancy is any intentional, unjustified, unauthorized, or illegal absence from school and usually does not have a legitimate reason for the absence (illness, appointment, vacation, or emergency). Any absence from school or a class without Administrator approval shall be considered unexcused / truant.</p> <p>Truancy incidences equal to one period will result in a 60-minute detention. Truancy for more than one period, but less than four periods, will result in a ½ day in-school-suspension. Truancy for more than four periods will result in one day in-school-suspension.</p> <p>Repeated violations will result in parent / student / school conference to discuss if the student will be permitted to remain enrolled at DMC.</p>
WEAPONS	Students will not be permitted, under any circumstances, to bring objects, which can be used as dangerous weapons onto school property. These include, but are not limited to: firearms, fireworks, air guns (BB, pellet, or other projectile), slingshot, chains, knives, etc.

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE- ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES - *In alphabetical order*

**ABOUT-** DMCS seeks to promote the development of the whole person through a variety of student activities that promote a biblical model of competition. Participation in the life of DMCS outside the classroom gives our students a chance to explore the many talents God has given them. Our membership in the West Central Activities Conference (WCAC) allows the students to compete in sports, fine arts and academic competitions. [Click here for more information about the athletics and activities offered at DMCS.](#)

The Director of Student Activities & Assistant High School Principal supervises and shepherds the student activities at Des Moines Christian School. This administrator provides training and supervision for coaches and directors in addition to vision related to creating a sustainable, excellent competitive program. See the Faculty and Staff Directory for contact information.

**ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES** - The eligibility standard for participation in athletics & activities is to maintain a minimum GPA of 1.67 (C-) and have no "F's" on a weekly basis. An "F" is a cumulative grade in the class and not an individual test or assignment grade. The eligibility report will be generated Wednesday mornings.

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**ATHLETIC PROBATION:** If a student does not meet the eligibility standards outlined above when the report is generated, they will be placed on probation for the following week. The probation period will begin on Wednesday and end on the following Wednesday. Students may participate in practices and games while on probation.

**INELIGIBLE:** If a student continues to not meet the eligibility standard outlined above when the report is generated, they will be considered ineligible, but only if the failing grade is in the same subject area as the week before. Ineligible is defined as no participation in performances/games until the conditions for eligibility are met (no F's or a GPA greater than 1.67). This policy covers all non-graded school activities such as sports, student council, worship team, drama, etc.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY TO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** - Students are required to be in attendance for 50% of their scheduled classes to participate in extracurricular activities. A written request is required from the parent with evidence of mitigating circumstances to be considered by for an administrative exemption to this rule. Coaches and Directors are responsible for verifying attendance of their players/participants on the day of an event.

**ATHLETIC / ACTIVITY FEES** - An athletic / activity fee is collected annually for each sport in which the student competes and show choir. This fee is set by the DMCS Board of Directors and supplements the overall cost of the athletic program. Fees are billed to the student's account and are only refunded if an athlete quits before participating in a competition. An athletic fee will also be assessed on the accounts of students participating in our Cooperative Sharing Agreement with Urbandale/Johnston to offset the fee those schools charge DMCS.

**ATHLETIC DOCUMENTS** - The Iowa High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) mandates all student athletes to have the following three documents on file with their school in order to participate (including practice) in any school athletic programs:

1. **Athletic Preparticipation Physical Exam:** Valid for 12 months + 30 days from date of exam.
2. **Head Concussion Information Form:** Signed by both parent and student.

**CONCUSSION PROTOCOL** - DMCS will implement the following return to participation / school protocol following a concussion made on an individual basis by licensed health care providers. Medical experts in concussion believe a concussed student should meet all of the following criteria in order to return to activity / school.

- Asymptomatic at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school) AND have written clearance from a physician, physician's assistant, or licensed athletic trainer. Written clearance to return by one of these licensed health care providers is required by Iowa Code 280.13C.
- Once criteria above are met, the student should return to full activity following the steps detailed below. A licensed health care provider should closely supervise this progression.
- Licensed health care providers' clinical judgement may affect the return to participation protocol.

**RETURN TO SCHOOL / LEARNING:** Student must complete physical and cognitive rest. There should be no exertional activity (activities requiring concentration, attention, worsens symptoms, or delays healing) until the student is asymptomatic.

**STEP ONE** - Students are symptom free for 24 hours with no medication and must have physical / cognitive rest. This means a strict adherence to no activity policy.

**STEP TWO** - Students may return to school with no symptoms and no medication.

**RETURN TO ACTIVITY:** Students will follow a return to activity protocol outlined by a healthcare professional that includes progression from low impact aerobic exercise to a full return to normal competition.

**STEP ONE** = Low impact, light aerobic exercise (Goal: Increase Heart Rate). Athlete will complete a 5-20 minutes on a stationary bike, walking, jogging, or swimming. No weight room, no jumping, no high intense running or resistance.

**STEP TWO** - Basic, moderate exercise (Goal: Add Movement). Sport specific drills and no contact drills open (no equipment). Light weight training may begin.

**STEP THREE** - Return to practice (Goal: Coordination and Cognitive Load). Non contact practice drills, no scrimmages. Athlete is released to use equipment and condition with the team until they begin contact sports, then athlete switches to individual workout.



STEP FOUR - Return to practice with medical clearance (Goal: Build Confidence and Assess Function). Controlled return to full practice with full contact drills and full weight training.

STEP FIVE - Normal competition in a contest.

## **GOOD CONDUCT RULE**

To retain eligibility for participation in Des Moines Christian extracurricular activities, students must conduct themselves as good citizens both in and out of school at all times. Students who represent the school in an activity are expected to serve as good role models to other students and to members of the community.

Claims of Good Conduct Rule violations will be investigated. Students will have the opportunity to hear the allegation and provided the opportunity to share their side of the story. If claims are substantiated, student(s) will be deemed ineligible for a period of time, as described below. A student may lose eligibility under the Good Conduct Rule for any of the following behaviors:

- Possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products (or look alike products), regardless of the student's age
- Possession, use, or purchase of alcoholic beverages (having odor of alcohol on one's breath is evidence of "use")
- Being in attendance at a function or party where the student knows or has reason to know that alcohol or other drugs are being consumed illegally by minors and failing to leave despite having a reasonable opportunity to do so
- Possession, use, purchase, or attempted sale/purchase of illegal drugs, or unauthorized possession, use, purchase, or attempted sale/purchase of otherwise lawful drugs
- Engaging in any act that would be grounds for arrest or citation in criminal or juvenile court system (excluding minor offenses such as traffic or hunting/fishing violations), regardless of whether the student was cited, arrested, convicted, or adjudicated for the act(s)
- Exceedingly inappropriate or offensive conduct such as assaulting staff / students, gross insubordination (talking back or refusing to cooperate with authorities), hazing or harassment of others. Such harassment does not have to rise to the level of violating the school's anti-bullying / harassment policy, but rather may include inappropriate and/or disparaging comments to or about others, whether made verbally, in writing, or by electronic means (e.g. text messages, email, or posting on social media). Examples of such harassment includes, but is not limited to: threats, inappropriate comments about the traits of an individual or group; creating parodies to make fun of others; posting or otherwise sharing potentially embarrassing photos, drawings, videos, or depictions of others without permission. NOTE: This could include group conduct. This rule is not intended to prevent a student from expressing his / her religious or political beliefs.

If a student transfers from another Iowa school or school district and the student has not yet completed a period of ineligibility for a violation of a Good Conduct Rule in the previous school, the student shall be ineligible if administration determines there is general knowledge in our school district of the fact that the student was in violation in a previous district.

**PENALTIES** - A student who, after an interview with administration, is found to have violated the Good Conduct Rule will be subject to the following:

- **FIRST OFFENSE WITHIN STUDENT'S MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER** = Suspended up to 30% of the current season (including any post season competition).
- **SECOND OFFENSE WITHIN STUDENT'S MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER** = Suspended up to 60% of the current season (including any post season competition).
- **THIRD OFFENSE WITHIN STUDENT'S MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER** = The student will be suspended for the remainder of his / her middle school career.

Ineligibility must be served before an athlete participates in any other sport. If the athlete is suspended at the end of one season or school year, then the ineligibility will carry over to the next sport or school year. An ineligible student may attend all practices or rehearsals but may not "suit up" nor perform / participate in the sport or activity, including travel to away games or performances. Students who are ineligible at the end of a sport or activity shall not receive a letter or award for that activity.



**ADMISSION PRIOR TO DETERMINATION (SELF-REPORTING):** If a student comes forward to a coach, administrator, or athletic director to admit (self-report) a violation of the Good Conduct Rule prior to a finding of guilt by the administration, the student's penalty may be reduced up to 15% for first offense and 30% for second offense.

**MUSIC AT EVENTS AND PRACTICES** - Students have the opportunity to use music at school events and ballgames. All music that is played should promote our mission or not distract from our mission. Music selections are not limited to Christian artists or to instrumental only music. Playlists used for student activities such as practices, events, dances, and ballgames must be approved in advance by the principal.

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## **MISCELLANEOUS** - *In alphabetical order*

**ADDRESS CHANGES** - Please report any change in address, telephone number, emergency contact, work numbers, etc. to Jill Frey at 515-252-2480 or [jfrey@dmcs.org](mailto:jfrey@dmcs.org).

**BENEVOLENCE / CHARITABLE ACTS** - Organizing meals, volunteer services, or gift cards for a specific family must be approved by the Department Principal on a case-by-case basis. Communication to the Association about the need may be limited to classes, grades, or departments who have a relationship with the family. In accordance with IRS regulations, the School does not fund-raise cash for specific families.

**FIELD TRIPS** - Classes may take trips to interesting and educational places. Parents will be notified and must sign a permission slip for the student to go. Students are responsible to the classroom teacher and/or other adult chaperone while on the buses and at the site. DMCS asks that siblings not accompany parent chaperones on field trips.

**LOST AND FOUND** - Custodians go through the building each evening. All items found in hallways, on top of lockers, in locker rooms or the gym, etc will be placed in the Lost and Found located outside the Secondary Office. Unclaimed items will be donated 1-2 times per month.

**TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES** - DMCS provides transportation to athletic events and other school activities for all student participants. All student participants are expected to ride the bus to and from the events unless otherwise communicated by administration. If a student misses the bus a parent may drive them to the event. Student conduct rules will apply on all buses.

*If DMCS transportation is provided but a student NEEDS to drive himself or herself, the following should be noted:*

Parental permission must be granted in writing ahead of time explaining the situation, i.e. doctor appointments, work schedules, student living near the event site, etc. Administration's permission must also be obtained. Being given permission to drive themselves does NOT give a student permission to drive other participants. Parents cannot give authorization for students other than their own unless they have written permission from the other parents.

*If DMCS transportation is NOT provided the following should be noted:*

Participants and parents will be notified if transportation will not be provided to a school event. DMCS will be relieved in such cases of legal responsibility for the actions of student or parent drivers.

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