



**2018 - 2019**

# **Student Handbook**

**McKeel Academy of Technology**

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## ❖ **School-wide Expectations**

**School-Wide Educational Expectations:** Failure to meet the following requirements, may result in dismissal from McKeel Academy of Technology.

**Career Shadowing:** Participation in all scheduled Career Shadow days is expected.

**Senior Internship:** To meet McKeel Academy of Technology graduation requirements, it is necessary for most seniors to participate in McKeel's Senior Internship Program. It's to be completed in the summer preceding their senior year or during their first semester as a senior.

### **School-Wide Behavior Expectations:**

1. Follow instructions and established procedures as currently set forth in the McKeel Student Handbook and as given by McKeel employees.
2. Maintain a positive learning environment - be kind, courteous, professional and respectful.
3. Be prepared with the correct materials - agenda, paper, pencil, charged iPad, parent communication, etc.
4. Dress appropriately at all times.
5. Arrive on time.
6. Display good digital citizenship while using electronic devices - use digital communication appropriately, use appropriate digital etiquettes and responsibly use digital interfaces and content.

**Warnings and Infractions:** Students will be notified for each offense of non-compliance of the School-Wide Behavior Expectations and it will be documented on the student's McKeel Dashboard. Warnings and Infractions will automatically generate an email notification to the student and parents/guardians, if they elected to have these notifications. As students obtain infractions, they begin moving up Infraction Levels and receive the associated discipline. Students along with their parents/guardians should frequently assess student behavior and their current Level, by reviewing the online statement. Directions on how to view warnings and infractions can be obtained at [www.mckeelacademy.com/info/display/viewbehavior](http://www.mckeelacademy.com/info/display/viewbehavior).

**Disciplinary Referrals:** A student may receive a disciplinary referral for misbehaving anytime they are on a Schools of McKeel Academy campus, during any McKeel related function (on or off campus) or while using McKeel Academy equipment (on or off campus), or while on transportation provided by the Schools of McKeel Academy. Students receive referrals for repetitive noncompliance of the School-Wide Behavior Expectations, Serious Breaches of

Conduct and violations of McKeel Academy Policies and Expectations. A student may be referred to administration by any McKeel employee regarding a student's misbehavior.

**Serious Breaches of Conduct:**

Any violation of these or other infractions listed in the Polk County Student Code of Conduct will result in a disciplinary referral and may lead to consequences up to and including dismissal from McKeel Academy of Technology. Polk County Student Code of Conduct may be downloaded from <http://www.polk-fl.net/parents/formsanddocuments/default.htm>

- Abusive language or conduct directed at a school staff member
- Academic Dishonesty
- Arson
- Assault
- Battery
- Bomb Threat/Possession of Explosive Materials
- Bullying (harassment)
- Burglary
- Computer or iPad misuse; Violation of the Terms of Use for School-Owned Devices, the Terms of Use for Campus Data Networks and the iPad Policies and Procedures.
- Disruptive Behavior
- Drugs (sale, distribution, use, or possession)
- Extortion
- False Alarm
- False Information
- Felony charges
- Fighting
- Gang Activity
- Guns, Weapons, and Dangerous (ie. electric shocking devices)
- Hazing
- Indecent exposure
- Insubordination (openly refusing to follow instructions)
- Interference with the Educational Process
- Leaving campus/class without permission
- Other Serious Violations of the Law
- Possession of lighters, matches, or hazardous chemicals
- Pornography-Possession or Distribution (including sharing of inappropriate electronic images or websites)
- Robbery
- Serious Misconduct on a School Bus
- Sexual Harassment or Offense
- Student Confrontation with a Staff Member
- Theft
- Tobacco Products (including electronic cigarettes, electronic "vapor" and associated materials used for consumption of nicotine)

- Transportation (speeding, illegal parking, going to car without permission from office, etc. )
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- Violence/Weapons (knives, etc. not firearms)

**Infraction Levels and Consequences:** Attendance to an assigned detention or work detail is mandatory. If a student misses a detention it may be replaced with a work detail and a missed work detail may be replaced with an out of school suspension (OSS.) Students discipline for Levels is assigned according to the following chart, however administration retains the right to alter consequences, as necessary.

**Level 1 = 5 Infractions**

Student's 1st period teacher will make parent contact.

**Level 2 = 10 Infractions**

Student meeting with an Assistant Principal.  
Student serves one before-school detention.

**Level 3 = 15 Infractions**

A McKeel staff member schedules the student's teachers to a conference meeting, in which a parent/guardian and the student must attend.  
Student serves two before-school detentions.  
Student may not be able to participate in field trips and extracurricular activities.  
Behavior Warning Letter is issued.

**Level 4 = 20 Infractions**

Student serves one 2.5 hour work detail.  
Student/Parent meeting with an Assistant Principal.  
Student will not be able to participate in field trips and extracurricular activities.  
Student is placed on a Behavior Agreement.

**Level 5 = 25 Infractions**

Principal discusses possible dismissal with the student and a parent/guardian.  
Danger of Dismissal letter is issued.  
Student serves one 2.5 hour work detail **and** one before-school detention.

**Level 6 = 30 Infractions**

Student serves one day of out of school suspension (OSS.)

**Students at or beyond Level 6 will receive additional consequences and may be dismissed from McKeel and sent to their home-zoned school.**

**Reduction of Behavior Levels:** To reduce a level, the student must complete the following:

1. Attend 15 consecutive school days without receiving any warnings, infractions or referrals.
2. Obtain and complete a Level Reduction form from [www.McKeelAcademy.com](http://www.McKeelAcademy.com).
3. Within five school days of completion of the 15 days without warnings, infractions or referrals, submit the completed Level Reduction form to administration.

**Rewards & “Paws-itive” Recognition:** McKeel Academy of Technology encourages and rewards students who are working hard and giving their best effort. Occasionally to encourage positive behavior and academic success, McKeel staff or PTSO will reward students for their outstanding efforts. These types of rewards are based on criteria determined by the issuing person or group. McKeel Staff are also able to issue “Paws-itive” Recognition to students for outstanding character. **Students’ “Paws-itive” Recognition and/or rewards will not be used to determine students’ Infraction Level.** Students should never seek, self-promote, or attempt to persuade a staff member to be considered for recognition.

❖ **McKeel Academy Policies and Expectations:**

**Zero Tolerance of Inappropriate Contact:** It is expected that students control their limbs, hands, feet and mouth at all times. Inappropriate touching, pushing, shoving, kicking or horseplay is not acceptable, even if it is done in a playful manner.

**Zero Tolerance of Drugs and Alcohol:** It is the expressed policy of McKeel Academy of Technology that the use, possession, distribution, or overt act in connection with any drug, controlled substance, counterfeit controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicative inhalant, as defined by law, by any student enrolled at McKeel Academy of Technology will result in dismissal of the student and as required by law, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified.

**Medication: Students are not allowed to carry medication nor self-medicate while on campus, with the only exceptions being students with emergency health issues that have been documented and have completed all the procedures outlined below.**

If a student must have medication of any type given during school hours, including over-the-counter drugs, the parent has the following choices:

1. The parent or someone designated on the emergency card may come to the school office, check in with office personnel, and give the medication to the student at the appropriate time.
2. The parent may obtain a copy of the Authorization for Medication form from the school nurse, health clinic aide, school secretary, or online at [www.mckeelacademy.com/info](http://www.mckeelacademy.com/info). The parent will take the form to the student’s doctor/nurse practitioner and have him/her complete the form by listing the

medication(s) needed. **This form must be completed for both prescription and over-the-counter medication. If the student must carry the medication for emergency, life threatening conditions, this form must expressly explain the need on the form.**

3. School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless they have received an Authorization for Medication form properly completed and signed by the doctor/nurse practitioner, and the medication has been received in the clinic in a prescription labeled container, or for over the counter medications, must be supplied in original, unopened containers.

**Public Displays of Affection:** Hand-holding and very brief hugs are considered appropriate displays of affection, as long as both parties are willing participants. Kissing, extended embraces, sitting on other student's laps, and/or inappropriate touching are not permitted at any time while on school property, including buses, or at any McKeel sponsored functions.

**Academic Honesty:** McKeel Academy is committed to maintaining high academic standards thus requiring a high-level of academic integrity from all students. Any act of cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment will be considered a serious offense and will result in a disciplinary referral. In addition, any student that is found to show a pattern of continued academically dishonest may be dismissed from McKeel.

**Electronic Device Policy:** Cell phones, iPads, other electronic devices, and associated equipment, including headphones; are only permitted to be in use while in the cafeteria or the pavilion directly in front of the cafeteria during the student's lunchtime or with expressed permission from a supervising adult within a class period. For safety purposes, at no time, while on campus, should a student be in motion while using any electronic device, including headphones. A student seen using any electronic device outside of the permitted times, will receive disciplinary action. Multiple offenses may result in more severe disciplinary actions and restrictions on electronic devices.

**Student Dismissal/Pick-up:** Students are expected to remain in their classrooms until the bell designated for their dismissal rings. Only students riding the bus will be dismissed at 2:23. All other students will be dismissed at 2:26. Student pick-up (for those students that do not ride the bus) must occur at the carline at the front of the school. No one will be allowed to be picked-up in the parking lots, across the street or in the bus loop. All students are expected to be off campus by 2:45 pm, unless they are under the direct supervision of an adult. This supervision may be a coach, club sponsor, or tutoring teacher. If a student is found unsupervised, they will be required to go to the cafeteria to participate in the after school study hall until pick-up occurs. Beginning at 3 pm, parents/guardians of students participating in the after school study hall, will be charged a minimum fee of \$10, then an hourly rate of \$10 per child, per hour. Charges are per hour and there will be no partial hour charges. This designated study hall will close promptly at 5:00 pm. Parents/guardians will be invoiced weekly for this service.

Coaches/sponsors may make arrangements to allow for students to participate in the after-school study hall in season during game days, performances, and for practice days/practice sessions, at no charge. This must be approved by the coach/sponsor in advance, except during the first days of tryouts. Siblings of students in these approved programs will be charged the full rate for study hall on any days they attend.

**Textbooks, library and other financial obligations:** An obligation is defined as school property lost or damaged by a student, and/or a fine or fee assessed by the school. Failure to provide timely payment for the obligation may result in the suspension of the student from participation in extracurricular activities included but not limited to sports, clubs, field trips and graduation.

**Rules for Student Drivers:** Parking for seniors will be in the front of the school. Parking for underclassmen will be in the back of the school. Students must be in good standing in attending school in order to be permitted to drive. The speed limit on campus is 5 mph. All students must receive a parking pass to be permitted to park on campus. Students must park as to not block other students in. (Directions on how to obtain a parking pass can be found at <http://www.mckeelacademy.com/uploads/StudentDriverGuidelines.pdf>.)

Please be cautious driving to and from school along Grady Ave. Frequently there are traffic backups just before school and just as school ends. Please plan your time accordingly so that you are not late. You may not break traffic laws to avoid this traffic. This includes not driving down the wrong side of the road to pass car lines.

Failure to adhere to safe driving practices, attendance guidelines, damaging the parking area, and/or breaking any traffic laws will result in loss of driving privileges and/or parking pass. Any damage to school facilities, due to student driving will be responsible for paying for the costs of repair. McKeel Academy and the Polk County School board are not responsible for damage or loss due to parking on our campus.

**Agenda Use:** Students are expected to have an agenda, labeled with their name, in their possession at all times. Students must repurchase an agenda within three school days if their agenda is lost, stolen or damaged.

**Passes:** It is the student's responsibility to properly fill out passes, in ink, in their agenda and present them to a staff member for their approval signature or initials. Anyone found outside of class without a proper pass is to be considered skipping and will receive a disciplinary referral.

**Bus Transportation:** In order to ride a McKeel School Bus, transportation information must be completed in McKeel Online Office when completing/updating information for your child. Please contact McKeel Transportation Department for any additional information.

**McKeel Wildcat Cafe:** In order to provide support to our McKeel cafeteria program and to align with the National School Lunch Program, outside vendor food and drink is not permitted at any of the campuses of The Schools of McKeel Academy. Parents/Guardians are welcome to dine with their student but lunch must be one that is provided from home or purchased in our cafeteria. Any food or beverage purchased before school will need to be consumed before entering the building.

**Lunch:** Students are expected to maintain a positive balance in their cafeteria account. Students with charges exceeding \$10.00 will be provided with an alternate meal. Students must remain in the cafeteria to eat their lunch. Parents and guardians are the only guests that may eat lunch with their child. They must present a government issued ID in the office and receive a visitor pass/badge prior to entering campus. Food purchased at fast food restaurants may not be dropped off in the office for students to pick up on their way to lunch. Please see McKeel Wildcat Cafe for more details.

**Eating, Drinking & Chewing Gum:** To help keep our campus clean and minimize pests students who bring outside vendor food and/or drink to school in the morning must consume it or throw it away before entering the building. School breakfast and lunch is to only be consumed in the cafeteria. Students may bring drinks in plastic or metal containers with a twist on or snap on cap/top. Disposable containers that can not be resealed are not permitted. Students should follow classroom guidelines regarding consumption of beverages. Chewing gum is not allowed **anywhere on campus**.

**Community Service:** Community Service is still a valuable asset for students in regards to college acceptance and is required for Bright Futures and for some school clubs and service organizations. However it is not required for graduation. A report of earned community service hours can be viewed online at [www.mckeelacademy.com](http://www.mckeelacademy.com). Directions on how to do so can be found at [www.mckeelacademy.com/info/display/viewhours](http://www.mckeelacademy.com/info/display/viewhours).

**Uniform Policy:** While on campus, students attending McKeel Academy of Technology are required to dress appropriately, as explained on the following pages of this handbook. All uniform clothing must be purchased from the MAT Clothes Closet, Risse Brothers website at [www.rissebrothers.com](http://www.rissebrothers.com) or from the Risse Brothers Uniform Store Located at: 2525 Drane Field Road, Suite 11 Lakeland, FL 33811 Phone: 863-940-9913. Anyone needing financial assistance in obtaining uniforms should contact their guidance counselor.

Students with uncorrectable dress code issues (torn, ripped or cut clothing, no belt, improper uniform, hair violations, inappropriate shoes, etc.) will be required to go to the office. Once in the office, the student will be required to change into appropriate uniform clothing. Students will be given the option of wearing clean items from the clothes closet, if available, or will have to call home to have appropriate uniform clothing brought to them. Students unable to get

appropriate uniform clothing through one of these manners may be required to remain in the office for the day.

Uniforms must be worn appropriately as follows:

- All skorts/pants/shorts must be worn above the hip bone.
- Shirts are to be tucked in at all times, not rolled under.
- Skorts/shorts/pants are not permitted to be rolled up at the waist or at the hemline.
- Belts must be visible and fastened properly.
- Visible body writing and/or tattoos are not permitted.
- PE shorts and/or non-uniform apparel should not be visible underneath a student's uniform.

### **Regular Uniform:**

**General** ☒ No oversized or baggy clothing, no clothing displaying brand logos, other than McKeel logos and no clothing that is torn or tattered will be permitted.

**Pants/Shorts/Skorts** (please note skirts are not allowed)

Must be navy blue, khaki or McKeel Academy Plaid.

Shorts and skorts hemlines should reach either mid-thigh or the end of the fingertips when the student's arms are hanging to the side with their shoulders down, whichever is longer. In the event that either of the previously mentioned requirements can not met, the uniform must be unaltered. (A copy of inseam factory measurements is available in the office.) Three length violations will result in the student wearing pants for the remainder of the semester **or** for the remainder of the year, if there are less than four weeks remaining in the semester.

**Shirts** ☒ Can be navy blue, hunter green, or white. Seniors may wear red.

☒ Must be McKeel "M" logo polo shirt.

☒ Must fit the student so they remain tucked in at all times.

**Shoes** ☒ Must have a closed toe and heel. No sandals, flip-flops, crocs, slides, or slippers may be worn at any time. No open toe or heel shoes.

**Belts** ☒ Must be worn through belt loops and fastened properly.

**Hair** ☒ Needs to be neatly cut, professionally styled and clean at all times.

☒ Must appear in a naturally occurring color.

☒ Should be cut as to not fall below the student's eyebrow. Girls may use hair bows, barrettes, headbands, scarfs, or clips to keep hair in compliance. Boys' hair must be kept in compliance without the use of hair bows, barrettes, headbands, scarfs, or clips and boys' hair should not touch the top of the collar.

☒ Extreme or distracting hairstyles (hair carvings, eyebrow cuts, mohawks, Faux-hawks, etchings, etc.) are not permitted.

**P.E.:** ☒ P.E. uniforms are purchased from McKeel, worn only in P.E., and may not be altered.

### **Optional Apparel:**

**Undershirts & long sleeved shirts** ☒ If worn, are allowed to be solid white or navy blue without logos, designs, or writing seen through the collar or through the uniform shirt.

**Sweaters, Sweatshirts, Jackets & Hoodies** ☒ Must be solid navy blue or have an official “McKeel” logo. ☒ Hoods on jackets should not be worn while on campus.

**Piercings, Body Jewelry and Tattoos:** ☒ The ears are the only pierced location allowed for jewelry. A clear acrylic piercing retainer may be used for other pierced locations. Piercings deemed distracting will be dealt with, on an individual basis by administration. ☒ Visible body jewelry and/or tattoos are not permitted. ☒ Tattoos and piercings may not be covered by band-aids, tape, or other devices.

**Hats & Sunglasses** ☒ May only be worn with special permission for field trips or activities.

**Other Accessories** ☒ Any accessory (earrings, rings, bracelets, necklaces, grills, bandanas, etc.) considered extreme or distracting to the educational process is not allowed.

**Tights & Leggings** ☒ White or navy blue may be worn, but they must cover the entire leg.

**Additional Unacceptable Uniform Issues:** ☒ Any clothing associated with gangs, bandanas, clothing encouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or violence and/or clothing associated with discrimination on the basis of age, color, handicap, national origin, marital status, race, religion, or sex will not be permitted.

**Cold Weather Dress:** Students and parents will be notified, in advance, if students will be allowed to wear blue jeans and heavy jackets or coats due to predicted cold temperature. An announcement will be made in school, information will be posted on the McKeel Academy website ([www.mckeelacademy.com](http://www.mckeelacademy.com)), and on the McKeel Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/McKeel-Academy-of-Technology-162742483754881/?fref=ts>) . Students without a “**heavy**” jacket or coat can layer appropriate “optional apparel” to stay warm. No thermal long john tops and bottoms, sweatpants, flannel shirts, pajama bottoms are allowed to be visible, though thermal long john tops and bottoms may be worn covered, under full length acceptable clothing.

**Non-Uniform Opportunities:** Not adhering to the following guidelines may result in loss of the privilege to participate in non-uniform opportunities. All clothing worn on “non-uniform days” must meet the PCSB Code of Conduct.

**Full-time MAT Students with 4 or more per semester AP or Dual Enrollment courses:** Students may wear “McKeel” spirit, club, team or “McKeel M” shirts with uniform bottoms or blue jeans, blue jean capris or blue jean skirts worn well below the knee (designs, holes, rips, decorative tattering, sequins, metal beading, laces, etc are not

permitted). For appropriate documentation see an Administrator.

**Senior Students:** Must wear a McKeel “M” polo Monday - Thursday and can wear blue jeans Monday - Friday.

**Fridays:** Students may wear “McKeel” spirit, club or team shirts with uniform bottoms. For a charge of \$1 (\$35 for the year, if paid in advance by 8-24-18), students are permitted to wear blue jeans, blue jean capris or blue jean skirts worn well below the knee (designs, holes, rips, decorative tattering, sequins, metal beading, laces, etc are not permitted). In the event that a student has paid for the year and a cold weather dress day happens to be on a Friday, no reimbursement will occur.

**Professional dress:** Occasionally administration allows students to wear professional dress at school. The following will be strictly enforced: Shirts must be tucked in and belts are to be worn, if appropriate. Males should wear dress pants along with a tucked in collared shirt and tie. Females should wear dress slacks or skirts along with a dressy blouse or they may opt to wear a dress. The hemline of skirts or dresses shall be no shorter than 3” above the knee.

**Dress for rewards, field trips, team activities, special events, or spirit week:** Team coach, club sponsor or school designee will determine and announce the dress code guidelines for these events.

**Sports Team Game-Day Clothing:** Each sports team will have designated Game-Day jerseys or shirts allowed to be worn with uniform bottoms, **only** on home game days, to encourage awareness and attendance to games. Cheerleaders and Dazzlers may wear their designated Game-Day uniform only on the days that they cheer/dance at home games.

**Student Field Trips and Extracurricular Events:** Students are expected adhere to both the McKeel Academy of Technology Student Handbook and the Polk County Code of Conduct in order to participate in any school sponsored field trips or extracurricular events. Students who do not abide by these expectations, skills, and rules will be sent home at their parents’ expense. In addition, should a student’s behavior, actions, misuse, or abuse of objects cause damages, the student and parents will be held financially responsible. Additionally students who are on Level 3 of higher, have had a serious breach of conduct and/or have repetitive insubordinate behaviors may not be allowed to participate in field trips and/or extracurricular events.

In addition to behavior requirements, students participating in school sponsored field trips or extracurricular activities must also maintain passing grades and must not be on attendance probation or be in danger of being placed on attendance probation.

**Attendance:** It is a McKeel expectation that students attend school daily so that the student will

have maximum instructional time and an increased opportunity to learn, which results in increased opportunity for academic success and social engagement. Additionally, if the student is absent for 50% or more of any school day, the entire day will be counted as one day of absence for truancy reports. The faculty and administration of McKeel Academy supports Florida State Statute (Title XLVIII, Chapter 1003.26) which mandates all children attend school regularly, during the entire school year, to ensure academic success. Students who accumulate excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, will be subject to review by administration to determine the causes of the excessive absences and determine the appropriate actions.

**Late Arrival to School Policy:** Students who miss more than 50% of any class due to being late will be marked as absent for that class.

- **Tardy 1-5 days:** Students **do not** need to bring a note or be checked in by a parent, but all students must report to the office for check in upon first arriving to school after the late bell at 8:45 am and receive a pass to class. Parents should keep track of tardies and medical notes or other documentation on Student Absence/Tardy Form.
- **Tardy 6 or more days:** After a student is tardy to school for six or more days during a semester, the student and parent or guardian will be asked to submit their child's Student Absence/Tardy Form along with medical notes received or other documentation during the semester. A review committee of one or more administrators and the child's guidance counselor will review each absence and determine if it is excused or unexcused. The attendance records will be updated to reflect the findings of the committee and the parents will be notified. Beginning with the 6<sup>th</sup> tardy, and every tardy thereafter, students will need to bring a note to the office or email [MatAttendance@mckeelschools.com](mailto:MatAttendance@mckeelschools.com) when they arrive late to school and will begin receiving infractions if the tardy is unexcused.

**Late Arrival to Class Policy:** A student with an unexcused tardy to class will receive an infraction, in accordance with the School-wide Expectations. Additionally, any student who has five (5) unexcused tardies to any of their classes will be issued a before school detention.

### **Absences:**

- **Absent 1 – 10 days:** Students returning to school from missing one or more class periods or a full day **do not** need to bring a note to school. Parents should keep track of absences and medical notes on Student Absence/Tardy Form. Parents and students should also keep teachers aware of extended absences through email and must follow the make up procedures listed later in this document.
- **Absent 11+ days:** After a student is absent for ten or more days from any one class period during a semester, the student and parent or guardian will be asked to submit their child's Student Absence/Tardy Form along with medical notes received or other documentation during the semester. A review committee of one or more administrators and the child's guidance counselor will review each absence and determine if it is excused or unexcused. The attendance records will be updated to reflect the findings of the committee and the parents will be notified. Beginning with the 11<sup>th</sup> absence, and

every absence thereafter, students will need to bring a note to the office or email [MatAttendance@mckeelschools.com](mailto:MatAttendance@mckeelschools.com) when they return to school. Students missing more than ten days of school are at risk of not earning credit for the semester, regardless of their grade in the class.

- **Absent 15+ days:** Florida Statutes require suspension of a student's driver's license when the student reaches 15 or more unexcused absences within a 90-day period. Additionally, students who are absent for fifteen or more days are in danger of dismissal from McKeel Academy. Before such decision is determined, the parent/guardian and student will have been afforded the opportunity to meet with administration.

**Truancy law:** Florida law defines "truant" as a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or guardian. Truant students are reported to the Department of Juvenile Justice through an automated system for excessive unexcused absences.

**Make-up work:** In the event of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to obtain missed work in accordance with their teachers' procedures (i.e. Canvas) and additional contact with teachers may be necessary to clarify information regarding work that was missed. The time allotted to a student to complete an assignment should be a minimum of one school day following the student's return to school per each day of absence from the class. For example, students who are absent 2 days should obtain make-up work immediately upon return to class and will be allowed 2 days to complete and turn in their make-up work. Students may be given more time only with prior teacher approval.

**Check in & check out: There will be no check-outs, for any reason, beginning at 2:00pm every day.** Students who miss more than 50% of any class due to a check in or check out will have an absence for that class. It is the parent's responsibility to furnish current names and phone numbers on their child's Online Student Emergency and Contact Information. Only adults listed online as being an emergency contact for the student may check the student out of school. Parents, guardians, and emergency contacts must present a photo ID in order to check out a student. Leaving school before the normal dismissal time for a valid reason is permitted provided the parent/guardian or a person listed on the emergency card comes to the school to check out the student. **All students who are checking out must come to the office and officially check out/sign out with office staff, before leaving campus.** If a student needs to check out for illness or other reasons and the parent/guardian is unable to come to the school, the student may be permitted to check-out once administration has received an email ([MATCheckout@mckeelschools.com](mailto:MATCheckout@mckeelschools.com)). The emailed request must include a copy of the parent/guardian's driver's license, the date, the time requested for check-out, and the student's legal name. If Administration determines that the student should not drive, someone listed on the emergency card will be required to pick up the student and arrange alternative transport of the student's vehicle.

**Bullying:** Harassment of any kind is not acceptable at McKeel Academy of Technology.

Bullying, as defined by the PCSB Bullying Policy, is defined as “conduct directed by a person or persons against another person on account of race, color, national origin, language spoken, homelessness, sex, disability, marital status, age, religion, or any other basis prohibited by law which is severe, persistent, pervasive and objectively offensive to the point that the prohibited conduct substantially impairs the victim’s participation in his/her employment, educational programs, school-sponsored activities, or any other activities offered or provided.”

<http://www.polk-fl.net/parents/formsanddocuments/default.htm>.

In order for an incident to be considered bullying **all** of the following statements must be present:

1. Any behavior that is unwanted, offensive, threatening, intimidating, insulting, causes discomfort or humiliation, or interferes with the individual's school performance which results in the victim feeling stressed, injured, or threatened. **AND**
2. The behavior is repeated. It has happened several or more times. **AND**
3. There is an imbalance of power between the bully and the person being bullied.

Students who believe they have been bullied or have witnessed bullying may report the incident(s) to a teacher, guidance counselor or an administrator. A student may also anonymously report bullying at [www.mckeelacademy.com/info/bullying/report](http://www.mckeelacademy.com/info/bullying/report).

### **McKeel Academy of Technology’s Policy Against Bullying and Harassment**

It is the policy of McKeel Academy that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The district will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited. In accordance with Senate Bill 7026, students that make a threat of violence will be charged with a 2nd degree felony.

**Bullying** includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual’s school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

1. Teasing
2. Social Exclusion
3. Threat
4. Intimidation
5. Stalking
6. Physical violence
7. Theft

8. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
9. Public or private humiliation
10. Destruction of property

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part via electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, facsimile communications or social media outlets. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

**Harassment** means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

**Bullying and harassment** also encompasses:

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
  - a. Incitement or coercion
  - b. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system
  - c. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment

**Cyberstalking** as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

McKeel Academy expects students to conduct themselves as appropriate for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

The school district believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/legal guardians, staff, and community members producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers will demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying or harassment.

The school district upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited:

- a) During any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
- b) During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- c) On a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution;
- d) Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution within the scope of the school district, meaning regardless of ownership, any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored program or activity; or
- e) Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the bullying substantially interferes with or limits the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school or substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.
- f) The above section (e) does not require a school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the McKeel Academy of Technology Student Handbook and PCSB code of conduct.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the McKeel Academy of Technology Student Handbook and PCSB code of conduct.

At each school, the principal or the principal's designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the principal or principal's designee.

The principal of each school in the district shall establish and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, how a report of bullying or harassment may be filed either in-person or anonymously and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying or harassment, anyone who witnessed the bullying or harassment, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying or harassment has taken place may file a report of bullying or harassment. A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying or harassment to the appropriate school official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in the district policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or harassment will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments.

Any written or oral reporting of an act of bullying or harassment shall be considered an official means of reporting such act(s). Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

At each school in the district, the Procedures for Investigating Bullying and/or Harassment include:

- The principal or designee selects a designee(s), employed by the school, trained in investigative procedures to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be the accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.
- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.
- The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:
  - o Description of incident(s) including nature of the behavior; context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred, etc.;
  - o How often the conduct occurred;

- Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
  - The relationship between the parties involved;
  - The characteristics of parties involved (i.e., grade, age, etc.);
  - The identity and number of individuals who participated in bullying or harassing behavior;
  - Where the alleged incident(s) occurred;
  - Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment;
  - Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported incident; and
  - The date, time, and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted.
- Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:
- Recommended remedial steps necessary to stop the bullying and/or harassing behavior; and
  - A written final report to the principal or designee(s).
- The maximum of 10 school days shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and/or harassment, and the investigative procedures that follow.

A principal or designee will assign a designee(s) that is trained in investigative procedures to initiate an investigation of whether an act of bullying or harassment is within the scope of the school district.

The trained designee(s) will provide a report on results of investigation with recommendations for the principal to make a determination if an act of bullying or harassment falls within the scope of the district.

· If it is within scope of district, move to Procedures for Investigating Bullying and/or Harassment.

· If it is outside scope of district, and determined a criminal act, refer to appropriate law enforcement.

· If it is outside scope of district, and determined not a criminal act, inform parents/legal guardians of all students involved.

The principal, or designee, shall promptly **report via telephone, personal conference, and/or in writing, the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by this policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved** on the same day an investigation of the incident(s) has been initiated. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Once the investigation has been completed and it has been determined that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, all appropriate local law enforcement agencies will be notified by telephone and/or in writing.

A district referral procedure will establish a protocol for intervening when bullying or harassment is suspected or when a bullying or harassment incident is reported. The procedure shall include:

- A process by which the teacher or parent/legal guardian may request informal consultation with school staff (specialty staff, e.g., school counselor, school psychologist, etc.) to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern (the involved students' parents or legal guardian may be included).
- A referral process to provide professional assistance or services that includes:
  - A process by which school personnel or parent/legal guardian may refer a student to the school intervention team (or equivalent school-based team with a problem-solving focus) for consideration of appropriate services. (Parent or legal guardian involvement is required at this point.)
  - If a formal discipline report or formal complaint is made, the principal or designee must refer the student(s) to the school intervention team for determination of counseling support and interventions. (Parent or legal guardian involvement is required at this point.)
- A school-based component to address intervention and assistance as determined appropriate by the intervention team that includes:
  - Counseling and support to address the needs of the victims of bullying or harassment;
  - Research-based counseling/interventions to address the behavior of the students who bully and harass others (e.g., empathy training, anger management); and/or
  - Research-based counseling/interventions which includes assistance and support provided to parents/legal guardians, if deemed necessary or appropriate.

The school district will utilize Florida's School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) Statewide Report on School Safety and Discipline Data, which includes **bullying** and **harassment** as incident codes as well as **bullying-related** as a related element code. The SESIR definition of bullying is systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation. The SESIR definition of harassment is any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct that 1) places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, 2) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or 3) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school including any course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose.

If a **bullying** or **harassment** incident occurs then it will be reported in SESIR with either the bullying or harassment code. If the bullying or harassment results in any of the following SESIR incidents the incident will be coded appropriately using the relevant incident code AND the related element code entitled **bullying-related**. Those incidents are:

- Alcohol
- Arson
- Battery
- Breaking and Entering
- Disruption on Campus
- Drug Sale/Distribution Excluding Alcohol
- Drug Use/Possession Excluding Alcohol
- Fighting
- Homicide
- Kidnapping
- Larceny/Theft
- Robbery
- Sexual Battery
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Offenses
- Threat/Intimidation
- Trespassing
- Tobacco
- Vandalism
- Weapons Possession
- Other Major (Other major incidents that do not fit within the other definitions)

Discipline and referral data will be recorded in Student Discipline/Referral Action Report and Automated Student Information System.

The district ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regards to bullying or harassment. This requires the efforts of everyone in the school environment – teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses, other non-teaching staff (such as bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, and/or school librarians), parents/legal guardians, and students.

Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers shall be given instruction at a minimum on an annual basis on the district's Policy and Regulations against bullying and harassment. The instruction shall include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying or harassment in schools.

The principal or designee shall by telephone and/or in writing report the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by this policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day an investigation of the incident has been initiated. According to the level of infraction, parents/legal guardians will be notified by telephone and/or writing of actions being taken to protect the child; the frequency of notification will

depend on the seriousness of the bullying or harassment incident. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

At the beginning of each school year, the Principal or designee shall, inform school staff, parents/legal guardians, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student of the school's student safety and violence prevention policy.

At the beginning of each school year, notice is given to students and staff of this policy through appropriate references in the PCSB Code of Conduct, MAT student handbook, staff campus handbook, and shall be posted online.

Each year School guidance counselors will work with students and staff to review school policy and reiterate reporting procedures in addition to staff attending anti-bullying training.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pursuant to 1003.44 FS students can opt out of reciting the pledge of allegiance with a written note from their parents. Parents who are interested in exercising this option should email, mail or deliver their note to John Massung, Assistant Principal.