

506 STUDENT DISCIPLINE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students understand and comply with the expectations for student conduct at STEAM Academy. A consistent and fair discipline policy supports a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all students. This policy aligns with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and reflects the latest state legislative requirements.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Star of the North Academy prioritizes mutual respect, student self-discipline, and responsible behavior. We believe positive relationships and proactive interventions are essential to creating an educational environment in which students can thrive. This policy promotes restorative and nonexclusionary practices to address inappropriate behaviors and prevent dismissals whenever possible.

III. KEY DEFINITIONS

- **Dismissal:** Denial of the current educational program to a student, including suspension, expulsion, and exclusion.
- **Nonexclusionary Discipline:** Alternatives to dismissal such as restorative practices, positive behavior interventions, mental health support, academic interventions, or other services.
- **Pupil Withdrawal Agreement:** A verbal or written agreement between a school administrator and a parent to withdraw a student in lieu of dismissal; cannot exceed 12 months.
- **Recess Detention:** Excluding or delaying a student from recess as a behavioral consequence.

IV. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- **School Board:** Ensures all personnel uphold this policy and supports its implementation.
- **Executive Director:** Develops guidelines and ensures consistent enforcement.
- **Teachers:** Maintain classroom order and enforce the Code of Conduct.
- **Other Staff:** Support a respectful school climate and report incidents.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Responsible for student behavior and engagement in resolution.
- **Students:** Responsible for behavior, attending school regularly, and respecting the rights of others.

- **Community Members:** Encourage a climate of mutual respect and safety.

V. STUDENT RIGHTS

- All students have the right to an education and a safe, respectful learning environment.

VI. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to:

- Follow all school rules and policies.
- Attend school regularly and on time.
- Complete assignments and make up missed work.
- Respect others and school property.
- Refrain from harmful or disruptive behavior.

VII. CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Vandalism, theft, or property damage
- Physical or verbal aggression, fighting
- Bullying, harassment, or discriminatory conduct
- Possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol, or look-alike substances
- Disruption of learning environment or refusal to follow staff directions
- Misuse of technology or violation of digital policies

Conduct expectations apply on school grounds, buses, events, and any setting affecting school safety or operations.

VIII. DISCIPLINE AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

STEAM Academy uses progressive discipline and nonexclusionary practices, including:

- Verbal warnings and student conferences
- Restorative conversations and problem-solving circles
- Behavior reflection sheets and written plans
- Parent/guardian contact or conference
- Referral to support staff or community services
- In-school supports or revised schedules
- Detention or loss of privileges
- In-school or out-of-school suspension (only if necessary)

- Expulsion or exclusion (as a last resort per law)

IX. REQUIRED PROCEDURES AND UPDATES (PER 2023 MN LAW)

A. Complaint Procedures

- Any member of the school community may file a complaint regarding discipline practices.
- Students, parents and other guardians, and school staff may file a complaint and seek corrective action when the requirements of the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, including the implementation of the local behavior and discipline policies, are not being implemented appropriately or are being discriminately applied. The Discipline Complaint Procedure must, at a minimum:
 1. provide procedures for communicating this policy including the ability for a parent to appeal a decision under Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.49 that contains explicit instructions for filing the complaint;
 2. provide an opportunity for involved parties to submit additional information related to the complaint;
 3. provide a procedure to begin to investigate complaints within three school days of receipt, and identify personnel who will manage the investigation and any resulting record and are responsible for keeping and regulating access to any record;
 4. provide procedures for issuing a written determination to the complainant that addresses each allegation and contains findings and conclusions;
 5. if the investigation finds the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.40 to 121A.61, including any local policies that were not implemented appropriately, contain procedures that require a corrective action plan to correct a student's record and provide relevant staff with training, coaching, or other accountability practices to ensure appropriate compliance with policies in the future; and
 6. prohibit reprisals or retaliation against any person who asserts, alleges, or reports a complaint, and provide procedures for applying appropriate consequences for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.
- Complaints may be submitted in writing or electronically to the Executive Director.
- STEAM Academy must investigate complaints alleging inappropriate or discriminatory discipline practices and respond with corrective actions as needed.

B. Remedial Response for Bullying Victims

- Students who respond to bullying with prohibited behavior may access restorative supports rather than punitive discipline, consistent with the Bullying Prohibition Policy.

C. Early Learner Protection

- Students in PreK-Grade 3 may not be dismissed for attendance/truancy issues.
- STEAM Academy must use nonexclusionary practices first unless the student poses a serious safety threat.

D. Tiered Interventions and Relationship Support

- Staff are encouraged to use interventions that build skills and relationships.
- Staff must avoid punitive reactions that remove learning opportunities.

E. Recess Detention Rules

- Recess may not be withheld except:
 - To prevent immediate harm
 - With parent/guardian consent
 - As determined by an IEP team for a student with disabilities
- May not be used for incomplete work.
- Parents must be notified within 24 hours of use.
- Recess detention data must be tracked and available on request.

XI. PUPIL WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENTS

- May be considered only as an alternative to expulsion/exclusion.

- Cannot exceed 12 months.
- Student remains eligible for academic and mental health services during this time.

XII. DATA REPORTING

STEAM Academy must track and report:

- All pupil withdrawal agreements
- Recess detention data by student demographics
- Use of reasonable force (if applicable) per MDE requirements

XIII. REVIEW AND COMMUNICATION

This policy shall be reviewed annually. A copy will be made available to students, families, and staff. Any changes will be communicated in writing.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.02 (Educational Expectations for Minnesota Students)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.12 (Early Learner Interventions)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.26 (School Preassessment Teams)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.27 (School and Community Advisory Team)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.29 (Reporting; Chemical Abuse)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.41, subd. 12 (Definition of nonexclusionary disciplinary practices)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.58 (Prohibition of Physical Holds)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.575 (Alternatives to Pupil Suspension)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.582 (Reasonable Force)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.60-121A.61 (Removal From Class)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.611 (Recess Detention)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.627 (Positive Behavior Interventions)
Minn. Stat. § 123A.05 (Area Learning Center Organization)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.03 (Enrollment Options Program)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.08 (Enrollment in Nonresident District)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 125A (Students With Disabilities)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A (Truancy)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 260C (Juvenile Court Act)
20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1487 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004)
29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.* (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, § 504)
34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1) (Manifestation Determination)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Bullying Policy)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 502 (Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 503 (Student Attendance)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 527 (Student Use and Parking of
Motor Vehicles; Patrols, Inspections, and Searches)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 610 (Field Trips)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 711 (Video Recording on School Buses)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)