

AGBU MANOOGIAN-DEMIRDJIAN SCHOOL

ՀԲԸՄ Մանուկեան-Տեմիրճեան Վարժարան



Elementary

Parent and Student Handbook

2023-2024

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About AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School (“AGBU”) is located in the heart of the San Fernando Valley. It was established in 1976 as St. Peter-AGBU School, with an enrollment of 19 students and a staff of three teachers. In 1986, a closed public school in Canoga Park was bought by AGBU and became the school’s permanent campus.

The school is part of an international network of schools owned and operated by a worldwide philanthropic organization called the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), headquartered in New York. AGBU is a non-political and non-sectarian educational and cultural organization.

The school has its own governing Board of Trustees, appointed by the AGBU Central Board, which sets policies and oversees school operations. All policy-related matters must be approved by the governing board before implementation. The school administration and faculty are accountable to the school’s Board of Trustees for the performance of their job duties.

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School is committed to developing academically well-prepared, value-oriented, well-balanced, and technologically proficient graduates who will function adequately and successfully in a changing world. School programs intend to educate the whole person and meet all students’ needs in a caring environment where they can use multiple facets of their intelligence and talents.

The school is committed to imparting a progressive curriculum beginning in Kindergarten and an enriched college-preparatory course of studies in middle school and high school. Effective learning habits, working cooperatively, and goal-setting abilities are stressed in all subject areas. The curriculum is in line with California Common Core Standards for English language arts and math, and the California Content Standards for science and social studies, meeting the requirements of a college-preparatory high school and accommodating the varying needs of all students. The school’s educational program fosters understanding, articulation, and application of all acquired knowledge and skills to ensure student success in higher education and lifelong careers.

Teachers, support staff, administrators, governing bodies, and parents work cooperatively, facilitating the learning and maturing process of all students and providing them with the support and encouragement needed to become successful learners. It is the school community’s expectation that all graduates pursue higher education at the conclusion of their schooling at AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School. The school believes that emphasis on high academic expectations, ethical and social responsibility, caring for one’s physical well-being, and respect for our resources and environment will prepare well-rounded and successful community members for the future.

Technology and its application to student learning is an integral part of school programs throughout the grade levels. The development of computer skills and the use of the Internet provides students with the means to function in today’s and tomorrow’s society. It also equips students with communication and researching skills, giving them the capability to gather information independently and expand their knowledge base in any subject area.

The Armenian program enables students to learn the Armenian language and history, as well as to appreciate cultural traditions and rich heritage. The enrichment derived from the Armenian program is intended to make students more aware of the uniqueness of others living in our community and to instill respect for different cultures and traditions in our world.

The visual and performing arts program allows students to develop their creative talents and cooperative interaction with classmates as they work towards major performances. We believe students can achieve a genuine sense of accomplishment and self-worth through involvement in a variety of elective classes and organized extra-curricular activities, including sports and athletic competitions, clubs, student government, and community service.

The vast majority of students at AGBU come from the San Fernando Valley. Most parents are professionals, small business owners, craftsmen, and salaried employees who meet their financial obligations to the school with some degree of sacrifice. They make the additional effort and expense to send their children to a private school, and they expect in return a demanding, college preparatory education that will give their sons and daughters the skills necessary to compete at the university level and in the workplace.

The school recognizes that although the Armenian community is comprised of families from all over the world, Armenians share the same cultural traditions and Christian heritage. Therefore, the Armenian culture is celebrated in several ways across the curriculum and in the daily life of a student. Students recite a prayer and pledge in Armenian, as well as the United States Pledge of Allegiance. Several cultural assemblies are held throughout the year featuring presentations in the Armenian and English languages, as well as dance performances and musical concerts. There are also several Armenian holidays celebrated throughout the year with the school closing for those specific days. Refer to the Master Calendar issued to all families at the start of each school year for a listing of these dates and events.

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) for the full six year term in the 2000-2001, 2006-2007, 2012-2013 and 2019-2020 school years.

Marie Manoogian Elementary School

The policies and procedures set forth in this Parent Student Handbook (“Handbook”) apply to parents and students of the Marie Manoogian Elementary School – i.e., AGBU’s elementary division, which encompasses Kindergarten through 5th grade. For purposes of this Handbook, the Marie Manoogian Elementary School will be referred to as “the school” or “AGBU MDS.”

AGBU MDS is composed of unique learners and a dedicated teaching staff, who utilize the latest instructional technologies to implement a progressive curriculum designed to provide students with a solid academic foundation. Through a variety of cross-curricular lessons and activities, teachers foster the development of core competencies, such as collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving.

Throughout the school day, elementary students have a number of courses that help lay a strong foundation for future academic, physical, social and emotional achievement. Students receive a well-balanced education that focuses on the whole child, ensuring that each individual learner is engaged, healthy, safe, supported, and challenged.

Amendments/Modifications

This Handbook is intended to serve only as a guide to the school’s general policies and procedures. AGBU MDS reserves the right to interpret, amend, modify, change, cancel, or withdraw any or all sections or provisions of this Handbook at any time. No person is authorized to make oral modifications to this Handbook.

AGBU MDS Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs)

I. Become academically skilled learners and independent thinkers who:

- Acquire a strong interdisciplinary knowledge base;
- Develop collaboration skills, effective study habits, and self-discipline;
- Solve problems critically and analytically;
- Demonstrate effective communication through verbal, written, artistic, and technological modes of expression.

II. Become individuals aware of their Armenian cultural heritage who:

- Acquire knowledge of Armenian language, literature, and history;
- Develop an appreciation for Armenian culture;
- Contribute to the Armenian community and its homeland;
- Value their Armenian American identity.

III. Become socially developed and productive future citizens who:

- Understand civic responsibilities and democratic principles;
- Embrace individual and cultural differences;
- Exhibit positive character in everyday life;
- Contribute time, skills, and talents to improve the community at large.

Definitions

For purposes of this Handbook:

1. “Parent” refers to a child’s parent(s) or authorized representative(s). An “authorized representative” means any person or entity authorized by law to act on behalf of any child. This may include a legal guardian, a conservator, or a public placement agency.
2. “School Personnel” refers to all employees including staff (including custodial, nursing, and counseling staff), faculty/teachers, and administration.

General Information

Admission Requirements

New students will be enrolled based on the following admission procedures:

- Step 1 — Complete application form; submit transcripts of the last two years; submit any Individualized Educational Program (“IEP”) agreements and disciplinary records.
- Step 2 — Take entrance examination (1st through 5th grade);
- Step 3 — Participate in an interview with the administration; and
- Step 4 — Submit birth certificate and medical records; pay the registration fee; sign the financial agreement.

School Hours

K-5th grade

8:00 a.m.	Students arrive to campus
8:15 am	Academic day begins
11:30 am - 12:15 pm	Lunchtime
3:30 pm	Dismissal

Parking Procedures/Drop-off and Pick-up

To ensure safety and orderliness, parents must follow the staggered drop-off and pick-up procedures:

Morning:

- Students must be dropped off between **7:45-8:00 a.m.**
- Enter through the Main Security Gate on Oakdale Ave. Then, drive to the blacktop. Your child(ren) will then be admitted to campus.
- Once your child is admitted on campus, you must immediately exit the parking lot through the north gate onto Hatillo Ave.

Afternoon:

- Dismissal is at **3:30 p.m.**
- Enter through the Main Security Gate and drive to the blacktop. Please pull forward and your child will be called to your car. Please exit immediately from the north gate onto Hatillo Ave. once your child is safely in your car.
- Students who have not been picked up by 4:00 pm will be escorted to daycare by their teachers.
- All cars must be cleared from the blacktop by 4:00 pm to make way for after-school student sports activities.

Our school is a closed campus with a security guard at the main gated entrance to monitor all who enter and leave.

Extended Day Care

For the convenience of working parents, the school offers extended daycare from 4:00 pm-5:30 pm for an additional fee. All children must be picked up from daycare by 5:30 pm. For more information about day care, please contact the Principal of the school.

After-School Enrichment Programs

AGBU MDS offers students a wide array of after-school activities which vary each semester. Enrichment programs provided for our elementary students range from sports, fitness, cheerleading, dance, karate, science, robotics, cooking, etc.

Different sessions are offered in the spring and fall. Parents receive an informative flyer by e-mail before the start of the spring and fall session. For more information on after-school enrichment programs, please contact the Director of Curriculum.

Parent Communication

The school emails parents regularly with updates on important dates and other events.

The school values ongoing communication with parents to meet student needs. To encourage open communication, teachers communicate with parents through the use of email on a daily basis. Parents may also obtain information about their child's progress and other school issues through a variety of communication channels, including the school website, Back-to-School Nights, personal conferences with teachers by appointment, and grade-level meetings. The school also utilizes a web-based program (Blackbaud) to give parents and students continuous access to academic grades.

If there are issues to be resolved, parents should contact:

1. The homeroom teacher or the resource teacher for matters related to a specific class;
2. Counselors for academic/social/emotional/personal matters;
3. The Principal if an issue requires more guidance that can be provided by the school staff mentioned above.

Parent Conduct Policy

Parents are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist students in meeting academic and behavioral expectations. Parents may respectfully express concerns about school operations and personnel.

However, they should not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor-driven, disruptive, hostile, threatening, or divisive. Any parent who insults or abuses any employee of the school, volunteers of the school, another parent, or any other contractor associated with the school, on school premises, adjacent to school premises, or some other location in connection with school activities, risks the enrollment of his/her child in the school.

In the event that any parent engages in any type of unacceptable conduct towards school employees, volunteers, parents, or any other contractor associated with the school, the school will apply some or all of the following measures as appropriate:

- Prohibit personal contact with the affected individual;
- Report threats of bodily harm, actual bodily harm, or any other illegal activity to the appropriate local, state or federal authorities;
- Withdraw their child's enrollment from the school; and/or
- Take any other action deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

For purposes of this policy, "unacceptable conduct" includes, but is not limited to any of the following:

- Insulting, abusive, or unprofessional conduct towards school employees, volunteers, parents, or any other contractor associated with the school. This applies whether the insulting, abusive, and/or unprofessional communication is telephonically, online (e-mail, social media, or any online forum), on the school premises, adjacent to the school premises, or some other location in connection with school activities;

- Threats or actual bodily harm or illegal activity against school employees, volunteers, parents, or any other contractor associated with the school;
- Any type of harassment, including: harassment based on age, sexual orientation, race; sexual harassment (including but not limited to inappropriate touching, sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures; verbal abuse; fighting, kicking, or other physical harm or attempted harm; making false, vicious, or malicious statements about another school employee, volunteer, parent, or any other contractor associated with the school; abusive, vulgar language; yelling or speaking in an aggressive raised voice; uncivil conduct or failure to maintain satisfactory working relationships with another school employee, volunteer, parent, or any other contractor associated with the school; immoral conduct or indecency; making unsubstantiated, malicious, embarrassing or false claims against another school employee, volunteer, parent, or any other contractor associated with the school;
- Deliberate or repeated violations of security procedures or safety rules;
- Deliberate or repeated violations of policies and procedures in this Handbook;
- Conducting or attempting to conduct or engage in any fraudulent, dishonest or deceptive activity of any kind;
- Any other act which endangers the safety, health or well-being of another.

The school does not have a progressive warning policy. Accordingly, the school reserves the right to determine, at its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning and without an intermediate step. For example, a parent may be required to withdraw their child's enrollment immediately if their uncooperative and disruptive behavior diminishes the effectiveness of the education process to such a degree that continuation of the child in the school is impossible.

Health Policies and Procedures

General

The school has a full-time nurse on staff to address students' medical concerns. Any questions, concerns, or developments you have regarding your child's health should be directed to the school nurse.

The school's health policies below provide information about the protocols the school will implement to address a student's health concerns, depending on the student's individual circumstance.

Sick Policies

Every student's health is a matter of major importance. A student must stay home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit;
- Red throat or an earache;
- A runny nose, watery eyes, or a constant cough;
- Vomiting;
- Diarrhea;
- Nausea or severe stomach cramps;
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes;
- Mucous of yellow or green;
- Draining eye (pink eye or sinus infection);
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing;

- Unexplained rash or skin eruption
- Contagious diseases; and/or
- If the student acts listless, drowsy, has a headache, flushed face, lack of appetite, or shows any behavior that is out of the ordinary.

The following protocols will be followed if a student presents symptoms of illness:

- A student with symptoms of possible illness will be sent to the school nurse's office. If the nurse deems it appropriate, the student's parent will be called to take him/her home.
- If the nurse takes the student's temperature, and if he/she has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, the parent will be called to take him/her home.
- If required, the school nurse will administer medication, provided that the nurse has received written authorization from the student's parent and/or a physician.
- A student with a contagious illness will be excluded from the school until no longer contagious, as to not expose other students. A physician's note or the school nurse's approval is needed for a student with a contagious illness to return to school.
- A student on prescription medication must stay home until symptoms are gone.
- If your child contracts a contagious illness, please notify the school so that the school can inform the other parents.

Insurance

Primary Insurance: All students must be covered by a verifiable health insurance plan through their parent(s). The Preschool reserves the right to request proof of coverage.

Secondary Insurance: The Preschool also has insurance which assists in the medical expenses incurred for accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to and from school, or while participating solely in school-sponsored and supervised activities. This is a secondary insurance policy after the parent(s)' primary insurance.

Accident or Emergency Procedures

If your child suffers a minor injury at the school, the nurse will administer simple first aid, such as washing the injury, applying ice, and bandaging.

In the event of a more serious injury that may require medical services, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Call parent or guardian.
2. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the school will call one of the persons listed on the emergency list.
3. In the case that the above two fail, the school will call an ambulance or paramedic team and have the child taken to the emergency room. A staff person will accompany the child in the paramedics van or ambulance.
4. If an injury is severe, the school will call 911 first and then attempt to reach you and/or your emergency contacts. If necessary, the student will be taken to the nearest emergency hospital.

5. All serious injuries will be recorded on the school's Injury Report form.

Please note any and all expenses incurred as to #3 and #4 will first be borne by the child's family and their insurance policy. Any additional expenses will be covered by the School's insurance policy.

Medication

If your child requires prescription medication at school, the medication must be brought to school by the parent, clearly marked in its original container, with the child's name, dosage, and time to be administered. Over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, aspirin, cough trips, etc. will generally be available at the nurse's office.

The school nurse will administer over-the-counter medication, provided parents provide authorization. If the medication is a prescription, the school nurse will administer the medication, provided parents submit a release form and provide prescription information detailing the name of the medication along with the amount, dosage, and time to be administered.

Lice

The nurse will also periodically check the students' hair for lice. If lice is found, the nurse will notify the student's parents.

You must notify us if your child has lice. If your child is sent home with nits and lice, he/she will NOT be allowed back to school until all nits and lice have been removed. Students who have had lice or nits must be checked and cleared through the school office prior to returning to their classroom.

Allergies

Parents should notify the nurse and administration about any allergies and provide a doctor's note. The nurse will document the student's allergies and any medications the student may require, including the administration of an Epi-pen. The documentation will be kept in the nurse's office, and the student's teachers will be notified to take all precautionary measures.

Immunizations

California law requires that students be immunized against certain diseases based on their age group and provide health records prior to admission.

Pursuant to SB 277 signed by Governor Jerry Brown, California no longer recognizes "personal beliefs" as an exemption for immunizations. In special cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition, a written statement is required from the child's physician (medical exemption). The physician's statement must provide the duration of the medical exemption and the reason for the medical exemption. All parents must submit a physician's statement for this medical exemption to the school nurse and prior to admission. The School will review the exemption and communicate its decision to the parent. Students who do not have immunization records on file and/or an authorized medical exemption will not be allowed to attend the school unless he or she receives the required immunizations.

Cafeteria (Café Charles)

The school cafeteria serves hot lunch every day. The cafeteria crew prepares fresh, health-conscious meals based on a menu that changes every month. Students are expected to demonstrate proper lunchroom manners, clean up after eating, and show consideration for supervising adults and cafeteria staff.

To make food purchases, students will be required to have an account set up with the school's online *LunchTime*® system. Parents must ensure there are sufficient funds available for the student to use. Cash payments will not be accepted. Parents will be notified of any outstanding balance on their child's *LunchTime*® account and must promptly pay the balance.

Disaster Preparedness

The school has implemented an emergency plan, and the procedures are to be followed at the time of an earthquake or another emergency. Fire and earthquake drills are practiced periodically. Students must treat each drill as if it were a real emergency. This ensures that in the event of an actual emergency, the same procedures will be followed.

Emergencies are events that present an active threat on school premises. These include, but are not limited to fire, earthquakes, intruders who pose a threat, etc. Events such as these may result in a lockdown, a shelter-in-place, or an evacuation depending upon the emergency.

To the extent possible, the school will notify parents of the nature of the emergency and any decisions regarding school dismissal. In case of an emergency on school premises, such as a fire or earthquake, the teachers will give directions on where to go and what to do. Students are to follow their instructions completely. If the fire alarm sounds during class, students are to evacuate with that class to the appropriate field.

“No Candy” Policy

One of our goals is to improve the well-being of the entire community by teaching students ways to establish and maintain lifelong health through better eating habits and physical activity. In keeping with this goal, candy is restricted for students. Candy (or any processed food made predominantly from sweeteners or artificial sweeteners with a variety of minor ingredients) includes, but is not limited to, hard candy, jellies, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy, and candy coated popcorn. *Candy is only allowed on Halloween day.* Staff may not provide candy to students under any circumstances as a reward, but candy may be used occasionally as an educational tool (e.g., sorting M&Ms). Parents should follow this policy when packing lunches and snacks for their children and when bringing treats for their child's class.

Birthdays and Parties

A birthday is a special day in a child's life. The school is happy to share in the day. For class birthday celebrations, parents may make arrangements with their child's homeroom teacher. As a reminder, we are a “Nut Safe Zone” school. Please do not bring any foods containing peanuts and/or tree nuts. This includes products processed in facilities that also process nuts. Please read all food labels carefully.

If a student is going to bring invitations to school for a birthday or other party, he/she needs to make sure that all students in the class are invited. Otherwise, parents are asked to make alternate arrangements to distribute invitations. AGBU MDS STRONGLY ENCOURAGES FULL-CLASSROOM INCLUSION whenever possible for out-of-school birthday celebrations.

Academics

AGBU MDS offers a challenging and enriched academic program for all grade levels. In the elementary department, classroom teaching and student effort aim to develop fundamental skills in all subject areas to prepare students for the rigorous college-preparatory program in middle and high school. Parents should realize that the school's academic programs are demanding and require sustained levels of student concentration, effort, motivation, as well as daily home support.

Grade Reporting

AGBU MDS teachers maintain their grades on Blackbaud. This software enables parents and students to access grades at all times.

Academic Standards

Students are expected to report to school on time and well-prepared, be ready for instruction at the bell, participate in class work and discussions, complete all homework assignments as per the one-week-schedule (OWS), and attend after-school tutoring sessions as needed. The school requires rigorous and consistent effort from all students. Students should demonstrate academic integrity in their work habits and schoolwork.

Teachers track student academic progress for all students throughout the school year. In the event that a student presents with difficulties accessing grade-level curriculum, parents will be notified by their child's teacher. The teacher and parent will meet to discuss the noted academic challenges, and discuss the steps to be taken to support the student in academic success. Students who continue to present with academic difficulty in one or more subject areas may require collaboration of the student, parent, homeroom teacher, counselor, resource teacher, and Principal (Student Success Team) to facilitate a comprehensive approach to educational intervention.

If a student receives a below average (C or lower) in two core subjects (math, English, science, social studies, and Armenian) in a semester, he/she will be placed on Academic Monitoring. When a student is placed on Academic Monitoring, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent(s) will be notified.
2. An Academic Support Plan will be created with the collaboration of the student, parent, homeroom teacher, counselor, resource teacher, and Principal (Student Success Team – SST- see below). The purpose of the Academic Support Plan is to implement practices to improve the student's grades and work habits.
3. If despite the implementation of an Academic Support Plan, the student continues to present with academic difficulty, the school will offer a referral for a formal, external comprehensive assessment to identify contributing variables that may be impeding the student's progress, and assist in developing further support. The school will make reasonable efforts to guide and accommodate the student if the assessment finds that the student requires accommodation and/or additional guidance to improve.
4. However, if the student fails to improve despite the school's efforts, the student will be placed on Academic Probation. If the student fails to show marked improvement by the next school year, their enrollment may be at risk.

At times, a student may have an opportunity to improve their grade in a subject if the school offers a summer school class for that subject. However, if a necessary class is not offered, students may enroll in the appropriate class at another educational institution.

Academic Dishonesty

This Academic Dishonesty Policy provides students with guidelines and rules for appropriate and inappropriate academic behavior. Academic honesty means that each student does his or her own work on assignments, homework and examinations (tests/quizzes), and accurately recognizes/cites the work of others when appropriate. Plagiarism is one form of Academic Dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined as the wrongful appropriation or close imitation of another's work.

Other examples of Academic Dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Copying another student's classwork, homework, or assignment
- Copying from a textbook verbatim
- Asking another student questions during a test or copying another student's answers during a test
- Allowing another student to view your personal work during a test
- Allowing a student to copy one's homework or giving another student test answers
- Preparing homework for another student or giving/lending assigned work to a student who copies the work or represents it as his or her own
- Taking work from a teacher's room without permission
- Taking a picture of a test
- Removing a test from a testing situation without the teacher's permission
- Providing information about a test to any student who will be taking it at a later time
- Receiving information about a test from a student who has already completed it
- Using unauthorized materials/cheat notes during exams and quizzes
- Using the Teacher's Edition Guide without permission to ascertain answers
- Submitting any material claimed as one's own but sourcing it from publications, websites, or other media without accreditation
- Attempting to change or changing a grade in a teacher's online grade book
- Someone other than the student submitting work with the student's name

Academic Dishonesty is considered to be a serious violation and warrants punitive recourse. Students who are considered guilty of Academic Dishonesty will receive a zero for their work, their parents will be notified, records will be kept in their cumulative file, and after-school detention will be assigned. The school reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary actions if warranted.

Class Placement

Class lists undergo a thorough, thoughtful and intentional process by teachers, counselors and administrators prior to finalizing. Additionally, class numbers are balanced by the number of sections per grade level. Class placement may not be switched throughout the school year. Requests regarding class placement will not be accepted by the school.

Homework

Daily homework is a requirement for all students. It aims to reinforce the content of subjects taught in the classroom and to sharpen newly acquired skills. It helps develop sound home study habits and fosters the valuable practice of independent work. Teachers will email the one-week-schedules (OWS) of assignments, quizzes, and tests to parents on a weekly basis and post it on their class website.

Below are the guidelines of time allotments regarding homework, per grade level:

- K-1st – A minimum of 15 minutes to a maximum of 30 minutes per night
- 2nd – A minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of 45 minutes per night
- 3rd-5th – A minimum of 10 minutes to a maximum of 20 minutes *per subject* each night

These time frames are estimates. Every student is unique and may take a shorter or longer time to complete the assignments.

Teachers, parents, and students all play an integral role in the success of homework. Teachers provide the foundation for developing positive study habits. Homework assigned must be a review of the skills and lessons taught in the classroom. Teachers will give appropriate feedback, as necessary, on each assignment. Parents should show an active interest in assignments but limit their assistance. Parents should also provide encouragement and support to their child. They must be accountable for the completion of their homework. Books and materials taken home must be returned as required. Work turned in must reflect the **student's best effort**.

Students need to complete all homework assigned and return it to their teacher on the due date.

Testing

Students are tested at regular intervals depending on the subject, at the teacher's discretion. A teacher may quiz students at any time, whether it is planned or unannounced. Students are encouraged to keep a portfolio of all tests for review purposes. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the teacher and schedule a make-up quiz or test.

Each year, standardized tests are taken by students in elementary school to assist teachers and parents in assessing the progress, strengths, and needs of students in different academic areas.

Evaluation

The school evaluates each student on a broad assessment basis, which includes the outcomes of tests and quizzes, projects, performances, presentations, homework, classroom participation, effort/improvement, and other applicable factors. It is a recommended practice for teachers and students to maintain portfolios of all work done throughout the school year.

Reporting Student Academic Progress

Teachers continuously report student academic progress to parents. In elementary, grading is done on a semester system. A semester consists of approximately 90 school days. At the end of each semester, students will receive their report cards. During the middle of the semester, students who are receiving below average in any subject may receive a semester progress report.

Teachers communicate with families primarily via email and regularly post grades online. Using a login and password, parents and students can use the school's web-based program (Blackbaud) to check grades and progress in classes on an ongoing basis at any time. Transcripts are issued to transferring students at no charge.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The school encourages parents to participate in their children's education on a daily basis. Parents can do so by participating in Parent-Teacher conferences. The purpose of Parent-Teacher conferences is to discuss and inform parents about student performance so that they are involved in the academic progress of their child and are informed of their child's classroom behavior.

Appointments with teachers can be made by phone or email. In general, teachers are available for meetings after school.

Counseling

AGBU MDS provides academic/behavioral/social/emotional counseling for students to facilitate student development in academic, behavioral, developmental, and social/emotional areas. Students may be referred to counseling services by a student and/or parent. A student may also refer themselves to counseling services. The school counselor plans, implements, and evaluates developmentally appropriate guidance programs that address the needs and priorities of the school and each student. Students are referred to the school counselor by teachers and/or parents, or they may seek counseling on their own. Students see the counselor for a variety of concerns, including but not limited to, academic achievement, behavior issues, support services, potential crisis, and/or any other matters that may be impeding their progress in the school.

Services may be offered on an individual, small group, and/or classroom basis, depending on the needs of the student/class. Individual counseling sessions may be appropriate for students who need further intervention. Support groups are offered to students throughout the year to support and enhance the development of personal skills and to promote educational success. Student support groups provide students with opportunities to learn about their abilities and interests, develop positive relationships, take responsibility for their behavior, make effective decisions, and express feelings in healthy ways. School-based interventions are also implemented where the school counselor conducts classroom guidance lessons aligned with social development competencies, based on students' needs, teacher concerns, and related data.

The school counselor and teachers reassure all students that issues discussed in the counselor's office are confidential, unless the counselor sees a need to inform school personnel, or the appropriate authorities, in cases of potential harm to self or others.

Counseling services are available to all students through a three-tiered system for intervention, as set forth below.

TIER 1: Tier 1 interventions occur within the classroom. Students who refer themselves to counseling or who are referred by a teacher and/or parent are subject to an initial evaluation. The evaluation encompasses a meeting between the teacher and parent, a meeting with the student, and a formal observation by the counselor. During this formal observation, the counselor assesses and monitors the student.

If a student requires additional intervention outside the classroom environment, the school will implement Tier

2 interventions, as set forth below.

TIER 2: Based on information obtained during the initial evaluation in Tier 1, all or some of the following steps may be taken, depending on the nature and extent of the student's behavior:

- A. Additional monitoring by the counselor, which may include additional visits to the classroom and hands on intervention by the counselor;
- B. Referral to a student support group; and/or
- C. Referral to an individual session (or sessions) with the counselor;

If the school determines that additional counseling services are needed due to the nature and extent of the student's behavior, the school will implement Tier 3 interventions, as set forth below.

TIER 3: At the Tier 3 level, a formal referral for comprehensive assessment will be offered to assist in identifying the student's strengths/weaknesses and area(s) of need.

Once identified, a formal Academic Support Plan (ASP), Behavioral Support Plan (BSP) and/or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be put into place, depending on the student's needs.

Please note the school does not have a progressive counseling policy. The nature of services provided will depend on the needs of the student and/or the student's progress in earlier interventions. For example, a student may need Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions immediately, depending on his/her needs. The counselor will use his/her discretion to determine the most appropriate steps to assess the student's, teachers, and or parent's concern.

Standards of Conduct

The following student standards of conduct will apply at all times:

- Students will attend school every day and arrive to class on time, with proper materials, prepared to work.
- Students will accept and respect directions from their teachers and all school employees.
- Students will respect the rights and property of other students.
- Students will demonstrate self-control while on campus and while attending school-related activities off campus, and show respect for the neighboring community.
- Students will keep their hands, feet, and objects away from others.
- Students will respect and care for all school property and equipment.
- Students will conduct themselves in an orderly manner while at school.
- Students will be polite, respectful, courteous, and cooperative with everyone they meet, including parents, School Personnel, campus guests, and fellow students.
- Students will refrain from disruptive/inappropriate behaviors.
- Students will follow all policies and procedures in this Handbook.

Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

A student is an AGBU MDS student at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether on campus or off-campus, during school hours or outside school hours, that is found to be inconsistent with the values of or harmful to the reputation of AGBU MDS may be subject to discipline.

Unacceptable Conduct

While not intended to be an all-inclusive list, the examples below represent behavior that is unacceptable and warrants discipline:

- Any conduct, in the judgment of School Personnel, that is:
 - Inconsistent with the values or harmful to the reputation of the school; and/or
 - Undermines the authority of school personnel; and/or
 - Is disruptive, disrespectful, insubordinate or defiant of school personnel.
- Any conduct that violates the Standards of Conduct set forth in the Handbook's "Standards of Conduct" Policy.
- Assault and Battery. This includes any caused, attempts to cause, or threats (including written and verbal) to cause physical injury to another person;
- Insubordination;
- Bullying;
- Harassment;
- Destruction of school property;
- Failure to be prepared for class;
- Fighting;
- Roasting;
- Causing a disruption in the classroom;
- Indecent exposure or exhibitionism;
- Leaving school premises or class without authorization;
- Littering;
- Profanity, pornography or obscene gestures or drawings. This includes the drawing of any objects or figures that are offensive, inappropriate, obscene, or pornographic;
- Threats against School Personnel, students, other parents, or anyone affiliated with the school. This includes statements of any kind that threaten, describe, or hope for violence, or create an intimidating or threatening environment at the school;
- Theft or robbery;
- Campus disturbance and inappropriate assembly;
- Failure to be prepared for class;
- Horseplay;
- Failure to wear the proper uniform;
- Food fights/throwing (ex. Food, bottles or cans) objects;
- Possession and/or use of weapons and dangerous instruments, real or fake. This includes possession of weapons (real or fake) or dangerous instruments on school grounds, in the school parking lot, to or from school, or at any school-related or sponsored activity or event. Weapons (real or fake) and dangerous instruments include, but are not limited to, firearms, air guns, paint-ball guns and stunt guns; cutting or puncturing devices like dirks, daggers, knives, or folding knives with locking blades; and/or
- Violation of any policy set forth in this Handbook, including but not limited to the school's Attendance/Absences policy, Dress Code policy, Cell phones and other Electronic Devices policy, and/or Tardiness policy.

General Guidelines:

When school policies, guidelines, or rules are violated, different disciplinary measures may be taken, at the discretion of the school administration. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Factors to consider shall include: (1) the seriousness of the violation; (2) the student's disciplinary history; (3) the student's potential for success at the school; (4) the student's attitude; and, (5) any other factors the administration desires to consider. It is possible that two students violating the same guidelines or rules at the same time may receive different disciplinary consequences.

Final Determination in Disciplinary Issues. The AGBU MDS administration reserves the right to make the final determination with regard to student disciplinary issues and consequences. The Principal is generally the final authority with regards to disciplinary issues.

Modifications. The AGBU MDS administration retains the right to modify any part of this policy at any time, if it believes modification is in the best interest of the school. Written notification will be provided to parents.

Right to End Relationship. The school reserves the right to end its relationship with a student and/or family at any time and for any reason if the administration believes that AGBU MDS is best served by ending the relationship. At the discretion of the administration, the student may be given the opportunity to voluntarily withdraw or be disenrolled.

No Progressive Discipline Policy. ***The school does not have a progressive discipline policy.*** Accordingly, the school at its discretion may choose any disciplinary consequence it deems fit, depending on the nature and extent of the student's behavior. For example, if warranted, the student may be immediately referred to the Disciplinary Committee and subject to removal, without receiving Infractions prior to the incident.

Types of Disciplinary Consequences:

Violations of the school's rules or policies may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, one or more of the consequences listed below:

- (1) Minor disciplinary problems may be handled by a teacher or staff member. The teacher or staff member will, at their discretion, determine to impose some, or all, of the following consequences:
 - a) Teacher student informal conference: This is generally a conference where the teacher will inform the student of the misbehavior and guide them to making better choices.
 - b) Loss of recess time: The student will be subject to one, or multiple, days of lost recess time.
 - c) Parent notification: The student's parent will be informed of the incident.
- (2) If behavior persists, or if the conduct is serious enough that it warrants harsher discipline, the student will be referred to the Principal (or the Principal's designee) and may be subject to the following consequences:
 - a) Behavioral Monitoring/Disciplinary Review: Students who consistently exhibit behavioral problems will be subject to Behavioral Monitoring/Disciplinary Review. The student will be monitored by teachers/staff and will be provided feedback regarding his/her behavior. The student may also be referred to counseling services. Students who are on Behavioral Monitoring/Disciplinary Review will have a hold on their account and will not be allowed to register for the upcoming school year until they demonstrate improvement in their behavior and the hold is removed.
 - b) Infraction: Infractions are disciplinary write-ups that are issued as a consequence of disciplinary

problems. The consequences of an Infraction include:

- Loss of privileges: For example, the student may be restricted from participation in school activities, athletics, and/or events at the discretion of the Principal.
 - Reflection Form: This form is completed by the student and explains the incident, the student's role and responsibility in the incident, and the student's plan for improvement. This form must be signed by the student and the student's parent.
 - Parent Meeting: A meeting between the student, parent, and teacher who witnessed the incident.
- c) Suspension: The parents of suspended students will be notified of the suspension by phone or email. Suspended students are responsible for making up all schoolwork activities and assignments missed while on suspension. The teacher has the discretion to determine whether a suspended student can make up missed work. There are two types of suspensions: (1) In-school suspension: The student serves the suspension at AGBU MDS under the direction of the Principal. The student will not be permitted to attend school, activities, or athletic events while on suspension. (2) Out-of-School Suspension: The student is not permitted on campus or at any AGBU MDS activities or events during the suspension period.
- d) Disciplinary Probation: AGBU MDS may place a student on Disciplinary Probation to ensure that the student understands the seriousness of a disciplinary problem and to provide the student with an opportunity to improve. The student and parents may be required to sign a written contract outlining the terms, conditions, sanctions and/or restrictions of the probation. A student may be placed on probation for as long as the Principal deems necessary. Students who are on Disciplinary Probation will have a hold on their account and will not be allowed to register for the upcoming school year until they demonstrate improvement in their behavior and the hold is removed.
- e) Referral to Counseling Services. Students who are referred to counseling services will be subject to the Academic/Behavioral/Social/Emotional Counseling Policy.
- f) Referral to Disciplinary Committee: The Disciplinary Committee is an advisory body to the Principal that may be convened to address disciplinary issues and provide recommendations for appropriate consequences. The Disciplinary Committee is advisory only. The Principal retains the authority to determine the disposition of disciplinary issues. The Disciplinary Committee may consist of administrators, counselors, teachers, and/or other school personnel. Students may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee by the Principal.

The Disciplinary Committee may make one of the following recommendations to the Principal:

Continued Enrollment: Student continues to be enrolled at the school. Continued enrollment may have other disciplinary consequences such as, but not limited to, loss of privileges, inability to participate in athletic events, possible switch of the classroom.

Parent Withdrawal: This designation provides a student and his/her family the opportunity to voluntarily withdraw from the school. Upon withdrawal or disenrollment, the student's attendance at AGBU is terminated by the school.

Withdrawal for Disciplinary Purposes: Upon withdrawal for disciplinary purposes, a student's attendance at AGBU MDS is terminated by the school. The student's record will be marked as a withdrawal for disciplinary purposes.

Expulsion: Upon expulsion, a student's attendance at the school is terminated by the school. The student's record will be marked as an expulsion.

- g) Expulsion: Whenever a student's behavior deteriorates to the point where school order is disrupted, or the morale, well-being, or good reputation of the students, faculty, staff, and school are jeopardized, the student forfeits the privilege of continuing his or her education at the school. In exceptional cases, it may become necessary to expel students after a single major violation of a school rule.

Specific Disciplinary Rules:

Students will generally be subject to the following disciplinary rules. However, as set forth above, the school does not have a progressive disciplinary policy, and the discipline the school imposes depends on the egregiousness of the conduct. Thus, the school reserves the right to impose higher levels of discipline, without providing any warning or infractions first.

Student misconduct will be formally documented in Blackbaud and communicated to the student's parents. Students will receive an Infraction following three occasions of their misconduct being documented in Blackbaud. Students who do not correct their behavior will continue to receive Infractions.

In general, students who receive multiple Infractions will be subject to the following consequences:

- Students who receive one (1) infraction will have their Infraction documented as an Infraction in Blackbaud.
- Students who receive two (2) infractions will be reported to the Student Affairs Officer.
- Students who receive three (3) infractions will be required to attend a Parent Teacher conference.
- Students who receive four (4) infractions will be placed on Disciplinary Probation.
- Students who receive five (5) infractions will be placed on a one (1) day in-school suspension.
- Students who receive six (6) infractions will be placed on a three (3) day in-school suspension.
- Students who receive more than six (6) infractions will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee and may be subject to removal from the School.

Attendance/Absences

Daily attendance is extremely important to the development of the student and academic success in the school. The educational process within the classroom environment demands daily attendance so students will be able to receive maximum benefits. All classes include class participation in their grading. Therefore, student absences and tardiness can negatively impact a student's grades. Every student is expected to make up any missed work because of an absence.

If a student has three (3) or more unexcused absences in a semester, the administration will schedule a meeting with the parent(s) to discuss the student's absences. If, after a further period of time, there is no significant improvement in the student's attendance, or the student's attendance continues to accrue in unexcused absences to a total of five (5) days in a semester, the administration will schedule another meeting with the parents. Students who continue to accrue unexcused absences beyond five (5) days in a semester are subject to discipline by the school. The school reserves the right to impose the appropriate level of discipline as it deems fit.

Absences are considered excused under limited circumstances. Excused absences include:

- (1) Absences because of temporary illness or injury;
- (2) Absences for an extended period of time due to physical, mental, or emotional disability;
- (3) Absences due to a school-sponsored activity;
- (4) Absences by those who are in custody of court or law enforcement authorities;
- (5) Absences determined by school administration to be excusable, such as doctor's appointments or appointments with outside agencies.
- (6) Absences due to severe weather conditions that make it impossible to attend school.

The school reserves the right to request documentation to support a student's absence before considering the absence excused. If a student is absent for three (3) or more days due to an illness, a doctor's note clearing the student to return will be required upon entry.

Out-of-school suspensions will not count as absences.

To the extent possible, parents and students should schedule appointments in such a manner that they do not occur within school hours. Parents must report an absence the morning of each day that the student is absent, via phone or email. If a voicemail message is left, parents must include the student's full name, grade, parent name, and contact number. Also, parents should provide the homeroom teacher or administration with documentation regarding any circumstances that would lead to an extended period of absence. If absences are warranted, the school must be informed so that a student support plan may be implemented during the student's absence and upon their return.

Tardiness

For K- 5th grade, the school day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m., with instruction beginning at 8:15 a.m. Students are expected to arrive to school on time each day. If a student is tardy, a parent must walk them to the Main Office and sign them in. The student will then be given a tardy slip to be admitted to class. After five tardy slips, the student will receive a Tardy Infraction and the parent will be called into a meeting by the school administration. If tardiness persists, the student may be subject to disciplinary probation.

The teacher has discretion to determine whether classwork, quizzes, and/or tests will be allowed to be submitted or retaken

Early Dismissal

If you would like early dismissal for your child, you must request an early dismissal by emailing your child's teacher and the Principal, and provide the school with at least 24 hour notice. If we do not have sufficient notice, you will have to wait until it is a convenient time during the class for the student to be dismissed.

Cellular Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Students may bring cell phones to school. However, they must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack throughout the entire school day. Students are permitted to utilize their cell phones on campus after 3:45 pm, solely for contact with his/her parent/guardian. Students may not use their phones on campus at any time for social media (children under the age of 14 are not permitted to utilize social media), games, apps, music, etc.

Students may not bring other electronic devices to school, including but not limited to, iPads, Smartwatches tablets, Game Boy, or any other gaming or electronic gadgets.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy:

A cellular phone or other unauthorized electronic device displayed or being used during school hours will be confiscated, and the following consequences will be incurred:

- **First Incident:** One-day penalty—School will confiscate phone/electronic device for a day. Student must be accompanied by a parent to retrieve confiscated device from administration at the end of the school day after the confiscation.
- **Second Incident:** One-week penalty—School will confiscate phone/electronic device for a week. Student must be accompanied by a parent to retrieve confiscated device from administration after the course of one school week.
- **Third Incident:** One-month penalty—Student will not be permitted to bring his/her cell phone/electronic device to school for one month.
- **Fourth Incident:** Student will not be permitted to bring his/her cell phone/electronic device to school for the remainder of the school year.

The school is not responsible for the loss/theft of any such item, whether confiscated or otherwise.

Internet/Technology Usage

The school offers computer and Internet access for educational, instructional, and research purposes for all students. All students have access to the Internet for access to information resources. In the spirit of respect for the AGBU MDS community, student use of technology on or off campus should in no way embarrass, threaten, or defame another member of the community or the reputation of the school itself. Posting inappropriate material to social networking/media or other websites may lead to disciplinary action. AGBU MDS reserves the right to take action in response to this type of behavior.

Unacceptable use of the school computer network and/or the Internet includes:

- Accessing, transmitting, or downloading obscene depictions, harmful materials, or materials that encourage others to violate the law;
- Selling or purchasing any illegal substance;
- Transmitting or downloading confidential information or copyrighted material;
- Use that causes harm to others or damage to their property;
- Use that involves obtaining and/or using an anonymous email site, disguising one's identity, impersonating other users, or sending anonymous email messages;
- Use of any trademarks, logos, or symbols associated with the school without the permission of the school and/or in a matter that brings discredit to, or damage the reputation of, the school or a person associated with the school;
- Threatening, harassing, or making defamatory or false statements about others;
- Using profane, abusive, or impolite language;
- Accessing, transmitting, or downloading offensive, harassing, or disparaging material;
- Commercial uses of the school network;
- Damaging computer equipment, files, data, or the network;
- Accessing, transmitting, or downloading computer viruses or other harmful files or programs, or in any way degrading or disrupting the performance of any computer system;
- Using any school computer to pursue hacking, internal or external to the school network, or

- attempting to access information that is protected by privacy laws;
- Use that jeopardizes access or leads to unauthorized access into personal accounts or other computer networks;
- Compromising another user's social media account;
- Introducing USB drives or other portable media into the network without having them checked for viruses;
- Deleting, copying, modifying, or forging another user's emails, files or data; and/or
- Accessing another user's email or online accounts without their permission.

Parents and students should be particularly mindful of the content used for:

- Creating web pages on websites or other social networking sites (such as Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- Social media postings, entries or other communications
- Email
- Digital photographs
- File sharing or hosting sites
- Phone calls
- Voicemail messages
- Picture messages
- Text messages
- Chat or instant messaging sessions
- Video messages
- Websites and web pages
- Blog entries

The school restricts access to material that is inappropriate in the school environment. It is possible that your child may find material on the Internet that you would consider objectionable. To help avoid this we have installed an Internet blocking program to limit access to inappropriate material. However, the software is not entirely effective in blocking access and, therefore, we cannot guarantee that your child will not gain access to inappropriate material. There may be additional kinds of material on the Internet that are not in accord with your family values. We would like to encourage you to use this as an opportunity to have a discussion with your child about your family values and your expectation about how these values should guide your child's activities while they are on the Internet.

Students who violate the Internet/Technology Usage Policy will be subject to discipline, including referral to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee will consider each case accordingly, based on the egregiousness of the violation. Violations that are serious could mandate an indefinite suspension, disciplinary probation, and possible expulsion.

School Use of Photos/Images/Videos Policy

Parents and students should be aware that AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School regularly uses photos/images of students on the school website (www.agbumds.org) and its social media pages (Facebook and Instagram). Student names and/or videos of the student may or may not be used as well, depending on the situation. If a parent and/or student does not want the student's image/name and/or videos of the student used on the school website or social media pages, they must execute a "School Use of Photos/Images/Videos Opt-Out Form" and

submit it to the administration. This form is attached to this Handbook or available upon request.

Dress Code Policy

The purpose of the Dress Code Policy is to develop and maintain a sense of school identity and unity among students. It is also an attempt to simplify the students' wardrobe needs. This policy will be enforced by administrators and teachers on a daily and consistent basis.

Proper Uniform:

1. All students are required to wear the school uniform throughout the entire school day:
 - **Boys:** White polo shirt or maroon polo shirt with school logo, grey trousers/pants (grey shorts to the knee on warm/hot days, NO CARGO PANTS), white cotton socks, and athletic shoes or rubber-soled walking shoes.
 - **Girls:** Plaid skirt or plaid jumper, white polo shirt or maroon polo shirt with school logo, black leggings, shorts, white socks, and athletic shoes or rubber-soled walking shoes. Jersey-type shorts or shorts that hang under the uniform are not allowed.

ALL STUDENTS:

- Only school approved maroon sweatshirts /crewnecks are allowed.
 - Long sleeved shirts under polos must be black or white only.
 - PE uniforms and athletic shoes can be worn on PE days and school approved days.
 - On cold days, students are allowed to wear additional coats over the school approved sweatshirt/crewneck.
 - Spirit shirts with PE shorts can only be worn on school-assigned days.
 - Students can only wear "free dress" on school-assigned days.
 - Shoes with inappropriate designs (for example, skull and bones, offensive material, etc.), open-toed shoes, and/or sandals are not permitted.
 - Hats are not allowed on campus. Girls may wear solid color headbands or those that match the uniform only.
 - Temporary tattoos are prohibited.
 - Haircuts are to be appropriate, well-kept, and away from the eyes.
 - Dying hair is not permitted.
2. Additional physical appearance standards for girls:
 - No visible jewelry, except watches and one pair of small, nondescript stud earrings, is permitted. Simple hair clips are allowed to keep hair out of the face. Girls may not wear excessive ribbons or other showy hair accessories.
 - All forms of makeup are prohibited.
 - Nail polish is prohibited.
 3. Additional physical appearance standards for boys:
 - Hair must be kept at an appropriate length, may not be worn below the collar, eyebrows, or ears, and may not be cut so short to display the scalp.
 - No visible jewelry, except for watches, is allowed. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings or studs.

Dress Code Violations:

Upon arrival each day, homeroom teachers check students' attire. Students who violate this policy are subject to the following consequences:

First violation: The student will be asked to rectify the problem immediately. If necessary, the student may be asked to wait in the main office until the parent brings the appropriate uniform attire. If the parent does not have the proper uniform or cannot drop it off, they have 48 hours to purchase the appropriate uniform.

Subsequent violations: The student will not be permitted inside the classroom. The student will be sent to the office and will be required to go home and return only when in proper uniform.

Uniform violations will be recorded on an Infraction Form. The homeroom teacher will notify the parents via email of each uniform violation.

IMPORTANT: THE ADMINISTRATION MAY MODIFY THE DRESS CODE AS NEEDED IN ALL CASES. THE ADMINISTRATION MAKES THE FINAL DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT AN OUTFIT MEETS THE DRESS CODE STANDARDS.

Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

General

At AGBU MDS, we believe that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The school community must promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. Our school community is full of exceptional students, parents, teachers, staff, and administration who want to continue working and learning in a safe and welcoming school environment. To maintain a positive and safe environment, the school has implemented proactive preventative strategies that support our anti-bullying and anti-harassment efforts.

Teachers are encouraged to discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of harassment or bullying. Students who bully and harass are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as set forth in more detail below.

This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school for a school-sponsored activity, and during the lunch/recess period.

What is Harassment?

All behaviors that constitute harassment, whether in person or online, are strictly prohibited.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

Verbal Harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.

Physical Harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

Visual Harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

What is Bullying?

All behaviors that constitute bullying, whether in person or online, are strictly prohibited. Bullying is generally defined as unwanted aggressive behavior towards another individual that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The imbalance is created between the aggressor and the victim. Bullying may include verbal or non-verbal threats, physical assault, or other methods of coercion such as blackmail, manipulation, or extortion.

The Different Forms of Bullying

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

Emotional, Psychological, Relational or Social Bullying: Blackmailing, defaming, extorting, humiliating, intimidating, isolating, manipulating friendships, ostracizing, rating or ranking personal characteristics, rejecting, terrorizing, or using peer pressure.

Indirect Bullying: The use of intimidation to cause physical or psychological harm to a third party. A person who engages in indirect bullying is sometimes referred to as the instigator or shot caller.

Nonverbal Bullying: The use of gestures, leering, posting threatening graffiti or graphic images, posturing, stalking, staring, or property destruction to demean, distress, or frighten.

Physical Bullying: The intentional act of beating, biting, fighting, hitting, kicking, poking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, or tripping to cause or attempt to cause physical discomfort, injury, or pain.

Verbal Bullying: Hurtful gossiping, making rude noises, making threats, name-calling, spreading rumors, or teasing to cause emotional or psychological harm.

Racial/Ethnic/Religious Bullying: Bias based on ancestry, culture, ethnicity, language, nationality, race, religion, or skin color. Intergroup conflict may occur within or between socially constructed subgroups, such as between first and second generations of the same ethnic group. Bullying that targets ancestry, culture, ethnicity, language, nationality, race, religion, or skin color may be symptomatic of a larger problem of intergroup conflict, requiring systemic interventions.

What is Cyber Bullying?

Cyber bullying is defined as the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target by means of written, verbal, or visual messages/images. This may be done through email, instant messaging, chat room exchange, social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.), or digital messages/images sent to a cell phone or personal computer, laptop, electronic tablet, etc. Cyber bullying, like traditional bullying, involves an imbalance of power, aggression, and a negative action that is often repeated.

Cyber-Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Pretending to be someone else online to trick others or create false personal accounts in place of others;

- Spreading lies and rumors about victims;
- Tricking people into revealing personal information and using that information against that person;
- Sending or forwarding hurtful messages through the use of technology;
- Posting pictures of victims without their consent; and/or
- Purposefully humiliating another person to cause harm.

Reporting Obligations and Investigations

Prompt notification of bullying and/or harassment is essential to providing a safe school environment and allowing the school to properly respond. The school cannot resolve an issue of which it is unaware. Accordingly, AGBU MDS encourages students to immediately report any incidents of harassment and/or bullying they experience and/or observe and/or harassment or bullying of which they are aware to the administration, staff, a teacher, and/or the school counselor. Students may make their report orally or in writing. Staff, administrators, and other school personnel are also required to report any conduct prohibited under this policy that they either witness or become aware of to the Principal. They are further expected to intervene when they see a bullying or harassment incident occur immediately. Moreover, members of the school community are encouraged to report bullying or harassment and can do so through the following parties: parents, teachers, administration, and school counselor.

All complaints which are reported to the school administration or which the administration becomes aware of will be investigated. While the school cannot promise absolute confidentiality, it will keep complaints confidential to the extent possible and consistent with the school's need to conduct a fair, timely, and thorough investigation that affords all parties appropriate due process and that reaches reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected.

If the complainant student or the parent of the student feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the student or the parent of the student should contact the administration. The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

Bullying and Harassment Intervention

The school has a zero tolerance policy for harassment and/or bullying by any student.

All complaints which are reported will be investigated. Based on its investigation, the school will take appropriate corrective action when warranted. The school recognizes that each incident of harassment and/or bullying is different and may require a specifically tailored approach. The school may impose the following interventions for students who violate this policy:

- Meeting with parents;
- Signing an infraction form;
- Meeting with the Disciplinary Committee;
- Counseling services, if appropriate. Students who engage in harassment and/or bullying behaviors, bystanders, and victims of harassment and/or bullying, may receive school counseling services, when appropriate. This is to help victims feel empowered and safe, to help those who bully and harass reduce their inappropriate behaviors, and to teach and reinforce socially appropriate behaviors.
- Detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Please note the school does not implement a progressive intervention policy. Accordingly, the school is not

required to engage in progressive interventions and may immediately require expulsion if the student's misconduct is to such a degree that progressive intervention is not possible or appropriate.

In all cases, it is important to ensure:

- That victims are believed and made safe;
- That the principles of due process are followed in regard to students reported for bullying and harassment; and
- Individual students receive school counseling services provided by the school counselor in addition to interventions designed to reduce problem behaviors and increase appropriate behaviors.

Theft

Theft is defined as an act or instance of stealing. Thievery in itself is a dishonorable act which corrupts the certitude and integrity of our institution. Students who are caught with stolen property and/or the unexplained possession of missing property, or in the act of participating in such behavior may be liable for monetary compensation and may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee and be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from school. In addition, a police report may be filed.

AGBU MDS is not responsible for the loss of any personal property. Students are to be accountable for their own possessions and should store them in a safe, secure location. Backpacks and other personal belongings should never be left unattended.

Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as deliberate or malicious destruction, defacement, or damage of property. Students are strictly prohibited from committing acts of vandalism on, to, or during, but not limited to: the school campus, school property, a teacher's property, another student's property, neighboring properties, other school campuses, or any school-related, off-campus activity. Students who commit acts of vandalism may be liable for damages and will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee. A police report may also be filed.

Vulgarity/Obscenity

Students are not to engage in vulgar, obscene, suggestive, or insulting expressions at any time. In addition, students are to refrain from disrespectful mannerisms and overt demonstrations or gestures which are intended to degrade, defame, or disgrace other individuals. Parents of those students who engage in such behavior, whether the content is a general conversation or directed towards someone specific, will be immediately notified. Students who violate this policy will also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

Weapons

AGBU MDS is devoted to a climate of safety. In order to maintain a safe school environment, students are strictly prohibited from carrying, brandishing, using, or possessing weapons of any kind, real or fake. They include but are not limited to:

- Guns/firearms
- Knives

- Daggers
- Dirks
- Razors
- Munitions
- Air/spring projectile guns (BB, paint, pellet, or dart)
- TASER guns
- Pepper spray
- Bats
- Batons
- Any object that can be used maliciously to inflict bodily harm

Any student caught utilizing and/or possessing any weapons (including toy guns) will be suspended. The Disciplinary Committee will review the case and that student may face expulsion. Additional steps may be taken with law enforcement if deemed necessary.

Acknowledgment Page

I acknowledge accessing my copy of the Marie Manoogian Elementary School (“School” or “AGBU MDS”) Parent Student Handbook (“Handbook”) on the school website at the following link: <https://agbumds.org/Handbooks>.

I understand and agree it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies and procedures contained in the Handbook, and to review the policies and procedures with my child. I further understand failure to comply with the policies and procedures contained in the Handbook can result in disciplinary action, including termination of services with AGBU MDS.

I understand that this Handbook replaces and supersedes all previous handbooks, memoranda, and oral descriptions of the School’s policies, practices, and procedures. I understand that the School may amend this handbook at any time, and any such amendment shall be binding upon all AGBU MDS students and parents.

Student Name

Signature

Date

Parent Name

Signature

Date

Parent Name

Signature

Date

Acknowledgment of Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

I understand that Marie Manoogian Elementary School (“School”) strictly prohibits all types of bullying and harassment on school premises, adjacent to school premises, or some other location in connection with school activities.

I acknowledge I received more detailed information describing the School’s Policy Against Bullying and Harassment in the School’s Student Parent Handbook (“Handbook”), including the reporting procedures. I acknowledge I read and understand the Policy and the reporting procedure and reviewed this information with my child.

I understand that the School may amend this Policy at any time, and any such amendment shall be binding upon my child and myself.

I further understand that violation of the School’s Policy against Bullying and Harassment may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of services with the School.

Parent Signature

Date

Print Name

Parent Signature

Date

Print Name

School Use of Photos/Images/Videos Policy

Opt-Out Form

A parent may withhold permission to have their child's photos, images, name, or videos of the child used on the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School ("School") website or social media pages (Instagram and Facebook).

As the parent or guardian of _____[student name], I understand that if I opt-out, my child's images, photos, names, and/or any videos of my child will not be included on the School's website or social media pages. Note: This does not include videotaping by security cameras in school.

By signing below, I agree that I do not allow my child's images, photos, names, and/or any videos of my child to be included on the School website or social media pages.

Signature_____ Date _____