

Marion Charter School

Student Handbook 2024-2025

“Guiding Students Toward Success”

Office Hours of Operation:

Monday thru Friday

7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

39 Cedar Road

Ocala, FL 34472

(352) 687-2100 phone

(352) 687-2700 fax

Website: www.marioncharter.org

Marion Charter School

39 Cedar Road
Ocala, Florida 34472

Dear Students, Parents, and Friends,

Welcome to Marion Charter School! We are all dedicated to enriching your lives with knowledge, thoughtful challenges, opportunities, love and courtesy. We are in our 2nd decade of service to students and their families. Our continued focus is on vigorously protecting student safety and academic time on task. To maintain the highest level of safety, we ask that you carefully read and abide by our visitor and volunteer guidelines. Our doors open at 7:30 and students are expected to be in class by 8:00, when school begins. Dismissal begins at 2:30. To protect your child's learning time, there will be no early checkouts after 2:00 p.m. If needed, we do offer Before and Aftercare services.

This handbook applies to all students and families, and it is expected that all students and families follow the procedures and policies that are outlined in this handbook. Marion Charter is a school of choice, and we reserve the right to send students back to their base school for noncompliance of our school and district wide policies.

We love to discuss your child with you, but to protect learning time and your child's confidentiality; teachers can only talk with you in a planned conference. Thank you for your cooperation. Please read this handbook carefully and use the calendar to stay informed as we venture into this school year with joy and enthusiasm.

Please sign and return the Notice of Receipt of Student Handbook page located on page 4 of this booklet and return to the school by August 23, 2024.

FAILURE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT WILL NOT RELIEVE A STUDENT OR THE PARENT/ GUARDIAN OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT OR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO MCPS PROPERTY.

Sincerely,

Marion Charter School Staff Members

Marion Charter School Staff Members

Director

Michelle Axson

School Counselor/Dean

Valerie Wells

Administrative Asst

Sandy Wagner

ESE/Gifted Teacher

Alison Hinerman

Attendance Clerk/Clinic

Tammy Corley

Kindergarten Teachers

Bonnie Carter
MaTosha Maldonado

1st Grade Teachers

Amy Booe
Tricia Montanez

2nd Grade Teachers

Jennifer Amerling
Elizabeth Dillingham

3rd Grade Teachers

Melinda Dube
Lesia Belwood
Heidi Kucharek

4th Grade Teachers

Jennifer Crawford
Lisa Moon

5th Grade Teachers

James Egert
Marie Fish

Food Service/Library

Vicki Bosworth

Occupational Therapy

Katie Leibe

Speech Therapy

Tobi Doerffel

Teacher Assistants

Lynette Narbonne
Sara Cole
Donna Hall
Debera LaRocco
Vivian Torres
Heidi Vierthaler

Physical Therapy

Extended Day

Vicki Bosworth
Donna Hall
Vivian Torres

ESE Specialist (MCPS)

Tara Williams

Contracted Custodian

Michael Byrd

School Psychologist (MCPS)

Amy Mannik

School Social Worker

Qhuantae Nunn

NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK (PLEASE SIGN THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL.)

This Student Handbook has been written so that students and family members know what behavior is expected and prohibited at Marion Charter School. It is helpful when parents are aware of school rules so they can help support our school from home. Please sit down and talk about these rules with your child(ren).

FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT WILL NOT RELIEVE A STUDENT OR THE PARENT/ GUARDIAN OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT OR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO MCS PROPERTY.

I have read the Marion Charter School Student Handbook and/or discussed it with my family. I understand my child is responsible for abiding by the Marion Charter Student Handbook as well as the Marion County Code of Student Conduct.

2024-2025 Marion County Code of Student Conduct may be found at:

<https://www.marionschools.net/codeofconduct>

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Date

Student Signature

Student Printed Name

Date

Mission and Vision of Marion Charter School

Vision

We envision a school that supports and nourishes the unique personality and gifts of each child, where students and staff members greet each day with enthusiasm, where success and challenge are expected and enjoyed.

Mission

We will strive to guide students to become respectful citizens, successful problem solvers, and lifelong learners who value themselves and others.

History

In July of 2000, two educators, Gina Evers and Becky Wolf, officially opened Marion County's first charter school – Marion Charter School. After 18 months of planning, Marion Charter School opened in August of 2000 with 150 students in K-3rd grade. They were temporarily housed in classrooms at the Druid Hills United Methodist Church. The following year, they moved to portables on the College Park Elementary campus while they waited for their own school to be completed in Silver Springs Shores. Over Spring Break of the 2001-02 school year, dedicated staff and parents moved the entire school and set it up, ready to go, in one week. In the following year, we added our second building to house our cafeteria, media center, therapy rooms and 4th & 5th grade classrooms. Marion Charter School was home! In our 20 years of operation, we have provided a family atmosphere for our students and staff members. In July of 2013, Gina Evers retired and Michelle Axson, who started her teaching career here at Marion Charter School, took over as principal. At Marion Charter, we strive for excellence in all that we do and are committed to providing the best education for our students.

Accidents

With children in an active environment, accidents are often unavoidable. Many times parents cannot be reached. It is very important that the school has 3 phone numbers for emergencies. If parents cannot be reached during medical emergencies, the child will be transported to a medical facility by trained medical personnel. In those instances the parent assumes full responsibility for any and all charges for medical services and transportation costs. Student accident insurance is available at a reasonable cost. Information on student insurance is sent home at the beginning of the year.

Animals in the classroom

Due to insurance issues, we must monitor this very closely. Please speak to Michelle Axson before bringing any animals near children.

Attendance

Good attendance is essential for satisfactory progress in school. Florida law also states that each parent or legal guardian of a child is responsible for the child's regular school attendance (FS 1003.24). Failure to attend school in a regular and timely fashion hinders the education process and may result in failing grades. Each student enrolled in a Marion County Public School is expected to attend school every day and be punctual. Schools are required to track excused and unexcused absences in order to prevent the development of a pattern of nonattendance.

Illness

Thank you for your cooperation in assisting us with the spread of contagious illness. If your child is ill or is complaining that they are not feeling well, then please keep them home. Please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever 100.4 or greater within the last 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Persistent cough, shortness of breathe or difficulty breathing
- Thick eye discharge, itchy red eyes ("pink eye" may not return until treated or end of acute phase)
- Rash unrelated to chronic skin condition
- Very sore throat (step throat may not return until after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment)
- Excessive mucous from the nose.

While at school, if your child exhibits symptoms of illness, such as a fever (100.4 or greater), vomiting or diarrhea, they shall be sent home and may not return to school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of symptom reducing medication.

Excused Absences

1. Illness of the student (if a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, the student must be under the supervision of a physician in order to receive an excuse from attendance).
2. Major illness in the immediate family of the student.
3. Medical appointment (physician note required)
4. Religious holiday
5. Death in the family
6. Head lice, a maximum of (1) excused day per occurrence
7. Approved school activity
8. Court appearance by student (summons or subpoena required)
9. Pre-arranged absence which has been approved*

*MCS encourages families to schedule vacations, etc. during the holidays/breaks that are built into the school calendar. Vacations will not be excused.

A note from the parent/guardian is required to be provided to the school within three (3) days of the absence (preferably immediately upon return to school). The note should be dated and reflect the student's name, dates of absence, specific reason for the absence, and parent signature. A student who has been absent five (5) or more consecutive days due to illness must present a note from a licensed physician. The principal or designee may also require a doctor's note after 10 excused absences (whether they be consecutive or sporadic) due to illness within a school year. Parent must provide a note for each absence, tardy, and early sign-out.

Unexcused Absences

Absences not included in the above list shall be unexcused. A student may be referred to School Social Work Services for intervention after they have five absences either unexcused or absences of unknown reasons. A student may be referred to the Child Study Team for attendance when they have (FS 1003.26):

1. 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or
2. Ten unexcused absences within a 90 calendar day period

If the Child Study Team finds that a pattern of non-attendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.

A student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within a 90 calendar period is considered a habitual truant and interventions leading to court action may occur. (FS 1003.27)

It is the student's responsibility to make up homework and assignments from his/her teacher upon return to school. Students will receive full credit for work that is appropriately completed and submitted within one day for each day of absence.

Letters will be mailed home every 20 days to families if student attendance falls below 90%.

Tardies and Early Sign-Outs

At Marion Charter School we are working to make every minute of school effective for your child. School begins at 8:00 a.m. and students are expected to be in their seats by this time. Our doors open at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving on campus at 8:01 a.m. will be considered tardy. If the student is tardy, the parent must sign the child in at the office and be issued a pass to class. Parents may not walk tardy students to class as this is very disruptive to our teachers and classrooms.

The end of the day is a crucial time for review of material learned and preparation for homework. Teachers are reviewing the day's work, explaining homework assignments, passing out important papers, and filling/marking "take home" folders. We understand that sometimes you may have appointments scheduled for your child. If so, you will need to check your child out BEFORE 2:00 p.m. To help your child's teacher gather the needed items for your child, please send a note that morning letting them know your child will be leaving early. If you come for an early checkout **before** 2:00 p.m., please park in the front open spaces on the left hand side of the driveway.

For the 2024-2025 school year, there will be NO early check outs of students after 2:00 p.m. If you arrive to pick up your child at or after 2:00 p.m., you will need to get in the car line and wait for regular dismissal at 2:30 p.m. **Parents may not park in the parking lot or in front of the school by the sidewalk and check out children early to avoid car line. This is a disservice to your child and those families who do follow our guidelines. If you choose to do, your child will not be released to you until AFTER carline.** Again, if you arrive at or after 2:00 p.m., you will need to get in car line, as we will not place children in parked cars at dismissal. This creates a safety issue as drivers use the left lane to pass through and Line 2 begins at 2:15.

We care about your child's education. Every minute of instruction counts. 15 minutes missed each day would equal 45 hours of missed instruction or more than one week in a school year.

Children who are continually checked out early may be asked to return to their base school.

Tardiness and early sign-outs are disruptive to the learning environment and can have a negative impact on student achievement. Valid excuses for tardy and early sign-outs are the same as absences. A student is allowed three (3) excused tardies/early sign-outs within a nine-week grading period at Marion Charter. Thereafter the school administration will address consequences for excessive tardiness and early sign-outs.

Per Florida Statute 1003.02(1)(b), for every three (3) unexcused tardies and/or early sign-outs in a semester, one (1) unexcused absence will be added to the student's total days of unexcused absences when consideration is given for legal action under truancy statutes.

Online Learning

For the 2024-25 school year, we are NOT offering online learning. In the event that it becomes mandatory, the following guidelines will go back in effect.

For those students who are attending school online MUST adhere to the school and classroom schedule. Students MUST check in with their teacher EVERY school day so that attendance can be taken. Students MUST be up and dressed in their FULL uniform so that they can attend regularly scheduled Teams/ZOOM meetings throughout the day with their teacher. They are expected to participate virtually in all of their whole group lessons at the scheduled time. During independent work, PE, lunch, and recess, they do not have to be present. If a child fails to return during their scheduled class time, then they will be marked as an early checkout. All curriculum materials will be available to the students at the beginning of the school year so that they can complete assignments. Students are expected to complete all assignments and to return the assignments to the teacher in a timely manner. All assignments and assessments that are assigned to the students who are attending traditionally, will also be assigned to the students who are attending online. Students are expected to communicate with the teacher on a daily basis, and parents can communicate with teachers as needed.

Students are expected to complete all assignments and assessments without the assistance from parents so that teachers can get an accurate reflection of their educational needs. There will be times where parent assistance could be needed, especially in the younger grades, for hands-on activities. (ie. Kindergarteners needing help with cutting, etc.) Teachers will give detailed instructions when parent assistance is needed.

Attendance Awards

Each quarter, MCS will recognize students that had perfect attendance (no absences, early signouts, or tardies of any nature) for that quarter. Additionally, perfect attendance recognition will be given to students who attend school every day, on time and do not leave early for the entire school year at the end of each school year.

Awards

Throughout the year classroom teachers will recognize students for achievement and improvement in both academics and behavior.

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of the month in October, January, April, and June at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. All meetings are open to the public. Changes to meeting days will be announced in our newsletters.

Board Members

Sage Edmond 39 Cedar Road Ocala, FL 34472 <small>Sage.Edmond@marion.k12.fl.us</small>	Barbara Holland 39 Cedar Rd Ocala, Fl 34472 <small>bccgators@aol.com</small>	Lori Soucey 39 Cedar Road Ocala, FL 34472 <small>Lori.Soucey@marion.k12.fl.us</small>	Sonya Williams PO Box 771327 Ocala, FL 34477 <small>nuebian@yahoo.com</small>
--	---	--	--

Board of Directors Contact

The governing Board of Directors of Marion Charter School has appointed Michelle Axson as the representative to facilitate parental involvement, provide access to information, to assist parents and others with questions and concerns and to resolve disputes. Mrs. Axson is the Director of the school. She can be reached by phone at (352) 687-2100, by fax at (352) 6872700, by email at Michelle.Axson@marion.k12.fl.us or in person or by mail at the school located at: 39 Cedar Road, Ocala, FL 34472. The school office hours are Monday-Friday 7:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Bullying

Bullying is defined in the Marion County Code of Student Conduct as, “the systematic and chronic infliction of physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students”. These behaviors toward any student are PROHIBITED during any school activity, school sponsored activity, or school related activity. Please see the MCPS Code of Student Conduct for more detailed information.

MCS School Counselor will present lessons to students (grade level/age appropriate) clearly demonstrating hurtful behaviors and strategies for dealing with students who are hurtful. Students will also have the opportunity to practice empowering behaviors.

Teachers at MCS will be alert to hurtful behaviors and will respond to such by teaching helpful behaviors and alerting the counselor for the need for individual counseling with students of concern.

Communication

Although there is a phone system installed at Marion Charter School there may be times where teachers and staff need to use their mobile phones to communicate with each other. Several staff members have walkie-talkies, but not all. School personnel may need to use their mobile phones to briefly communicate student needs, etc. such as when they are outside at recess or moving locations and during urgent situations. Additionally, staff are utilizing Class Dojo for classroom management.

Cell Phones

Students will NOT be allowed to have cell phones and similar wireless devices on campus without Administrative Approval. If Administrative Approval is given, they **CANNOT BE ON THEM OR ACTIVATED** during regular school hours without direct supervision of an adult. Use of a wireless communication device includes the possibility of the imposition of disciplinary action, including but not limited to confiscation by the school and/or criminal penalties if the device is used in a criminal act. Using or possessing a wireless communication device to view, or transfer, or store material of a sexual nature is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and may be a criminal act. The unauthorized recording and/or photographing of employees, volunteers and/or students is prohibited. Refusal to allow search of electronic device will be considered gross insubordination and/or other serious misconduct and may result in a suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion. The school will not be held responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones and/or any other electronic devices.

Conferences

Marion Charter School prides itself in welcoming our parents to be involved in all aspects of your child's learning. Our conferences are a tool for you as a parent to connect with your child's teacher and to stay informed on all that is happening within the classroom. You are invited to schedule a conference to discuss your child's progress at any time; however, we ask that all parents meet with their child's teacher a minimum of 2 times per year. ***For the 2023-2024 school year, we will allow parents to meet with their child's teacher either in person or through a virtual meeting.** Although parents or legal guardians are welcome to have others sit in on these meetings, we cannot discuss your child without the presence of a parent or legal guardian. Informal declarations (notarized statements) DO NOT allow us to discuss your child with another individual nor can that individual sign any legal documents for the child. Please contact the office if you have any questions about this.

Please understand that conferences will need to be scheduled outside of classroom time. To protect student learning time and maintain confidentiality, teachers will not be able to

conference informally. Please do not ask a teacher if you can talk to them for “just a minute” during the school day. To do so they must take their attention off the students. Please feel free to email, leave a voicemail, send a written note, or drop by the office if you have something you want your child’s teacher to know.

Curriculum

To provide the best possible education for your child, our staff members use a variety of programs and materials. Our basic reading program is Savvas MyView reading which addresses all 5 of the essential reading components – phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. Our math program is Savvas Envision Science instruction is provided by Scholastic Science Weekly and Social Studies by Scholastic Social Studies Weekly. The new social skills curriculum is provided by Caring School Community. In addition to our basic programs, your child may also be working with one or more of the following programs:

- Great Leaps – a program designed to increase fluency for readers at all levels
- SRA Reading Mastery or Early Intervention in Reading (EIR) – a program designed to address all 5 areas of reading using differing instructional strategies.
- Leap Pads – auditory support for phonological awareness and phonics
- Corrective Reading
- Read Naturally
- I-Ready
- Visualizing and Verbalizing
- Reading Rangers □ Mystery Science
- Brain Pop/ Brain Pop Jr.
- Reflex Math
- Other programs determined and added as appropriate

Custody Situations

In order to best serve the needs of the students of our school, we use the following guidelines in dealing with divorce/separation issues.

We are guided by the complete documents of the court and/or DCF, which outline restrictions involving the school and the student. Such documents must be signed by the court (judge). Documents that are not signed by the court cannot be considered legal and binding. Copies of documents must be provided to the school and shall be complete (contain all pages of the decree/document). Parents need to provide complete documents signed by the court and court documents as they are updated.

When parents have “shared parental responsibility” the child is viewed as both parents retaining full parental responsibility with respect to their child (F.S. 61.046(17)) and in which both parents confer with each other so that major decisions affecting the welfare of the child will be determined jointly. This would include:

- Equal access to the child’s records (including report cards)
- Equal access to the child
- Equal ability to sign out the child from school or designate another person of their choice to pick up the child
- Equal access to parent conferences or other educational meetings/staffing
- Both to complete Emergency Forms and Skyward Family Access contacts.

It is recommended that both parents complete all appropriate registration forms including the names and phone numbers of any persons approved to sign their child out of school.

In instances of “sole parental responsibility”, as stipulated by the court (F.S. 61.046(18)), one parent makes decisions regarding the minor child. Schools are limited by specifics to the court’s decree/document. In the case of non-custodial parents, the following may apply:

- Equal access to both parents of the child’s records (including report cards).
- Only provide access to the child as stated in the court’s decree/document, and as listed on the child’s registration forms as completed by the “sole responsible” parent.

Parents bear the burden of communication between the school and each other regarding their children.

Code of Student Conduct

Students attending Marion Charter School are responsible for abiding by and are subject to the rules and regulations of the Marion Charter School Board during the school day and regular school activities, such as, but not necessarily limited to: school-sponsored events, field trips, extended day, athletic functions and other activities where appropriate school personnel have authority over students; while being transported to and from school for the purpose of educational activities; during the time that they are otherwise en route to and from school or are presumed by law to be attending school. In addition, authorization control over the student may be extended to the immediate vicinity of the school whenever the conduct of the student is deemed to have a detrimental effect on the health, safety, and welfare of other students and/or the school.

Marion Charter School K-5 Discipline Program

Parents and Students are responsible for knowing the contents of this document. Please read and discuss the appropriate sections together. There are classroom discipline plans for K-2 and 3rd-5th. This discipline plan is used in conjunction with the Marion County Code of Student Conduct and the Marion County Incident and Action Disciplinary Level System. The Code of Student Conduct is used as a guideline to teach our students what behavior is expected and prohibited at school or at school activities. The Incident and Action Disciplinary Level System (found in the MCPS Code of Student Conduct) will be in effect if/when the MCS Expectation system is not helping the student change his or her behavior and consequences are appropriate. All reports required by law will be completed as described in the Marion County Code of Student Conduct.

2022-2023 Marion County Code of Student Conduct may be found at:

<https://www.marionschools.net/codeofconduct>

Marion Charter School Expectations

(aka The Marion Charter School Way)

Be RESPECTFUL

Be RESPONSIBLE

Be a PROBLEM SOLVER

Parents, please talk with your child(ren) about your expectations and those of their teachers regarding these rules. Classroom expectations for all grade levels are sent home on the first day of school. Your support is essential! Teachers will be teaching social skills daily, particularly in what is referred to as “Morning Meeting” time and now will have Caring School Community instruction as well. This is also a time where teachers encourage students to work on solving any “problems”, whether peer conflicts or otherwise. Morning Meeting time is intended to create a team environment in the classroom and prevent academic disruptions throughout the day. Please encourage your child(ren) to incorporate the Problem Solving Steps that are being taught and encourage at MCS. These are:

1. Ignore
 - a. Walk away or move
 - b. Cool off
2. Talk it out
 - a. Use an “I” message
 - b. Listen
 - c. Take responsibility for your actions

- d. Share what you are willing to do differently
3. Agree on win-win solution
 - a. Brainstorm ideas
 - b. Chose the solution that works best for all concerned
4. Put the problem on the class agenda
 - a. Get other's ideas
 - b. Learn from the problem

At Marion Charter School, we use the terms such as “helpful” and “hurtful” in discussing behaviors and teaching children positive behaviors. Describing someone, or their behaviors, as “good” or “bad” is less clear and more subjective than helpful and hurtful. Labeling a child, particularly as “bad”, can have long-term hurtful consequences for a child so we do not use that term to describe a child. We encourage students to make helpful choices.

Rewards

Grades K-2 – Teachers will choose to reward and reinforce their students within their individual classrooms. The rewards and reinforcers can take place throughout the day, at the end of the day, or at the end of the week. Classroom teachers will be responsible for tallying the Gold and Diamond reward percentages.

Grades 3-5 – Teachers will also provide rewards within their own classroom settings. Verbal feedback and classroom rewards have been found to be more effective and reinforcing when provided on a more frequent basis, and within the classroom environment.

All-school rewards may include a “no-uniform day”, at which time announcements or stickers will be sent home. No-uniform days typically occur every other Friday. K-2nd grade students will receive no-uniform if they have been on gold or diamond daily, with no more than two silver or bronze days per two-week period. 3rd – 5th grade students will receive no-uniform if they had no more than 2 days of <70% on Class Dojo per two-week period. A student will not be allowed to have a no-uniform day if they received any office referrals in the two-week period.

Parents of our distance learning students may need to help teachers with earned rewards at home. (ie. Extra recess, special treats, etc.)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBS)

PBS is an organized, data-driven system of interventions, strategies, and supports that positively impact school-wide and individualized behavior planning.

One way to recognize, reinforce, and monitor positive student behavior is through PBS. The PBS curriculum is based on three main ideas:

1. Children need to know what is expected of them.
2. Children need to be directly taught the correct way to behave.
3. The correct behavior needs to be encouraged and acknowledged and reinforces the “The MCS Way” (Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be a Problem Solver).

SHARK BUCKS: Shark Bucks are given to students to acknowledge positive student behavior. Students can spend their shark bucks on items (tangible or non-tangible) in their classroom or school stores.

WALL OF FAME: One student involved in the daily workings of each classroom, who has exhibited exemplary indication of the character word chosen for the week, will be honored by having his or her picture displayed on the Wall of Fame, visible in the front corridor of the entryway to our school. The student’s specific reasons for his/her being chosen for the display of that character word for that week will be shown for all who enter our school, along with the photograph. It is then displayed within the classroom for the year, and sent home at the end of the year. Words of the Week are shown on the school newsletter. They indicate positive and helpful characteristics that are indicative of our Marion Charter School Way.

CLASS DOJO: MCS is a STEAM school, so teachers are required to use a variety of technology. Class Dojo(www.classdojo.com) is now required at MCS for communication and classroom management. Class Dojo is a computer application (app) that can be downloaded on an electronic device, typically cell phones. This also enables parents/guardians to communicate with the teachers with the ease of modern technology! Teachers can communicate regarding individual students, as well as class-wide information. In addition to individual and class communication, parents/guardians will also receive school-wide information. Class Dojo can be used on a computer, tablet, or smart phone device and is an excellent system for teachers and parents. For more information, please go to www.classdojo.com.

It is the parent(s) responsibility to monitor Dojo points of their child(ren) daily and update their Class Dojo apps regularly. Class Dojo is a great way to help children understand that parents/guardians and teachers/staff are a team through good communication. We are asking that parents please discuss ways to help their child understand the importance of following the rules and expectations. It is the student’s responsibility to communicate with their parent about their Dojo points each day. Please understand that all children may lose a Dojo point occasionally, as they are learning the expectations and growing in their ability to make decisions, and is not necessarily a need for punitive actions at home. However these may be great discussion opportunities for parents! It is important to encourage children to recover from making a mistake in decision-making and learn from it. If a student comes home on Gold or

Diamond, that is certainly praise-worthy and a parent may wish to reward their child. If a child comes home on Silver or Bronze, then a parent may wish to give a reasonable consequence (such as earlier bedtime, limit TV/electronic use, etc.) to reinforce better decision making in the future.

Please understand that all technology has occasions where it may not work as planned (maybe the wi-fi is down or the app is being updated). On these occasions, teachers and parents may not be able to communicate on the app and Dojo points may not be available. Please be understanding of this and use an alternative method of communication as needed, such as email or phone. If there is an important need for communication, then please call the office. Additionally, Dojo communication is meant to be brief and efficient, similar to text messaging. Please remember that it is difficult to interpret emotions, intentions, or have lengthy conversations. If elaboration and conversation is needed, please call for direct communication via phone or set up a parent-teacher conference.

K-2nd Grade Classroom Discipline Plan

Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers and students will be following these steps in their classrooms in order to create and maintain a strong, safe, orderly and positive learning environment. Please review them carefully.

Behavior Levels

Diamond(101% or more Dojo points): This is behavior that is above and beyond what would be expected for a child of this age.

Gold (80-100% Dojo points): This is behavior that is expected and follows the rules of the school. All students begin their day on gold.

Silver(70%-79% Dojo points): When a student is moved to this level it is because they are not following the class rules, despite teacher reminders and loss of Dojo points. It is an opportunity to take a time out and get back on track.

Bronze(69% or less Dojo points): When a student chooses not to get back on track and follow the class rules after repeated reminders and loss of Dojo points, they move to bronze. They may be sent to the office for counseling and further help to get back on track.

Students can be expected to move between levels throughout the day. When a child is on silver or bronze and shows expected behavior for thirty minutes he or she will be moved to the next higher level by receiving Dojo points for getting back on track.

Teachers will provide specific information to parents at the beginning of the school year to explain how their Class Dojo levels can be determined and the Dojo system can be utilized.

Corrective Steps at each Level:

Gold (Expected Behavior) – If a student is not exhibiting expected behavior they will receive a reminder of what the expected behavior is. This is a reminder, not a reprimand. It may be directed to the whole class at once. It may be directed to one or two students. The teacher does not need to approach an individual student when using this step. The teacher needs to take the opportunity to remind students early enough so that the situation does not progress beyond a point where a simple reminder is no longer appropriate. Please remember that children need to be reminded often, simply because they are children and their impulse control is still developing. An example of this may be the teacher stating, “Please be respectful when I am teaching by using good listening skills. That means eyes on me and voice level 0 (no talking).”

If the student does not respond to the reminder, they will lose Dojo points, which may move them to the Silver level.

Silver – This IS a reprimand. The individual student is spoken to directly, and the verbal warning will not be delivered across the classroom. The teacher moves in close to the student and reminds him/her what is expected. The student is asked to identify the next step.

Example: During a class discussion, Tammy suddenly speaks out, “Boy this really stinks!” The teacher walks up, makes eye contact, and respectfully, but firmly says “Tammy, you are not showing a positive attitude. Instead, you could raise your hand and say something like “Will you help me with this?” Then the teacher might say something like: “Please take a couple minutes to calm down and try again. This is your warning: What is the next step?”

Silver Level = 5 minutes off recess time or equivalent

If the student does not regain control on the Silver Level and continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviors they will lose Dojo points and may move to the Bronze Level.

Bronze: (Occurs following a minimum of three (3) infraction/reminders on silver) – The student is approached again. He/she is reminded that he/she has already received 3 warnings, either verbal or written. Ask him/her to identify the next step. Student will complete a Think Sheet and receive the already established classroom consequence for moving to the Bronze Level. The teacher may utilize a time out for the student in their room or a teaching partner’s room to help the student try to regain their composure. At this point, the student is told that if his/her behavior does not improve, he/she may be sent to the office.

Bronze Level = 10 minutes off recess time or equivalent

If the student does not regain control on the Bronze Level and continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviors they will be sent to the office.

Going to the office: (Following a minimum of 15 minutes on Bronze Level). The teacher will call the office and ask for the student to be removed from the room. Ms. Wells, Mrs. Axson, or designee will escort the child to the office. After all steps have been followed, the parent will be called and appropriate consequences will be imposed. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, office time out, counseling, in school suspension, out of school suspension, etc.

Parents will need to check Class Dojo every day to be aware of your child's behavior at school and discuss any behavioral issues with your child at home. Parents will see what their child lost Dojo points for and teacher comments as needed. If further clarification is needed about behavior, parents may send the teacher a Dojo message (similar to a text or email) or call and leave a message for the teacher to call them after school/during their planning time as needed. If there is an ongoing concern with particular behaviors or a child is continually on silver and/or bronze, parent contact will be required to discuss the situation and come up with a plan.

Class Dojo tracks student behavior and graphs it, as well as logs communications. Teachers can provide printed reports as needed and utilize this data to track any behavior concerns.

Diamond (Exhibiting above expected Marion Charter School behaviors) – K-2 students who end the day with a Diamond status will be rewarded daily by the classroom teacher.

Diamond for one week (or as determined on an individual basis for extra incentives) – Students may have rewards in the classroom or office at the end of the week (Friday afternoon).

3rd – 5th Grade Classroom Discipline Plan

3rd grade through 5th grade teachers and students will be using a modified version of our leveled behavior system. This version strongly emphasizing the Marion Charter School Expectations (aka Marion Charter School Way): **Be RESPECTFUL, Be RESPONSIBLE, and Be a PROBLEM SOLVER!** We strongly believe that student success is a direct result of a positive learning environment. We will use Class Dojo to represent each of these 3 expectations. When a student does not follow an expectation, they will be given a verbal warning and redirection to help correct the behavior. If the behavior continues, students will lose Dojo point(s) that correspond to the expectation they did not follow. Students will have a chance to correct their behavior and continue to earn positive Dojo point(s).

Teachers will give positive Dojo points regularly to help reinforce meeting expectations. Each teacher will decide on positive incentives in the classroom, such as earning coupons with special

privileges, Shark Bucks, Fun Friday opportunities, etc.; however these are the standard School Consequences for Class Dojo:

- 70% of Dojo points = 5 minutes off recess time or equivalent
- 60% of Dojo points = 10 minutes off recess time or equivalent
- 50% or less Dojo points could result in additional consequences, such as silent lunch, direct parent contact or phone call home, office referral depending on behavior, or think sheet.

K-5 Discipline

Marion Charter School has the right and responsibility to determine the level of severity of an incident based on multiple factors including age, seriousness of incident, and the safety of other children and staff member.

For Student Discipline Incident Referrals that are recorded online within SMS county records, Marion Charter School will follow Marion County Disciplinary Incident and Action Codes for Levels 1-4 for recording and historical purposes. Please refer to Marion County Levels 1-4 for this information. A list of these incidents is available in the MCPS Code of Student Conduct online: <https://www.marionschools.net/codeofconduct>

Students at Marion Charter may be referred back to their base school due to serious discipline incidents, dependent on the nature of the incident and at the Director's discretion. Please see below for additional information regarding individual behavior plans and behavior contract, which could lead to a child's return to base school as well.

Individual Behavior Plans for Marion Charter School

All children are involved in their classroom's behavior education lessons. For children who seem unable to conform to the school's behavioral expectations, additional interventions and help is provided. If a child has significant difficulty following our school rules, he or she is referred to our Child Study Team (MTSS), which meets as needed. The Team always includes the Director, the School Counselor/Dean, and the Classroom Teacher. Additional team members may include, the School Psychologist, the School Social Worker, and the ESE Consultant. The parent/guardian is required to be involved and supportive of the plan as well.

Individual Behavior Plan Contract Goal for MCS Students

GOAL: Students, parents, and all staff members will work together closely to help students choose helpful and cooperative behaviors. Students and parents will know the consequences of continued hurtful and disruptive behaviors, will be held accountable, and a more appropriate educational setting will be found in a timely manner if needed.

Individual Behavior Plan Contract Steps

STEP 1 – All students will be taught and required to participate in their **classroom behavior program as designed by their teacher and approved by the School Counselor – Tier 1**. The teacher will closely monitor and document behavioral issues for each student who makes continuing hurtful/disruptive choices. These will be discussed with the School Counselor and there will be a **minimum of weekly parent contacts by the teacher**. The teacher and School Counselor will continue to work with the child with Tier 1 activities to try and help the student select more helpful behaviors. **If a child’s behavior improves with Tier 1 activities, the teacher will monitor behavior and no further actions will be necessary.**

STEP 2 – For students who seem unwilling to shape their choices into helpful ones within the classroom system using Tier 1 activities, a MTSS meeting will be held involving the teacher, parent, school counselor, and school psychologist. This meeting will address the documented areas of behavioral changes needed and will be initiated by the classroom teacher and the school counselor. A Tier 2 intervention plan will be created to provide more intensive interventions to address the student’s behavior. The child will receive the Tier 2 interventions and the teacher and/or school counselor will track their behavior. There will be a minimum of weekly parent contact to share how the student is doing. If a child’s behavior improves with Tier 2 interventions, the teacher will continue the interventions and monitor behavior, fading interventions, as appropriate. No further actions will be necessary, unless the child begins to struggle with their behaviors again. If that occurs, steps 1 and/or step 2 will be repeated.

STEP 3 – If the student does not meet their goals while receiving Tier 2 interventions, the MTSS team will create a **Tier 3 intervention plan** with more intensive interventions for the student. At the same time, at the discretion of the Director, an individual Behavior Contract will be initiated. The parent is required to participate in the development of the Behavior Contract. **Failure of the parent to participate in developing the Behavior Contract can lead to the child being referred to return to their base school.** The student will participate in the Tier 3 interventions (which will also be a part of a Behavior Contract) for the indicated period of time, usually 4 weeks. The teacher will keep **daily** behavioral records and may send home weekly or daily reports to the parents. At the end of the first 4 week period, another conference involving all original team members will be held to address the progress of the student. If positive behavior choices are being made by the student at the 80% level or higher, the Tier 3 interventions (and Behavior Contract) will remain in effect until the next 4 week meeting is held. If behaviors addressed in the Tier 3 plan (and Behavior Contract) are still at the 80% level or higher, conferences will only be scheduled if needed. **If the student is on a Tier 3 plan/Behavior Contract and the student has not improved to at least the 80% positive level, adjustments will be made to the plan after our School Psychologist and our School Counselor have observed the child, and the child’s teacher has provided required input.**

STEP 4 – The student will participate in the adjusted Tier 3 plan/Behavior Contract for 4 more weeks. The teacher and the school counselor will continue to closely monitor the child’s behavior and the **teacher will send home daily reports** to the parent. The teacher, parent, student, and school counselor will meet again to evaluate the student’s progress. If there has been the agreed upon improvement, the Tier 3 plan/Behavior Contract will remain in effect with regular 4 week conference checks. **If the child’s behavior choices do not remain at or above the 80% level, the parents will be referred to return their child to his/her base school.**

If at any time, parents choose not to participate in regular conferences/meetings, the child will be referred to return to his/her base school, at the discretion of the Director.

Procedure for Return to Base School

To summarize, dismissal will be appropriate if weapons or illegal drugs are brought to school or if the student exhibits chronic violations of the Marion Charter Code of Student Conduct.

Dismissal will also be appropriate if the student exhibits behavior that jeopardizes his/her safety or the safety of others or presents a significant disruption to the learning environment. In these cases, parents will be notified and invited to cooperatively create a specific Behavior Contract to improve the student’s behaviors. Conferences will be held at 4 week intervals over a period of 4-8 weeks. If the student’s behaviors improve to the agreed upon degree, he/she may be allowed to remain at Marion Charter School. If the student’s behavior does NOT improve to the agreed upon degree or if the parent does not attend the scheduled conferences or support the plan, the student may be required to return to his/her base school. At the sole discretion of the Director, students may be asked to immediately return to their base school if their behavior presents a danger to others or otherwise significantly impairs learning in his/her classroom. Marion Charter School does not have any self-contained classrooms for either behavior or academic needs. A student who’s IEP’s indicates the need for self-contained services will be referred to their base school.

Dress Code

Marion Charter School has a uniform code in order to help create a sense of unity among all and to limit student distractions. All students, whether traditional or distance learning, are expected to attend school wearing clean uniforms, shoes, and appropriate undergarments. It is also expected that students’ hair will be clean, free of lice and nits, and that their bodies will be clean and odor-free. The following is a description of the uniform clothing that is acceptable at Marion Charter School:

- **Solid red, navy or light blue** shirts with a collar. Shirts must be tucked into **khaki, navy blue, gray, or black** shorts, slacks, or skirts. Jumpers the same color as bottoms are

allowed. Solid, collared dresses the color of shirts are allowed. No stripes, plaid, or designs other than the MCS Logo are permitted on tops. Logos are not required.

- Close-toed and heeled shoes with socks. Close-toed and heeled shoes must be worn at all times, even on “no-uniform” days. Remember, students have PE every day, so they need appropriate and comfortable shoes, like sneakers. For safety reasons, shoes with wheels and/or skates may NOT be worn on school campus at any time.
- On Fridays students may wear their MCS T-shirt and a neat pair of well-fitted blue jeans(shorts or pants). Students not choosing to wear the MCS T-shirt will dress in regular uniform shirts and may wear neat, well fitted blue jeans. No colored jeans or jeans with holes.
- Students may NOT wear hooded jackets with the hood on indoors or hats inside the school. These are recommended to be left at home.
- Students are asked to wear shorts under their skirts, dresses, or jumpers.
- Pants are to be worn at the waist and be well fitted (not hanging below the waist).
- Leggings may only be worn under uniform bottoms and are not to take the place of uniform bottoms.

Students will be told when they are out of uniform once and a note will be sent home to parents or a phone call will be made. Staff may be able to provide uniform clothing to the student to borrow for that day. The second time, parents will be called and asked to bring the correct clothing to school for their child. If hoods or hats are worn in the school, the student will be asked to not bring them again. If it occurs again, the item will be confiscated until a parent is able to take them home. On occasion (usually every other Friday), a child may earn a no uniform day. Parents will always be notified of this in writing, typically a “No Uniform Sticker.”

We do not want clothing to be a hardship for any parent. The School Counselor will work with parents to help all students dress in uniform, however, if this becomes a habitual problem, the student may be asked to return to his/her base school.

The following items may NOT be worn to school at any time, including “no-uniform” days:

- Clothing with obscene, scary, distracting or offensive language or images
- Shorts, skirts, or skorts that do not come to at least mid-thigh length
- Muscle shirts that show the chest or area under the arms
- Clothing that is overly tight or revealing, including clothes with holes
- Shoes with heels over ½ inch in height (not safe for PE)
- Pajamas or bedroom attire (unless for a special event such as Kindergarten PJ day)
- Hats (allowed during PE only to prevent sunburn and must be worn properly)

*The Director or designee will have final discretion in determining if the article of clothing is not appropriate.

Drop off/Pick-up/Parking Procedures

(It is very important that these guidelines be followed) Drop

off times: 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Pick up times: 2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

For the 2023-24 school year face mask will be OPTIONAL unless it becomes mandatory by the Marion County School Board, Department of Health, and/or the CDC.

Children who arrive before 7:30 a.m. or who are not picked up by 2:45 p.m. will be placed in extended day care and the parent will be charged the full price for that day, regardless of the length of time they are there in the program.

To allow each child to develop positive, independent skills and maintain a safe environment, as well as Covid-19 policies, parents will not be allowed to walk their children to class in the morning. We will have adequate school personnel on duty in the morning to assist the children from the car line to their classrooms.

Park only in the designated parking spaces - Please do not leave your car unattended in the driveway.

Please wait inside your car at afternoon pick-up time. Your child will be delivered to your car by an adult staff member.

If the adult picking up your child is not recognized by our staff, they will be asked to come inside so we can check their ID.

Please leave the road or driveways of surrounding homes open while waiting to turn into our driveway. In respect to those ahead of you, please do not “cut” in line. Please drive to the end of the car pick up line.

All students will be picked up from the right hand lane/sidewalk. For parent who are the 2nd lane, an adult will walk your child to your car. Parents, please be courteous role models during this process!

For the safety of our children and in fairness to parents who go through our carline, parents may not park their vehicle off the road and walk up to get their child. If you do, your child will not be released to you until AFTER carline is over. This is for the safety of you and your children.

Parents and children who walk to pick up their children will be cleared to leave once carline is over due to safety reasons.

If you do not want to wait in line, plan to get here at 2:40 p.m. when our line is much shorter.

No early checkouts after 2:00 p.m.. Parents are asked to read and sign our early check-out policy at the beginning of each school year.

To protect your child, to change how your child goes home, you **MUST** send in a written note. We cannot accept phone calls or emails. Without a written note, your child will go home the way we have on our student information form. **DO NOT** use Dojo for this. If there is a last minute change, you must contact the office via phone, but please limit these situations so that dismissal can occur in an orderly manner.

Our car line procedures are designed to facilitate an orderly, safe, and fair dismissal process. For the safety of our students and fairness to parents who follow our carline procedures, parents who are unwilling to follow these procedures may be asked to find another education setting for their child.

Drugs

Marion Charter School is a drug and alcohol free environment. This includes tobacco and nicotine products. Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted anywhere, at any time, on school property or on school sponsored field trips.

Emergency Information

It is very important that the school be able to get in touch with you in case of an emergency involving your child. Skyward Family Access is required. If you do not have your login information, please email Sandra.Wagner@marion.k12.fl.us . Also, if you have a change of address, then you will need to provide proof of address to Sandy by emailing her at the above email address. It is your responsibility to update any other pertinent information in Skyward such as phone numbers and emergency numbers and emergency pickup contacts. The Emergency and Medical Information Sheet must be completed yearly. Any changes or additions to people you have listed on your child's Emergency and Medical Information Sheet who are authorized to pick up your child, must be input in Skyward Family Access by the parent/guardian(s).

Ethics

Marion Charter School strives to operate at the highest possible ethical level. All employees are in-serviced in their ethical responsibilities and empowered to report any violation of ethics. If

you feel an ethics violation has occurred, there is whistleblower complaint form you can use at the back of this handbook.

Extended Day

Extended Day services are provided both before and after school. Our morning hours are 6:30 – 7:30 a.m. and the afternoon hours are from 2:30 – 6:00 p.m. Applications and information are available in the office. A registration form must be on file for a student to use our Extended Day services.

Field Trip Guidelines

Your child will receive a permission slip from school any time there is a field trip scheduled. A permission slip must be on file before your child can participate. No handwritten notes or phone calls will be accepted. Students who fail to bring a completed permission slip will remain on campus and work in another classroom. All field trip permission slips will also be available to download from our school website.

- Only students enrolled at Marion Charter School can go on field trips, no younger or older siblings.
- Chaperones must be a responsible adult (18 or older) and be approved through our volunteer approval process.
- Only official chaperones may ride the bus.
- Chaperones are accepted on a first paid first served basis. Both the student and chaperone must be paid in full to reserve a chaperone spot. Chaperone spots are limited. To be fair to all, only one chaperone per child please.
- Students may be excluded from a field trip due to poor self-control, with prior communication between parent and teacher.
- No one may chaperone without an official volunteer form on file. Volunteer forms must be completed no later than 2 weeks before the trip. All chaperones must abide by our chaperone guidelines at all times and sign a volunteer agreement.
- Parents who are chaperones and wish to go on a field trip may drive their own vehicles; however, their children must ride the bus to the field trip.

- Students will be expected to maintain classroom behavior when on all field trips. These are educational privileges.
- Families who have outstanding balances in extended day must pay their balance due before their child can attend field trips.
- Please send in the exact amount for your child's field trip. If you do not send the exact change, it will be sent home once we receive change.

Grade Reporting

Student progress conferences will be scheduled at the end of the First and Third 9 weeks virtually and on an as needed basis. At these conferences you will discuss your child's progress and learning needs. At this time, all student grades will be available on Skyward. Interims and report cards will not be printed, unless otherwise directed to do so by the county. Parents or teachers may request additional meetings during the year to discuss a student's progress. Dates for conferences and interim reports are listed on the school calendar.

At MCS we will use a web-based grade book program which allows you to view your child's grades at any time during the year. At the beginning of the year you will receive information about how to register for Skyward Family Access. Returning families who have activated their parent account will still use the same information.

Grievances

A student grievance follows this section and may be copied and submitted to the appropriate party. The Director of Marion Charter School will coordinate all student grievances and he/she may be reached by phone at 687-2100 from 7:00 – 3:30 p.m. on school days or by mail at: 39 Cedar Road, Ocala, FL 34472.

The section 504 Coordinator may be reached at 671-6860 from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on school days or you can mail information to 1517 SE 30th Avenue, suite 1, Ocala, FL 34471.

The Title IX, ADA, and Educational Equity Coordinator may be reached by phone at 671-6305 from 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on school days or you can mail information to 512 SE 3rd Street, Ocala, FL 34471.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE FORM

Student Name: _____ Date Written: _____
Received By: _____ Date Received: _____

1. _____ I have spoken with the person against whom I have a complaint on _____, 20__.
2. _____ I would like to discuss my concerns with the School Counselor.
3. _____ I spoke with the School Counselor on _____, 20__.
4. _____ My concern were resolve on _____, 20__.
5. _____ My concerns were NOT resolved and I would like to discuss my concerns with the Director on _____, 20__. I have attached a written, signed grievance description which includes: a description of the dispute; facts on the dispute; and how I want this dispute to be resolved.
6. _____ I met with the Director on _____, 20__.
7. _____ My concerns were resolve on _____, 20__.
8. _____ My concerns were NOT resolved and I would like to file a written grievance to the Marion Charter School Board. I know that this must include the following: a description of the dispute; facts on the dispute; a description of the attempts made to solve my dispute; and how I want this dispute to be resolved.
9. _____ The final Marion Charter School Board ruling was made on _____, 20__ and is attached.

Head Lice

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY STATES: “Any student infested with head lice and/or nits shall be excluded from school until the student has received treatment for head lice and all nits have been removed. To be readmitted to school, the student must be free of head lice and nits and will be checked by designated school personnel. A student who is absent from school in excess of three (3) consecutive days because of head lice will be referred to appropriate school/health officials.”

Documentation of treatment (label from medication) will be required before the student will be re-admitted to school. Please bring the child to the clinic to be rechecked before the child goes to class.

Remember, head lice can happen to anyone – rich, poor, clean, and dirty. If you find that your child has contracted head lice, please call the school immediately so that we may take steps to stop an infestation throughout the school and community.

SCHOOLWIDE HEAD CHECKS WILL BE DONE THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL AND AFTER EACH MAJOR HOLIDAY. REGULAR SCHOOLWIDE CHECKS WILL TAKE PLACE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Health Services

During the school year, your child is eligible to participate in certain health services. Health screenings include but are not limited to: vision, hearing, weight, and scoliosis. Parents will be notified if these screenings require follow-ups. If you have any questions regarding health screenings, please feel free to call the school office. If you do not wish for your child to participate in health screenings, please send a written note to the school counselor on a yearly basis requesting your child be exempt.

Information

Marion Charter School is a public school. Parents or any interested individuals are welcome to inspect records. The following documents are available: annual audits, annual report, Board meeting minutes, Public Accountability Report, and others. Records are available during office hours. If requested, copies can be prepared at a cost of ten cents per page.

Crisis Protocol

The Marion County School District has implemented the Alice Protocol in the event of an active shooting. The A.L.I.C.E. Protocol stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate. The ALICE Protocol is a multiple options-based response, which creates distance from the shooting event and/or the amount of time you can create to keep an intruder away until Law Enforcement arrives. Providing a safe and secure environment for our students to learn is the top priority of the Marion County School Board. Measures have been taken to ensure our staff and students are prepared in the event a crisis situation occurs in one of our schools. A comprehensive Crisis Management Plan has been created to guide our staff through a wide variety of situations. Fire drills, tornado drills, code red and code yellow drills are practiced at each site to ensure that routines and safety procedures are well established and familiar to all.

In a code yellow, all school doors will be locked and regular classroom instruction continues behind the locked doors. No parent notification will be made at this time unless the code goes from yellow to red, as there is no immediate danger.

In a code red, all school doors are locked and all students and staff are advised to get on the floor away from doors and windows. Classroom instruction is discontinued. What parents need to know during either a code red crisis:

1. Please **DO** expect to be notified with a special parent advisory sent home from the school and/or with a telephone message from our telephone notification service when the school is able to provide accurate information and/or the incident is resolved.
2. Please **DO** cooperate with school and/or district directives.
3. Please **DO** consult local media for regular updates about the incident. Listen for information updates on local radio and television stations. You may be directed to an offcampus parent staging area for the latest information regarding a campus crisis.
4. **Please DO NOT call the school because phone lines will be needed for emergency communication.**
5. **Please DO NOT call or text your child's cell phone because cell phones are not to be used during a code red or code yellow.**
6. **Please DO NOT go to the school if a code red or code yellow situation should occur. Roads are closed, doors are locked and campuses are off-limits to anyone other than authorized personnel.**

Pursuant to § 120.54 Fla. Stat., in the event of an emergency, the Superintendent or the School Board can enact additional rules governing student conduct which shall be enforced as included in this Code of Student Conduct.

Student and Family Reunification Plan

In case of a school emergency or a natural disaster, you need to be aware of our school's plan for releasing your child. First and foremost, remain calm. Remember, it is our primary concern that students remain safe at all times, and there is a plan for an orderly dismissal and release of

our students. **When you learn that your child’s school is in a lockdown situation, or any other emergency situation, do not call the school and do not come to the school. Staff will be very busy during an emergency and will not be able to attend to the safety of your children if they have to answer your phone calls. If you come to the school during an emergency, in all likelihood you will not be allowed into the school or even into the inner perimeter set up by emergency responders. The presence of hundreds of parents showing up on the scene will hinder the efforts of emergency responders which in turn may jeopardize the safety of your child.** Instead, if the situation warrants the release of students, direct notification to your listed emergency contact numbers as well as the use of local news media will provide instructions on when and where the release will take place. Students may be bussed to an off-site location for their release to parents. Once an all-clear is given at the school, and if there is a need to release students for the day, the Student and Family Reunification Plan will be put into place. For the safety of every child, we must document to whom each child is released. Students will only be released to a parent or childcare personnel as designated on your child’s school Emergency and Medical Information Form. When you arrive at the facility where students will be released, proceed to the Check-In Gate and plan to do the following:

1. Fill out a Student Release Form
2. Present picture identification
3. Move to the Student Release Gate and wait for your child
4. A runner will go to the Assembly Area, get your child, and bring him/her to the release area
5. Be prepared to show your ID again
5. Sign for the student and depart

REMINDER: Your child will be released only to those listed on the Emergency and Medical Information Form. It is therefore imperative that you keep information on your child’s Emergency and Medical Information Form up to date. Know also that for any reason your child is not picked up, he/she will be placed in an alternate place of safety. These procedures should be shared with everyone you list on the Emergency and Medical Information Form so they are familiar with our plan and these concerns. If you have any questions about the Student and Family Reunification Plan, contact your child’s school principal.

Lockdown/Evacuation Procedures

In order to provide for the greatest level of safety for your children, Marion County School, along with all other public schools, has a lockdown procedure to secure our school in the event of a potential or occurring emergency. Please read the following information carefully so you will be informed about our procedures.

CODE YELLOW – In a code yellow situation, there is no immediate safety concern but there is a concern within the general area of the school. Normally, law enforcement or the school district office will call us with any code yellow situations. Upon being advised of a code yellow

situation, the following procedures will be implemented – all classroom doors will be locked but students assigned to that class will be admitted. Students may not leave the class and instruction will continue. If classes are outside, they will either gather together and remain outside or be directed inside depending on the nature of the code yellow. Outside doors will be locked and a yellow piece of paper will be taped to the front door. Dismissal **will not** occur until given the all clear by law enforcement.

CODE RED – In a code red situation, there is an immediate safety concern. Normally, law enforcement or the school district office will call us with any code red situations. Upon being advised of a code red situation, the following procedures will be implemented – all classroom doors will be locked and no students may be admitted once doors are locked. Students will move to their assigned places and remain there quietly until told to move. There will be no noise or activity in the classrooms or office area, lights and all AV equipment will be turned off and students will remain away from doors and windows. We will activate the emergency calling system with a message about the lockdown. This message will be sent to the phone number(s) you have listed on your emergency information sheet. It is very important that you keep us informed of any changes in phone numbers. If classes are outside, they will either gather together and remain outside or be directed inside depending on the nature of the code red. They will remain concealed and quiet to the greatest extent possible. Outside doors will be locked and no one, not even known parents or other adults will be allowed in. A red piece of paper will be taped to the front door if possible. Dismissal **will not** occur until given the all clear by law enforcement. Do not call the school as we will not be able to answer phones. Direct all inquiries to the school district at 671-7700 or law enforcement.

EVACUATION PLAN FOR MARION CHARTER SCHOOL – Situations may arise which would require an off-campus evacuation to ensure the safety of students and staff. These situation might include a chemical spill, airplane crash, explosive device located on campus or major fire. Obviously we want to move away from the dangerous situation. Whenever possible we will try to move to an area with easy access for parents and emergency personnel (ie., the Publix plaza). Since we will not know beforehand where the danger may be, we have designated four evacuation routes below. Information will be sent out on the emergency contact system to all parents.

- NORTH EVACUATION SITE (PREFERRED) – Students will walk to the back exit on the north side of the property down the swale and continue to the front of the Publix store and be directed from there by emergency personnel.
- SOUTH EVACUATION SITE – If preferred north evacuation site is not possible, we will walk the students west on Cedar Road, turn South on Midway Road and continue to the ball park down the road.
- EAST EVACUATION SITE – Students will walk East on Cedar Road until they have reached a distance deemed safe by the Director or their designee.

- WEST EVACUATION SITE – Students will walk west on Cedar Road until they have reached a distance deemed safe by the Director or their designee.

The contact person at the school will inform the emergency personnel of our evacuation site and parents will be directed to that area. The Director or designee will have the emergency forms notebook to monitor student checkout. All students must be checked out with the Director or designee at the site. NO student may leave before they are officially checked out, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Evacuation Steps:

1. The order to evacuate will be made by the Director or, in her absence, the School Counselor. If both of them are off campus, the Administrative Assistant will order an evacuation.
2. Teachers will bring class record books when evacuating, ensure all students are out of the classroom and bathrooms, proceed to the designated evacuation area and, once they are there, will take roll and make sure there are not any missing students. They will be responsible for maintaining order and silence and will remain with the class until the Director or their designee gives other directions.
3. Backpacks are taken ONLY if readily accessible and no delay occurs to take them

Lost & Found

A “Lost & Found” area is maintained in the cafeteria. Parents are encouraged to mark their children’s clothing for quick identification. We will remind parents and students to check for clothing often. Unclaimed clothing will be donated to charity at the end of each grading period.

Meals

Breakfast will be offered to all students from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. daily.

Lunches are catered in from Marion County.

This year the county is offering free breakfast and lunch for all elementary students. If for some reason students have to return to paying for lunches, each student will have an individual account which will be charged whenever the child eats a school lunch. In the event this happens we ask that meals be paid for as far in advance as possible. Meals could be paid for online through MCPS. If sending in home lunches, carbonated beverages (sodas, etc.) are not allowed.

If your child has a food allergy or special dietary needs, prescribed by a doctor, you will need to complete the Diet Prescription Form and return it to your child’s teacher at the beginning of each school year.

Please speak with your child about meal choices to prevent misunderstandings. Even if a child brings lunch, if they ask for a meal, we must give them one.

Breakfast must be consumed either at home or in the cafeteria. Parents, please do not send in breakfast with your child, either from home or purchased from restaurants, and expect that they can eat it in class as school is starting. If a student brings a meal from home, they will be allowed to eat in the cafeteria, but they will not be able to bring the food out of the cafeteria. Students begin working immediately upon entering their classrooms. If your child arrives late to school and you have sent food along with them, they will eat in the office before going to class. Students will be counted tardy if they are not in class at 8:00.

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCHES – If for some reason the county does not continue with providing free breakfast and lunch for all elementary students, then your child will receive an application for free or reduced lunch. The application would determine your child's eligibility for free or reduced lunch. The determination process takes up to 1 week. Please note that you are responsible for your child's lunch and breakfast until he/she has been approved. If you have any questions, please contact the school office at (352) 687-2100.

Medication Florida Law Mandates



ONLY prescription medication in the original bottle with the patient's full name, date and dosage, method and time of administration may be given at school.

ONLY when the official Prescribed Medication Form is filled out and on file in the Health Clinic, will medication be administered.

NO over the counter drugs are to be brought or sent to school with your student. This includes chap stick, sunscreen, and cough drops. Parents may come to the school to administer this type of medicine in the presence of school personnel.

Teachers will carry and administer all medications on field trips.

An asthmatic student shall **NOT** be able to carry an inhaler on them at Marion Charter School.

Students are responsible for remembering to take medications. The school will make every effort to remind students to keep them on schedule.

Parents are responsible for making sure ongoing prescriptions are refilled and given to school in a timely manner so there is no lapse in the child's medication schedule.

IMPORTANT MEDICATION INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In order to assist your child with medication(s) that may be prescribed to be taken during school hours, please read the following guidelines based on Florida laws and Marion County School District policy:

1. A physician must order the medication, prescription OR non-prescription (over the counter), specifically for your child. No medication can be administered to your child unless ordered by a physician.
2. Medications are given at school ONLY at times when it cannot be given by the parent. The pharmacy prescription label must have a specific ordered time that we are to give a medication at school.
3. Medications are to be brought to the school by an adult.
4. Students are NEVER to carry medication to school unless it is a physician authorized emergency medication and the "Authorization for Prescribed Medication" form has been signed by the parent AND physician.
5. All medications must be in the newest or most recent pharmacy bottle with the proper labeling from the pharmacy. Narcotics and schedule two drugs, such as ADHD medications, are to be given only as the physician orders them and must be administered as the dates on the label order. The prescription label will be accepted as the doctor's order for these drugs.
6. You must complete an "Authorization for Prescribed Medication" form for each medication your child is to receive at school along with the physician ordered dosage to be administered.
 - If your child's dosage or medication changes, you MUST complete a new authorization form.
 - Please do not forget to give your child their first morning dose. We cannot administer the missed medication unless the time is listed on the pharmacy label and authorized in writing on the authorization form. □ The "Authorization for Prescribed Medication" form is only valid for the current school year. At the beginning of EACH school year a new form must be submitted for each medication.
7. Liquid medications should come to school with a medication cup or medication spoon.
8. Medications MUST be picked up by a parent, guardian, or designated adult at the end of the school year, at the end of the ordered medicating time period, or when it is expired.
 - Any medications not picked up will be disposed of according to Marion County School District policy (usually within 7 days after the last day of school).

Please speak with your child about the importance of taking their medication on time and to report to the clinic promptly. We know it is important for your child to receive his or her medication as ordered by their doctor. If problems arise in the administration of medication, school personnel will contact you. Please keep the school informed of your current home and work phone numbers.

Parent-School Compact
Marion Charter School Parent/Student/Teacher Contract

Vision – We envision a school that supports and nourishes the unique personality and gifts of each child, where students and staff members greet each day with enthusiasm, where success and challenge are expected and enjoyed.

Mission – We strive to guide students to be respectful citizens, successful problem solvers, and life long learners who value themselves and others.

Education is a partnership between students, teachers, and parents. In order for all of the partners to get the most out of their education at Marion Charter School, we have created a contract stating the rights and responsibilities of each partner.

Parent Rights/*Responsibilities

1. To be treated with respect and dignity.
2. To receive clear and timely information about my child's progress at school.
3. To examine all academic records maintained on my child.
4. To observe in my child's classroom in such a manner as to not distract from the teacher or students' work.
5. To ensure that my child is taught at home how to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner to allow them to get the most out of school.
6. To make sure my child receives enough sleep, has a quiet place to do homework, arrives to school on time and has the necessary supplies to work at school.
7. To make sure that my child's attendance stays above 90%.
8. To make sure that any absences or tardies are EXCUSED with correct documentation such as medical/parent notes and are turned into the office within 3 days of returning to school.
9. To attend at least 2 parent conferences to discuss my child's progress through the year.
10. To inform the school of any changes in my child's life that could impact him or her in the classroom.
11. To make sure the school always has current and accurate contact, medical and emergency information for my child.
12. To send my child to school if he or she is ill and to make sure any needed medications are correctly documented in the office and refilled in a timely manner as appropriate.
13. The school has the responsibility for providing parents with opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities during the school day from 8:00 – 2:30.

Other: _____

Teacher Rights/*Responsibilities

1. To be treated with respect and dignity.
2. To select from a variety of instructional materials, strategies, and assessments to create educational opportunities that best meet the needs of the children in my class.
3. To receive appropriate support from the school administration, support personnel, and parents and students.
- * To provide a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as detailed in the family handbook.
- * To ensure that all students are provided an educational setting that respects the rights and dignity of all people.
- * For creating and maintaining a warm, nurturing, and positive classroom atmosphere.
- * For creating and maintaining, with support from the guidance counselor, behavioral expectations for students that are fair, respectful, and consistent and age appropriate.
- * For maintaining regular and helpful communication with parents by holding at least 3 parent conferences per year and providing frequent (5 times per year) reports on student progress.
- * For maintaining accurate and timely educational records for my students and sharing the information with parents and other staff members as appropriate.

Other: _____

Student Rights/*Responsibilities

1. To be treated with respect and dignity.
2. To be safe in my school.
3. To ask questions, get help and learn as much as I can.
4. To work and play with others in safe and helpful ways.
5. To be treated fairly and kindly at school. * To come to school ready to learn.
- * To follow the school and classroom rules.
- * To try my hardest and work together with the teachers my classmates and my parents to learn and improve my academic achievement each year.
- * To treat others with kindness and respect.
- * To complete my assignments in class and at home to the best of my ability.

Other: _____

I understand my rights and agree to uphold my responsibilities at Marion Charter School.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Newsletters

Newsletters will be posted every Friday on our school-wide DOJO page, as well as our school website: www.marioncharter.org

Please read them as they will contain class and school information, important dates, as well as updates on events.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Please join! Our parents are creative and welcoming. They will organize family activities and some fund-raising events. PTO meeting information will be shared at the start of the school year.

Parties

We believe each child is special so we allow parents to provide a small food treat to celebrate their child's birthday. **For the 2024-25 school year only individually wrapped items will be allowed.** Please coordinate this with your child's teacher. Scheduled parties are listed in the calendar. Other parties will be determined by the Staff and Director. We will send home notices of these events well in advance.

In order to keep hurt feelings to a minimum, please do not bring home party invitations to school unless you are inviting the entire class. If you are only able to invite a few children, please mail the invitations.

If you do not wish for you child to participate in parties or birthday celebrations, you must send in a written statement of that request.

Pledge of Allegiance

Section 233.065, Florida Statutes requires that the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag be recited at the beginning of the day in every public school. Exemption from participation may be provided upon written request from the parent or guardian.

Public Input Policy

All interested members of the public are invited to attend our Board meetings. Public input is welcomed at the start of each meeting, as well as giving input to the board and principal in regards to the Parent Involvement Plan (PIP) and the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Members of the public must state their name and address. Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person. MCS reserves the right to remove individuals who are disruptive or verbal/physically abusive or aggressive. We ask that all speakers present their ideas in a respectful manner.

Public Records Request

All public records pursuant to Florida Statutes shall be available for inspection or copying at reasonable items during normal office hours of the school or other offices in which records are maintained. Photocopying or other reproduction of any record shall be performed upon a person's request. The request does not have to be in writing and no reason for the request can be asked for. Charges for the photocopying or reproducing shall be in accordance with current Florida law. The Director or his/her administrative assistant will log all public records requests. The log will include the document(s) requested, the day and time it was requested, when the document(s) was delivered to the person requesting it and the charge, up to \$1.00 per page, for copying the document(s). Records maintained by the school, which are exempt from public inspection, include:

1. Personally identifiable records of students pursuant to Florida Statutes and the federal Family Education 1 Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
2. Portions of personnel records pursuant to Florida Statutes;
3. All work products developed in preparation for collective bargaining pursuant to Florida Statutes;
4. Appraisals, offers, and counter offers relating to purchase of real property pursuant to Florida Statutes;
5. Legal records prepared by an attorney exclusively for civil or criminal litigation pursuant to Florida Statutes, and litigation files while the case is active;
6. Data processing software obtained under a licensing agreement which prevents its disclosure, and data processing software designated by the School Board as "sensitive" pursuant to Florida Statutes;
7. Sealed responses to request for bids or proposals, until such time as they are publicly opened pursuant to Florida Statutes;
8. Personally identifiable records of dependent children of former or current employees who are insured by a school group insurance plan;
9. Employee and student health and medical records as prescribed by Florida Statutes and PL 104-191, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Publicity Policy

The press may come to school to photograph and/or write about our students at work! These photos could be used in the paper or the Internet. If you do not want your child to be photographed, please provide a letter expressing your wishes.

SAC (School Advisory Council)

Although the law designates the governing board of charter schools to be their SAC, we welcome and invite interested members from our staff, parents, and community to join us in helping shape our school improvement plan. All interested staff, parents, and community members are invited to join us. *Dates are subject to schedule changes, so please see our weekly newsletter for updates on our website: www.marioncharter.org

All meetings are in our staff room and begin at 6:00 p.m.

Safety in Private Spaces Act

Safety In Private Spaces Act Pursuant to Section 553.865(9)(a), Florida Statutes, each educational institution shall, within its code of student conduct, establish disciplinary procedures for any student who willfully enters, for a purpose other than those listed below: a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex on the premises of the educational institution and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any instructional personnel as described in s. 1012.01(2), 212 administrative personnel as described in s. 1012.01(3), or a 213 safe-school officer as described in s. 1006.12(1)-(4). For purposes of this section, pursuant to Section 553.865(6), Florida Statutes “a person may only enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex under the following circumstances: (a) To accompany a person of the opposite sex for the purpose of assisting or chaperoning a child under the age of 12, an elderly person as defined in s. 825.101, or a person with a disability as defined in s. 760.22 or a developmental disability as defined in s. 393.063; (b) For law enforcement or governmental regulatory purposes; (c) For the purpose of rendering emergency medical assistance or to intervene in any other emergency situation where the health or safety of another person is at risk; (d) For custodial, maintenance, or inspection purposes, provided that the restroom or changing facility is not in use; or (e) If the appropriate designated restroom or changing facility is out of order or under repair and the restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex contains no person of the opposite sex.”

The following definitions apply pursuant to Section 553.865(3), Florida Statutes:

- "Changing facility" means a room in which two or more persons may be in a state of undress in the presence of others, including, but not limited to, a dressing room, fitting room, locker room, changing room, or shower room."
- "'Educational institution" means a K-12 educational institution or facility or a postsecondary educational institution or facility."

- “"Female" means a person belonging, at birth, to the biological sex which has the specific reproductive role of producing eggs.”
- “"Male" means a person belonging, at birth, to the biological sex which has the specific reproductive role of producing sperm.”
- “"Restroom" means a room that includes one or more water closets. This term does not include a unisex restroom.”
- “"Sex" means the classification of a person as either female or male based on the organization of the body of such person for a specific reproductive role, as indicated by the person's sex chromosomes, naturally occurring sex hormones, and internal and external genitalia present at birth.”
- “"Unisex changing facility" means a room intended for a single occupant or a family in which one or more persons may be in a state of undress, including, but not limited to, a dressing room, fitting room, locker room, changing room, or shower room that is enclosed by floor-to-ceiling walls and accessed by a full door with a secure lock that prevents another individual from entering while the changing facility is in use.”
- “"Unisex restroom" means a room that includes one or more water closets and that is intended for a single occupant or a family, is enclosed by floor-to-ceiling walls, and is accessed by a full door with a secure lock that prevents another individual from entering while the room is in use.”
- “"Water closet" means a toilet or urinal.”

Violations of the policy will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Code.

School Hours

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. Class Begins
- 2:30 a.m. Students dismissed

* Classrooms will be open for the children at 7:45 a.m. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive after 8:00 a.m. Please try to have your child at school by 7:50 a.m.

Student Insurance

In the event your child is injured during regular school hours, any medical expenses incurred are the responsibility of the parents. Marion County School does not carry insurance on students. Parents are encouraged to consider purchasing optional school time or extended 24 hour student accident insurance, offered each year through an outside vendor, for a nominal cost. Additional information on this optional coverage is available on the District’s homepage or by contacting your child’s school.

Student Assistance Plan/RTI

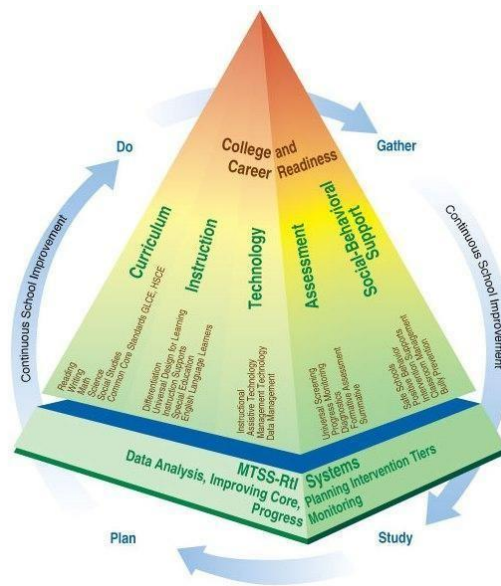
What is MTSS?

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework that uses problem-solving and data to identify student needs and guide decision making. MTSS strives to accelerate the performance of all students. MTSS integrates academic and behavioral instruction, as well as interventions to help provide support for struggling students. MTSS is not special education, but a way to intervene early so that all students can be successful, providing interventions and support that can be adjusted depending on a student’s progress.

The MTSS process in Marion County uses three levels of instruction that build on one another. Each level provides a more intensive “tier” of support that the previous level. MTSS is implemented at all grade levels with the goal of preparing all of our students to be college and career ready.

The student’s progress toward meeting grade-level academic and/or behavioral goals will be monitored throughout the school year and an individual student’s tier level can be adjusted as needed.

MTSS A TIERED MODEL



Tier 1 – Core Instruction

The Instruction that students receive in the general education classroom with their classroom teacher is called Tier 1 Core Instruction. It is expected that whole-group instruction, supplemented with differentiation within the classroom, should meet the needs of all students. Student mastery of the core curriculum will be monitored using universal screenings including state or district-wide assessments.

Tier 2 – Core Instruction & Targeted Interventions

Students not making adequate progress in Tier 1 are provided with more intensive services and interventions. These students continue to receive the core curriculum in addition to targeted interventions, generally delivered in small groups during the student's regular school day. Tier 2 instruction includes careful monitoring and charting of the progress each student is making.

Tier 3 – Core Instruction & Intensive Interventions Students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the student's skill deficits. Progress is monitored and charted frequently to make sure the student is doing well and to help the teacher decide whether he or she needs to make changes in instruction. Students who do not respond to these targeted interventions could be considered for eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Benefits of MTSS.....

- Reduces the time a student waits before receiving additional instruction assistance, including special education, if needed.
- Reduces the overall number of students referred for special education services and increases the number of students who succeed within general education.
- Provides critical information about the instructional needs of the student, which can be used to create effective educational interventions.
- Limits the amount of unnecessary testing that has little or no instructional relevance.
- Ensures that students receive appropriate instruction, particularly in reading, prior to placement in special education.
- School-wide screening is used to determine which students need closer monitoring or additional interventions.
- Uses collaborative problem solving to develop, implement, and monitor interventions.
- Continuously monitors student progress to determine if instruction/interventions are effective in meeting the needs of the student.
- Allows parent involvement throughout the process.
- Provides formal follow-up to ensure that the instruction/interventions were implemented as planned.

Find out more information and download the district MTSS manual at:

<https://www.marionschools.net/Page/50819>

Achievement Testing

KG - F.A.S.T testing in Reading & Math in August, December, and May

2nd - F.A.S.T. testing in Reading & Math in August, December, and May; Writing in February;
District Assessment (DPMAs) in October and February

3rd - F.A.S.T. testing in Reading & Math in August, December, and May; Writing in February;
District Assessment (DPMAs) in October and February

4th - F.A.S.T. testing in Reading & Math in August, December, and May; Writing in September, November, and February; District Assessment (DPMAs) in October and February

5th - F.A.S.T. testing in Reading & Math in August, December, and May; Writing in September, November, and February; District Assessment (DPMAs) in September, October and February

Information on F.A.S.T assessments may be found at:

<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/fsa.shtml>

If a 3rd grade student does not achieve a passing score on the I-Ready AP3 test or qualify under one of the allowed good cause exemptions, they will be retained in 3rd grade per Florida Statute 1008.25(5)(c)4.

Title 1 Information

Marion Charter School is a Title 1 School-wide project school. As parents, you will be invited to attend an informational meeting regarding the school's participation in Title 1 and the requirements of the program. Marion Charter School receives Title 1 funds because 40% or more of our students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Our Title 1 funds are used to meet the academic needs of all our students, but particularly students who are struggling in reading, writing, or mathematics. Last spring, our Board of Directors, who act as our School Advisory Council which identified how our Title 1 funds would be used for the 2019-2020 school year to improve student performance and to increase parental involvement.

We operate a school wide Title I, Part A program, which is the largest federally funded grant program for grades K-12. It is designed to provide all children that attend low-income schools significant opportunities to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education.

Title I funds can be used to:

- hire highly qualified teachers and/or para-professionals,
- provide additional learning time through before/after school and/or summer programs,
- purchase extra resources such as equipment, computers, and supplemental learning materials
- provide additional training for our school's staff, and
- implement innovative family engagement opportunities.

You will be invited to attend our Annual Title I Meeting that will explain how this program is used to support the needs of your child and the school goals. You will also receive information

about the rights you have as a parent of a child attending a Title I school. We look forward to sharing this information and other exciting news at this meeting!

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our school is committed to ensuring that meaningful consultation is ongoing between family members and school staff. When families engage with schools to support their students learning, several positive effects can take place:

1. Students learn to read faster.
2. Students typically score higher on tests.
3. Students attend school on a more regular basis.
4. Students experience less disciplinary occurrences.
5. Students are more likely to graduate.

The most recent version of our Parent and Family Engagement Plan is available by request through the school front office or for review at any time online at <https://www.floridacims.org/districts/marion> (click on your school, then click on “Other Documents”. The District’s Parent Engagement and Family Plan is available in the front office or at www.marion.k12.fl.us under “Curriculum and Instruction”, then, “Grants and Federal Programs”.

NOTIFICATION OF TEACHERS “CERTIFICATION”

Schools are required to provide timely notice to each individual parent that their child has been assigned to or taught for FOUR or more consecutive weeks by a teacher or substitute who is not state certified. You will be provided this notification, if applicable, throughout the school year.

“RIGHT TO KNOW NOTIFICATION”

As a parent, you have the right to know the professional qualifications for the classroom teacher and/or paraprofessional who instructs your child. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows you to ask to receive information about certification(s)/credential(s) and you can request this information at any time. Requests can be made at any time by contacting our front office and asking for a Parent’s Right-To-Know Request form.

MARION CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OR ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

Marion Charter School's Board serves as their SAC committee. The Board reviews issues of a school wide nature, helps to create and review the effectiveness of the School-Parent Compact, the Parent and Family Engagement Plan for both the school and district, and reviews the annual Schoolwide Improvement Plan. Board or SAC meetings fall under the Sunshine Law and are declared public meetings and open to the public at all times. Your input matters and we encourage all parents to attend our Board meetings and provide input for the development of our School Improvement Plan. Board meeting dates for the 2022-2023 school year are tentatively scheduled for October 11, 2022; January 17, 2023; April 18, 2023; and June 13, 2023. The Title 1 program provides schools with educational support and assistance throughout the year. Our Title 1 budget funds paraprofessionals, computers, training and materials to support the classroom teacher and parents in educating your child.

SCHOOLWIDE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)

The SIP is a tool used by stakeholders to review data, set goals, progress monitor and create action plans. The most recent version of our Schoolwide Improvement Plan is available by request through the school front office or for review at any time online at <https://www.floridacims.org/districts/marion>.

PARENT OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST MEETINGS

Parent-Teacher Conferences may be scheduled when the need arises at the request of either the parent or the teacher. Parents may schedule a conference by writing a note or e-mail to the teacher, or calling the front office to set up a time with your child's teacher. By scheduling a conference, the teacher is able to prepare individual reports, papers, etc., regarding your child to improve the sharing of information during the conference. During planned instructional time, teachers are working hard on supporting students to master state standards and are not allowed to conference with parents. We encourage all parents to set up and attend at least one conference per quarter.

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Each Title I school must collaborate with parents to develop an agreement that clearly outlines the responsibilities and commitments that the parents, entire school staff, and student will share. This document is known as the School-Parent Compact and assists with building and developing a partnership to help students achieve the state's high academic standards.

The School-Parent Compact is a living document, signed by the school, staff, and parent, that will be used throughout the year as parents and school staff communicate about the progress and growth of your child.

Please see your child's teacher if you have not yet received a School-Parent Compact. If you would like to provide suggestions or input about the compact, please contact the school.

TITLE I PARENT RESOURCES

The Marion County School District invites all parents and families to visit the Title I Parent Resource Center where there are many resources and materials available for checkout to assist you in teaching your child. The Title I Parent Resource Center is located within the Howard Academy Community Center at 306 NW 7th Avenue. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM-5:00 PM. If you have questions about available materials, please call 352-671-4171.

The Parent Resource Center on Wheels travels to each Title I school in the district and various community events throughout the school year. Resources can be checked out from the van as well! Watch for upcoming notifications alerting you when the van will be at our school.

STATE LEVEL PARENT RESOURCES

The mission of the Bureau of Family and Community Outreach (BFCO) is to empower families and communities with resources and information needed to promote a high quality education for their children. The Bureau reaches out to serve Florida's diverse families and communities in a number of ways including dropout and bullying prevention; family engagement; volunteer and community involvement; faith- and community-based initiatives; mentoring/student assistance and school and instructional enhancement state grants; and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal afterschool grant.

For general information related to Family and Community Outreach, please call: 888-665-5055 or visit the website below: <http://www.fl DOE.org/schools/family-community/activities-programs/parental-involvement.stml>

For questions related to Parents as Teachers (PAT) or home visiting, please contact the National PAT Center directly:

Parents as Teachers, 2228 Ball Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146

Phone (314) 432-4330; FAX: (314) 432-8963 Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

<http://www.parentsasteachers.org/contact>

The State of Florida provides two online Parent Resource Centers:

1. Partnership for Family Involvement in Education: <http://www.fl DOE.org/schools/family-community/family-involvement-links.stml>
2. The Family Network on Disability: <http://fndusa.org/>

Florida's Benchmark for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards identify what your child needs to know and be able to do in all content areas at all grade levels. This information is located at: <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/standards/>

The Title 1 law requires that all Title 1 schools and families work together. How we work together is listed in our School Level Parental Involvement Policy, our Parent-School compact and our School Improvement Plan.

Our school Parent Involvement Plan for 2024-2025 is waiting for final approval from the state. When approved, we will send home information on how you can access it. Copies will also be available in the school office and a link will be provided from our school website. Our 2013-14 plan can be viewed at: <https://www.marionschools.net/Page/50547>

The district Parent Involvement Plan for 2024-2025, once available, can be found at our website and also in our office.

The district's Title 1 Improvement Plan for 2024-2025, when available, can be found at: <https://www.marionschools.net/Page/50551> Once on the School Improvement site, choose "District Assistance and Intervention Plan" under "Type of Plan" and select "Marion" from the district drop down menu, then click to view.

The Parent-School Compact lists the school responsibilities and promises, the family responsibilities and promises, and the student responsibilities and promises. A copy of the 2022-2023 Parent-School Compact is included in the family handbook. You will also receive an NCR copy for you to sign at the beginning of the year. For further information on our Board meetings, please contact the Director, Michelle Axson at 687-2100 or via email at Michelle.Axson@marion.k12.fl.us

To provide parents with the most flexibility, teachers are available to meet with parents, by appointment, from 7-5. Regular school meeting times are from 7:30 – 3:15, during non-student contact times. To protect student learning time, conferences should be scheduled for before or after school.

We communicate with you via our weekly school newsletters. All newsletters are posted on the school website for your convenience. Check out our website, it is full of school information and resources.

Title 1 funds provide materials for parents to work with their children at home. We have materials at school that parents can use to help their children. These materials cover reading, math, and behavior. At the beginning and end of every year, we put out materials for parents to take at our opening orientation and end of year family get together. In addition, the Title 1 van visits our school at scheduled times throughout the year with materials parents can borrow. The dates for these visits will be posted in our school calendar online and in our weekly newsletters.

Some ways you can help your child:

- Share a love of learning

- Read to your child and ask your child to read to you
- Limit TV and video game time
- Take advantage of the books and materials at the public library and our school library
- Show interest in your child's school day – ask questions, ask to see homework, check their daily folders
- Praise their efforts
- Encourage good study habits
- Encourage your child to make use of internet resources, such as, FCAT Explorer, especially for 3rd and 5th graders.
- Attend Board meetings and provide input for our School Improvement Plan
- Attend parent conferences 3 times per year
- Attend a parent workshop to learn how you can help your child do their best □ Volunteer at the school
- Join the PTO
- Keep teachers informed about important events in your child's life
- Take advantage of the district resources available and visit the Title 1 van when it comes to our school
- We send home weekly newsletters from the school – be sure to look over them
- Check and sign your child's work folder every night if his/her teacher uses that system
- Become knowledgeable about the Sunshine State Standards and what your child needs to know
- Regular on-time attendance is important. Your child needs to be in school on time to get the most out of school. Attendance letters will be sent home every 20 days for students whose attendance rate has dropped below 90%. Follow up meetings will be held with parents whose children continue to have excessive absences.
- If your child wears glasses, make sure they have them. If you need help getting or replacing glasses, please contact the school. Your child can't learn if they cannot see correctly.
- We have provided school information in our Family Calendar and Handbook which I sent home at the start of the school year and is available at our school website. Please read over this important document.
- Our Code of Conduct was sent home at the beginning of the year with all students. Please read over it. The Code of Conduct is also available online at our school website.

Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors and volunteers are welcome at our school! To provide for your child's safety, all volunteers must be background checked before they can do volunteer work with students. All visitors and volunteers must check in at the office with a valid picture ID, which will then be scanned into our RAPTOR system. Once cleared, they will receive a visitor or volunteer badge that must be worn at all times. All visitors and volunteers must read and sign a visitor and/or

volunteer guidelines form before visiting or volunteering at our school. Thank you for your cooperation.

Your involvement is crucial to your child's success. Research shows that your influence and involvement are vital to your child's success. You are your child's first teacher and the constant leader in your home. You set the tone and make decisions about what is important in your home. We are here to help you help your child. Please make time to speak with us about your child and never hesitate to set a meeting to share any concerns or ask questions. Let us know how we can help you help your child.

Toys

Toys are not allowed at school. Students may not bring electronic devices, collectibles or valuable items to school. If special permission is given for a student to bring an item in to share, the school cannot assume responsibility.

Uniform Guidelines

TOPS:

Red, Navy or Light Blue w/collars – Shirts must be tucked into bottoms. Solid-colored shirts only - no stripes, plaids, or designs. Collared dresses in these colors are permitted.

BOTTOMS:

Black, Gray, Navy or Tan Khaki shorts, slacks, skirts, or jumpers. – Bottoms are to be worn at the waist. Shorts must be worn under dresses or skirts. Jumpers must have collared uniform shirts underneath in appropriate colors. Pants must be well fitted. Shorts must be appropriate mid-thigh length or longer.

SHOES:

Closed toes & heels – No shoes with wheels at all times even on “No Uniform Days”. Socks are required. Comfortable shoes appropriate for physical activity are suggested (i.e. sneakers).

FRIDAYS:

Jeans & MCS t-shirt* may be worn on Fridays if desired. If students do not wear their MCS tshirt, they must wear a regular uniform top. Jeans/jean shorts must be blue and not have any holes.

NO UNIFORM FRIDAY'S:

A sticker will be sent home for those earning No Uniform Friday. Shoes must still be closed toed.

*School T-shirt orders are taken in September

STUDENTS WITH HOODED JACKETS MAY NOT WEAR THE HOODS UP INSIDE THE SCHOOL!

Visitors

In order to maintain a positive, orderly teaching environment and to keep our children safe, a visitor MUST:

- Enter and Exit through the main office
- Sign-in and Sign-out when arriving and leaving
- Wear a “Visitor” Badge
- Have approval to be on campus
- Be ready to depart immediately upon completion of school activity
- Sign our “Visitor Agreement” policy. The visitor agreement policy is in our handbook, posted on our website, and will be sent home with all students.

If parents wish to visit their child’s classroom, arrangements must be made with their child’s teacher prior to the visit. No younger siblings/ relatives/friends are allowed on visits.

VOLUNTEERS are the Heart of our School

Plan to be a volunteer. There are many ways that you can help our school and its students. If you are interested in being a volunteer, you must complete an application (available in the office and on the school website) and attend a volunteer meeting every other year for approval. These meetings will be held a limited amount of times, so please do NOT put off attending until wanting to volunteer. At this time, you will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement. No younger siblings/relatives/friends are allowed during volunteer activities.

Some ways you can help:

- Put up visual displays
- Read to a child
- Help with art, music, and PE activities
- Lunch monitors
- Assist teachers in classes
- Share your talents/hobbies in Extended Day
- Give individualized spelling tests
- Chaperone field trips
- Office help
- Help with PTO activities

If you wish to chaperone on a field trip, you must complete a volunteer application at least 2 weeks before the trip. We are unable to process applications submitted less than 2 weeks before the trip.

MCS reserves the right to revoke volunteer privileges at any time.

Wall of Fame

Every week one student from each class will be recognized for practicing a positive social skill and/or character trait. Their teacher will talk with them about this at the beginning of each day. The trait or skill will also be in the school newsletter.

Teachers submit a student at the end of each week to Ms. Wells or designee and write a brief description of how the student demonstrated the skill/character trait. The student will have their picture taken and displayed on our Wall of Fame for all to see and admire! Teachers will send these pictures home at the end of each school year.

Mental Health and Safety

In the wake of the tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that took the lives of 17 Florida students and educators, the 2018 Florida Legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 7026, the [Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act](#) (MSDHSPA). This legislation outlines significant reforms to make Florida schools safer, while keeping firearms out of the hands of mentally ill and dangerous individuals. This bill established The Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program. In its initial report, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission found that having Guardians in schools is the best way to ensure highly trained personnel are in place to respond immediately in the event of a school shooting. Guardians are armed personnel who aid in the prevention or abatement of active assailant incidents on school premises. They are either school employees who volunteer to serve in addition to official job duties or personnel hired for the specific purpose of serving as a school guardian. Guardians must pass psychological and drug screenings, and successfully complete a minimum of 144 hours of training. Marion Charter School is a participant in The Guardian Program and will also have periodic supervision of Sheriff's Office personnel. The names of our school's Guardian(s) are kept confidential and are not to be discussed with unauthorized personnel. For more information on the MSDHSPA go to <http://fldoe.org/safe-schools/>

For additional security measures, Marion Charter School has a video/electronic security system set up around campus. There is also a fence set up around the perimeter of the school with several locked gate exits.

In response to the 2019 Florida Legislature passing Senate Bill 7030, Implementation of

Legislative Recommendations of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission, which comprehensively addresses school safety, Marion Charter School has had several changes.

Marion Charter School has adopted Marion County Public School's Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan (MHAA Plan). This includes a focus on a multi-tiered system of supports to deliver evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services to students with one or more co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses. This will be done utilizing trainings MCPS provides to staff, such as Youth Mental Health First Aid, following the MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team) model, and utilizing Tier I curriculum in the classroom, currently Caring School Community. The MDT will meet throughout the school year. See <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18612/urlt/Marion.pdf> for more information or contact the school counselor for questions.

Marion County Public Schools: An Equal Opportunity School System

Students in Marion County are entitled to certain rights, standards and protections including those of due process, equal opportunity protection, accurate and confidential record keeping, safeguards to health and safety, and access to suitable employment. The School Board is committed to affording students the benefits of these rights, standards, and protections. Students who feel that they have questions concerning this matter have the right and the responsibility of discussing such questions with the school administration.

Marion Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race (including anti-Semitism), ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability (including HIV, AIDS, or sickle cell trait), pregnancy, religion, marital status, age (except as authorized by law), military status, ancestry, or genetic information, which are classes protected by State and/or Federal law (collectively, "protected classes") in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices as required by Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, Age Discrimination Act of 1967, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Florida Educational Equity Act of 1984. A lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation.

Marion Charter School also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which is against the law and School Board Policies 1362, 2266, 3362, 4362, and 5517.

Marion Charter School will not tolerate sexual harassment activity by any of its members of the school district community, including students, employees, and third parties pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX Rules and Regulations.

For more information, please contact:

Rose Cohen, Equity Assurance Director ADA, Title IX and Equity
Issues Phone: (352) 671-6305

District 504 Specialist, Section 504

Inquiries Phone: (352) 671-6860

PO Box 670, Ocala, FL 34478-0670

Pursuant to Florida Statutes Chapter 39, all employees or agents of Marion Charter School have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, have immunity from liability if they report such cases in good faith, and have a duty to comply with child protective investigations and all other provisions of law relating to child abuse, abandonment, and neglect.

VISITOR/VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT POLICY

1. I will sign in at the Marion Charter School office, immediately upon arrival, when I arrive at MCS in order to create a safe atmosphere. I will wear my visitor/volunteer name tag at all times when on campus.
2. I will dress appropriately when visiting Marion Charter School.
3. MCS is a drug-free environment. I am aware that all drugs, including tobacco or any VAPE products, are prohibited by law and within 200 feet of school campus, as well as during schoolsponsored events. THIS INCLUDES CAR LINE AND PARKING LOTS.
4. MCS is a WEAPON FREE Zone. This includes guns, knives, utility and pocket knives, and any other item that would be construed as a possible weapon. I understand that weapons are prohibited by law on campus and within 200 feet of the school campus. THIS INCLUDES CARLINE AND PARKING LOTS.
5. As a visitor/volunteer, I will not interfere with the classroom instruction, or any student's learning including my own child's classroom experience. I will set a positive example for the students.
6. I know the MCS rules (Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be a Problem Solver) and will encourage students to follow them. If any student, for whom I am responsible, fails to follow my attempts to encourage them to abide by the rules, I will immediately ask for assistance from an MCS staff member.
7. I understand as a visitor, I have not been background checked and so may only be alone with my own child(ren).
8. In order for the teacher and students to focus on learning, as well as focus on the important tasks at hand as a volunteer, I will not bring other children with me. I understand that all MCS staff members must direct their attention to the children and will not engage in an unscheduled conversation/conference.
9. I will respect the confidentiality of each student by not sharing information about students I encounter during my visit. I will only discuss student behavior/actions with his or her teacher.

10. I understand that as a visitor/volunteer, I need to arrange my visit time with the teacher or office ahead of time. I understand that to enable the teacher to focus on the students, my visit will be for a specific period of time. I will be unable to arrive before the specified time nor stay past the specified time.
11. I understand that the Staff Work Room is for staff only and will only enter it when with a staff member.
12. Being a volunteer at MCS is vital and important role. The teachers are depending on my being there when I say that I will be! I will show that I am reliable and dependable by arriving at MCS as promised, in a prompt and timely manner, and by leaving promptly upon completion of my task.
13. If this agreement is not followed, I will not be able to visit/volunteer at Marion Charter School.

Whistleblower Complaint Form for Marion Charter School

Mailing Address: 39 Cedar Road, Ocala, FL 34472
Phone Number: (352) 687-2100 Fax: (352) 687-2700
Email: Michelle.Axson@marion.k12.fl.us

To file a Whistleblower Complaint, please complete this form and return it to the Director (or, if it concerns the Director, return it to a Board member). See Board member section for contact information. Upon receipt, your complaint will be reviewed and a determination made as of whether your complaint will be investigated as an ethics or other complaint. You will notified in writing of this determination. If your complaint is investigated as an ethics complaint, you will be notified of any findings.

- I. State the names, address, telephone numbers, and email addresses of persons whom you believe have violated the Marion Charter School ethics policy.

- II. **ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE ETHICS PROCEDURES:** I believe that the above-name Marion Charter School employee(s) violated the section of the Ethics Policy/Procedure identified above by engaging in the following conduct: (Describe the employee's actions, which you believe may have violated the Ethics Policy, as specifically as possible, including dates, times, places, and actions. Attach additional sheets as necessary).

- III. **WITNESS INFORMATION:** State the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of persons with firsthand knowledge of the facts alleged or other information that could help.

- IV. **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:** List any records or documents that would assist the Director or Board member in their investigation. Please mail or deliver to the Director or Board member any documentary evidence that supports the facts.

- V. **COMPLAINANT DECLARATION:** If you wish to remain anonymous, do not fill out this portion.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (printed): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

DISCLOSURE: This form may, at some point, become subject to disclosure. Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns about filling out this form.