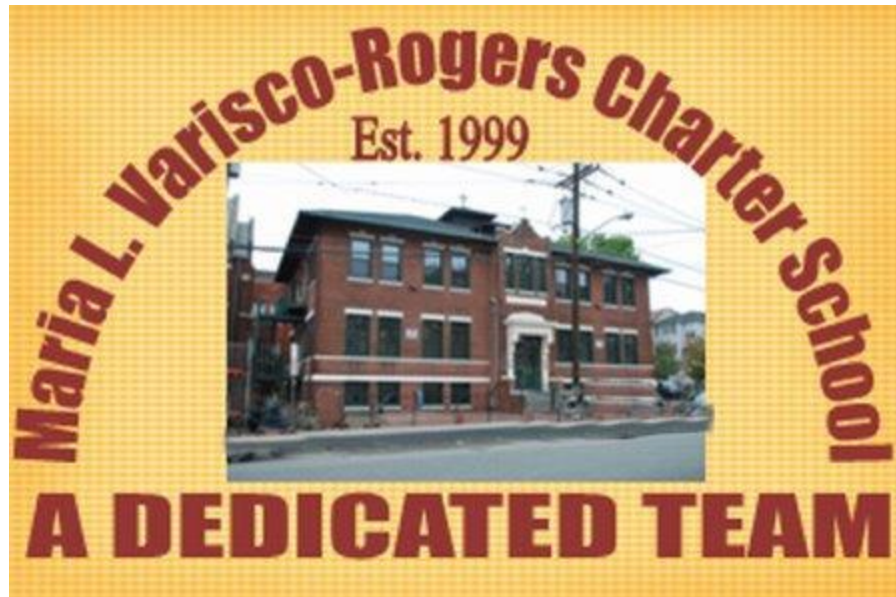


Parent / Student Handbook 2016-2017



“Providing New Alternatives for a Better Education”

Mrs. Teresa Segarra, Lead Person/Executive Director

Ms. Anne Heyward, Principal

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**Welcome To
Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School**

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School, I welcome you to the 2016-2017 school-year. Whether you are a returning parent and student, or new to the MLVR Charter School, please know that you are a valued member of our school community. The MLVR Charter School faculty and staff are committed to providing our parents and students with the support and materials that are needed to assist our students with meeting their educational goals and demands. Through a collaborative effort between school staff, parents, students, and community resources, we will be able to improve student achievement and enable our students to see that they have the ability to succeed. At Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School we believe that all students have the ability to attain or surpass the levels of proficiency required by the state's assessment program.

We look forward to another successful year! Thank you for the support and dedication that you continue to show to our students, staff, and to Maria Varisco!

Kind Regards,

***Teresa Segarra
Lead Person /Executive Director***

Description of the Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School

Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School (MLVR Charter School) was founded in 1999 with the support of CURA, Inc., a community based organization. MLVR Charter School currently serves 554 students in grades K-8 in the City of Newark. The main purpose that promoted the creation of the school was the possibility of offering young people in the City of Newark the education needed to successfully pursue higher education and be able to compete in the technologically advanced world we are in.

The school focuses on providing Newark's youth with a thorough and efficient education through smaller class size, infusion of technology in the classroom, extended school days, rigorous curricula and the provision of supportive services that can provide students with increased opportunities for attaining academic success.

MLVR Charter School affirms the belief that all children can learn, when provided with opportunities and the appropriate individualized instruction. Furthermore, the school believes that academic, intellectual, emotional, and social aptitude exists equally among all nationalities, races, and creeds.

In order to achieve its goals the school will provide:

- Professional counseling for students, both group and individual
- A five-day academic week with a minimum of seven and a half hours of instruction daily
- A small student to certified teacher ratio approximately, 10:1
- Individualized portfolios for each student
- Instructional program congruent to the NJ Adopted Core Curriculum Standards, Common Core State Standards, the school's adopted and continuously revised curriculum, the state of NJ Assessment Program, and the school's assessment program
- Technology education, second language learning and extracurricular activities
- A school uniform policy
- Parental Training and volunteer programs
- Partnerships with Higher Education, Private Business, and Community-Based Sponsorship various community organizations

Mission Statement

Our School Mission is to improve the educational achievement of all students based on the belief that all our children can learn. MLVR Charter School provides inner city youth with a thorough and efficient education through smaller class size, use of technology in the classroom, extended school days, and the provision of essential supportive services. It is a goal of Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School to make certain each and every child achieves their highest potential academically and socially. ***MLVR Charter School was created to offer Newark students an educational environment that will develop the skills necessary to compete in today's high technology global economy.***

1. Our staff, parents, and the community in general will work together to make this belief a reality.
2. Our instructional and support programs will be coordinated to ensure that all our students will reach their maximum level of proficiency in the basic areas of Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Science, World Languages, and Technology.

Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School Administration and Faculty believe:

- That every student must be given the opportunity and encouragement to reach their full potential.
- That the responsibility of the learning process extends beyond the formal school setting.
- That all individuals are responsible for their actions.
- That each child has value regardless of race or ethnicity.
- That students learn best when they are actively involved in learning.
- That learning is a creative process.
- That all students learn differently.
- That learning is strengthened through the use of technology.
- That education is a lifelong process.
- That education is a shared community responsibility.
- That investing in staff development is essential.
- That diversity is of great value.
- That the learning process must occur in a safe and secure setting.

Vision Statement

The vision of MLVR Charter School is to maintain a campus-wide, integrated network that will enable students and teachers to not only work collaboratively but also provide quality services and programs for our students. A collaborative approach to education enabled by technology will:

- facilitate the administrative tasks of the school
- enhance the quality and scope of the research, teaching and service provided by the faculty
- enable students to effectively excel in the 21st Century.

MLVR Charter School students will have the opportunity to become competent in the use of technology for work, problem solving and research, in essence they will achieve educational excellence. Students and staff will be provided with sufficient technological resources and training. New technology will be implemented based on a review of current curriculum, instruction, and the physical environment in order to bring about an advantageous atmosphere for learning. A commitment to support and fund material resources and professional development for an ongoing process of technological and academic accomplishment will be maintained.

Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School Schedule

Time Schedule-Regular School Day

7:55 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast Program – In the classroom
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Lunch Program: Grades K-4- In the cafeteria
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Lunch Program: Grades 5-8- In the cafeteria
4:00 p.m.	Dismissal (Grades K-8)

***On Scheduled half days students are dismissed at 12:00PM and must be picked up promptly. School staff is scheduled to receive Professional Development and must report immediately following dismissal.**

Faculty/Staff

Title/Position	Name	Contact Information
Lead Person/Executive Director	Mrs. Teresa Segarra	973-481-9001 tsegarra@mlvracs.org
School Business Administrator/SBS	Mr. Jose A. Segarra	973-481-9001 jsegarra@mlvracs.org
Principal	Ms. Anne Heyward	973-481-9001 aheyward@mlvracs.org
Assistant School Business Administrator	Mr. Al Barre	973-481-9001 abarre@mlvracs.org
Director of Special Services/HR	Ms. Gynise Gotto	973-481-9001 ggotto@mlvracs.org
Director of Curriculum and Assessment	Ms. Jennifer Fumero	973-481-9001 jfumero@mlvracs.org
Director of ESL	Ms. Maritza Villanueva	973-491-9001 mvillanueva@mlvracs.org
Lead Teacher	Ms. Kelly Mitchell	973-481-9001 kmitchell@mlvracs.org
School Nurse	Ms. Gemma Seppe	862-240-1780 gseppe@mlvracs.org

Keeping Our School Safe

Building Security and Safety

The school buildings belonging to MLVR Charter School are all monitored by 24 hour video surveillance. All outside doors to the school building are kept locked at all times. Entrance into the school building may only be gained through the front door via the assigned Security Guard.

Early Pick-up of Students

Parents/Guardians and/or authorized adults coming to pick up a student(s) during school hours, must be listed on the student's Emergency Data Information Sheet. All visitors must first go to the receptionist's desk at 243 Woodside Avenue to sign in, obtain a visitor's pass and sign the student out prior to leaving the school building.

Visitors

MLVR Charter School accepts only those visitors who have legitimate business to attend to at the school. Parents are always **welcome**.

Guests and visitors must sign in at the receptionist's office at 243 Woodside Avenue. Parents are always welcome to visit our school. We ask that parents exercise careful judgment and avoid frequent lengthy visits. Providing your children privacy and independence at school sends a positive message about their self-reliance and your confidence in the teacher.

If you wish to visit a class, please make arrangements with the teacher prior to the day of the visit. Dropping into classrooms with quick messages for students or teachers can be very disruptive. Teachers will be happy to confer with parents during their planning period or before or after school. A conference appointment may be made by sending a note to your child's teacher(s).



Student Attendance

School attendance is essential to a student's school success. In order to ensure each student is provided with the greatest opportunity to learn, and to ensure compliance with New Jersey Department of Education (NJ DOE), students will be expected to attend school regularly and to be on time.

School Hours of Instructional Time: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM for students in grades K-8

Arrival: All Students **must arrive at school at 7:55 AM.**



Students in grades K-4 must be dropped off at 243 Woodside Avenue.

Students in grades 5-8 must be dropped off and go directly to 18 Heller Parkway.
Breakfast is served in the classroom from 7:55 AM



Students arriving after **8:00 AM (8:05 AM or later)** are **tardy or late** and **must obtain a late pass from the receptionist in the office at 243 Woodside Avenue.** The receptionist will refer all attendance concerns to the attendance department.

Dismissal: Dismissal time is at **4:00 PM** for grades K-8 **Please be prompt!** Dismissal on half- days is 12:00PM. Parents who arrive late for student pick up will sign the "Late Pick-Up Log".

Infraction	Consequence
3 Unexcused Absences	Attendance Coordinator will contact Parent/Guardian
5-9 Unexcused Absences	Mandatory Attendance Contract Meeting. After 5th unexcused absence-Legal Notice, After the 7th unexcused absence - 2nd Legal Notice, 9th unexcused absence-Mandatory Pre-Judicial Conference
10 Unexcused Absences	Refer New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts for Final Legal Notice
13 Unexcused Absences	Retained (Student Held Back)
3 Unexcused Tardy (lateness)	1 Absence

If a student must be absent, the parent/guardian must call the administration office by 8:30 am at **862-240-9005** to report the absence. Please provide your child/children's name, grade(s), teacher, and reason for absence.

If a student needs to be picked-up early please call **973-481-9001 x 210** ahead of time so the student(s) can be waiting in the main office.

All Students-Summary of Administrative Regulations Regarding Attendance & Absences

1. Class attendance constitutes a component of the grade for each class. Individual teachers may award participation points as part of the student's grade. When the student is unexcused from school, he/she will not receive participation points.

2. Absent students are to make-up the schoolwork/homework they missed during their absence and must be graded by the academic teacher.
3. When the student returns to school from an absence, a written note from the doctor stating the reason for the absence must be brought to the administration office located at 381 Woodside Ave.
4. If a student is absent for an extended period of time, a written note from the doctor is mandatory. The Principal, whether or not extended, must approve any other reasons for absences.
5. Schoolwork assigned during an absence must be completed to the satisfaction of each instructor whose class or classes were missed. All schoolwork must be made up within the specified time frame (two days per one day absent). Students returning to school following an absence will be required to take tests given on the returning day, provided the test was announced prior to the absence.
6. Students participating in school activities must be in school at least one-half of the day (by Noon) on the day of the event in order to participate or practice in any school activity. Only in extraordinary circumstances, may the Principal waive this policy.

Excused Absences

The Principal in accordance with NJ DOE has deemed the following as acceptable forms of excused absences:

1. Personal illness- The school requires documentation from a medical provider.
2. Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled after school hours. Documentation from medical provider required.
3. Extraordinary emergency in the home/family, family illness, or death.

PLEASE NOTE: Any student accumulating an excess of **13 absences** in the academic year, which are not excused absences or long-term illness, are subject to being retained in their current grade unless the academic work is made up during the academic school year.

Religious Holidays

Certain religious holidays permitting student absence from school have been identified by the NJ DOE. A listing of approved religious holidays can be viewed at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/holidays.htm>. Documentation from your religious organization is required and must be submitted to the Student Accountability Coordinator or Director of Curriculum and Assessment located in the administration office at 381 Woodside Ave or by telephone at 862-240-9005.

Tardiness

Instructional time is important, therefore, each student must arrive on time daily. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure their child(ren) arrive to school on time (7:55 am). Any student who arrives after 8:05 am will be marked tardy.

Students may be excused for arriving late due to the following reasons:

1. Medical appointment
2. Personal Illness
3. An extraordinary home/family emergency
4. An education reason pre-approved by the Principal

All other tardiness are considered unexcused. If a student arrives late to school, the student must first report to the receptionist's office at 243 Woodside Avenue for a late pass. If a student is detained by a teacher, or in the office, the student must ask for a pass from the staff member who detained him/her before going to class.

Penalties for Tardiness

3rd Tardiness- Parental Notification

4th Tardiness- Parental notification and Lunch detention

5th Tardiness- Parental notification, two days of lunch detention; an attendance contract will be developed and implemented. For every three (3) times a student is tardy, they will in turn accumulate one (1) unexcused absence.

PLEASE NOTE: Tardiness to school may result in extended detention time, in-school suspension, or being put on probation with the school.

School Closings

Inclement Weather Considerations

The decision to open or close the school in bad weather is based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, such as:

- **Information on road conditions from NJ Transit Authority.** Careful consideration is given to the most dangerous roads in the district. Even if your street looks clear, travel elsewhere in the district may be dangerous. In addition, consideration is given to the fact that some students take public transportation to school.
- **Amount of snow and ice accumulated.**
- **Hazardous precipitation, i.e. hurricane**
- **Building conditions** (such as whether school has electricity or heat).
- **Temperature and wind chill.** Some of our students walk to school and some must wait outside for the bus.
- **Weather predictions.** The administration prefers not to make a decision based on weather predictions, which are not always accurate, however, sometimes this is necessary.
- **What other school districts are doing.** Whether other local districts are opening or closing is also a consideration.

The Lead Person/Executive Director of MLVR Charter School is responsible for the final decision, based on the above factors and recommendations from the Principal, Maintenance, Police Department, and NJ public transportation. In the event of a school cancellation or delayed opening, the decision must be made to close or delay the opening of the school no later than 5:30 am so that the information is disseminated to parents and staff via the Automated Telephone System, as well as appropriate television broadcasts (such as but not limited to News 12 NJ and the VIOS Channel) and the school website www.mlvracs.org. In the event that conditions worsen after the start of the school day, a decision to conduct an early dismissal will be considered. If school is dismissed early because of inclement weather after the start of the school day, parents will also be notified by Automated Telephone System, television broadcasts, and the school website www.mlvracs.org.

Extracurricular activities scheduled for the day or evening of a day when school is canceled or dismissed early are generally canceled and rescheduled. The Lead Person/Executive Director will determine whether to hold extracurricular activities. If the extracurricular activity is to be held, students and parents are notified in the

same manner as the notification that school was dismissed. When school is canceled for the day(s), due to hazardous conditions, the canceled day(s) may be rescheduled in the school calendar at the discretion and direction of the Lead Person/Executive Director.

Academics

State of NJ and Standardized Testing

Students of MLVR Charter School are administered standardized tests as per school policy and/or the requirements of the State of NJ, as follows:

- Grades Kindergarten to Second: TerraNova (MLVR Charter School test)- Twice a year
- Grades Kindergarten to Eighth: NWEA MAPS Online Assessment Benchmark (MLVR Charter School test)- Twice a year
- Grades Third to Eighth: PARCC State Assessment- (state testing)- Once a year
- Grades Fourth and Eighth: NJASK Science Assessment- (state testing)- Once a year

These tests are used to determine academic progress for individual students, for groups of students, and for the school.

Honor Roll and Academic Honors

Students at MLVR Charter School are recognized for their academic achievements. Honors are determined quarterly. Students receive awards at an academic assembly which takes place the week after report cards are distributed. Students who are able to earn Principal's List and Honor Roll are in Grades Third to Eighth.

- Principal's List: Students with all A's.
- Honors: Students with all A's and B's.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Students receive progress reports four (4) times a year prior to each report card. The progress report is not a grade, but rather a tool of information that can assist parents and students with determining the student's progress. Parents and students who are concerned about their progress should talk to the teacher to determine how they can improve their performance.

Students will receive report cards four (4) times per year. The first two report cards are distributed during designated Parent/Teacher conference nights; parents are invited at this time to discuss their children's grades with their teachers. The last two report cards are sent home with the students.

In the event that parents cannot attend the parent/teacher conference on the assigned date to receive the report card, the parent should call the administration office to make arrangements to have a conference with the student's teachers or may send written permission for the report card to be sent home with the student. The final report card is given out to the students on the last day of school.

Report cards will be held for any monies owed to the school, i.e. breakfast/lunch/afterschool program money, retribution money for destruction of school property, etc.

Grading Cycles 2016/2017

1st Marking Period - Aug. 17th through Oct. 26th

2nd Marking Period – Oct. 27th through Jan. 19th


3rd Marking Period - Jan. 20th through March 30th

4th Marking Period – March 31st through June 9th

*Please see our school calendar for specific dates.

Grading System

Students at MLVR Charter School receive a letter grade based on the numerical system. The four point numerical system and its grade equivalence are as follows:



Numerical Grade	Letter Equivalent
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
69 and below	F

Any grade below 70 is a failing grade.

School Retention Policy

The Principal determines the retention of a student. The following is the procedural criteria:

- Our goal is to support our students' academic and social-emotional needs. By using a wide variety of assessment data, it is our responsibility to closely track and monitor students' individual progress and instructional development. Progress reports and report cards are one form of communication to parents regarding the progress of his/her child. Progress reports and report cards must accurately represent how a student is progressing toward meeting grade level standards.
- In the event that a student is identified as "at risk" he/she must be referred to receive basic skills and/or Wilson services. Parents should be abreast of student's progress twice each marking period via student progress reports, report cards, and during parent/teacher conference before January.
- When it is determined that a student may be retained for an additional year, the parents must be informed in writing through a retention letter by January, at that time the teacher must indicate at least three (3) forms of intervention that he/she will implement, a conference will be scheduled.
- It shall be within the sole discretion of the Principal to retain students.
- Students failing one or more core courses at the end of the academic year will be considered for retention. The core courses are Language Arts Literacy (Reading and Writing), Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science.
- Principal can utilize a secondary assessment method to promote students. This method should include the following assessment instruments: Scores of the New Assessment Program, Scores of the School's Standardized Testing program, and Evaluation of Student's portfolio.
- Students accumulating an excess of 13 absences in the academic year which are not excused absences or long term illness are subject to being retained unless the academic work is made up.

- No student should be retained more than once in the same grade level. If a student is in danger of being retained in the same grade a second time, the Principal should meet with the student's parents/guardians and a Child Study Team Intervention should be initiated.

Academically Related Services

Homework

Homework is regularly assigned to reinforce learning and the curriculum. Students are expected to complete all homework activities by the date assigned. Students who are absent from school have the responsibility to make up all homework assigned during their absence. If an absence is excused, students are permitted two days for each absent day to make up any missed work. In the event of an absence exceeding three days, parents may call the administration office and request the student's assignments be prepared for pick-up. Upon their return to school, students may need to schedule a makeup date with their teacher for missed assignments, i.e. class presentations, homework, tests, quizzes, etc. (See attached Homework Contract/Rubric)



Extra Help

It is the shared responsibility of the teacher, parent, and student to make arrangements when extra help is needed.

Home Language Surveys/English as a Second Language (ESL) Services

Upon registration parents are required to complete a "Home Language Survey". The survey is used to determine if the student being registered should be screened for ESL services. Students are also considered for ESL placement testing based on teacher or parent recommendation. Please contact the Director of ESL to discuss placement and testing procedures.

Students with Disabilities/ Special Education

MLVR Charter School Students with Disabilities procedures and protocols are consistent with the State of NJ and Federal Policies on the treatment of Individuals with Disabilities as per Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

For the purpose of this policy, the definition of an "individual with a disability" is a person who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, or working,
2. Has a record of impairment, or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

A fair and supportive environment will be provided for all students regardless of their gender, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or disability.

Inquiries or grievances related to the provisions of students with disabilities services may be directed to the Principal or Lead Person/Executive Director.

All students at MLVR Charter School with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are placed in the least restrictive environment in the general education class with supplementary aids and services including, but not limited to, the following:

- Curricular or instructional modifications or specialized instructional strategies
- Assistive technology devices and services
- Teacher aides
- Related services
- Integrated therapies
- Consultation services
- In-class resource programs

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech/language therapy services are available to children who meet the eligibility criteria. Referrals may be made to the MLVR Charter School Social Worker by either parents or school staff. The social worker will then make a referral to the Speech and Language Therapist. Once it is determined that the child meets the eligibility criteria for services, the following is required prior to the start of services: parent consent and Speech Individual consent. After the assessment is complete, the Speech Therapist will prepare a Speech Individual Education Plan. This plan will be reviewed with the parents, teachers, and social worker. The plan is reviewed and revised annually.

Field Trips

Educational trips are taken in conjunction with the curriculum at the various grade levels. Students are expected to attend all **required** field trips. The only exception would be if a student and the student's parent(s) are advised that the student will not be permitted to attend due to behavior, grades, etc. Should this occur, the student is still **required** to attend school on the day of the field trip. Any students not permitted to attend will be left with work for their classroom teacher and will remain in a designated classroom for the day.

While on field trips, students are guests and are considered representatives of the school. Students must treat employees, chaperones, and guides with respect and courtesy. Students who exhibit behavior issues during the year may require a personal chaperone in order to attend trips. Prior to attending a field trip, students must return a permission slip signed by their parent/guardian granting permission for them to attend the trip. Parents **MUST** sign and return the Permission Slip in order for their child to participate.

Birthday Celebrations

In order to promote healthy eating habits and maximize learning, there will be no birthday party celebrations in class during the day, there will also be no cake, cupcakes, candy, chips, soda, etc. Only healthy snacks such as applesauce, fruit, pretzels, or water for birthdays will be distributed at the end of the day.

Evening Activities

All students attending evening school sponsored events must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Residency

All students attending the MLVR Charter School must reside within the City of Newark, NJ.

Telephone Usage

A telephone is available for student use in emergencies only. If a student wishes to use the telephone, the student must first obtain permission from the Principal or designee. Students are NOT permitted to use cell phones in school.

Students are also not permitted to take calls during class. Parents that have messages for their students to must contact the receptionist's office at 973-481-9001. Due to the high volume of calls received by the receptionist's office, please keep the need to call for student messages to emergencies only, i.e. to stay in aftercare.

Student Funds and Fundraising

At times, the school will sponsor activities with the purpose of raising funds for specific student activities, such as a class trip, etc. The Principal will select and approve the fundraising activities. Funds raised remain in the control of the school.

Students may not solicit funds from teachers, employees, or other students during the school day. Violations of this rule may result in future fund raising activities being denied.

Dress Code

Experience shows a relationship between behavior and dress. Our observation as educators is that what students wear does affect the way they think and behave toward their work while at school. Therefore, MLVR Charter School has adopted and implemented a school uniform policy. **This policy has been adopted to ensure the safety of your child; it will allow us to identify all students that attend our school and ensure that students from other schools do not enter our facility.**

The school uniform is intended to help create an atmosphere of learning at the school and dissuade competition in dressing. Dressing appropriately helps one better focus on the matter at hand. MLVR Charter School students are expected to dress in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child wears his/her uniform to school daily.

Please note: Silly Bands/Loom bracelets and accessories (bright colored headbands, feathers, scarves, cut off gloves, beads, etc.) are strictly prohibited and are not to be worn or taken to school. If Silly Bands or accessories are found in a child's possession, they will be confiscated and returned to a parent only. Earrings must be no larger than a quarter in size.

Allowances will be made for students who start the school year late. If you have any further questions please contact the administration office for assistance.

The Uniform consists of:

- Black pants/slacks, knee length black uniform shorts, knee length uniform skirt (**No cargo pants: loose trousers with a large external pocket on the side of each leg. No cargo shorts or skirts permitted**)
Pants MUST be SLACKS. No "SKINNY Pants" or "Jeggings" (Jean like legging)
- Teal collared shirt with MLVRCS logo must be worn.
- **Sweaters with School logo only! Hoodies with school logo are allowed to be won ONLY on gym days in class. (No other sweaters are permitted to be won in class)**
- **Black dress shoes only!** (No Sneakers, converse, vans, "Toms"- canvas shoes, sandals, flip flops, open toed shoes, heels, wedges, furry boots, "Timberlands", "Uggs", or rain boots are permitted) **If rain or**

snow boots are worn due to inclement weather, students must have a pair of black shoes to change into.

- Black **solid** colored socks, or stockings only.(No leggings and all students **MUST** wear socks for health and safety)
- Long sleeves and undershirts must be **black only**.
- Boys must wear a black. Belt buckles must be regular size.
- On “Gym or Music in Motion day” the **school gym uniform** must be worn. T-shirt and sweat pants or shorts with the new school logo and sneakers which must be **one solid color- black or white (No converse, skippies, Keds, Vans, or multi-colored canvas sneakers)**
- No bright colored headbands, feathers, scarves, cut-off gloves or accessories.
- Earrings must be no larger than a quarter in size.
- **No loom bracelets or silly bands**

*** Failure to wear the proper uniform will result in disciplinary action. The only exception would be on “Dress Down Days” which have been approved by the Principal.**

Physical Education Dress Code

In accordance with NJ law, all students must participate in physical education. In order to be excused, students must present a note, signed by a physician, to the physical education teacher and school nurse. This note should state the reason and the length of time the student is to be excused.

Suitable gym attire is required for participation in gym classes:

- Grey T-Shirt or sweatshirt with school logo
- Black sweatpants with school logo
- Black shorts with school logo (No tights/leggings under gym shorts allowed)
- Solid colored black or white sneakers. **(No canvas sneakers such as: converse, skippies , Keds, Vans or multi-colored sneakers are permitted)**
- On scheduled "Health" days the gym uniform may not be worn.
- No earrings or studs are permitted on gym days for student safety!

When wearing the uniform:

- Polo shirts must be tucked in
- Pants must be worn to waist
- No undergarments should be seen
- Thermals and undershirts should not be showing when short sleeve polo shirts are worn. Colors permitted: Black
- **Sneakers are not to be worn unless it is a scheduled gym day**
- Colorful or oversized jewelry, including bangles should not be worn
- Hats, caps or doo rags are not to be worn inside the building or when walking to lunch. If hats, caps or doo rags are worn to and from school, they may **NOT** be worn during the school day!

Students at MLVRCS are R.E.A.C.H.

REACHing "our" students! The REACH Program has made positive strides each school year. It is proving that relationships, and character building, along with holding students accountable daily, creates a climate that fosters academic competence and social growth.

Respect for oneself and other's property.

Excellence in everything you do!

Accountability- Being responsible for your work and actions.

Character-Being the best you can, even when no one is looking.

Honesty- Always being truthful.

Respect-You value school property, listen to others and you keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.

Excellence- You always prepared and ready to work in class. You are responsible for studying your materials and complete all your homework.

Accountability-You return important documents and take ownership for your grades.

Character-You are a positive role model to your peers and others around you.

Honesty- You always tell the truth, despite the consequence.

For grades K-4 the homeroom teacher will select the **R.E.A.C.H** student of the month. For grade 5-8 grade level teachers will collectively decide on the **R.E.A.C.H** student of the month. The selected student must consistently display the behaviors listed above. The student selected will have their photo taken and displayed in their school building.

Student Behavior/Code of Conduct

Students are responsible for their conduct from the time they leave home until the time they return home from school. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules and regulations of the school. Disrespect for, or defiance of teachers, insubordination, smoking in school or on school grounds, possession of fireworks or explosive devices, unauthorized lighting or possession of lighted materials, fighting, using profanity, cutting class, leaving the building, using electronic devices in school, and/or repeated discipline referrals, are serious violations of school rules. Consequences have been established by the Principal for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Guidelines:

The following guidelines, in effect throughout the school day, both within the building and on school property, are listed for students' self-direction in meeting the standards of the Code of Conduct.

1. **Classroom Behavior**

Students are expected to:

- Arrive to class on time- Regular attendance is essential for academic success.
- Be prepared for class
- Maintain appropriate classroom behavior- Students are expected to complete assigned work and activities to the best of their ability
- Pay attention to and follow directions
- Show respect for teachers, fellow students, and property- Students are expected to treat all school staff, visitors to the school and fellow students with courtesy and respect at all times. Students must treat school grounds with pride and respect.
- Students are expected to use appropriate strategies to deal with situations of conflict and disputes. Resorting to physical or verbal violence, intimidation, teasing, put downs, or foul language is never appropriate and is to be avoided. If there is a problem that a student needs help with, he/she should tell a teacher, a staff member, a social worker, or an administrator; and

2. **Hall Behavior**

Students are expected to:

- Have a signed pass when in the hallways during a class period
- Not loitering in halls at any time
- Not run in the halls
- Not engage in loud conversations, yelling, or dangerous play in the hallways.

3. **Dangerous Destructive Items**

The following items are considered dangerous or destructive and may not be brought to school.

Possession and/or use of any of these items are cause for suspension and/or referral to the Juvenile Bureau:

- Cigarettes or other tobacco products
- Matches or cigarette lighters
- Drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances
- Spray paint
- Fireworks (including poppers and snappers)
- Guns, pellet guns, knives, or any other type of weapon

4. **Disruptive Items- If a student is found in possession of one of these electronic items the item will be confiscated and returned to a parent.**

Uses of the following items are not allowed in school:

- CD Players/MP3 players, iPods, cell phones, electronic devices (electronic games, pagers, laser lights, etc.)
- Novelty devices or inappropriate toys

5. **Vandalism**

- Students who are found destroying, damaging or defacing school property will be expected to pay for the damages and face disciplinary action.

Electronic Devices/ Personal Property

Equipment such as iPods, iPhones, cell phones, iPads, Nooks, Kindles, video games, etc., are not permitted to be worn or carried on school grounds at any time during school hours unless issued by MLVR Charter School

for student use or permitted by the classroom teacher for educational purposes. Students found in possession of a cell phone will have the cell phone taken in the morning and returned at the end of the school day. All other electronic devices will be confiscated and returned to parents/guardians only. **Gaming systems are strictly prohibited on school property and at school sponsored events.** In addition, students should NOT bring valuables (expensive jewelry, large sums of money, etc.) to school. If it is necessary to bring such items to school, students should inform their classroom teacher and/or the main office. **MLVR Charter School is NOT responsible for lost/stolen/damaged items not checked in with the classroom teacher and/or receptionist's office.**

Behavior Expectations

MLVR Charter School expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

MLVR Charter School also believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of students, staff and community members.

It is believed that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities to help students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

MLVR Charter School administrators, staff, faculty, parents, volunteers, and community members have participated in the development of this policy to ensure that the general guidelines for student conduct take into consideration the developmental ages of students, the severity of offenses and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors, and the mission and physical facilities of the MLVR Charter School. This policy requires all students in the school to adhere to the rules and regulations established by MLVR Charter School and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules.

The Principal or designee shall provide, annually, to students and their parents/guardians the rules of the school regarding student conduct. As per N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.9(a) 1xii (1), the policy shall appear in all publications of the school's comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools within the school, including the student handbook. MLVR Charter School will make provisions for informing parents/guardians whose primary language is other than English.

Teachers will follow the suggested progressive discipline steps:

Consequences:

- 1. Verbal Warning (at least two)**
- 2. Silent Lunch/Lunch Detention**
- 3. Phone Call Home**
- 4. Morning detention**
- 5. Zero day- Parent must accompany student to school the following day when a student receives a Zero day letter. This is NOT a suspension.**

Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care and return of all books, supplies, equipment and materials assigned to them during the school year. In the event of a student losing or damaging school property, the student will be charged the cost of the repair or replacement of the item(s) and may face disciplinary action.

Students will be supplied textbooks and various other materials during the school year, which should be used with great care. Damage to any supplies, in excess of the normal wear and tear, will be assessed and charged to the student at the end of the year.

Detention

Detention assignments are scheduled for minor disciplinary infractions, excessive tardiness to school without an excuse, uniform infractions, etc. Students assigned to morning detention, report to the designated classroom and are supervised by the assigning teacher. Students who serve lunch detention sit silently in a separate location from their regularly assigned lunch table and may not purchase snack when serving detention. Students in Kindergarten to Fourth grade would be given Lunch Detention and students in grades Fifth to Eighth would receive Morning and/or Afternoon Detention.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy

Statement of Purpose

Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School (MLVR Charter School) prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students, faculty/staff, parents, volunteers, and community members. MLVR Charter School has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards; harassment, intimidation, and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

Policy

The Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School has established that "harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying" means, as per N.J.DOE, any intentional gesture; any written, verbal, or physical act; or any electronic communication** that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored event or function, or on a school owned or operated vehicle, and that:

- a) Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability; or,
- b) By any other distinguishing characteristic, and
- c) A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- d) Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

** Electronic Communication is any communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

Procedure for Reporting

MLVR Charter School requires the Principal and/or designee to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees, as well as all other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are required to report alleged violations of HIB to the Principal or designee. While submission of the report form is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available from the Principal. Oral reports also shall be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal action for violations of the code of student conduct may not be based solely based on an anonymous report.

Procedures for Prompt Investigation of Reports of Violations and Complaints

The Principal or designee is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the Principal and/or designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the alleged incident.

MLVR Charter School will use existing policies and procedures, including those used to investigate allegations of violations of the school's codes of student conduct, as appropriate. In addition, record keeping policies and procedures will be established to create a defensible record that demonstrates the school's efforts to reduce incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying, and that facilitate the evaluation of the school's efforts to reduce incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Response to Identified Incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

MLVR Charter School recognizes that some acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation and bullying that they require a response either at the classroom level, school level, or by law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students who commit an act of harassment, intimidation and bullying can range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, the Principal will consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the level of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Institutional (i.e., classroom, school level, etc.) responses will range from school, community surveys, mailings, focus groups, adoption of research-based bullying prevention program models, training for certificated and non-certificated staff, participation of parents and other community members and organizations.

Appropriate Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Action

MLVR Charter School requires its administrators to implement procedures for responding to acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying that ensures the inclusion of both appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Procedures shall be consistent with the code of student conduct as well as the consequences and remedial responses for staff members. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offenses, consider the developmental ages of the student offenders and student's history of inappropriate behaviors per the code of student conduct.

The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators in the implementation of appropriate consequences and remedial actions for each act of harassment, intimidation, and bullying by students:

Procedure

When determining appropriate consequences and remedial actions, MLVR Charter School faculty and administration will consider the following factors:

Factors for Determining Consequences:

- Age, developmental and maturity levels of parties involved

- Degree(s) of harm
- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature of severity of the behaviors
- Incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior
- Relationships between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures:

Personal

- Life skill deficiencies
- Social Relationships
- Strengths
- Talents
- Traits
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Classroom participation
- Academic performance

Environmental

- School culture
- School climate
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student
- General staff management of classrooms or other educational environments
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Community activities
- Neighborhood situation
- Family Situation

Types of Consequences and Remedial Action

Appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to, and including, suspension or expulsion of students, as set forth in the NJ DOE's approved code of student conduct.

Appropriate consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to disciplinarian
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend
- After school programs, such as after school detention, counseling group, intervention, etc.
- Out of school suspension (short-term or long-term)
- Legal action
- Expulsion

Appropriate remedial measures may include, but are not limited to:

Personal

- Restitution and restoration

- Mediation
- Peer support group
- Recommendations of a student behavior or ethics council
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive student interventions, including participation of the intervention and referral services,
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Social Worker, as appropriate.
- Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g. hallway or bus monitor)
- Involvement of school “disciplinarian”
- Student counseling
- Parent conferences
- Student therapy

Environmental (Classroom, school building, or school district)

- Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services team
- Parent conferences
- Family counseling
- Development of a general bullying response plan
- Recommendations of a student behavior or ethics council
- Peer support groups
- School transfers
- Law enforcement (e.g. school resource offices, juvenile officer) involvement

Levels of Intervention

The following Levels of Intervention will be used as a guideline for implementing the appropriate consequences and remedial actions.

Level 1 Intervention:

Level 1 intervention is generally utilized for first offenses or minor behavioral infractions including harassment, intimidation, and bullying which occur within the school environment. Level 1 intervention may involve talking to the student to reinforce the school expectations, providing strategies to address the behavior and having the student complete a “What Happened Letter”. When possible, the student will be given an opportunity to address the behavior before moving to Level 2.

Step 1: Students will be given verbal warning. Staff discretion will be used as to the number of warnings issued (within reasonable limits) before proceeding to Step 2.

Step 2: Student completes a “**What Happened Letter**” and a copy is given to the student as a written warning.

Consequences and Remedial Actions

The following consequences and remedial actions are not intended to be all-inclusive or necessarily in an increasing order of severity. Appropriate consequences must be determined by school staff to fit the unique circumstances of each incident.

- **Verbal Warning-** a reminder that a behavior is inappropriate and an alternate strategy is agreed upon for future incidents
- **Verbal Reprimand-** a more serious verbal reminder with further consequences outlined in relation to mutually agreed upon alternative strategies for use by the student or the teacher.

- **Minor/Lunch Detention-** loss of recess or part of a noon-hour privilege with small work assignment related to the effects of inappropriate behavior on others
- **Phone call home-** used in conjunction with most consequences to ensure parents are informed and involved.

Level 2 Intervention:

Definition: Level two behaviors are more serious and may involve repeated patterns of behavior or specific incidents where the staff member makes a parental contact. Staff will report such behavior to the office using the **Incident Report Form**. A record of the incident will be kept in the office as well as the student's file.

Step 1: Student issued "**What Happened Letter**" for a required parent signature.

Step 2: "**A Zero Day Notice**" issued, which requires parent/guardian's attendance to a conference on the following school day with the student. The student must return accompanied by an adult.

Step 3: Conference to be scheduled with school administration, teacher, student, and parent(s) to determine resolution.

Step 4: Parents will be responsible to arrange for prompt student pick-up after the student engages in behavior that jeopardizes the safety of him or herself or the safety of a classmate or school member. Parents may also communicate in writing if student can be dismissed by him/herself as during normal school dismissal.

Consequences and Remedial Actions

The following consequences and remedial actions are not intended to be all-inclusive or necessarily in an increasing order of severity. Appropriate consequences must be determined by each school staff to fit the unique circumstances of representatives.

- **Major detention-** detained before/after school or lunch detention for one or more days, or loss of other free-time privileges for one or more occasions with larger relevant work assignment related to developing effective alternative strategies for use by the student.
- **Phone call home-** used in conjunction with most consequences to ensure parents are informed and involved
- **Formal interview with student-** a scheduled private meeting to discuss issues with notes taken; may involve ongoing teacher, student, social worker, and/or appropriate administrative staff (i.e. principal).
- **Relocation-** Student temporarily relocated to a supervised location to complete specific course assignment.
- **Direct counseling-** student is required to learn anger/behavior management strategies and develop a behavioral plan with a designated person or behavior support team to assist in implementation and assessment of progress.
- **Assigning restitution-** removing graffiti, repairing or replacing damaged property, etc. caused as a result of student behavior
- **Removal of privileges-** ineligible for extra-curricular groups, field trips, etc. until behavior shows consistent improvement

Level 3 Intervention:

Definition: Level 3 intervention is utilized for what is considered very serious behavioral incidents and concerns. Staff will immediately report and bring the student to the office for administrative follow-up. Appropriate documentation will be completed by faculty and administration. Parents will be contacted and the Principal will issue an appropriate consequence in relation to the seriousness of the behavior. This could include application of the school's suspension policy. School consequences may include in-school suspension, behavior contract, a meeting with parents, out-of school suspension, or police involvement.

Consequences and Remedial Actions

The following list of consequences and remedial actions are not intended to be all-inclusive or necessarily in an increasing order of severity. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions must be determined by school staff to fit the unique circumstances of each behavioral incident.

- Those listed for Level two intervention
- **Out-of-School Suspension-** temporary removal from school for a specified time; terms for appropriate behavior and /or contract are developed upon re-admittance
- **Suspension with recommendation for expulsion.** This means student is suspended and may lose the privilege of attending MLVR Charter School; alternative arrangements for the child's education will be the responsibility of the school and parent, subject to term of re-enrollment between the student, parent and board of trustees.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

Types of Responses

- *Individual responses* can include positive behavioral interventions (e.g., peer mentoring, short-term counseling, life skills groups) and punitive actions (e.g., detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion).
- *Classroom responses* can include class discussions about an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying, role-plays, research projects, observing and discussing audio-visual materials on these subjects and skill-building lessons in courtesy, tolerance, assertiveness and conflict management.
- *School responses* can include theme days, learning station programs, parent programs and information disseminated to students and parents such as fact sheets or newsletters explaining acceptable uses of electronic and wireless communication devices. It may also include community involvement in policy review and development, professional development programs, adoption of curricula and coordination with community-based organizations (e.g., mental health, health services, health facilities, law enforcement, and faith-based).

In addition, the school will provide support for victims of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The school has identified a range of resources that are possible (e.g., counseling, teacher aides, hallway monitors, mediators, and therapy) that will be available to the victims. The school will respond in a manner that provides relief to the victims and does not stigmatize the victims or further their sense of persecution.

Maria L. Varisco Rogers Charter School has the required *Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials* that defines the conditions by which school officials are required to report suspected hate crimes or bias-related acts to law enforcement authorities. Since some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be bias-related acts and potentially hate or bias crimes, school officials must report to law enforcement officials either serious acts or those that may be part of a larger pattern. Additionally, all incidents

of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including related offender and victim information, must be reported over the NJ DOE's Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System.

Prohibition of Reprisal or Retaliation Against Reporters of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

School administration understands that fear of reprisal or retaliation is a deterrent for many that hinder them from reporting acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. MLVR Charter School recognizes the importance of maintaining a normal response to all suspected acts of reprisal or retaliation. Therefore, school administration prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Principal after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, federal and state statutes and regulations and district policies and procedures.

Appropriate Consequences and Remedial Action for a Person Found to have Falsely Accused Others

MLVR Charter School prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial action are as follows:

- Students- The appropriate consequences and remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, and bullying may range from positive behavior interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion,
- School Employees- Appropriate consequences and remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation and bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with the school policies and procedures.
- Visitors or Volunteers- Appropriate consequences and remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, and bullying shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

The Principal will consider the totality of the circumstances surrounding individuals who falsely accuse others as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Decisions about consequences and appropriate remedial action should be consistent with existing case law, federal and state statutes and regulations and district policies and procedures.

How This Policy will be Publicized

Maria L. Varisco - Rogers Charter School Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, students and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions and events, and/or on a school-operated bus. The Principal shall ensure the policy is posted on the school's website. The Principal shall develop and implement a process for annually discussing the school district policy on harassment, intimidation, and bullying with students.

The School is also aware that for students to demonstrate preferred behaviors, it is important that they have a clear understanding of the school's expectations under the policy, the reasons for and benefits of the policy, as well as the consequences for violation of the policy. Therefore, students will be informed of the code of student conduct and the provisions of the harassment, intimidation, and bullying policy on an annual basis and as deemed needed throughout the school year.

Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School is aware that through explanation and dialogue with students and staff, it can clearly distinguish, for example, "friendly teasing" and "rough and tumble play" from harassment, intimidation and bullying as well as the difference between "telling" or responsible "reporting" (which is intended to keep someone from getting hurt) of acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying from "ratting" or "tattling."

The Charter School will use experiential learning techniques, such as role play situations and other demonstration and modeling strategies in its information activities for students and staff.

RESOURCES ON HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Books and Programs

A Guide to Effective Statewide Laws/Policies: Preventing Discrimination against LGBT Students in K-12. GLSEN and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. 2001.

A School-Based Anti-violence Program. Sudermann, M., Jaffe, P., Schiek, E. *et al.* (1996). London, ON: London Family Court Clinic.

Blueprint for Violence Prevention – Book 9, Bullying Prevention Program. United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention.

Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do. Olweus, D. 1993. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Bullying Behavior: Current Issues, Research and Interventions. Geffner, R.A., Loring, M. and Young, C. (Eds.) 2001. Haworth Press, New York.

Bully proof: A Teachers Guide to Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth and Fifth Grade Students. Sjoström, Lisa, & Stein, Nan. (1996). Boston, MA: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women and the NEA Professional Library.

Articles

Ahmad, Y., & Smith, P. K. (1994). Bullying in schools and the issue of sex differences. In John Archer (Ed.), *Male violence*. London: Routledge.

Batsche, G. M., & Knoff, H. M. (1994). Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the schools. *School Psychology Review*, 23(2), 165-174.

McCoy, E. What to Do... When Kids Are Mean to Your Child (What to Do Parenting Guides, Vol. 1). Pleasantville, N.Y. : Reader's Digest, c1997. 96 p. : col. ill. ; 21 cm.

Olweus, D. (1993b). Victimization by Peers: Antecedents and Long-term Consequences. In K.H. Rubin and J.B. Asendorff (eds.), *Social Withdrawal, InHarassment, Intimidation and Bullying and Shyness in Childhood*. Hillsdale NJ: Erlbaum.

Whitney, I., & Smith, P. K. (1993). A survey of the nature and extent of bullying in junior/middle and secondary schools. *Educational Research*, 35(1), 3-25.

Zero Tolerance for Illegal Acts

MLVR Charter School maintains a Zero Tolerance for Illegal Acts. Students who are found committing and/or participating in an illegal act will be turned over to law enforcement. This applies to any major offense that involves violence, theft, harassment, intimidation, and possession of use of illegal or dangerous material, drugs, or items. When circumstances permit, the procedure will be as follows:

1. Report will be written describing the incident and listing the witnesses, parents of the students involved, emergency contact phone numbers, etc.
2. The school will make an effort to contact the parents of the students involved and/or the people listed as emergency contacts.
3. The school will conduct an investigation and decide if the offense is a major offense that breaks the law.
4. If it is considered a major offense that breaks the law, the police will be contacted.
5. The school will make a determination as to the school penalty.

If the police are called:

- The police department will call the student's parents if the school has been unable to contact the parents.
- The police department may or may not take the student to the police station.
- The police department will interview the offender and, if necessary, refer him/her to the Juvenile Bureau.
- The police department will then make a determination as to the release of the students, i.e. Return to school, release to parent, remand in detention facility, etc.
- The police department may complete a written report. Should this occur, the school will attempt to obtain a copy of the report from the police department for the student's file.

MLVR Charter School intends to maintain an alcohol and drug free environment, as required by Public Law. The MLVR Charter School informs all students and their parents of the following:

Students are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, manufacturing, possessing, using, and/or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, and look-a-like substances; and possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products, or look-a-like substances while on school property, attending school sponsored events, and /or school owned or operated vehicles include charter buses.

The following procedures will be implemented if the above occurs:

- For **Tobacco/Alcohol/Controlled Substances products or look-a-like substances**: For a first offense students will be suspended for a period of three (3) days for the first violation. A second violation will result in suspension more than three (3) days. The student will only be permitted to return to school after the student has shown proof of enrollment in a substance abuse program, as well as contact having been developed and implemented between the Principal, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. If the student drops out of the substance abuse program, the student will be put on probation until the substance abuse program is completed. A third violation may result in the student being referred for expulsion.
- **Weapons and look-a-like weapons ("fake weapons")** are not allowed on school property, school owned or operated vehicles including charter buses, and at school sponsored events with the exception of weapons in the control of law enforcement officials or those being used for educational purposes and approved by the Principal. A student bringing firearms or bombs to school will be expelled for not less than one year. Parents of students found in violation of this policy will be contacted and the students will be reported to legal authorities.

Breakfast/Lunch Program

Food Services

The Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School participates in the State School Lunch/School Breakfast Program. Nutritious meals are served every school day. All meals served must meet patterns established by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

Students may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. One application per family must be submitted each year listing every child in the family. It is important that the application is submitted whether or not you think you qualify, it is a requirement from the State of NJ that we have these applications on file for all children attending our school. Questions regarding free and reduced-priced meals should be directed to the financial department at **(862) 240-9005**.

Breakfast and lunch monies can be prepaid and put into your child's account. The money remains in the student's account and may be used for any meal during the year. Your child's account can be replenished at any time to avoid a negative balance. If you have any additional questions about the menu or food service in general, please ask the cafeteria manager at the administration office site.

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- Personal checks are **not acceptable**.
- We accept money order (made payable to Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School) or cash.
- To pay online: Log on to www.payforit.net Select the "Sign up" option from the menu. The screens will guide you through the process to establish your account.

Cafeteria Procedures

It is the policy of MLVR Charter School that the lunch period is closed. Students will not be excused to leave the school during their lunch period unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. All other absences during the lunch period will be considered unexcused absences.

MLVR Charter School operates a breakfast and lunch program. Students may either bring their own lunches to school or purchase a lunch and other items, including milk. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner during the lunch period. Spilled food, napkins, milk cartons, trays, etc. must be disposed of properly before leaving the area. No food is to be taken out of the lunch area. All students are to report to the lunch program area during their designated lunch period regardless of whether or not they eat. If it is necessary to go out of the lunch area, students need a hall pass. Students found in any other area without permission will be given detention.

We Care About Your Health

School Nurses

Located at 243 Woodside Avenue, 862-240-1780

During the course of the school year, the school nurse will be involved in health evaluations. A current annual physical must be kept on file for all students. If a student becomes hurt or ill in school, parents/guardians will be notified. If the injury or illness requires immediate medical attention, the parent/guardian must pick the child up from school. If a child has a fever, the parent must pick the child up from school.

Medication Administration

According to NJ state law and school policy, no medication can be dispensed by school personnel unless written permission has been granted by the student's parent/guardian and doctor. Medication is to be held in a locked cabinet and distributed by the school nurse.

Medication must be in the original container with the following information on the container:

- Name of Student
- Name of Medication
- Directions for use including dosage, times, and duration
- Name, phone number, and address of pharmacy
- The date of the prescription
- Name of the physician

The parent must also provide a signed and completed Physician and Parent Consent for Medication Administration form. This form can be obtained by contacting the Nurse located in building 243 Woodside Ave at 862-240-1780.

When medication is brought to the school, it should be left in the nurse's office upon arrival at school. No medication should be kept in desks or classrooms. State law and school policy also excludes dispensing aspirin and other over the counter medications to students.

Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Students who have infectious or communicable diseases are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves and does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. Should the school's administration have a concern about whether or not a student with a communicable and infectious disease should be permitted to attend classes, then the student will not be allowed to return to school until the parent provides written documentation from the student's personal physician permitting them to attend. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles, chicken pox, and tuberculosis.

Health Screening

Throughout the year, the school sponsors health screenings for vision, hearing, scoliosis, and height and weight measurements. Students are automatically screened unless the parent submits a note asking the student be

excused from the screening. Parents are generally notified prior to the health screening; however, upon a teacher's recommendation and with parental permission, students who are not scheduled for screening may also be screened.

Illness or Injury

Children with definite signs of illness such as colds, skin diseases, or childhood communicable diseases must be kept at home. A child should not return to school for 24 hours after vomiting or having high temperature. This policy is both for the health of the affected child as well as classmates who could become infected. Students who have lice, nits, and/or bed bugs must also be picked up and treated before returning to school.

If a child is injured or ill, he/she is cared for temporarily in the nurse's office until a parent/guardian or person designated by the parent/guardian is able to take the child home. Parents must provide the school with an emergency number where they can be reached or another adult that can take responsibility for their sick child.

Immunizations

Prior to the start of school or when transferring, students must present an approved immunization certificate. Each student must be fully immunized against the following diseases:

1. Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), and Tetanus
2. Polio
3. Measles
4. Rubella
5. 11 years and older – Meningitis

Please call the school nurse for more details regarding immunizations, 862-240-1780.

Parental Involvement

We Need Our Parents

MLVR Charter School is aware of the great importance of having the parents and community members partake in the education of our children. MLVR Charter School strives to design and implement a comprehensive parent education and training program to provide parents and potential volunteers with a quality training program that can help them become better parents, to get more involved in their children's education, and to become informed volunteers and citizens. See Ms. Gotto in the administrative office for more information.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school when they have questions about their children's academic or behavioral life at school. Parents can meet with particular teachers by scheduling an appointment with the teacher or through the receptionist's office. If after meeting with the teacher the parent is still not satisfied, then the parent may request a meeting with administration. School administrators are available to meet with parents at a time that is convenient to the parents.

Volunteer Program

Congruent with the school belief that, **"Providing New Alternatives for a Better Education"**, the MLVR Charter School strives to:

- Continue to re-organize and improve the school's volunteer program by restructuring it to make it more effective and efficient,
- Provide a comprehensive training program for all prospective volunteers,
- Continue to provide incentives to recognize the volunteers who donate their time and their services to the charter school.

Technology Acceptable Use Regulations

Acceptable use: The purpose of technology use, including the Internet, is to support education and research by providing access to unique resources. The use of technology resources must support education and research and must be in keeping with the educational objectives/curricula of the Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School. Sharing of any material in violation of any national or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secrets.

Privileges: The use of the computer networks and access to all forms of technology including but not limited to: I pads, nooks, cameras, Elmo, equipment and Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges. The Chief Technology Officer will determine what is inappropriate and may close a network account at any time.

Network etiquette: You are expected to follow the rules of network etiquette which include but are not limited to:

1. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your communication.
2. Use appropriate language. Swearing, use of vulgarities, or other inappropriate language is forbidden. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden. Access to sites with inappropriate content is forbidden and may result in immediate suspension of privileges and possible discipline as well.
3. Do not give your personal home address or phone number to anyone.
4. Electronic mail (e-mail) is not necessarily private. The Chief Technology Officer has access to all mail. Inappropriate e-mail may cause loss of privileges.
5. The network may not be used in a way that would disrupt others.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.

Warranties: MLVR Charter School makes no warranties of any kind for the service it is providing. The MLVR Charter School will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. Use of information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. The MLVR Charter School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained.

Security: If you find a security problem on the network you must immediately tell your teacher or system administrator. You may not use another person's network account. Attempts to log in as a user other than yourself, may result in immediate loss of privileges. Any user identified as a network security risk or having a history of problems with internet access may be denied access to the Internet.

Prohibited Use: User may not use the MLVR Charter School technology resources to make money illegally or for any other illegal purpose.

Viruses and Hacking: Users may not upload, transmit, intentionally download, or participate in any manner in the creation, promulgation, publication, or use of computer technology resources. Hacking includes, but is not limited to, gaining or attempting to gain access to restricted computer sites, and/or viewing copying, downloading, or altering the computer programs, data files, and other materials contained therein.

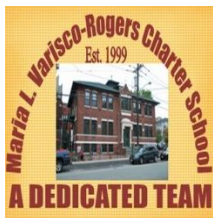
Use of Private Passwords and Security Devices: Users may not use any passwords, recognition codes, security access information, or physical locking devices, on any of the school technology resources, without the MLVR Charter School's prior written consent. When written consent is given, the user must inform the Technology Supervisor in writing of all devices the user wishes to use. User must also provide keys, passwords, access codes, and/or other security information or materials to permit the school to obtain access to user secured areas prior to using such security devices. The school reserves the right to remove any such device any time at the MLVR Charter School's sole discretion.

Vandalism: Vandalism will result in immediate loss of privileges, disciplinary action and legal referral. Vandalism includes any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the internet, or other parts of the network. This includes, but is not limited to the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Students who vandalize district computers or systems will be held liable for the cost for the cost of replacement or repair.

Weekly Homework Schedule: Grades K-8

Homework time:	Homework assigned per week	Homework vs Studying	Homework vs Studying
Kdg. 10 minutes HW & 10-20 minutes reading w/parent or guardian	Weekly Spelling Words Math 3x's Reading Journal 5x's	HW refers to material assigned by teacher to reinforce knowledge, key skills,, exercises to learn new words, math, etc. ideas. Part of final grade	Studying refers to time family sets aside to go over key concepts learned during school time and areas of personal interest.
Grade 1 20 minutes HW & 15-20 minutes reading w/parent or guardian or independently	Weekly Spelling Words Math 4x's Reading 4x's Reading Journal 5x's Social Studies/Science 1-2x's	Same as above	Studying refers to time child and family sets aside to go over key concepts learned during school time and/or areas of personal interest.
Grade 2 30 minutes HW & 25-45 minutes reading w/parent or guardian or independently	Weekly Spelling Words Math 5x's Reading 5x's Reading Journal 5x's Social Studies/Science 1-2x's	Same as above	Same as above
Grade 3 40 minutes HW & 30-45 minutes reading w/parent or guardian or independently	Weekly Spelling Words Math 5x's Reading 5x's Reading Journal 5x's Social Studies/Science	HW refers to class material to reinforce knowledge, key skills, projects, to learn new vocabulary, math concepts, etc. ideas & part of final grade	Studying refers to going over key concepts from class to make sure knowledge is complete. Learning on their own time, w/o specific guidance of a teacher
Grade 4 50 minutes HW & 30-45 minutes reading w/ parent or guardian or independently	Weekly Spelling Words Math 5x's Reading 4x's Reading Journal 5x's Social Studies/Science	Same as above	Same as above

<p>Grade 5</p> <p>60 minutes HW & 40-50 minutes reading w/parent, guardian, or independently</p>	<p>Weekly Spelling Words</p> <p>Math 5x's</p> <p>Reading 5x's</p> <p>Reading Journal 5x's</p> <p>Social Studies/Science 3-4x's</p>	<p>HW is practicing key concepts from class, to reinforce and supplement to classroom material and is part of final grade.</p>	<p>Studying refers to time set aside to go over key concepts taught in class, re-reading unclear material from class, areas of personal interest</p>
<p>Grade 6</p> <p>60 minutes HW & 40-50 minutes independent reading</p>	<p>Weekly Spelling Words</p> <p>Math 5x's</p> <p>Reading 5x's</p> <p>Reading Journal 5x's</p> <p>Writing 4 – 5x's</p> <p>Social Studies 4 – 5x's</p> <p>Science 4 – 5x's</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Same as above</p>
<p>Grade 7</p> <p>70 minutes HW & 40-60 minutes independent reading</p>	<p>Math 5x's</p> <p>Reading 5x's</p> <p>Reading Journal 5x's</p> <p>Writing 4 – 5x's</p> <p>Social Studies 4 – 5x's</p> <p>Science 4 – 5x's</p>	<p>HW is practicing key concepts from class, to reinforce and supplement classroom material and to work on time management of long-term projects & is part of final grade.</p>	<p>Time set aside time each night to review study guides, to go over the day's lesson in their hardest class, and schedule time for long-term projects.</p>
<p>Grade 8</p> <p>90 minutes HW & 40-60 minutes for independent reading</p>	<p>Math 5x's</p> <p>Reading 5x's</p> <p>Reading Journal 5x's</p> <p>Writing 4 – 5x's</p> <p>Social Studies/Science 4-5x's</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Same as above</p>



Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School

Providing new alternatives for a better education

233 Woodside Avenue

Newark, NJ 07104

Tel: (973) 481-9001 Fax (973) 481-9009

E-mail: Office@mlvracs.org

Website: <http://www.mlvracs.org>

Dear Parent(s) & Guardian(s):

Below is an explanation of the homework policy for Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School. Please review the policy with your child so that you better understand the expectations with regard to homework, studying, and independent reading (see attached Weekly Homework Schedule for grades k-8). By following these guidelines, we can help be consistent teaching responsibility and practicing homework to increase your child's learning.

For your child to be successful completing homework/out of class activities, he/she needs:

A place to do homework. If possible, your child should do his/her homework in the same place (an uncluttered, quiet space—free from distractions).

A schedule for completing homework. Set a homework schedule that fits in with each week's particular activities. It is best to do homework as soon as your child comes home—the later the less effective the child will be at completing assignments.

Encouragement, motivation, and prompting. It is not a good idea to sit with your child and do homework with and/or for him/her. Your child needs to practice independently and apply what he/she has learned in class. If your child consistently cannot complete homework assignments alone, then I need to know this so I can adjust the task and/or activity accordingly.

Understanding of the knowledge. When your child is practicing a skill, ask which steps he/she finds easy and difficult and how he/she plans to improve speed and accuracy with the skill. If your child is working on a project, ask what knowledge he/she is using to complete the work. If your child consistently cannot answer these questions, please contact me.

Reasonable time expectations. Homework time assigned according to grade level expectations. If your child is spending too much time each night on homework, please contact me.

A bedtime. It is important that your child gets a good night's sleep.

When it comes time to go to bed, please stop your child, even if he/she has not finished the homework.

Consider having your child start his/her homework earlier the next session.

Feedback: I will review and give feedback for all homework assignments for both content and timeliness. If your child consistently turns in an assignment late, I will be contacting you to discuss and resolve this issue with you and your child.

Please return this policy with the appropriate signatures, acknowledging that you have read and discussed the policy with your child. If you have any questions about expectations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Partners in our children's future,

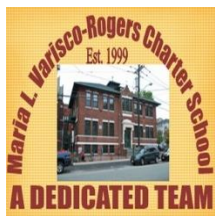
Ms. Heyward Principal

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Student's Signature _____

Date _____



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PARENT & STUDENT DISCIPLINE CONTRACT

By signing below, we affirm that we have read the infractions and disciplinary actions that follow and agree to the stated disciplinary consequences:

CONSEQUENCE		
INFRACTIONS	AFTER 2 TIMES	➡ LUNCH DETENTION-At teacher's discretion
	AFTER 3 TIMES	➡ ZERO DAY
	CONTINUOUS	➡ SUSPENSION/DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL
DISRESPECT (includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Profanity• Talking Back• Mumbling)	1 ST OFFENSE	➡ LUNCH DETENTION AND PHONE CALL HOME
	2 ND OFFENSIVE	➡ PARENT MEETING
	CONTINUOUS	➡ SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL
LACK OF PROPER UNIFORM	1 ST OFFENSE	➡ UNIFORM LETTER AND PHONE CALL HOME
	2 ND OFFENSE	➡ LUNCH DETENTION
	CONTINUOUS	➡ ZERO DAY

CONSEQUENCE	RESULT
3 ZERO DAYS	SUSPENSION
3 SUSPENSIONS	ACADEMIC-BEHAVIORAL PROBATION or EXPULSION

STUDENT'S NAME (PRINT) _____ GRADE _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S (PRINT) _____ PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE _____

❖ ZERO DAY REQUIRES THE PARENT/GUARDIAN TO ACCOMPANY THE STUDENT TO SCHOOL THE FOLLOWING MORNING FOR A CONFERENCE.

Acknowledgement

Parent/Guardian

This document acknowledges that I, _____, parent/guardian of
_____ grade _____ have fully read and understand this handbook.

I have also ensured that my child is aware of the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook and he/she agrees to abide by them to the best of his/her abilities. Both parent and student will pay close attention to the following policies: Attendance (pgs. 13-14), Uniform Compliance (pgs.21 -22), Student Code of Conduct/Behavior Regulations (pgs.24 -35) and Parental Involvement (pgs.40). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Print Name

Signature of Parent

Date

Student's Name

Class

Student's Signature

Date

FORMAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF 2016 - 2017 HANDBOOK & NOTIFICATIONS RECEIPT AND REVIEW

We, the undersigned, understand that this handbook contains important information for parents, guardians and students. We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the 2016 – 2017 MLVR Charter School Parent and Student Handbook. We are aware that this handbook contains information and policies for our review. We have reviewed the information and policies contained in this handbook.

We understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and that failure to abide by the guidelines for student behavior can result in the discipline outlined in this handbook.

We understand further that failure to return this acknowledgment form does not excuse any individual from complying with the Student Handbook, MLVR Charter School policies, regulations, and guidelines.

We are aware that MLVR Charter School reserves the right at any time to amend or to add to the policies, regulations and guidelines contained or referred to in this handbook. We are also aware that the 2016 -2017 student handbook is accessible online at www.mlvracs.org, and that any changes or updates to this handbook will be posted on the school website.

Directions for return of this form throughout the 2016- 2017 school year: Student and Parent/Guardian review handbook.

1. Parent/Guardian sign handbook acknowledgement below.
2. Tear out this page from handbook
3. Student returns this page to homeroom teacher by ____ (Date) _____. New and transfer students registering after the start of the 2016 -2017 school year must return this acknowledgement page within one week after receipt.

Student Name: _____

Student Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____