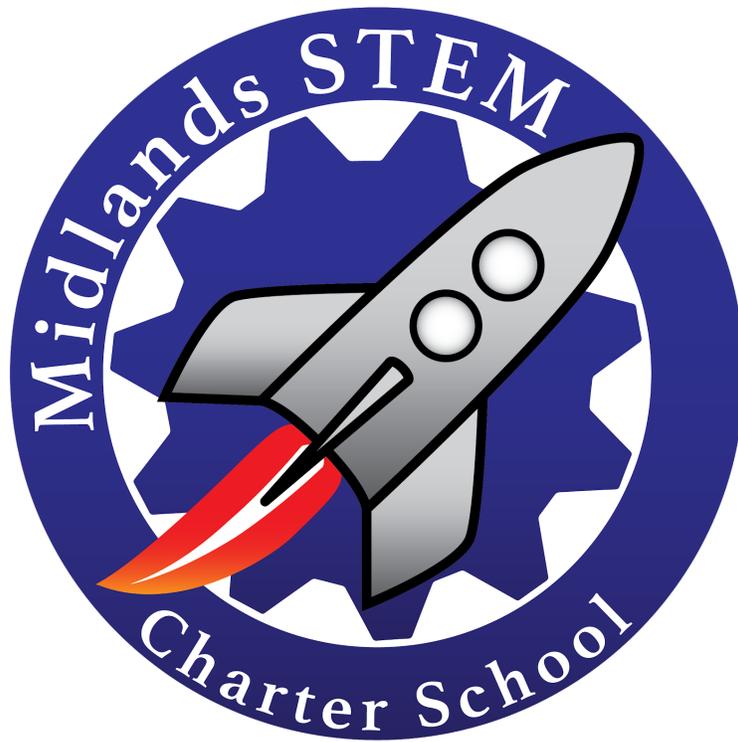


# Secondary Student Handbook 2022-2023 School Year



**Midlands STEM Charter School**

**112 Crane Street  
Winnsboro, SC 29810  
803-815-1524**

*Ready... Aim... Soar*

## I. Code of Conduct

### Pledge

I Will Set My Goals  
I Will Work Hard  
I Will Be Unstoppable  
I Will Trust My Teaching  
I Will Celebrate My Wins  
And I Will Win  
Because When One Wins  
We All Win!

### Mission Statement

The Mission of Midlands STEM is to produce academically and physically fit STEM proficient students.

### School Honor Code

The Midlands STEM community embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of the school, and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the school community. The fundamental beliefs underlying and reflected in the Honor Code are:

- I will abide by the rules and standards of the school as written in my school handbook.
- I will behave with integrity, respect, and dignity in all relationships with teachers and peers.
- I will acknowledge the rights and property of the school and my peers.
- I will do unto others as *they* would want done to *them*.

This Honor Code summarizes the Honor Policy, which defines the expected standards of conduct in academic affairs. The Honor Policy is published on our school website [www.midlandsstem.org](http://www.midlandsstem.org). The Honor Council is the school body charged with enforcement of the Honor Code. The Honor council is to be made up of the grade level assistant principal, the general education teacher, and the president of the student council. The student body and faculty at Midlands STEM will not tolerate any violation of the Honor Code.

## II. Grading Policies

This is the weighting of each assignment.

Assessment Type	Percentage Weight	Assessment Type	Percentage Weight
Tests	30%	Classwork	25%
Quizzes	20%	Homework	10%
Projects	15%		

Your final grade for a course will be calculated as follows:

Quarter 1	20%	Quarter 2	20%
Quarter 3	20%	Quarter 4	20%
Final Exam or EOC	20%		

\*\*\*All middle and high school classes will include a midterm assessment which will count as a double test grade.

*Grades will be updated regularly by the following Tuesday afternoon. Please note that essays and projects may take longer to grade and return than tests and quizzes, so feedback on these assignments may be delayed.*

The grading scale is as follows:

A: 90-100	C: 70-79	F: 0-50
B: 80-89	D: 60-69	

### III. School Policies, Rules, and Procedures

#### Attendance and Truancy

Attendance is an essential component to a student's academic success. Often, the number of days that students are absent accumulate without parents realizing how many days have been missed.

Children who are eligible to enter five-year kindergarten through age seventeen are subject to compulsory attendance regulations as defined by the South Carolina Code of Laws. **Unexcused absences that total ten or more days in any one school year will result in automatic grade retention.** In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, **truancy cases must be reported to the court system.**

Ten (10) consecutive absences will result in your child being dropped from the school enrollment. A child who accumulates three (3) consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences will be deemed truant and will be signed up for an **Attendance Intervention Plan**. Midlands STEM's policy regarding attendance violations is consistent with South Carolina state laws and regulations pertaining to student's Attendance and Truancy Procedures.

#### **Midlands STEM considers students lawfully absent when:**

- The student is ill and attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others and a medical excuse is provided;
- The student has a medical or dental appointment or other recognized licensed/certified medical practitioner and a medical excuse is provided;
- The student is participating in school-related activities that have received prior approval by the executive director or his/her designee;
- The student has been suspended from class or school;
- The parent or guardian has prearranged absences due to extreme hardship;
- There is a death or serious illness in their immediate family;
- There is a recognized religious holiday of their faith; or
- There is a required appearance in court or an appointment with a legal officer.

#### **Midlands STEM considers students unlawfully absent when:**

- The student is absent from school without the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian;
- The student is absent without acceptable cause with the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian;
- **Three (3) tardies constitute one (1) absence.**

South Carolina State Board of Education Regulations are as follows:

#### **SBOE Regulation 43-172: Accounting and Reporting**

**A pupil shall be dropped from membership on the day when the number of unlawful days absent exceeds ten consecutive days or when the pupil leaves school because of transfer, death, expulsion, graduation, legal withdrawal, or for any other reason.**

#### **SBOE Regulation 43-274: Student Attendance**

##### II. Truancy

##### A. Truant

A child ages 6 to 17 years meets the definition of a **truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.**

##### B. Habitual Truant

**A "habitual truant" is a child aged 12 to 17 years who fails to comply with the intervention plan developed by the school, the child, and the parents) or guardians(s) and who accumulates two or more additional unlawful absences. This child may need court intervention and an initial truancy petition may**

be filed. The written intervention plan, and documentation of non-compliance must be attached to the truancy petition asking for court intervention.

Please note that Midlands STEM makes every effort to comply with compulsory attendance regulations in order to provide students with a high quality education. **In the event that a student has been lawfully absent and the absence has not been excused by the school, please submit any documentation meeting the lawfully allowed absentee criteria listed above within 3 business days to the office.** Should you have questions regarding attendance, please contact Mrs. Robertson, Attendance and PowerSchool coordinator at 803-815-1524

### **Dress Code**

Students are expected to come to school in appropriate attire suitable for learning. The school dress code is also applicable during off-campus school activities, including, but not limited to, sporting events, field days, and field trips.

School attire must meet the following criteria:

- Clothing, articles or other items, that display advertisements for, or messages or pictures depicting or suggesting, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, weapons, or sex are prohibited.
- Clothing, articles or other items that display symbols, messages or statements which are vulgar or disrespectful to individuals or groups; including but not limited to profanity, slurs, negative stereotyping, and violence.
- Clothing must cover the full waist, chest, sides, back, groin, and buttocks with opaque fabric.
- Top garments cannot reveal undergarments or the outline of body features below.
- Sleeveless shirts are allowed as long as shirt straps are at least the width of the student's ID card.
- Lower garments should be no more than 1 ID card in length above the knee.
- Leggings, athletic shorts, hoodies, and hats may **only** be worn after school for *sports* practices.
- Undergarments should not be visible. If pants do not fit properly, a belt must be worn to keep them in place.
- Lower garments should have no visible rips, holes, or tears above the knee unless they have patches or leggings underneath.
- Appropriate, solid soled shoes are necessary to ensure safety during school activities. For this reason, crocs, slides, or flip flops are not permitted.

### **Identification Badges**

Identification badges (student IDs) are required for all middle and high school students, school employees, and visitors. ID badges are to be visible at all times on campus. To assist with this safety issue, students and staff will be issued wearable ID cards. A student must:

- wear their ID card properly while on school grounds on a school issued lanyard around the neck
- wear only their own ID card and never one that belongs to someone else;
- not alter their ID card in any way; and
- not place unapproved decals or stickers on their ID card.

Upon entering the school for the first time, a student will be issued an ID card and a lanyard at no charge to the student. The card will identify the student by name and grade level. The card should be kept in good condition. Each student will be issued a new ID card annually. Students may not check out books from the media center, check out textbooks or technology, or obtain lunch without their ID card. Lost or destroyed ID cards must be replaced by the student. Temporary IDs are \$1 at the front desk. A temporary ID is only valid for ONE day. If a student refuses to or is unable to purchase a temporary ID, the student will have lunch detention. Replacement ID cards and replacement lanyards are \$5 each at the front desk. After the 4th ID violation the student will receive a written warning (PBIS). After the 5th ID violation, the student will receive a discipline referral.

### **Phone and Headphone Policy**

Middle School: students are not permitted to use a cell phone or headphone/earbuds during school hours. Cell phones and headphone/earbuds should remain off and put away at all times.

High School: Students will not have cell phones on their persons or headphones/earbuds in their ears while classes are taking place. Phones will be placed in the phone organizer at the front of the classroom during entrance procedures and will remain there until exit procedures are announced. Headphones/earbuds will remain put away in their pocket or bookbags. Smart watches may also be confiscated if being used for purposes other than medical monitoring and telling time during the class period. High school students are permitted to use their phones and headphones/earbuds during their lunch and free time.

### **Public Displays of Affection (PDA)**

Being overly affectionate in school creates an environment that is not conducive to concentration and learning, therefore students should refrain from inappropriate, intimate behaviors on campus or at school related events & activities. Students are expected to show good taste and conduct themselves respectfully at all times.

Examples of PDA include but are not limited to: hugging, kissing, holding hands, touching faces, sitting on another student's lap, and putting legs across another student's lap.

Failure to comply with this will automatically result in a lunch detention and a PBIS referral. After the 3rd PDA offense students will be given a formal discipline referral.

### **Technology Policy**

All students must sign an acceptable use agreement and submit it to the front office before being issued school equipment. Personal computers and other technology are prohibited during school hours. Students who disable or remove monitoring softwares will receive a discipline referral. Students will be held accountable for the contents of the acceptable use policy during school hours and during any scheduled school events. School technology checked out to students becomes the responsibility of that student. The cost of any equipment that is lost, damaged, or which is no longer identifiable will be the responsibility of the student and their guardians.

### **Food and Beverage Policy**

- Water is the only approved beverage for students to drink in the classroom. All water bottles must have a resealable top.
- Gum is not permitted in any classroom.
- There should be no eating in the classroom unless an individual teacher has given it to them.

### **Student Parking Procedures**

Students must register to park on campus. Students will be assigned a parking area and must only park in the assigned location. Students must also place their parking tag in a visible location at the front of the car. There will be a \$5 fee if the parking tag is lost. Students that violate these parking procedures will lose the privilege of parking/driving to school.

### **Homework Policy**

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class. If the student cannot produce the assignment at the time it is called for, it will be considered a late assignment. The student will still be responsible for the content of the homework assignment.
- If it is determined that one student is copying another student's homework, both students will receive zeroes. This is a violation of the Honor Code.
- If students are unsure about an assignment, they should check with a reliable classmate, email the teacher, or check Google Classroom for directions.

### **Testing Procedure**

- Students must adhere to test taking procedures as described by the teacher.
- Students who do not adhere to test taking procedures will be removed from the classroom to complete the test with an administrator. The parents or guardians of the student will also be notified.

### **Makeup Work Policy**

- It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher about any missed work during an excused absence. Students will be expected to make up assignments within a period of time equal to the number of days the student was absent. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

### **Late Work Policy**

- All work is due on the date assigned by the teacher. Any work not turned in on the date assigned will receive late work penalties as follows:
  - Missing assignments will be indicated on weekly worklists.
  - Students will have 5 school days to submit the assignment after it was missed with no penalty.
  - No work will be accepted after the 5th late day without a missing work student's form completed by the student and signed by the parent or guardian.
- It is the student's responsibility to email the teacher informing them that the assignment has been submitted.

### **Extra Credit**

- Extra credit assignments will not be given. Extension activities may be available if students have completed all assignments for a given week.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of someone else's words or ideas as your own. You must quote and cite or paraphrase and cite someone else's work used in your paper to avoid plagiarism. Any paper found to contain plagiarized parts will receive a zero, and the student will receive a discipline referral. If a peer shares work or contributes to plagiarism of another student's paper, the same consequences will apply to the other student(s). Sharing of information for tests, quizzes, homework, etc. also results in a zero on the assignment and/or discipline notice for both students.

### **Academic Responsibilities:**

**At all times, academic integrity must be preserved, and all students are held to the honor code.** Students are expected to read all assigned materials (use of Spark Notes, Cliff Notes, and such are secondary to the primary texts). Individuals are expected to complete their own work. Plagiarism and copying another person's work and claiming it as your own will not be tolerated. These acts not only cheat the individual but also damage Midlands STEM's integrity. Consequences for such acts are zeroes on the assignment for all involved and discipline notices which may result in further punishment to be decided by the Honor Council.

### **Teacher/Student Conferences**

Teachers will be available for conferencing during the homeroom period and after school until 4pm unless otherwise specified. Students must let the teacher know when they will be coming to discuss grades, assignments, or other matters. Because conference times have been made available, these matters should not be discussed during the class period.

### **Retakes and Reteaching**

Makeup of missed assignments and retakes of tests and quizzes are at the teacher's discretion provided that students have made appropriate effort and attended reteaching sessions during class if offered by the teacher or during after school tutoring. Students who receive a 69 or below on any test or quiz will be required to attend reteaching.

### **After School Tutoring**

Each teacher will have a designated day each week for after school tutoring. Students who need tutoring should notify their teacher of their intent to stay for tutoring no later than 3:30pm. Students must arrange for their ride to pick them up by 4:30pm

#### **IV. Record of Student Progress**

The following procedures will be used to monitor and record student progress.

1. Gradebook/PowerSchool: Each student will have a line in which grades are recorded. Grades will also be entered in PowerSchool, which is an electronic grading system. All graded assignments will be recorded. Parents will have access to Powerschool via Parent Portal.
2. Other records: Other means of monitoring and recording student progress will include interims, report cards, student/teacher conferences, parent/teacher conferences, notes and/or phone calls home. Documentation of the above is kept in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to link to their student's Google Classroom account in order to gain extra insight into classroom assignments and grading procedures.

*All students must keep backup copies of all work submitted. If a grade is missing or incorrect, the student is responsible for bringing it to the teacher's attention, providing the dated backup copy and proof of submission. Save everything until final grades are posted.*

#### **V. Curriculum and Reading**

Classes are comprehensive courses designed to encourage student thinking, problem solving, and reading skills. As such, some material will include coarse language and suggestive themes. These books and materials have all been approved for use by students at the secondary school level and chosen directly from historical and scientific records or the literary canon.

*Texts may be modified or adjusted throughout the year at the teacher's discretion.*

#### **VI. Materials and Resources**

##### **Writing Materials**

- Charged school-issued laptop. (Students who fail to charge their devices will be made to do assignments for that day on paper. All assignments will be due at the end of class and students will be issued lunch detention.)
- Pen/pencil (blue or black ink only, assignments written in difficult to see inks will not be accepted.)
- Red pen
- Daily binders for student learning logs.

\*All students should purchase supplies as indicated by the school supply list prior to the start of the school year.

#### **VII. Classroom Rules**

1. Respect Yourself
2. Respect Others
3. Respect this Space
4. Cultivate positive relationships.
5. Take responsibility for your actions.
6. You are responsible for your learning.

#### **Consequences and Rewards for Behavior**

Consequences:

- Warning
- Lunch Detention
- Student/Teacher Conference
- PBIS Form

- Parent Conference
- Guidance Referral
- Parent Re-contact
- Referral to Administrator

Rewards:

- Praise
- Positive Notes/Calls Home
- Receipt of Token Classroom Currency
- Student of the Month Award
- Extra Classroom Opportunities
- Random Acts of Goodwill

**Infractions severe enough to require immediate consequences, suspension, or expulsion are laid out in the school discipline plan which can be found on the school website.**

**VIII. Scheduling Parent-Teacher Conferences:**

Conferences should be scheduled with teachers via phone or email. Teachers are available for conferences during the planning period, before school, and after school. Parents should schedule meetings with teachers and administrators by phone before coming to the school to ensure that the teacher or administrator is available. **The parent or guardian of any student who is failing will be asked to schedule a face-to-face parent-teacher conference to discuss the student's progress.**

**IX. Note on Disciplinary Procedures:**

Every effort is made to ensure that all students have a fair chance to learn, therefore the above rules and consequences are necessary. In keeping with this philosophy, teachers treat all students with fairness and respect as their main concern is that all students be present in class so that they have an opportunity to learn. Only severe infractions, which infringe upon the rights of other students to learn, will necessitate students being taken out of the instructional setting.

## **6th-12th Grade Student Handbook Signature Page**

Please go over the above information with a parent or guardian. Then, verify with signatures below that all are aware of the responsibilities and expectations of the school and confirm that you are prepared to complete all assigned material.

Please return this page by Friday Sep 2.

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**Student Name (Print)**

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**Student Signature**

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**Parent/Guardian Name (Print)**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature**