



MIRUS ACADEMY

School Handbook of Policies & Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Last Updated: 9/1/2023

Introduction	2
Admissions	3
Tuition & Fees	4
School Hours, Visitors, & Communication	5
Attendance & Absences	6
Credits & Graduation Requirements	7
Classes & Curriculum	8
Testing & Accommodations	9
Electronics	10
Course Designations	11
Assignments & Academic Integrity	12
Grades	13
Student Awards & Honors	14
High School Graduation	15
Classroom & School Rules	16
Mirus Academy Codes of Conduct	17
Discipline Policies	18
Activities & Organizations	19
Health & Safety	20
Student Privacy	21
Appendix	22
Recommended High School Sequence	23
Junior & Senior Sign-Out Privilege	24
Locker Agreement Form	25
Adult Students	26
Mirus Academy Party Rules	27
Emergency Levels: Epidemic or Pandemic	28
Notification of Rights under FERPA	29

NOTE: The contents of this handbook are not contractual and do not give rise to a claim of breach of contract against Mirus Academy. Further, the contents herein apply to all students as the contents now appear in the handbook or may be amended in the future.

Introduction

OVERVIEW

Mirus Academy is a non-sectarian, independent private high school located in the historic City of Katy. As a college-preparatory school, it serves students in 9th-12th grades (8th graders may be admitted on a case-by-case basis). The school is small by design (a “microschool”) so that students feel a sense of family-like community both with their peers as well as their teachers and administrators.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mirus Academy’s mission is to provide a supportive, family-like learning community in which high school students actively pursue college-preparatory academics while developing the confidence and independence they need to reach their full, unique potential.

SCHOOL MASCOT & COLORS

Mirus Academy school mascot is the Soaring Falcon-- a symbol of Hope and Aspiration. The school colors are all six colors of the rainbow, with blue being dominant when only one color is used.

CORE VALUES

Mirus Academy is guided by Six Core Values. Each of these Core Values is represented by a color, and each of the six grading periods in the Mirus Academy school year is dedicated to one core value.

1. **CURIOSITY**-- Represented by ORANGE
2. **CREATIVITY**-- Represented by GREEN
3. **COURAGE**-- Represented by RED
4. **COMPASSION**-- Represented by PURPLE
5. **COMMITMENT**-- Represented by YELLOW
6. **CITIZENSHIP**-- Represented by BLUE

SCHOOL HISTORY

Mirus Academy was founded in 2006 by Laura Hogan. Originally, the institution was called “The Curious Mind Homeschool Center,” and it provided classes and educational resources to the homeschooling community. In 2010, transitioned to a private school called The Curious Mind School, and the first class of seniors graduated in May 2011. In Fall 2011, by a nearly unanimous vote, The Curious Mind School changed its name to Mirus Academy (“Mirus”, pronounced “meer-us,” is a Latin word meaning *curious, wonderful, remarkable*). At first, Mirus Academy included grades K-12, but it soon transitioned into a private high school for students in grades 8 - 12.

“MICRO-SCHOOLS”

Small private schools with fewer than 100 students are often called “micro-schools”. Mirus Academy considers itself to be a “micro-school”. That is, it’s a school that is small by design. Every micro-school is different, but most micro-schools, including Mirus Academy, have these characteristics in common:

- Student population of less than 100
- Small student-to-teacher ratio
- Multiple ages in the same classroom
- Nurturing, family-like atmosphere

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mirus Academy does not discriminate on the basis of any gender, race, color, national/ethnic origin, religion, sexuality, or any other protected group in its admissions policies, educational programs, or employment procedures.

Admissions

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

For entrance to the current school year, Mirus Academy accepts applicants year-round, if space is available. For the next school year, the admissions process begins in the spring. Mirus Academy accepts new students on a “first come, first served” basis, provided that space is available and the applicant meets the admissions requirements listed below. Current students, family members, and teacher’s children have first priority. New students are accepted when space is available, and a waiting list will be established as needed.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Mirus Academy accepts new students year-round, when space is available. The school has selective admissions to ensure that students succeed academically and thrive in Mirus Academy’s unique school environment. Potential students should meet the requirements listed in the “Admissions Requirements” section below. On occasion, the Mirus Academy admissions team may determine that a potential student is a good fit for the school despite the usual requirements not being met; in this circumstance, the student is accepted with probationary status for a period of six weeks.

- **Citizenship:** Students must either be US Citizens or living with parents who are in the USA on a work visa (Mirus does not accept international students who are in the US with a student visa)
- **Age:** New students must be between the ages of **13 - 17** years old on the first day of school
- **Grade Level:** Students should be in 8th - 12th grade and enrolling in a grade level that is no more than one year behind the grade level that would normally be expected for the student’s age.
- **Testing:** Mirus Academy requires applicants to have scored at the 50th percentile or higher on previous standardized tests (ISEE, STAAR, ITBS, Stanford, Terra Nova, PSAT, etc). If a student does not have recent standardized test scores, Mirus may require testing as part of the admissions process.
- **Report Cards:** The past 3 years of report cards should indicate that all classes were passed for the semester/year
- **Disciplinary History:** New students may not have a history of suspension, alternate placement, expulsion, or illegal activity within the past 3 years.
- **Special Needs:** Mirus accepts students with physical, emotional, and educational challenges in the “mild to moderate” range, as long as that student is on grade level, does not require modified curriculum, and is otherwise a good fit for Mirus’s unique learning environment (*see “Accommodations” p. 9*). However, as a microschool, Mirus does not have diagnosticians or specialists on staff; therefore, the school is unable to provide any therapeutic interventions and is unable to accept new students who are experiencing mental, physical, or emotional health symptoms in the “moderate to severe” range. In matters of admissions, Mirus may request a consultation or letter from the students’ physician or therapist, confirming that Mirus will be able to meet the academic, emotional, physical, and/or social needs of the potential student.

TRIAL DAYS

After a student is approved for admission, they are encouraged to spend one or two “trial days” at the school, to ensure the school and student are a good fit for each other. Trial days are only available to students applying for admission during the school year, and are not available during the summer break. For this reason, we strongly encourage all applicants for the next school year to apply during the spring semester when trial days are available.

TRANSFERRING CREDITS & GRADES

Following admission to the school, Mirus Academy will request academic records from all previous schools and will honor the previous school’s grades and recommendations for grade level promotion. If the student transfers to Mirus mid-term, the “grades in process” from the previous school will be applied to any assignments that occurred before enrollment.

(specific policies regarding the transfer of credits from homeschooling or British-style schools is available from the school office upon request)

Tuition & Fees

SCHOOL TUITION

As an independent private school, Mirus Academy receives no money from religious, government, or corporate institutions. The school relies solely on tuition and fees to pay for rent, utilities, educational supplies, and teacher paychecks. Mirus Academy's tuition is all-inclusive; that is, it includes classes, textbooks, lab fees, standardized testing, field trip entry fees, etc. (after-school and off-campus elective classes may incur an additional fee). School tuition is billed annually. Families requiring smaller tuition payments have the option of paying tuition in two installments (due at the beginning of each semester) or ten installments (due at the beginning of each month). Installment payments include a finance/processing fee (please see the Annual Registration Form for the exact amounts).

TUITION COMMITMENT

To register for classes each year, the Registration Form must be accompanied by the Annual Registration Fee. When registering for classes, the parents/guardians enter a legally-binding contract with Mirus Academy to pay the full year's total tuition, even if the student does not actually attend classes during that year. This contract may only be nullified if the student has moved 30+ miles from the school, as verified in writing by submitting the new utility bill (at least 30 days written notice is required). This contract may not be nullified under any other circumstances, including expulsion or illness. Families experiencing financial hardship may apply for financial aid to reduce their tuition. Students experiencing illness that prevents school attendance may apply for distance learning options through the school. Tuition/fees already paid will not be refunded.

MAKING PAYMENTS

The school office cannot accept any direct payments. All tuition, fees, and incidental expenses (such as snack bar charges) are billed through a financial vendor, such as PayPal.

LATE OR OVERDUE TUITION

Mirus Academy is a small, independent school that relies directly on tuition for all its operations. Therefore, timely payment of tuition is essential. A \$35 late fee will apply to any payments that are late or returned by the bank. All tuition must be paid in full by the last day of school (or upon withdrawal). Exams, report cards, and transcripts may be withheld if the family's financial account is past due. Accounts that are 120+ days overdue will be referred to a collection service.

LATE ENROLLMENT

For families enrolling mid-year, the annual tuition is pro-rated as follows:

- Enrolling at or during 1st or 4th Term: The full semester (half-year) tuition will apply
- Enrolling at or during 2nd or 5th Term: The semester (half-year) tuition will be discounted 30%
- Enrolling at or during 3rd or 6th Term: The semester (half-year) tuition will be discounted 60%

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid (in the form of a 25%, 50%, or 75% tuition discount) may be available for highly qualified students who otherwise would not be able to attend Mirus. To apply, a student must be an existing student or first be admitted into the school through the normal application process. Families are required to fill out the Financial Aid form for each year that aid is requested, and this form must be accompanied by the tax statements and family expense records specified in the paperwork. Please note that financial aid is limited and is not always available.

School Hours, Visitors, & Communication

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are 9:00 am – 3:30 pm (1:30 pm on Fridays). Class instruction begins promptly at 9:00, so all students should be at school no later than 8:55 am. Students who arrive after 9:00 am or leave before 3:30 pm are required to sign in/out, making note the time. If a student needs to leave school before 1:30, the parent must communicate with a school administrator, either by personally signing the student out of school or by calling/messaging the school office.

- **Before School:** The school opens at 7:30 am on school days. Students who arrive at the school before 8:55 am are required to wait in the common area. Teachers need time and space to prepare for the school day, so students should not enter the classrooms before 8:55 each morning.
- **After School:** The school day ends at 3:30 pm (1:30 on Fridays). Students may remain until the school closes at 5:30, at which point any remaining students will be transported to the Katy Library to await their parents there.

LEAVING CAMPUS

All students are required to remain on campus until they leave school for the day. The exception to this rule is that 11th and 12th graders have “Off-Campus Privileges” if they have a signed form on file in the office. (*see form, p. 24*)

SCHOOL DOORS

The front entrance of the school is unlocked during students’ arrival time before school. However, once school begins, the school door is to remain locked. Students are permitted to open the door for staff and fellow students. However, for all other visitors (including parents and delivery personnel), the door may only be opened by an adult staff member.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Mirus staff knows and recognizes most of the family members of our school community. Family members are welcome to enter the school and wait for their student in the reception area. All other visitors (or family members not readily recognized by the staff) must present ID and sign in with the school office to be admitted into the school. Family members and visitors may not enter the classroom areas of the school without staff accompaniment. School tours must be scheduled in advance and are only available at select times when a school administrator is available to lead the tour.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Mirus Academy welcomes communication with parents. As a small learning community, Mirus Academy strives to have ongoing, positive, productive communication throughout the student’s years at the school. Teachers and administrators are allies with our student’s parents and guardians; we are all on the same team in guiding and supporting students! Mirus teachers and administrators make every effort to address parents and other family members with kindness and respect; likewise, parents are expected to also treat school staff with kindness and respect. Excessive complaining, disrespectful communication, and/or verbal abuse is not tolerated and will result in the family’s expulsion.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The school’s primary method of routine communication with parents is via email and/or text messages sent through the “Remind” app. For each family, at least one parent/guardian must agree to receive text messages from the school as well as check emails regularly. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that they have the Remind app properly installed on their cell phone and that the school has a current email address and cell phone number on file.

CONFERENCES

When requesting a conference, parents should provide the teacher/administrator with a heads-up as to the nature of the requested conference; in return, the teacher/administrator will do the same if requesting a conference with the parent. By doing so, all parties can attend the conference prepared to talk about the subject matter at hand. Conferences with teachers must be scheduled in advance—Parents should NOT attempt to have an impromptu parent-teacher conference either on-campus or off-campus. For conferences with a school administrator, a scheduled meeting is strongly preferred. However, at least one school administrator is always available if an emergency meeting is needed right away.

Attendance & Absences

WORK PERIODS & CLASS PERIODS

Mirus Academy follows a unique block-schedule that divides educational programming into separate “Class Periods” and “Work Periods”. During school hours, all students must be in their assigned classrooms or workspaces unless they have teacher or administrative permission to be elsewhere.

- **Class Periods**— 9:00 - 1:30, Monday - Thursday (plus select Fridays). All students are required to attend their scheduled class periods, unless illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents attendance that day. Whenever possible, parents should avoid making appointments during class periods.
- **Work Periods**— 1:30 - 3:30, Monday - Thursday. Students are encouraged to complete their work period assignments on the school campus, so they may receive guidance and supervision from their teachers. However, attendance is not mandatory, and parents may choose for their child to leave school at 1:30 to complete their work period assignments at home under parent supervision. Because Work Period attendance is optional, appointments should be scheduled during this time (instead of during Class Periods) when possible.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Mirus does not require parents to justify their children’s absences from school; therefore, an excuse note from a parent or doctor’s office is not required, and absences are not classified as “excused” or “unexcused”. To receive credit and a grade for any class, the student must attend at least 80% of the scheduled class periods during that semester-- this translates to no more than 6 absences from a class during a single semester. On a case-by-case basis, less than 80% attendance may be permitted in the event of doctor-verified, prolonged illness. Students who fail to earn class credit due to insufficient attendance have the opportunity to recover that credit via summer school.

ABSENCES

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of school success. Whenever possible, families should plan for their child to attend school; however, the student should remain home if they have a known contagious disease or have experienced vomiting or a fever of 100°+ within the past 24 hours. Whenever possible, we strongly urge families to make plans around scheduled holidays and not be absent on a school day. If a pre-planned absence is unavoidable, please notify the school office as soon as possible. School work may be requested in advance; however teachers are not required to provide that work in advance.

ABSENT WORK

Every absence results in the student missing vital instruction, and the material is not re-taught upon the student’s return. If a student is absent, parents are responsible for ensuring their child learns the material they may have missed. Assignments and links to the online textbooks are available on Google Classroom and maybe accessed from home. All absent work should be turned in within one week of the student’s return, unless alternate arrangements are made.

- **Tests**— If a student is absent on a test day, the test must be taken during Work Period on the day the student returns to school. If a student was absent for one class period before test day, they are still required to take the test as regularly scheduled. However, if the student was absent for two or more class periods before test day, they may postpone the test for one week while they complete their absent work.
- **Major Assignments**— Major assignments are due on their regularly scheduled due date regardless of the absence and may be submitted online. The major assignment will be considered “late” unless the student or parent communicates with the teacher to make alternate arrangements for turning in the assignment.

TARDIES

Students are considered “tardy” if they arrive late to class. Tardies are disruptive to the instructional process and inconsiderate to the students’ teacher and classmates, so all students are expected to be on time. Students who are tardy will not be provided extra time to complete assignments/tests nor will the missed instruction be repeated or retaught. A student is considered “absent” rather than “tardy” if the student misses more than 50% of a class.

Credits & Graduation Requirements

HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS

In alignment with Texas educational standards, students earn “high school credits” for each course they complete while enrolled at Mirus Academy. Full-year courses include 120+ hours of instructional time and grant 1.0 credits (0.5 credits/semester) upon successful completion. Shorter courses that include 60+ hours of instructional time grant 0.5 credits upon successful completion. “Successful completion” is defined as a passing semester grade, at least 80% attendance, and the fulfillment of all financial obligations.

MIRUS ACADEMY TRANSCRIPT

Mirus Academy maintains a permanent academic record (“high school transcript”) of all high school credits attempted and earned at Mirus and any schools attended before enrolling at Mirus. Transcripts are automatically provided to students on 3 occasions: the summer between 11th and 12th grade, after completing the Fall semester of 12th grade, and after graduation. To receive a transcript at any other time, or to have an official transcript sent to another institution, please provide the school office with 72 hours notice.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In alignment with Texas educational standards, Mirus Academy requires 26 credits to graduate from high school and receive a high school diploma. In order to graduate in four years, students should plan to take 6 to 7 credits each year of high school. (see “Recommended High School Sequence, p. 23)

SUBJECT	CREDITS	REQUIREMENTS
MATH	4	Algebra 1 + Geometry + Algebra 2 + 1 additional math credit. Students are required to take a credit of math each year they are enrolled at Mirus (students may be exempted from 12th grade math if 2 math credits were earned in JH)
ENGLISH	4	Students are required to take a core English class each year they are enrolled at Mirus
SCIENCE	4	Biology + 3 additional sciences credits
SOCIAL STUDIES	4	World Geography + World History + US History + Government/Economics
LANGUAGES	2	Both credits must be in the same language
TECHNOLOGY	½	“Computer Applications” is required beginning with the Class of 2024
WORLDVIEW	1	Courses may include Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Humanities, or similar courses that explore the nature of humanity and our role in society.
ELECTIVES	6 ½	Electives as needed to bring the total number of credits to 26. (Note: students are required to take the half-credit Seminar class each year at Mirus)

22-CREDIT FOUNDATION PLAN

On a case-by-case basis, an alternative 22-credit plan may be approved for juniors and seniors who are in danger of not graduating. Under this plan, only 3 credits (instead of 4) are required for each of the core subjects, and the student is exempt from the foreign language requirement. The following courses are still required: Biology, Geometry, World History or Geography,, US History, and Government/Economics.

CREDIT RECOVERY

If a student fails one semester but passes the other semester, then that student may still receive credit for the course as long as the student passes both semester final exams and the overall year-end final grade is passing. If a student fails to receive credit for one or both semesters of the course, then the student must recover the credit, either by participating in a credit-recovery program during the summer or retaking the course the following school year. Students and parents should be aware that failing grades usually result in a GPA below 2.0, automatically placing the student on Academic Probation. (see “Academic Code”, p. 19)

Classes & Curriculum

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

For each subject, students engage in instruction twice a week (either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday). A core tenet of Mirus Academy's educational philosophy is that students are best prepared for college when their high school experience includes opportunities for independent learning and self-management. Accordingly, Mirus Academy's instructional time is divided into 2 phases each day: "Class Periods" and "Work Periods". Combined together, Class Periods and Work Periods provide students with over 120 hours of instructional time per subject per school year.

- **Class Periods**— 70 minutes of teacher-directed learning in a structured classroom environment
- **Work Periods**— 40 minutes of student-directed learning in a flexible workspace environment

CORE SUBJECTS

At Mirus Academy, the four "Core Subjects" (English, Math, Science, & Social Studies) are generally taught in a classroom setting with an in-person teacher. Mirus Academy offers all of the core subject classes a student needs for graduation; however, as a micro-school, Mirus does not necessarily offer every class every year. Please see below for explanation:

- **English Classes**— Mirus Academy provides 3 different English classes-- *English A* for students still developing their ELA skills; *English B* for students with more developed ELA skills; and *Dual Credit English* for seniors with advanced ELA skills who are ready for the rigors of college-level coursework. English A and B utilize a two-year curriculum, so students may remain in the class for two years without a repeat in content. When listed on the Report Card/Transcript, English A & B are listed as English 9, 10, 11, 12 (per the student's particular grade level).
- **Math Classes**— Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 classes are scheduled every year. When there is sufficient need, Pre-Algebra and/or Applied Math are also scheduled. College-level Dual Credit courses are utilized for advanced math classes beyond Algebra 2.
- **Science Classes**— Integrated Science and Biology are scheduled every year. Other science courses, such as Chemistry and Physics, are generally offered in alternating years (e.g., Chemistry one year, Physics the next year). Other science courses, such as Environmental Science, are scheduled as needed.
- **Social Studies Classes**— Mirus Academy's Social Studies courses are offered on alternating years, with World Geography & US History being offered one year, and World History & Government/Economics the following year.

ELECTIVES

Elective courses are an important component of a well-rounded high school education. Elective classes allow students to pursue their personal interests and learn more about potential careers. Mirus offers 3 different options for electives:

- **After-School**— Fine arts classes, such as Art and Theater, are offered after school once- or twice-a-week. These courses earn 0.5 to 1.0 elective credit, depending on the number of hours that particular class meets.
- **Online**— Mirus Academy provides a catalog of over 50 online elective classes. Each class grants 0.5 credits upon course completion, and the class may be taken in one semester or spread out over two semesters.
- **Independent**— Students may earn elective credit for the activities they pursue outside of school hours, such as sports, music, dance, etc. 0.5 credit is granted upon completion of 45 hours within a one-year period of time. On the high school transcript, the grade will be listed as Pass/Fail.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Mirus Academy utilizes print and online curriculum published by some of the nation's most popular educational publishers. The specific curricula used in each class may be viewed in the *Mirus Academy Course Catalog*. Textbooks and other curricular materials are carefully selected to best fulfill Mirus Academy's mission. With this in mind, students and families are expected to fully support the educational programming at Mirus Academy, and students may not be excused from classes or assignments due to an objection to the course objectives, textbooks, teachers, or materials. School textbooks, programs, materials, schedule, curricula, and faculty are established at the sole discretion of Mirus Academy administration and may be altered or modified at any time without notice.

Testing & Accommodations

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Mirus uses standardized testing as an informative tool for monitoring students' academic progress and as well as ensuring that the school is maintaining its high academic standards. The PSAT test (taken in the Fall) and the Pre-ACT test (taken in the spring) are different from the STAAR tests used in Texas public schools. The STAAR evaluates students on specific Texas course objectives and student scores are compared to other students in Texas public schools. The PSAT and Pre-ACT, on the other hand, are national exams that evaluate a broader range of Reading, English, and Math skills. The scores are compared to students across the nation (not just Texas) and provide information as to whether the student is meeting the expected benchmarks for college-readiness.

	FALL	SPRING
Grade 8 - 9	PSAT 8/9	Pre-ACT 8/9
Grade 10	PSAT	Pre-ACT 10

	FALL	SPRING
Grade 11	PSAT	ACT
Grade 12	SAT (<i>optional</i>)	--

AP TESTING

Students who enroll in AP level courses are required to take the associated AP exam in May of that school year. Students may choose whether or not this AP exam score will be listed on their transcript and/or sent to colleges/universities.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

Mirus Academy is a micro-school, and as such it does not have diagnosticians on staff. If Mirus' staff observe obstacles to the student's learning or symptoms of mental distress, then the school may require that student to receive diagnostic testing and/or therapeutic services as a condition of continued enrollment at the school. All diagnostic testing and/or therapeutic services must be provided at the parents' own expense. Mirus Academy can provide a list of private clinics who provide such testing and remediation, and some diagnostic services may be available for free from the student's local school district.

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Mirus Academy accepts credits earned via examinations, provided the exam is administered through an accredited agency. A score of at least 70% is required, and the score earned on the test will be listed as the course grade on the transcript, along with a notation that the credit was earned through examination.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Mirus Academy can generally accept and accommodate students with mild to moderate challenges, provided the student otherwise meets the school's application criteria. Basic accommodations can be provided such as extended time on tests, allowances for handwriting/spelling, options for audio/read-aloud software, and the use of electronic methods for typing notes or assignments. Content modifications (including simplified content, alternate formats, alternate assignments, or reduced workload), cannot be accommodated. Please note that Mirus Academy cannot reasonably accommodate service animals within the school. (*note: a written Service Animal policy is available from the office upon request*)

Electronics

RESPONSIBLE INTERNET USAGE

Computer technology is a powerful tool that allows teachers and students to access high-quality educational content that would otherwise not be available in a regular classroom. The school maintains a high-speed internet connection that is sufficient for all students to access the internet for their assigned school work. Students are required to use the school's internet responsibly and in accordance with all applicable laws. Accessing, sending, receiving, or storing any material that is threatening, harassing, illegal, or pornographic will result in disciplinary action.

STUDENT INTERNET ACCOUNTS

All students are provided with a Mirus Academy email address and corresponding Google account that allows access to Mirus Academy's full range of online programming. This Mirus Academy account is intended for school-related use only, not personal use. School internet usage should NOT be considered confidential. Students should be aware that the account is maintained and monitored by school administrators, and parents should have access to the account password at all times. All internet usage and all electronic files and data that are accessed, sent, or received via the school's internet connection are subject to review by the school at any time and for any purpose.

PERSONAL COMPUTERS

Students are required to provide their own portable/laptop computers and bring them to school each day. Parents are responsible for the setup, maintenance, charging, and security of each device. These devices are the sole responsibility of the student and parents, and the school assumes no responsibility if the device is damaged, lost, or stolen. If a student's device is unavailable, the school will provide a computer for the student to use at school on a temporary basis.

CELL PHONES & OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are welcome to bring their cell phone and/or other personal electronic devices to school. These devices are the sole responsibility of the student and parents, and the school assumes no responsibility if the device is damaged, lost, or stolen. Students are free to use these devices during non-class times (before and after school, lunch period, breaks, etc). Students may not use their cell phones or other devices during class time without permission from the teacher. Students who violate this rule may be asked to place their phone in a secure location, such as the teacher's desk or school office.

ONLINE VENDERS

Mirus Academy teachers strive to provide students with the most relevant and effective teaching materials available. In today's globally-connected world, these educational materials are often provided online. These materials are not operated directly by the school; instead, they are provided through third-party vendors, such as Google, Microsoft, Savvas, TCI, Peak/Fuel Education, etc. A complete list of online programs is available through the school office upon request. In order for students to utilize these programs and services, Mirus Academy may need to provide identifying information about your child such as name, grade level, user name, and/or email address. Under the federal *Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)*, signed parental consent is not required because all Mirus students are age 13+.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION

Mirus Academy uses **Google Workspace for Education**, a set of education productivity tools from Google used by tens of millions of students and teachers around the world. Google Workspace for Education has become the industry standard for schools as it allows students to easily complete assignments, communicate with teachers, engage with educational content, and learn 21st century digital citizenship skills. Mirus Academy uses both the "Core Services" (Google Calendar, Google Classroom, Google Docs, Google Calendar, Gmail, etc.), as well as some "Additional Services" (YouTube, Google Earth, Google Maps, etc.). The following link contains the official notice of the information we provide to Google and how Google collects, uses, and discloses personal information from students in connection with these accounts: https://workspace.google.com/terms/education_privacy.html

Course Designations

REGULAR COURSES

Unless otherwise stated, Mirus Academy courses are “Regular”. Regular courses meet or exceed state or national standards and include curriculum objectives designed to meet the needs of most students.

HONORS COURSES

Mirus Academy offers HONORS level courses in high school English, Math, Science, and Social Studies courses. Honors courses generally include additional reading and writing, more difficult versions of exams, and more opportunities for critical thinking and analysis. Such courses prepare students to take college level courses while still enrolled in high school. Honors level courses are designated on the high school transcript, and they receive an additional 1.0 point when calculating GPA.

COLLEGE LEVEL COURSES

All seniors are strongly encouraged to enroll in at least one college-level course. 10th and 11th graders who meet course prerequisites and demonstrate college-readiness scores on standardized testing may enroll as well. Mirus Academy has two options for college-level courses: Dual Credit (DC) courses and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

- **Dual Credit**— Dual Credit (also called Dual Enrollment) courses are college-level courses taken directly from a college or university. The credit is considered “dual” because the student is granted credit by both the high school and the college. Students who successfully pass the Dual Credit course will receive a college transcript showing the college credits earned. Mirus Academy maintains a Dual Credit partnership with respected public and private four-year universities. These courses are online but are facilitated & supervised by Mirus staff.
- **Advanced Placement**— AP classes are college-level courses for which Mirus Academy has received official recognition from the national College Board. AP courses use college-level textbooks and materials to prepare students to take the AP test in May. Students enrolling in an AP course are expected to take the corresponding AP exam. The AP exam is scored on a scale of 1-5, and colleges grant credit to incoming freshmen with satisfactory AP test scores (a satisfactory score may be a 3, 4, or 5 depending on the university)

AP & DC courses facilitated by Mirus Academy are provided to Mirus students at no additional cost (i.e., the annual tuition covers the cost of the courses). If a student chooses to take Dual Credit courses elsewhere (e.g., a local community college or a summer program), the parents are responsible for the outside tuition in addition to their regular tuition obligation at Mirus Academy.

EXITING AN HONORS OR COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSE

Students enrolling in an Honors or Dual Credit course make a commitment to remain in that course for at least one semester (for AP courses, that commitment is for the full year). Students are required to earn a report card grade of “A” or “B” in all Honors, AP, or Dual Credit courses. A student earning a grade of C or F will be placed on probation, and a second C or F will result in being removed from the advanced-level class and placed into an equivalent regular-level class.

Assignments & Academic Integrity

ASSIGNING WORK

Assignments and upcoming projects/tests may be announced in a variety of ways, including being published on Google Classroom, listed in a printed syllabus, sent as a text message, written on the white board, or announced orally in class. Students are responsible for completing all assigned work, regardless of the method by which it was announced.

MAJOR & MINOR GRADES

The assignments in most classes are assigned to one of two categories: Major Grades and Minor Grades (some classes may have a third category, such as labs or participation). Minor Grades generally consist of daily assignments that are designed to be completed during the Work Period. Major grades generally consist of chapter/unit exams, projects, essays, presentations, and other long-term assignments. Major and Minor grades usually each count 50% towards the term grade, although each teacher has the freedom to weight Minor/Major grades in the way that works best for their individual classes (for example, senior-level courses may weight major grades more heavily in preparation for college).

TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

Teachers establish their preferred method for receiving completed assignments. Most assignments are turned in online, either through Google Classroom or through the various online textbooks and curriculum providers. For paper-based assignments, teachers establish their own method for collecting the completed work. For example, the teacher may choose to collect assignments at the beginning of class, have a homework basket for students to turn in work, establish a portfolio, etc. If an assignment is emailed to the teacher, then the emailed file must be in a format that can easily be received by the teacher's computer (PDF or shared Google document), Students should not assume that an emailed assignment has been received until an email confirmation has been sent by the recipient teacher.

LATE OR MISSING ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the announced due date. Late work will be accepted up to two weeks after the due date for a maximum grade of 70. Teachers may grade late work on the basis of completion rather than accuracy, and late assignments may take longer to return to the student. (*see "Attendance" p. 6*)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mirus students and staff are members of a learning community that is dedicated to academic honesty and integrity. Activities such as cheating and plagiarism are prohibited because they interfere with a student's pursuit of knowledge and prevent the school from fairly evaluating student performance. Prohibited activities include (but are not limited to):

- **Cheating**— Using (or attempting to use) unauthorized materials when completing assignments. *Example:* Using a cheat sheet during an exam, using an unauthorized app or calculator to solve problems, looking up answers on non-curriculum websites, consulting a teacher's version of the textbook, etc.
- **Plagiarism**—Presenting other people's ideas as your own with proper citation or acknowledgement. *Example:* copying a classmate's answers, copying essays or answers from websites, failing to cite sources, etc.
- **Fabrication**—Submitting false information and misrepresenting it as being true. *Example:* making up data for an experiment, citing nonexistent articles, etc.
- **Unfair advantage**—Attempting to gain unfair advantage over other students. *Example:* obstructing another student's efforts, lying about emergencies in order to gain an extension, continuing to write when time is up, etc.

Engaging in prohibited activities may result in both academic action (e.g., receiving a 0 on the assignment) and discipline action (e.g., probation, expulsion). The student's age, academic background, and history of academic integrity are taken into consideration when investigating any incidents of academic dishonesty.

(*See "Code of Honor", p. 17, and "Discipline Policies", p. 18*)

Grades

ACADEMIC GRADES

School work is graded so that students are held accountable for their academic efforts and mastery. Grades are calculated on a percentage scale, with a 100 representing 100% mastery and/or completion. A grade of 70 or higher is considered “passing”; a grade of 69 or lower is considered “failing”. Whenever possible, grades are determined through objective rather than subjective measures, analyzing the students’ work for accuracy and completion. Both numeric and letter grades are listed on the school report cards; only the letter grade is listed on the overall high school transcript. The Mirus Academy grading scale is listed below:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	F	0-69 (Fail)
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	P	Pass (non-graded classes)
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	I	Incomplete

TERM & SEMESTER GRADES

For the purposes of grade reporting, the Mirus Academy school year is divided into 6 terms and 2 semesters:

- **Term Grades**— The school year is divided into six “terms”, each lasting approximately 5-6 weeks. The school work that is assigned during each term is used to calculate the “Term Grade”. Approximately two weeks after the end of each term, a report card listing that term’s grades is emailed to each parent and student. (*see “Major & Minor Grades” on p. 12 for information on how term grades are calculated*)
- **Semester Grades**— The school year is divided into two “semesters”. The Fall Semester includes Terms 1, 2, 3. The Spring Semester includes Terms 4, 5, 6. At the end of each semester, the three term grades are averaged together to determine the semester grade. For classes that have a semester final exam, that exam counts once and the terms each count twice when calculating the semester grade. The semester grades are listed on both the Report Card and the High School Transcript. (*see “Credit Recovery” p. 7 for information about receiving credit when a semester grade is below 70*)
- **Final Grades**—At the end of the school year, the two semester grades are averaged together to calculate a year-end final grade. The final grade is listed on the High School Transcript

INCOMPLETE TERMS

If a student cannot complete the term’s work due to absences or other extenuating circumstances, a grade of ‘I’ (“incomplete”) may be temporarily recorded on the Report Card. The ‘I’ will be converted to a conventional letter grade once the student has completed the missing work. A student who withdraws from a class mid-term (up to 14 days before the end of term) will receive the grade of ‘W’ (“withdrawn”). The grades of ‘I’ or ‘W’ are not calculated when determining a student’s grade average or GPA.

CALCULATING GRADE POINT AVERAGES

A student’s Grade Point Average (GPA) provides a single number that summarizes a student’s overall academic performance for the term or semester. Each letter grade earns a certain number of grade points. These points are then averaged to create a single grade point average. The grade points are listed below:

A+	4.00	B+	3.33	C+	2.33	F	0.00
A	4.00	B	3.00	C	2.00	P	<i>Not calculated</i>
A-	3.67	B-	2.67	C-	1.67	I	<i>Not calculated</i>

Honors, Pre-AP, AP, and Dual Credit classes are “weighted” so that an additional 1 point is given for Honors/AP/DC courses. The final transcript will list both the weighted and the unweighted GPA. When preparing final transcripts for college applications, seniors may request that non-essential elective courses not be factored into their GPA calculation.

Student Awards & Honors

GRADUATION & AWARD CEREMONY

The Mirus Academy Graduation & Award Ceremony is generally held one week after the school year ends, and all students and their families are strongly encouraged to attend. The ceremony includes an award ceremony in which every student receives at least one recognition. Academic and Core value awards are announced, and seniors participate in a graduation ceremony. The ceremony is followed by a party/reception to celebrate the end of the school year.

MIRUS ACADEMY HONOR ROLL

As part of the Award Ceremony, Mirus Academy recognizes students who have earned excellent grades through the year:

- **HONOR ROLL**— Students who received only A's and B's for their Fall and Spring semester grades
- **HIGH HONOR ROLL**—Students who received all A's for their Fall and Spring semester grades

PERFECT ATTENDANCE AWARD

As part of the Award Ceremony, Mirus Academy recognizes students with no full-day absences for the entire year.

STUDENT COUNCIL RECOGNITION

As part of the Award Ceremony, Mirus Academy recognizes students who have served in vital leadership roles in the school's student council program.

WORLD TRAVELER RECOGNITION

As part of the Award Ceremony, Mirus Academy recognizes students who have successfully participated in the school's annual international school trip.

CORE VALUE AWARDS

As part of the Award Ceremony, one of Mirus Academy's highest honors-- the Core Value Awards-- is presented to six students who have been identified by their teachers as excellent examples of one Mirus Academy's six Core Values (Curiosity, Creativity, Courage, Compassion, Commitment, Citizenship). The students are presented with a medal, and their names are engraved on the plaque that is displayed near the school's front entrance.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

As part of the Award Ceremony, one of Mirus Academy's highest honors-- the Academic Excellence Awards-- is presented to four students who have earned the highest year-end GPA in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The 1st place students are presented with a medal, and their names are engraved on the plaque that is displayed near the school's front entrance. Students with the second or third highest GPA are also recognized. In the event of a tie, the following factors will be used to break the tie: first, the overall average grade for the subject; second, the final exam grade for that subject; third, the overall GPA for all subjects combined.

High School Graduation

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

The Mirus Academy High School Diploma is awarded to graduating seniors who have earned the minimum credits required for either the “Foundation” or “Endorsement” plan and have fulfilled all financial obligations to the school. To earn a diploma from Mirus Academy, graduating students must have earned at least 5 credits as a senior at Mirus.

CLASS RANKING

Mirus Academy does not generally rank its students and the transcript and official school profile indicate that Mirus Academy is a “non-ranking” school. However, if a class-rank is mandatory, then rank will be assigned based on the grade point average of all high school courses. Mirus Academy does not name a class valedictorian or salutatorian.

4.0 – 4.9 1st Quartile

3.0 – 3.9 2nd Quartile

2.0 – 2.9 3rd Quartile

0.0 – 1.9 4th Quartile

GRADUATION ENDORSEMENTS

Students may earn one or more graduation endorsements by completing at least 2 credits beyond the basic, core requirements required for graduation. Endorsements are recognized via blue, red, purple, or green honor cords.

- **S.T.E.M. Endorsement (Blue)** — Completion of 2 additional credits in Math, Science, Engineering, or Technology
- **Humanities Endorsement (Red)**— Completion of 2 additional credits in English, Social Studies, or Languages
- **Fine Arts Endorsement (Purple)** — Completion of 2 additional credits in Fine Arts
- **Multidisciplinary Endorsement (Green)** — Completion of 2 academic credits that do not otherwise meet the requirements for the endorsements listed above. *Notice: Any credits counted for the Multidisciplinary Endorsement cannot also be counted for other endorsements.*

GRADUATING WITH HONORS

Students graduating with Honors will wear a designated **Honors Stole** at graduation. To graduate “With Honors”, all requirements listed below must be met:

- Overall GPA of at least 3.5
- At least 4 credits designated as “Honors”, “AP”, or “Dual Credit”
- Complete 1 credit of Chemistry and/or Physics
- Complete either 1 credit of advanced math (beyond Algebra 2) or complete 3 Foreign Language credits

GRADUATING WITH DISTINCTION

Students graduating with a GPA of 4.0 or higher will graduate with distinction. The levels of distinction are listed below.

- **4.00 – 4.24** = Cum Laude (*with honor*) — Receive 1 gold honor cord
- **4.25 – 4.49** = Magna Cum Laude (*with great honor*) — Receive 2 gold honor cords
- **4.50 – 4.99** = Summa Cum Laude (*with highest honor*) — Receive 3 gold honor cords

HONOR CORDS

Mirus Academy has 5 different Honor Cords that are awarded to seniors to be worn during the graduation ceremony:

- **Gold Cord:** Graduation with Distinction (one, two, or three depending on the distinction level)
- **Silver Service Cord:** Completion of 80+ hours of community service during 9th – 12th grade
- **Endorsement Cord:** Blue, Purple, Red, and/or Green depending on the endorsement earned

GRADUATION CEREMONY

All seniors are expected to participate in the ceremony. As part of the ceremony, seniors give a short (2-4 minute) speech about the Core Value of their choice. According to Texas state law, students have the right to receive a diploma if they have met the requirements for graduation; however, students are not guaranteed the right to participate in the ceremony itself. Students who have been suspended/expelled from school will not be permitted to attend the graduation ceremony. (*see “Graduation & Award Ceremony, p. 14*)

Classroom & School Rules

Mirus Academy Classroom Rules and School Rules are posted in a visible location, so that students and staff can be frequently reminded of the expected behavior while at school. In regards to Mirus Academy disciplinary policies, Violations of “Classroom Rules” are generally considered “Level 1” offenses and are handled by the classroom teacher. Violations of “School Rules” are generally considered “Level 2” offenses and are handled in the school office by an administrator, except Rule #10 which constitutes a “Level 3” offense. (see “Discipline Policies”, p. 18)

Classroom Rules

Respect Yourself

- Come prepared for class, so you have everything you need.
- Keep a positive attitude, so you’re ready to learn.
- Work hard, so you can be the person you want to be!

Respect Your Classmates

- Listen quietly when they’re talking, so you can hear what they say.
- Respect other people’s personal space, so you can earn their trust.
- Treat each other with kindness, so you are friends with everyone!

Respect Your Teacher

- Pay attention to your teachers, so they know you’re listening.
- Stay quiet when the teacher talks, so everyone can listen and learn.
- Treat your teacher with respect, so your teacher is excited to help you learn!

Respect Your School

- Clean up your messes, so other people don’t have to clean them for you.
- Treat school property carefully, so it doesn’t break or wear out too quickly.
- Follow all the school rules, so our school stays a great place to be!

School Rules

1. I will respect other people and not engage in behaviors that could cause harm to anyone’s body, emotions, or possessions. This includes self-harm.
2. I will speak respectfully to all adults and use a title (Ms., Mrs., or Mr.) when I say their name.
3. I will not engage in any behavior that damages (or has potential to damage) the floor, walls, tables, chairs, equipment, or any other part of the school building or grounds.
4. I will keep all food & drinks (other than water) in the lunchroom area and not bring them into classrooms.
5. During school hours, I will stay inside the building or schoolyard, unless I have permission to be elsewhere.
6. I will use my cell phone, computer, or other electronics responsibly and not use them during class unless they are required for the lesson. If used during class, I will use my electronics to access lesson-related material only.
7. I will keep my speech clean and free from insults, profanity, sexual references, violence, and/or criminality. The clothing I wear, the things I display, and the media I use at school will also follow these standards.
8. I will not have PDA (public displays of affection) in the classroom. Any PDA during lunch or in the common areas will be “G-Rated”.
9. I will follow the four Mirus Academy “Codes of Conduct”: The Academic Code, The Honor Code, The Off-Campus Behavior Code, and Anti-Harassment Code.
10. I will not engage in any illegal activity, including (but not limited to) theft, assault, or the possession/use of weapons or illegal substances (drugs, alcohol, nicotine products, etc.)

Mirus Academy Codes of Conduct

The Honor Code

“Mirus Academy students do not cheat nor do they allow others to cheat.”

Mirus Academy is a learning community that is dedicated to academic honesty and integrity. To avoid Honor Code violations, students should:

- Complete assignments independently without receiving answers from others
- Complete assignments privately without providing answers to others
- Use only approved materials during assignments and tests
- Carefully document all sources of information used in essays, projects, and reports

Students found to be violating the Honor Code may receive a 0 for the assignment and be placed on disciplinary probation. A second violation may result in expulsion from the school. (see *“Academic Integrity”* p. 12)

The Academic Code

“Mirus Academy students maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher”

Mirus Academy students are expected to maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 each term. A student is automatically placed on Academic Probation if any report card lists an overall GPA that is lower than a 2.0. If the GPA remains below 2.0 on the subsequent report card without improvement, then the student risks expulsion from the school. (see *“Calculating Grade Point Averages”*, p. 13)

The Anti-Harassment Code

“Mirus Academy students keep their school safe from harassment and bullying”

Everyone should feel safe at school without experiencing behaviors that are “harassing” or “bullying”. “Harassment” is persistent, repeated conduct that is intended to offend, humiliate, intimidate, or threaten a victim. Examples of harassment may include (but are not limited to) derogatory language, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, rumors, and physical aggression towards the person or their property.

If the harassment exploits an imbalance of power, it is called “Bullying”. If the harassment includes an unwanted sexual, romantic, or gender-based component, it is called “Sexual Harassment”. Harassment (in all its forms) is not permitted or tolerated on-campus, off-campus, or online, and the perpetrator is subject to disciplinary action. (see *“Discipline”*, pg 20)

The Off-Campus Behavior Code

“Mirus Academy students are good representatives of the school, both on and off campus”

By becoming part of the Mirus community, students and parents represent the school both on campus and off campus. As representatives of the school, students and parents are expected to behave in such a manner that the reputation of the school is not damaged in any way. Violations of the Off-Campus Behavior Code may result in expulsion. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Participation in hate groups or organizations that promote violence or disparagement towards others
- Participation in any illegal activity, including but not limited to underage substance use, theft/shoplifting, possessing or distributing sexually explicit images of minors, etc)
- Participation in public forums (social media, newspapers, blogs, social media, etc) for the purpose of making publically disparaging remarks about Mirus Academy or any Mirus student, parent, or staff member

Discipline Policies

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Mirus Academy strives to be a friendly, positive environment for all students. If a discipline problem arises, teachers make every effort to address the situation professionally and sensitively. School policy prohibits teachers from yelling at students, making insults/demeaning comments, or encouraging students to shun or tease another student. Because of the school's selective admissions policy, Mirus students are generally well-behaved and skilled at self-regulating their behavior. As a result, teachers and administrators trust the students and offer them a high level of responsibility. If a disciplinary event does occur, then teachers and administrators follow the procedures listed below. (see "Classroom & School Rules, p. 16, or "Mirus Codes of Conduct", p. 17)

LEVEL 1 OFFENSES

Level 1 offenses are behaviors which violate classroom rules, making it difficult for teachers to teach and students to learn. Examples include excessive talking, causing distractions, not following directions, making a mess, etc.

- **Disciplinary Procedure:** Level 1 offenses are handled by the classroom teacher. Interventions may include reminders, verbal corrections, or assigned seating.
- **Student Consequences:** Usually one or two warnings is all that is needed to correct a Level 1 offense. Repeated Level 1 offenses may be considered a Level 2 offense (see below).

LEVEL 2 OFFENSES

Level 2 offenses are behaviors which violate school rules. Examples include inappropriate use of electronic devices, mean or disrespectful behavior, rough-housing behavior, violating the Codes of Conduct, etc. Level 1 offenses that are occurring repeatedly and not responding to teacher correction may also be escalated to a Level 2 offense.

- **Disciplinary Procedure:** Level 2 offenses are handled in the office by a school administrator. Depending on the severity of the event, students may be sent to the office immediately or they may be referred to come to the office during a free period or after school.
- **Student Consequences:** An administrator will speak with the student and make a written record of the disciplinary event. A first-time Level 2 offense will usually result in an administrative warning, and the student will be sent back to class. A second Level 2 offense in a single semester (or a Level 2 offense with a victim) will result in parents/guardians being contacted and a conference arranged. Consequences may include a written apology, school service, disciplinary probation, and/or suspension.

LEVEL 3 OFFENSES

Level 3 offenses are behaviors which are illegal and/or threaten the safety of the student or other individuals. Examples include (but are not limited to) violence or threats of violence, self-harm or threats of self-harm, theft, assault (non-consensual touch that is violent or sexual in nature), intentional property damage, or the possession or use of illegal substances. Level 2 offenses committed by a student on disciplinary probation may also be treated as a Level 3 offense.

- **Disciplinary Procedure:** Level 3 offenses are handled in the office by a school administrator. The student will be immediately removed from the classroom and kept apart from other students until a parent or guardian arrives. In the event of a criminal action, the City of Katy Police Department will also be contacted.
- **Student Consequences:** Level 3 offenses result in immediate suspension. During the suspension period, a committee of administrators and teachers will convene to discuss the event and consider the appropriate school response. In some circumstances (such as self-harm), psychiatric treatment may be required before the student may return to school. In other circumstances (such as assault), expulsion may be required so that Mirus Academy can remain a safe space for its students.

Activities & Organizations

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

All Mirus students are automatically members of MASC, the Mirus Academy Student Council. MASC provides students with valuable leadership opportunities as they plan and implement activities such as parties and service projects. MASC meetings are held during seminar class on select Fridays. Students who take on leadership roles are expected to attend all MASC-sponsored events and may also need to attend meetings more often, such as during lunch or after school.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All Mirus students are strongly encouraged to attend the activities planned by MASC and/or the school. Mirus Academy has observed that students who participate in school-sponsored activities are better bonded to their classmates, feel more confident participating in collaborative learning, and take more pride in their membership in the school community. Plus, activities are always more fun when lots of students participate! Mirus Academy respectfully requests that students do not invite their classmates to alternate activities that conflict with Mirus activities (e.g. a birthday party scheduled on the same day as an activity planned by the Student Council).

FUNDRAISING & ACTIVITY FEES

Mirus Academy strives to fund all its school programming and activities through its annual tuition and fees, and fundraising is not required under normal school circumstances. On occasion, a small fee may be assessed to cover the school's non-educational expenses such as parties, activities, and special programs.

PARTIES & CELEBRATIONS

Mirus Academy observes many traditional American holidays (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc.) through secular (non-religious) traditions. Parties and celebrations are primarily planned and funded by the school, although donations of food or other items may be requested.

RULES FOR SCHOOL PARTIES & ACTIVITIES

Mirus Academy has established a set of rules that apply to all school parties and events, whether held on-campus or off-campus. These rules are posted in a visible location throughout the party/event. (see "Party Rules", p. 28)

STUDENT-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Mirus Academy welcomes student-led clubs and organizations. All clubs that meet on school campus or advertise or recruit members on school campus must first receive official approval from a school administrator. Approval is only given for clubs that have open membership and operate in alignment with Mirus Academy's core values and codes of conduct.

PARENT-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Mirus Academy does not host a parent organization for the school. As a high school, it is important that the students have opportunities for developing their leadership skills. Therefore, all activities and events not planned directly by the school should be planned by the Mirus Academy Student Council, not a parent-led organization.

POSTING OR DISTRIBUTING NON-SCHOOL MEDIA

Non-school media (i.e. materials that were not created as part of teacher-supervised assignment) may not be posted, circulated, or distributed on the school campus or via school communication channels (Remind App, Mirus Academy email addresses, etc.) without administrative approval. Such materials include, but are not limited to, printed literature, petitions, flyers, posters, photographs, images, audio and/or video recordings. Mirus Academy encourages expressions of free speech; however, it also has an obligation to maintain a safe educational environment that is free of disruptions. For this reason, media will not be approved for posting, circulation, or distribution if it is vulgar or obscene, contains hateful or defamatory statements, promotes violence and/or illegal activity, or violates intellectual property rights, or if there is reasonable cause to believe that it would create a disruption to the school's operations.

Health & Safety

SAFE BEHAVIOR

Mirus Academy strives to maintain a safe environment for students to learn and play. Roughhousing (running, climbing, wrestling, gymnastics, etc.) or wheeled objects (skateboards, bikes, skates, etc.) may not be used on school grounds. Dangerous materials (including, but not limited to, alcoholic beverages, nicotine, illegal drugs, weapons, etc.) are forbidden at all school or school events. Students, parents, and staff have an obligation to report any unsafe conditions they may observe, so that the situation can be corrected.

ILLNESS OR INJURY AT SCHOOL

Students who are sick or injured should come immediately to the school office. Office personnel will provide basic first aid, take the student's temperature, allow the student to rest, etc. Parents will be notified of such visits via email or phone call, depending on the severity of the visit. In a life-threatening event, Mirus Academy will call for an ambulance.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

The school office may administer non-prescription medication if permission was granted on the parent-signed Student Medical Form. Students may carry and administer their own medications, provided the medication is not a controlled substance. Controlled substances (medications that require ID to purchase, such as stimulants and opioids) must be stored in their original containers inside a locked drawer in the school office. Students are prohibited from sharing any medications (including non-prescription medications) with any other student.

VISION SCREENINGS

The school conducts routine vision screenings for all students each spring semester or at any time there is a concern about a student's vision. These screenings do not take the place of routine examinations by a qualified optometrist. Parents will be notified if the school has any concerns about the student's vision.

BAD WEATHER & SCHOOL CLOSURE

When bad weather threatens, Mirus Academy closely monitors announcements made by the National Weather Service. If a tornado warning is issued for the Katy area, students shelter in interior rooms until the warning is lifted. Mirus Academy follows KISD (specifically, Katy High School) in making decisions about bad weather closings. If, before school begins, KISD cancels classes, announces a late start, or announces an early closing, then Mirus Academy will cancel classes for the entire day. If, after school has already begun, KISD announces an early dismissal for impending bad weather, then Mirus Academy will dismiss early at the same time announced by KISD.

EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS

In the event of a disease epidemic or pandemic, Mirus Academy closely follows the recommendations of the CDC and local health and governmental officials. The school has established four epidemic/pandemic related emergency levels, which are activated when needed: Green, Yellow, Orange, Red. (see *"Emergency Levels: Epidemic/Pandemic"*, p. 28)

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Mirus Academy is a safe environment, and students are statistically much safer at Mirus than in public school. However, no school is immune to violence. After consultation with law enforcement, Mirus has chosen to not engage in "Active Shooter Drills." Each act of violence is a unique event— it is impossible to drill for every theoretical situation which may occur, and, for Mirus students, the disadvantages of these types of drills outweighs the benefits. Instead, Mirus focuses on two measures regarding school violence: First, working to prevent school violence from occurring by supporting students' mental health and promoting a culture of "If you see something, then say something." Second, providing instruction to staff and students on how to act quickly to stay safe if they encounter gun violence in any location.

CHILD ABUSE

As required by state law, Mirus teachers receive annual training in identifying/reporting physical, sexual, and neglectful abuse of a child. Teachers and staff are "mandatory reporters" who are required by law to report suspected abuse within 48 hours of first suspicion. Reports are anonymous, and parents/guardians are not informed when such reports occur.

Student Privacy

F.E.R.P.A.

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under the applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Mirus Academy is a private school and does not receive any governmental funding. However, Mirus does respect the privacy of its students in accordance with FERPA. (see *"Notification of Rights under FERPA"*, p. 29)

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are stored either in a secure, password-protected online database or in a locked file cabinet. In general, school records are only available to school administrators and faculty. However, with signed consent, records may be shared with other educational institutions such as future schools, colleges, scholarship searches, diagnosticians, therapists, etc. Custodial parents/guardians and students age 18 or older have the right to view their school records. (see *"Notification of Rights under FERPA"*, p. 29)

ADULT STUDENTS

Parents have the right to receive all educational notices and records for their minor children (i.e., age 17 or younger). However, students who are 18 years or older are considered adults, and federal privacy laws prohibit schools from sharing adult's records without that adult's permission. When a Mirus student is 18, they are required to sign a form that grants Mirus Academy express written consent to share educational records with his or her parents/guardians (see *"Adult Students"*, p. 26)

SECURITY CAMERAS

For the safety of everyone on the school campus, Mirus Academy utilizes security cameras throughout the school campus, both indoors and outdoors. These cameras provide continuous 24-hour video recordings (no audio) that are stored in a password-protected online cloud service.

VALUABLES & LOCKERS

Students should avoid bringing anything valuable to school, as Mirus Academy is not responsible for items lost or stolen. Students may be assigned a locker on a first-come, first-served basis. Locks placed on lockers must be combination-type (no keyed locks are permitted), and the combination must be on file in the school office. Students are not permitted to know one another's lock combination. Students are expected to keep their lockers clean and in good repair. Parents may be assessed a fee if their child's locker becomes damaged or requires clean-out. (see *"Locker Agreement Form"*, p. 25)

SEARCHES

Lockers are the property of the school, and a school administrator may open and search the locker at any time and for any reason. In addition, if there is reasonable cause, a school administrator may open and search any student property that is located on school grounds or at an official school event, including (but not limited to) backpacks, purses, cars, etc.

DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING

If there is reasonable concern that a student's health or safety is at risk due to drug or alcohol use, Mirus Academy may require parents to have their child tested for drug or alcohol use as a condition of continued enrollment at the school.

AUDIO & VIDEO RECORDING

As part of the enrollment process, all Mirus parents/guardians signed a "Photo & Media Release Form" which allows Mirus to use photographs and/or recordings freely in publications. To protect the privacy of the teachers and students and to prevent classroom distractions, students may not use audio and/or visual recording equipment during class unless participating in a teacher-supervised school assignment. Because of the wide-spread use of cell phones & portable electronics, Mirus Academy is not able to prevent audio and/or visual recording during break times such as lunch, recess, between classes, or before and after school.

Appendix

The Appendix contains some of the documents and forms referenced in this handbook.
For any form not included here, please inquire with the school office.

Recommended High School Sequence

GRADE 9

English 1 ¹	1.0
Algebra 1 (or Geometry) ²	1.0
Integrated Science ³	1.0
World Geography ⁴	1.0
Spanish 1 (or Spanish 2) ⁵	1.0
Computer Applications ⁶	0.5
High School Seminar ⁷	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5

TOTAL: 6.5

GRADE 10

English 2 ¹	1.0
Geometry (or Algebra 2) ²	1.0
Biology ³	1.0
World History ⁴	1.0
Spanish 2 (or Spanish 3)	1.0
High School Seminar ³	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5

TOTAL: 6.5

GRADE 11

English 3 ¹	1.0
Algebra 2 (or other Math) ²	1.0
Science Course ³	1.0
US History ⁴	1.0
WorldView Course ⁹	0.5
High School Seminar ⁷	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5

TOTAL: 6.5

GRADE 12

English 4 ¹	1.0
Advanced Math (or other) ²	1.0
Science Course ³	1.0
Government/Economics ⁴	1.0
WorldView Course ⁹	0.5
High School Seminar ⁷	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5
Elective Class ⁸	0.5

TOTAL: 6.5

REQUIREMENTS¹⁰

ENGLISH ¹	4.0
MATH ²	4.0
SCIENCE ³	4.0
SOCIAL STUDIES ⁴	4.0
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ⁵	2.0
TECHNOLOGY ⁶	0.5
WORLD VIEW ⁹	1.0
OTHER ^{7,8}	6.5

TOTAL: 26

SILVER HONOR CORD:

- Complete at least 80+ hours of community service during HS

GOLD HONOR CORDS (GPA):

- *Cum Laude* (4.00 - 4.24)
- *Magna Cum Laude* (4.25 - 4.49)
- *Summa Cum Laude* (4.50 +)

TO GRADUATE "WITH HONORS"

- At least 4 "honors" classes
- At least 3.5 GPA
- Complete Chemistry or Physics
- Complete Advanced Math or a 3rd credit of foreign language

Notes:

- ENGLISH:** Students are required to take a core English class (English 1, 2, 3, 4) each year of high school. Dual Credit (college level) English is available for advanced students whose ACT/SAT scores meet college readiness requirements.
- MATH:** Algebra 1 + Geometry + Algebra 2 + additional math for a total of 4 math credits. Dual Credit (college level) is available.
- SCIENCE:** Biology + 3 additional sciences for a total of 4 science credits. Integrated Science is strongly recommended before taking any other high school level science courses. Environmental Science, Chemistry, and Physics are all popular options for science.
- SOCIAL STUDIES:** World Geography + World History + US History + Government & Economics are required. Students may waive World Geography or World History if completed in 8th grade. Dual Credit (college level) courses are available.
- FOREIGN LANGUAGE:** 2 credits are required, 3 are recommended for students applying to competitive universities.
- TECHNOLOGY:** Computer Applications (0.5 technology credit) should be taken the first semester a student is enrolled at Mirus Academy. This course provides the foundational computer skills required for success in high school and beyond.
- SEMINAR:** All students are required to take High School Seminar (0.5 elective credit) each year they are enrolled at Mirus Academy
- ELECTIVES:** Students may take as many or as few elective classes as desired, as long as they earn at least 26 credits by graduation
- WORLDVIEW:** Students are required to take 1 credit of "Worldview" courses. Courses may include: Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Humanities, or similar courses that explore the nature of humanity and our role in society.
- GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:** At least 26 credits are required for a standard diploma. An alternate 22-credit plan may be approved on a case-by-case basis (4 English + 3 Math + 3 Science + 3 Soc.Stud. + 11 additional credits for a total of 22)

Junior & Senior Sign-Out Privilege

Mirus Academy 11th and 12th graders may sign themselves out of school if a copy of this form has been signed by both the student and parent and returned to the school office.

Student Initial	Parent Initial	
		I agree to sign-out when I leave campus and sign back in if I return during school hours. I also agree to let the school office know that I am leaving.
		I agree to return to school at least 5 minutes before my next class begins (this includes the "clean-up period" on select class days).
		I will not bring any food, drinks, or other items back to students on campus (exception: you may bring lunch to a sibling if requested by a parent).
		If I bring someone with me when I leave, I understand that I am responsible for bringing that person back to school with me when I return.
		I understand that by leaving the school campus, I am placing myself outside of the supervisory role of the school. The school provides no supervision to students who have left campus.
		I understand that by being off campus during school hours, I am subject to being stopped and questioned about truancy by local law enforcement.
		I agree to follow all local and state driving laws, including the law that states 16 and 17 year old drivers may only have ONE passenger (unless a family member or over 21).
		I understand that I represent Mirus Academy, and I agree to follow all of Mirus Academy's rules and codes of conduct while off campus during school hours.
		I understand that my Junior/Senior sign-out privileges may be revoked by my parent/guardian or a school administrator at any time.

STUDENT: *I have read and I understand all the information listed above. I understand that the ability to check myself out of school is a privilege that will be revoked if I break any of the rules or at any time that a parent/guardian or school administrator feels it appropriate or necessary.*

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: *I give permission for my child to sign his or herself out of school during the school day. I understand that in leaving school, my child will no longer be supervised by Mirus staff, and I release Mirus Academy and its representatives from all liability for any incidents that occur in conjunction with my child having left the school campus.*

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Locker Agreement Form

Mirus Academy provides students with a locker to store their belongings. All students using a school locker agree to the following terms:

- **All lockers are the property of Mirus Academy**
 - Students may only use the locker(s) assigned to them
 - A school administrator may open and inspect the locker at any time
 - The use of a locker is a privilege which may be revoked at any time

- **Mirus is not responsible for any items lost or stolen from your locker. It is recommended (but not required) that students use a lock to secure their locker. If a lock is used:**
 - The lock must be combination-style only (no keyed locks).
 - The lock combination should not be shared with other students.
 - The school office must have the current combination on file. If the lock combination is changed, the school office must be notified of the new combination.

- **Lockers must be kept clean and in good condition.**
 - No food or opened drinks may be stored overnight (it attracts ants and roaches)
 - No stickers may be applied
 - Lockers may not be filled so tightly that the door is difficult to open or close
 - Lockers must be thoroughly cleaned when the school year ends (all items removed, all surfaces wiped down with a disinfectant wipe)

- **Students who violate the rules listed above will lose their locker privilege. In addition, a \$40 Locker Fee will be assessed in the following circumstances:**
 - The locker had to be cleaned by school personnel (either because it wasn't cleaned out at the end of the year or because it had become a health or safety hazard)
 - The lock must be cut off or otherwise forcefully removed
 - The locker has been damaged due to misuse

STUDENT NAME: _____ LOCKER NUMBER: _____

LOCKER COMBINATION: _____

I have read the rules listed above and agree to abide by them:

Student Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

Adult Students

Consent to Share Information with Parents/Guardians

High schools are primarily designed to educate students under the age of 18. Because of the nature of educating children, communication with parents or other guardians is an integral and essential part of the administrative operations of the school.

When you were under 18, your parents had full legal right to view your school records and talk to school teachers and administrators about you. Now that you are 18, you are required to give us your consent so that we can keep sharing records and information with your parents until graduation.

Please sign the form below so that we can continue to communicate with your parents, as we have in the past.

In signing below, I hereby give consent to Mirus Academy administrators and staff to share my school records and information with my parents/guardians in the same manner in which this information was shared previous to my 18th birthday. This consent form remains valid for one year following graduation, unless I notify the school otherwise.

PRINTED NAME: _____ BIRTHDATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Mirus Academy Party Rules

Whether on-campus or off-campus, parties that are planned by Mirus Academy or the Student Council are required to follow the rules listed below:

1. BEHAVIOR: All school rules for good behavior apply to school parties and activities, whether occurring on or off campus. Misbehavior at any school event is subject to school disciplinary action. The use or possession of any illegal substance (drugs, alcohol, nicotine, weapons, etc) will result in immediate dismissal from the activity and expulsion from the school.

2. CHAPERONES: All parties must be fully chaperoned at all times by Mirus staff and/or parents. Students should be allowed their own space to have fun on their own; however, at least two adults (one of whom is fully awake) should be on the premises at all times.

3. CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT: All parties and events are “Lock-In” style. That means once a student arrives at the party, they must remain with the party at all times. To leave the party, the student must check out with the chaperone and may not return to the party after they have checked-out.

4. GUESTS: All guests must be pre-approved by the school office. Guests must be 13-19 years old.

5. GROUP PARTICIPATION: School events are group activities and everyone is encouraged to be welcoming and inclusive. Students are required to remain in a group of at least 3 people at all times; pairing off privately is not permitted. Doors must always remain open, if that room is being used by students.

6. MEDIA: All media (games, movies, music, etc) must be rated for teen audiences. Movies must be rated no higher than PG-13; video games must be rated no higher than T; music must be suitable for radio play.

7. NOISE: When outside, everyone should remain respectful of the neighbors and keep the volume down, especially after 10 pm.

8. CLEAN-UP: Everyone should be mindful of keeping their possessions tidy and cleaning up their own messes. Everyone is expected to help clean up before leaving the party.

9. FIREWORKS: If fireworks are part of the celebration, they are to be collected upon arrival and stored by the chaperones until the designated time. Fireworks may only be used at the designated time and must have close, hands-on supervision by chaperones at all times. A bucket of water should be accessible for extinguishing fireworks if needed. All trash must be swept up and properly disposed of.

10. OVERNIGHT PARTIES: After a designated time, those staying awake should be quiet and respectful of those wanting to sleep. Sleeping areas should be established to separate those who want to sleep from those who want to stay awake. Closed-door sleeping areas must contain at least 3 people, none of whom are in a romantic relationship. Students in a relationship may not share blankets or bedding. Sleep clothing should provide good coverage with no sheer fabrics.

Emergency Levels: Epidemic or Pandemic

GREEN: Heightened Awareness

The school has a heightened awareness of disease outbreaks affecting the community and is taking steps to reduce the spread of the disease.

1. Heightened monitoring for new developments that may impact school operations
2. Heightened communication with parents and staff
3. Heightened cleaning & disinfecting protocol
4. Direct instruction to students and staff in basic hygiene practices, such as hand washing
5. School gatherings & activities may altered or restricted in alignment with current recommendations
6. The school will follow CDC-established requirements for isolation/quarantining for individuals who have symptoms of the disease, have tested positive for the disease, or have had close contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have the disease.

YELLOW: Modified School Operations

School operations are modified to meet the health and safety protocols established by the CDC and local public health and government officials. Yellow Level includes everything above plus these exceptions:

1. Students and staff may be screened upon arrival at school for symptoms, as advised by the CDC
2. Students and staff may be required to sanitize their hands and personal space, as advised by the CDC
3. Classrooms may be altered to meet CDC requirements for social distancing (for example, desks may be spaced apart or students may be assigned their own non-shared portable table)
4. If masks are recommended by the CDC, the school will have an adequate supply for all student/staff

ORANGE: Hybrid Attendance

Orange Level includes everything listed in Yellow Level except that students and faculty may choose to participate in classes either on campus or online from home.

1. All classes will be transmitted via video conferencing software to allow students and staff to be absent as needed with minimal interruption to the educational process.
 - a. In deciding how to attend classes, students and staff should consider their own health and the health of their family members, as well as their own academic, mental, and emotional needs.
 - b. Students and staff may individualize their schedule according to their current needs. For example, they may choose to be on campus full-time, part-time, or not at all.
 - c. For attendance purposes, students are “Present” if they attend & participate in each online class

RED: Remote Learning

The school campus is temporarily closed

1. The campus will close and temporarily move to “Red Level” in the following 3 circumstances:
 - a. Government regulations require the school campus to close
 - b. There is reasonable cause to impose a quarantine period on school staff and/or students
 - c. The school does not have enough students or staff on campus to operate
2. Classes will be conducted online via video conferencing-- No classes/activities will be on campus
3. Students are considered “Present” if they attend and participate in their online classes

Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day Mirus Academy receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school office a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school office will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Mirus Academy to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the Academic Director or other school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Mirus decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, Mirus will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided to the parent or eligible student when Mirus is notified of the request for a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate education interests. A school official is a person employed by Mirus Academy as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom Mirus has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Mirus Academy also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school system to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605

Directory Information Notice:

Mirus Academy may disclose certain information, known as directory information, in its discretion without consent. Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Directory information may be disclosed to entities such as outside organizations that provide scholarships, manufacture class rings, etc. In addition, two federal laws require schools receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents or students have advised the school that they do not want the student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Parents or eligible students may refuse to let Mirus Academy release any or all of this information. If you do not want this information released, you must send a written notice annually to Mirus before September 1 of each school year. The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) photo, (3) e-mail address, (4) home address, (5) telephone number, (6) date and place of birth, (7) major field of study, (8) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (9) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (10) dates of attendance, (11) degrees and awards received, (12) the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and (13) other similar information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.