



Muskegon Covenant Academy
Student and Family Handbook
2023/24

125 Catherine Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49442
231-720-3100

<https://covenantacademies.org/muskegon/>

Muskegon Covenant Academy Mission

The Covenant Academies Foundation serves to prevent youth homelessness and youth incarceration by providing educational opportunities and other services, including residential, to dropout, homeless, at-risk and disenfranchised youth. We focus on retention, progress and graduation. Through access to education, support services and community partnerships, the Covenant Academies Foundation offers unconditional love and absolute respect to our most vulnerable youth.

Muskegon Covenant Academy Core Values

1. We believe all students in our community who have disengaged, and left school deserve a chance at growth opportunities that may lead to a high school diploma and a more secure life.
2. We believe our mission is to take in students as they are and through unconditional love and absolute respect help them grow emotionally and academically.
3. We believe retention, academic achievement, and personal growth along with individual and achievable goals will help our students live more productive lives.
4. We believe our staff provide an environment that manifests growth and breaks down barriers in order to prevent homelessness and incarceration.
5. We believe in collaborating and working in partnership with community agencies and associations to improve the quality of life for our students.
6. We believe in providing year-round educational opportunities that build trust, provide hope, and develop a support system for each individual student.

The School Day

The School Day

Monday - Thursday

Morning Session: 7:30 - 12:00

Afternoon Session: 12:30 - 3:30

Friday

Morning Session only: 7:30 - 12:00

Morning Session -

- Structured
- 2 scheduled class
- 1 mini-session for reading/math intervention, supplemental help, career preparation

Afternoon Session -

- All teachers in their classrooms teaching and supporting students and classes
**please note that 2:30-3:30 is teacher prep time, your teacher may not be available during this time, please communicate with your teacher*
- Available for additional help and supplemental learning
- Schedule conflicts that prevent attendance during the morning session
- Support when working on additional classes
- Reading and math basic skills support
- Mirrors morning session

MUSKEGON COVENANT ACADEMY

2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDER

July 2023							9
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
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30	31						

August 2023							19
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September 2023							19
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October 2023							22
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November 2023							19
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26	27	28	29	30			

December 2023							16
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January 2024							17
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28	29	30	31				

February 2024							19
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March 2024							20
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April 2024							17
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28	29	30					

May 2024							21
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June 2024							12
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30							

17	First Day of School
	Regular School Day for Students
	Holidays/No School
PLCs	Afternoon PLCs-students AM only
	Count Day
	NWEA Testing Window
	State Testing
*	Board Meeting @ Noon
20	Last Day of School

Total Instructional Days 210 Days
 1st Session (Instructional Day) = 7:30 AM-12:00 PM (270 mins)
 2nd Session (Afternoons) = 1:00 PM-3:30 PM
Total Instructional Hours 945 Hours
Staff Professional Development (PLCs): 77.5 Hours
 31 Afternoons 1pm-3:30pm (2.5 hours)
 Winter Graduation December 12, 2023
 Summer Graduation June 11, 2024

MUSKEGON COVENANT ACADEMY

2023-2024 TERM CALENDAR

July 2023							9
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
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August 2023							19
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September 2023							19
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October 2023							22
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November 2023							19
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26	27	28	29	30			

December 2023							16
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January 2024							17
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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21	22	23	24	25	26 T3 End	27	
28	29 T4 Start	30	31				

February 2024							19
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March 2024							20
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April 2024							17
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
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7	8	9	10	11	12 T4 End	13	
14	15 T5 Start	16*	17	18	19	20	
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28	29	30					

May 2024							21
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June 2024							12
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16	17	18	19	20 T5 End	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30							

- 17 First Day of School
- Regular School Day for Students
- Holidays/No School
- PLCS Afternoon PLCs-students AM only
- Count Day
- NWEA Testing Window
- State Testing
- Board Meeting @ Noon
- 20 Last Day of School
- 12 Start/End Term

Total Instructional Days 210 Days
 1st Session (Instructional Day) = 7:30 AM-12:00 PM (270 mins)
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Total Instructional Hours 945 Hours
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 31 Afternoons 1pm-3:30pm (2.5 hours)
 Winter Graduation December 12, 2023
 Summer Graduation June 11, 2024

- Term 1: 7/17 - 8/31**
1 Class
28 Days/126 Hours
- Term 2: 9/5 - 11/7**
2 Classes
46 Days/207 Hours
- Term 3: 11/8 - 1/26**
2 Classes
44 Days/198 Hours
- Term 4: 1/29 - 4/12**
2 Classes
47 Days/211.5 Hours
- Term 5: 4/15 - 6/20**
2 Classes
45 Days/202.5 Hours

Mid-week Term switch due to Count Period

MCA Daily School Day				
7:30 - 9:30	1st hour (2 hr)			
9:30 - 10:00	Mini-Session	Mini-Session	Mini-Session	Mini-Session
	Reading Recovery	Math Recovery	Open Classroom for Content Area Class Assistance	Career Planning and Work Readiness
10:00 - 12:00	2nd hour (2 hr)			
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch			
12:30 - 1:15	Extended classroom time			
1:15 - 1:45	Mini-Session	Mini-Session	Mini-Session	Mini-Session
	Reading Recovery	Math Recovery	Open Classroom for Content Area Class Assistance	Career Planning and Work Readiness
1:45 - 2:30	Extended classroom time			
2:30 - 3:30	Teacher Prep Time			

Attendance Policy

A student must make progress in STRONGMIND, engage in academic conversation with their teacher and/or engage in meaningful conversation with a mission team member or school leader to remain an active student at Muskegon Covenant Academy.

When a student fails to complete any of these actions over the course of ten consecutive school days, the student may be unenrolled from Muskegon Covenant Academy.

At the time of enrollment, each student will complete a Student Covenant. This Covenant will be reviewed and updated at the conclusion of each term.

Muskegon Covenant Academy is not a virtual or cyber school. Students are required to attend school, daily, in-person. If there is a temporary situation that may require the student to work from home, please contact the School Leader to discuss if a Remote Learning Contract is appropriate. Remote Learning Contracts are not a guarantee and, if granted, have a plan for the students' return to school.

Enrollment / Deactivation

Enrollment and re-enrollment of students will be in accordance with Michigan Law. If there is a waiting list of students who want to attend the school, a student who wishes to enroll will be placed last on the waiting list.

THE MCKINNEY VENTO ACT: PARENT/STUDENT RIGHTS FOR THOSE IN TRANSITION

Covenant Academy shall provide an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every student experiencing homelessness or transition shall have access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not experiencing homelessness. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, and unaccompanied youth applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

A student may be considered eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act if he or she lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

This includes children and youths who:

- are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters
- are abandoned in hospitals
- have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, eligible students have rights to:

Immediate enrollment: Documentation and immunization records cannot serve as a barrier to the enrollment in school.

School Selection: Eligible students have a right to select from the following schools:

- The school he/she attended when permanently housed (School of Origin)
- The school in which he/she was last enrolled (School of Origin)
- The school in the attendance area in which the student currently resides (School of Residency)

Remain enrolled in his/her selected school for the duration of homelessness, or until the academic year

upon which they are permanently housed.

Participate in programs for which they are eligible, including Title I, tutoring programs, Free Lunch in schools with the National School Lunch Program, Head Start & Even Start Preschool Programs.

Transportation Services: A McKinney-Vento eligible student attending his/her School of Origin has a right to transportation to and from the School of Origin. Covenant Academy does not provide transportation (aka. school bus) to its students. However, part of its Title 1 funding is spent on tokens/passes for public transportation. Covenant Academy offers tokens/passes to any student who qualifies under the MKV act.

Dispute Resolution: If you disagree with school officials about enrollment, transportation, or fair treatment of a homeless child or youth, you may file a complaint with the school district. The school district must respond and attempt to resolve it quickly. During the dispute, the student must be immediately enrolled in the school and provided transportation until the matter is resolved. The McKinney Vento Liaison will assist you in making decision, providing notice of any appeal process, and filling out dispute forms

Absence (Excused and Unexcused)

Unexcused absences will be recorded and counted toward the deactivation requirements. Excused absences shall be limited to the following nine criteria:

1. Illness with a signed medical statement
2. Recovery from accidents
3. Required court attendance
4. Incarceration or adjudication by court officer, sentenced 30 days or less
5. Professional appointments
6. Death in the immediate family
7. Family vacation - parent/guardian/student must contact the school office at least three school days in advance of the absence
8. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
9. Suspension

Upon returning to school, students shall provide appropriate documentation for the excused absence(s) to the School's Data and Enrollment Specialist. An absence for anything other than the above-noted criteria shall be defined as an unexcused absence.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT (SCC)

The success of Muskegon Covenant Academy's mission and the success of all individuals within the academy community depends on the continuous expression of absolute respect for everyone, including oneself, at all times. As such, the **Student Code of Conduct (SCC)** establishes expectations that create a learning environment conducive to positive development.

The SCC applies to actions of students during academy hours, before and after school while on school property, while traveling in school vehicles funded by the school, while participating in a group representing the school or attending such an activity, at all school-sponsored events, and while using the school network or any computer or IT devices. The SCC also applies to actions of students before or after school and off school property if those actions pose a substantial likelihood of disruption to the learning environment in the school.

Team members shall consider all mitigating circumstances prior to disciplinary action and ensure due process for each student, while consistently following the policies outlined below. Mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to the following factors: A student's behavior plan, age, health, maturity, and academic placement of a student, the student's discipline record, including previous similar incidents, the student's attitude and willingness to change, the cooperation of parents/guardians, seriousness of offense, and willingness to enroll student in a student assistance program.

Actions or Behaviors that Harm the Self and Community

There are certain actions that cause harm to one's self and the community. When the community is harmed, there needs to be actions to heal the community otherwise the damage can deepen and spread. For each category of actions below that harm the community, there are various forms of healing that could be applied to positively restore the community.

Category One: Minor acts that harm the self and community

Disrespect to members of the learning community or self

- Malicious teasing or taunting
- Verbally aggressive fighting
- Filming/recording violations of the SCC

Disrupting the learning environment in the classroom or building

- Defiance toward an adult
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Possession or use of tobacco products or related items (such as lighters or matches)

Category Two: Major acts that harm the self and community

Repeated Category One Behaviors

Major disrespect to members of the learning community or self

- Use of racial, ethnic, and sexual slurs
- Physical fighting
- Posting violations of the SCC on the internet
- Attending school inebriated by alcohol or drugs

Major disruptions to the learning environment in the classroom or building

- Aggressive defiance toward an adult

- Gambling on school grounds
- Possession or use of alcohol or marijuana on school grounds

Inappropriate use of Social Media, Internet, or other communication devices to harm others.

- Using phones, computers, or social media to bully, intimidate, or harass others.

Category Three: Forbidden acts that harm the self and community

Repeated Category Two Behaviors

Forbidden disrespect to members of the learning community or self

- Harassment, hazing, dating violence, threatening to cause or causing harm or bodily injury to another student or adult.
- Indecent exposure, unsolicited sexual proposal, sexual harassment, or committing any other act of criminal sexual or sexually intimidating conduct.
- Causing physical damage to the property of another student or adult.
- Subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint
- Maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health
- Participation in gang activity
- Theft, robbery, or extortion
- Physical fighting, assault, or battery

Forbidden disruptions to the learning environment in the classroom or building

- Destroying public or private property
- Vandalism, graffiti, or arson
- Theft of public or private property
- Sale or providing of alcohol, drug paraphernalia, or possession of drugs on school grounds
- Possession and/or use of weapons/dangerous objects, including, but not limited to firearms or knives of any kind.

Student Discipline

When the self or community is harmed, we need to acknowledge the act so that we can work together to heal individuals and the community. All the following tools exist to help mend people and the community.

Behavior Monitoring	The student will closely monitor behavior and academic progress (e.g., self-charting of behaviors, feedback sessions for the student) that will permit rewards to be provided for successful performance.
Coordinated Behavior Plans	The school team, student, and parent/guardian will create a structured behavior support plan specific to the student and based on the target behavior to be reduced. It will focus on increasing desirable behavior and replacing inappropriate behaviors.

Counseling	The student may be required to receive additional support(s) or individual counseling from trained helping professionals (e.g., counselor, social worker, academy psychologist) focused on problem solving or personal issues interfering with learning.
Harm Reparation	Harm reparation is when students complete tasks or assignments to make up for previous offenses (example: cleaning gum off of desks because he or she spit gum on the carpet).
Parent/Guardian involvement and Supervision	Along with the school and student, parents/guardians will develop ways that they can provide closer supervision or be more involved in their student's schooling. Together the team will work towards better communication and more frequent contacts between teachers and parents/guardians, as well as coordinated behavior-change approaches.
Parent/Guardian Conference	A meeting where the student, school official, parent or guardian, teacher, or Advisor discusses behavior, consequences, action items, goals, support plans, and/or communication methods.
Restitution	In-kind restitution permits the student to help to restore or improve the academy environment either by directly addressing the problems caused by the student's behavior (e.g., in cases of vandalism students can work to repair things they damaged), or by having the student improve the academy environment more broadly (e.g., picking up trash, washing lockers).
Restorative Circle	A community process for supporting those in conflict. It brings together the three parties to a conflict – those who have acted, those directly impacted and the wider community – within an intentional systemic context, to dialogue as equals.
Problem Solving/Contracting	Negotiation and problem-solving approaches can be used to assist students in identifying alternative behavior choices. The student will develop a contract that reminds him or her to engage in a problem-solving process that includes positive reinforcement for success and consequences for continuing problem behaviors.
Restorative Conference	A structured meeting between offenders, victims and both parties' family and friends, in which they deal with the consequences of the crime or wrongdoing and decide how best to repair the harm.
Restorative Justice Classes	Students who have a violation of the student Code of Conduct related to fighting, bullying, gang activity ,or drug use or distribution may be required to take Restorative Justice classes that teach proper behavior in order to continue with the community or to graduate.
Student Conference	A meeting where the student, school official, teacher, or Advisor discusses behavior, consequences, action items, goals, support plans, and/or communication methods. Parents or guardians should be informed of such conferences.
Student Seclusion and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only in certain emergency circumstances, professional team members may need to restrain and seclude students. • All such intervention shall only be done in accordance with guidelines and standards adopted by the Covenant Academy Board

<p>Restraint</p>	<p>of Directors regarding the use of student restraint and seclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training will be provided to professional staff and the support staff determined appropriate by the school leader. Training will be in accordance with the State's Standards.
<p>Suspension</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No suspension shall exceed ten (10) school days. • The School Leader must give written notice of the intention to suspend and the reason for the suspension to the student. • The student shall be given the right to appear at an informal hearing before the School Leader and has the right to challenge the reasons for the intended suspension or otherwise provide his/her explanation. The hearing can happen immediately after the incident and can take place anywhere -hall, office, classroom, etc. • The written notice of suspension shall be sent or given within one calendar day to the parent/guardian if the student is under the age of 18. The notice shall contain the reasons for the suspension and the right of the student to appeal to the School Leader/Educational Service Provider (ESP). • Teacher "Snap" Suspension A teacher may suspend a student from the classroom for up to one day if the student creates a safety threat as defined by local policy. The policy is adopted as part of Muskegon Covenant Academy's district's code of student conduct. A parent-teacher conference shall follow the suspension as soon as possible and may include a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker.
<p>Expulsion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Leader shall provide the student and the parent/guardian written notice of the intent to expel. The written notice shall include reasons for the intended expulsion. The student and parent/guardian shall have an opportunity to appear, upon request, before the Board of Directors to challenge the expulsion or otherwise explain the actions that led to the intended expulsion. • The written notice shall state the time and place to appear which shall not be less than three (3) days or more than five (5) days after the notice of intent to expel is given. • The Board may grant an extension of time. If granted, the School Leader must notify all parties of the new time and place of the meeting. • An expelled student will be provided with a date of re-entry and the date of the re-entry conference. • The student and parent/guardian of any student will be notified, in writing, in the event the student fails to attend the re-entry conference.
<p>Arrest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police may be called to arrest students if there is reason to believe they are involved in any illegal activity. This includes, but is not limited to, involvement in a physical altercation or for bringing weapons or illegal substances of any kind to the academy. A weapon is defined as anything that can inflict harm including, but not limited to; a firearm, a stick, brass knuckles, a knife, box cutters, bullets, screw drivers, saws, metal pipes, b.b.guns, toy guns, slingshots, or broken bottles. A campus official must call the parents immediately before or after the police are called. • Faculty and all staff members who have reason to believe that they have witnessed the sale, possession, or transfer of weapons shall

	<p>report this immediately to the Principal (or designee). The Principal or designee shall determine if sufficient cause exists and, if so, file a disciplinary report and notify the Juvenile officer of the Police Department. The Principal (or designee), in consultation with the Police Department, will determine whether or not to file charges. All contraband will be turned over to the Police department. In addition the student who is charged with possession and/or use of a weapon shall be subject to immediate suspension from academy and may face expulsion</p>
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Age Requirements

General Education students ages 16-22 are welcome to enroll, however, students aged 22 must have turned 22 after September 1st in the school year they are attending.

Special Education students ages 16-26 are welcome to enroll, however, students aged 26 must have turned 26 after September 1st in the school year they are attending.

Muskegon Covenant Academy may enroll 15 year old students at the approval of the School Leader.

Cell Phones

Muskegon Covenant Academy is not responsible for loss, theft, damage or vandalism to student cell phones, ECDs, or other student property. Using a cell phone or other ECD in an unauthorized manner (recording classrooms or hallways) is a violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action. Cell phone usage is not permitted in the classroom. If there is an emergency, a student can request to step out of the classroom to receive or make a call.

Fire Drill

Posted in every room is a map detailing the evacuation protocol required. Students are to follow their teacher according to that map and to stay with their class. In the event of a fire drill or fire, students must not stop at bathrooms or lockers. They must go directly downstairs and stay as a class in the designated outside location until given further instruction. Any student violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of the school community. To ensure the precise execution of the drill, there should be little to no talking during a fire drill.

Lost & Found

Any personal items that have been found at Muskegon Covenant Academy should be taken to the main office. Muskegon Covenant Academy is not responsible for lost money, jewelry, or other personal items.

Building Closures

If there are times during the year that students will not be able to report to the school building for classes due to, for instance, an extreme weather event, a Covid-related closure, power outage, etc., Muskegon Covenant Academy students continue to have the same expectations in regards to engagement and progression in their classes. During state mandated closures, teachers will be running virtual classes that students will be expected to attend, just as they do when all are physically present in the building.

Muskegon Covenant Academy will use local radio and television stations, text messaging, or other social media platforms to inform the school community.

Medical Policy

Records and Physical Exams - In order to enroll at a Covenant Academy school, every student must have up-to-date physical, health records, including immunizations.

Medications - If a student requires medication during school hours, the distribution of the medications will be supervised by the Office Manager or Nurse under the following guidelines required by state law:

- Prescription medications must be supplied in the original pharmacy container.
- The container must be identified with the following information: student name, Name of Medication, Doctor's Name and Phone Number, Pharmacy, and Phone Number.
- Parents/guardians must sign the appropriate administration forms.
- Non-prescription medications must also be supplied in the original container and must be accompanied by written consent from parent/guardian for students who are not of legal age.

Each Academy will designate employees as the primary person and back-up person authorized to administer medication in the absence of the school nurse. All medication must be placed in a locked box in the main office. In order to administer any prescribed medication to a student or child, there must be a doctor's note on file. For any over the counter medication, a note signed by the parent with directions must be present. Furthermore, a log will be kept on file that indicates the following: Name of student/Child, Name of Medication, Date, Time, and Who Dispensed Medication.

Students are responsible for coming to the main office to receive their medications at the appropriate time.

Students are not allowed to have medications in their possession. This includes any over the counter medications.

Policy on Mandated Reporting of Abuse/Neglect

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment **immediately** when they: "have reasonable cause to believe that a child who is under 18 years old known to them in a professional or official capacity has been harmed or is in danger of being, harmed-physically, sexually, or through neglect and that a caregiver either committed the harm or should have taken steps to prevent the child from harm."

1. Once any Team Member becomes aware that a student may be the victim of abuse or neglect, they must:
 - a. Call the DCFS hotline at (800) 25-ABUSE,
 - b. Notify the School Leader or Social Worker, and
 - c. Complete an incident report.

2. When calling the hotline, the Team Member must have the following information (or as much as is known): the name, birth date, and address of the alleged victim; the name, address, age or birthdate, and relationship of the alleged perpetrator; what type of injury or harm was allegedly done to the victim; and a description of the incident (time/date, place in which it occurred, and indication of intention to harm). The staff member should also have the names and ages of other children in the household, information as to whether or not English is fluently spoken by the parents and the work phone number of the alleged perpetrator.

3. While these steps are taking place, the social worker will assist both the faculty member and student in 24 understanding the ramifications of the call. The social worker will debrief the student and, when appropriate, will contact the parent(s)/guardian.

4. No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to license suspension or revocation, and commits a misdemeanor. Falsely reporting information to the hotline is also a misdemeanor.

5. Physical abuse is defined as occurring when a parent or person responsible for the child's welfare "inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury, by other than accidental means". Common injuries include bruises, human bite marks, bone fractures, and burns. Physical abuse also occurs when the caregiver or parent creates a substantial risk of physical injury by shaking, throwing, choking, smothering, or pushing the child into fixed objects. Act of torture are defined as "deliberately or inflicting cruel or unusual punishment which results in physical or mental suffering". When reporting physical abuse, it is important to document the presence of any injuries.

6. Sexual abuse is defined as occurring when a person responsible for the child's welfare commits sexual penetration, sexual exploitation, sexual molestation, or when a young child contracts a sexually transmitted disease. A child's disclosure of sexual abuse will be handled sensitively. When a student attempts to disclose sexual abuse, the teacher or staff member will listen attentively while maintaining a calm demeanor. The mandated reporter will pay very careful attention to the disclosure of sexual abuse, but will not encourage the student to disclose information in addition to what is being given voluntarily. Staff will take very careful notes, writing the student's words verbatim as much as possible. The student will be referred immediately to the school social worker and the Dean of students will be informed.

7. Neglect occurs when a person responsible for the child "deprives or fails to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment".

Students' Rights

The right of students to freedom of expression shall not be abridged, **provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school.** Freedom of expression shall include without limitation, the rights and responsibilities of students, collectively and individually, (a) to express their views through speech and symbols, (b) to write, publish, and disseminate their views, and to assemble peaceably on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions. Any assembly planned by students during regularly scheduled school hours shall be held only at a time and place approved in advance by the Principal (or designee).

No expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed an expression of school policy, and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for an expression made or published by students.

Freedom of Speech. Students' right to free speech comes with the following restrictions:

- What a student says may not disrupt the work and discipline of the school in a material or substantial way.
- A student's words may not incite others to disrupt the work or discipline of the school or disobey the laws.
- No students may be obscene.
- Students may not say (slander) or write things about (libel) another person that damages that person's reputation and are not true, if they know the statement to be false or don't care whether it is true or false.
- Students may not use fighting words, that is, words which when spoken are likely to produce a violent action. Included in this category would be racial, sexual, ethnic, or religious slurs.

Freedom of Press. Students may express their opinions in publication and other written material as long as it follows standards of good taste. Unofficial or underground publications distributed at school will not be censored so long as they are signed by the author(s), and are not disruptive, defamatory, obscene, or containing "fighting words." Covenant Academy reserves the right to regulate the content of "school sponsored express activities." A sign posted must be signed by the person who put it up and must be posted in the designated area in the school.

Freedom of religion. Students have the right to be absent from school for observance of the holy days of their religion.

Right to Equal Education

Covenant Academy students cannot be prevented or discouraged from participating in any school activity because of race, gender, sexual preference, religion, national origin, or handicap.

Students' Rights

Students have a right to privacy, and their belongings may not be violated by unreasonable search and

seizure. However, if the School Leader has a reasonable suspicion that a serious infraction could result, a reasonable search of the student's property is permitted including electronic devices. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the student's age, and the student's disciplinary history.

Any searches of backpacks or purses *will* be conducted solely for the safety and well being of the Muskegon Covenant Academy community.

Student Grievances

1. The grievance must be presented in writing to the School Leader.
2. The School Leader has five (5) school days to investigate and respond in writing.
3. The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of the School Leader within five (5) school days to the School Leader/ESP.
4. The student shall have the right to appeal to the Board within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision of the School Leader/ESP.

What to do if rights are violated

Students are encouraged to talk to their teachers, School Leader, or another adult staff member in the school. Any member of the school community who believes he/she has been subject to or bears witness to discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, or handicap may file a complaint with the School Leader. The School Leader will make a determination in the matter. If that determination is unsatisfactory, the member of the school community can request a hearing before the Director of Academic Progress by submitting a request in writing to the school office.

Age of Majority

High School students who have attained 18 years of age, may when they have so informed the School Leader in writing:

- Have all personal school correspondence mailed directly to them
- Have access to their school records
- May sign excused absence or report cards for themselves
- May sign themselves out of school

If adult students choose to exclude their parents or guardians from any of the above matters, the School Leader should be so informed in writing. Students who have attained the age of 18 are still subject to all school and board policies and regulations.

Supervision of Students

Students are not to be in the building or on the school grounds after the regular school day unless under the direct supervision of a school team member.

Work Permit

Pursuant to Michigan Law, any student who is at least 16 years old and desires to work may do so through a validly-issued Work Permit. The Michigan Department of Labor has granted Muskegon Covenant Academy the authority to issue Work Permits for its actively enrolled students. Any student may request a Work Permit when he/she has secured possible employment. It is important to note that **the Work Permit is employment and employer specific**, and, as such, a new Work Permit must be submitted for each new employment opportunity of the student.

ACADEMICS

Instructional Delivery Method

Muskegon Covenant Academy serves students 16-22 years of age and offers a high school diploma upon meeting the academy's graduation requirements. Typically, all the students have entered the ninth grade at a previous school or schools and have since dropped out. The profiles of the students entering Muskegon Covenant Academy range from students with 9th grade through 12th grade credits and a variety of ability levels. Students will earn credits toward a high school diploma by meeting the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC).

Muskegon Covenant Academy uses a blended learning model of instruction to address the individualized learning needs of our students. The flexible school schedule is designed for students to pursue their high school diploma and their need for strong communication and relationship skills necessary for the world of work and a successful life. Our approach to education is twofold. Muskegon Covenant Academy uses the Canvas Platform which is a Learning Management System (LMS) that allows students to work at their own pace and, potentially, at a time that fits their schedule. The second, and most important part of our education model, is teaching, learning and engagement through direct instruction, lessons and activities in the classroom. These lessons may be in addition to, or instead of, the lessons in Canvas. All instruction is delivered by certified, content area teachers who individualize and customize instruction according to the needs of the student. This direct instruction will take place in a face-to-face setting. However, there may be times that this direct instruction be live-streamed. Research shows that students engage more and learn best through in-person instruction designed to meet students' needs, address gaps in learning, is hands-on, and is stimulating. Whenever possible, instruction will also address post-secondary training and employability skills, including Career/Technical training facilities in the local community. In addition to instruction, all staff members, not just teachers, are trained to support the social, emotional, safety, and well-being of each student. Learning cannot happen if basic needs are not being met.

Muskegon Covenant Academy is committed to offering its students the highest quality education on the most convenient and easy to use platform. Our curriculum is designed by StrongMind to help students gain the knowledge and thinking skills they'll need for life, work, and post-secondary education. To ensure that each student reaches his or her full potential, teachers structure classes so students are being taught the most important concepts while also blending self-paced learning to assist in mastery.

With the instructional model that Muskegon Covenant Academy utilizes, which is in line with the Mission of our school, students who are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Act are not penalized for times in which they are not in attendance or enrolled at Muskegon Covenant Academy during the school year. Incoming transcripts for eligible students are audited and, when possible, credits are awarded based on partial credits earned at other schools. Eligible students also have the opportunity to earn credits by testing out of a class.

StrongMind Curriculum

Muskegon Covenant Academy has selected the curriculum provider, StrongMind. StrongMind specializes in blended curriculum, students are provided with robust instructional activities informed by research and best practices. StrongMind couples pedagogically sound practices with rigorous content to provide an engaging and meaningful educational experience designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to achieve their full potential as adults. Both the asynchronous and synchronous instruction is designed to promote deeper learning that can be applied across situations to allow students to be successful in education, work, health, and other life contexts. The courses offered by StrongMind include activities, such as project-based learning, that foster the metacognitive and interpersonal competencies students need to become lifelong learners and gain important skills necessary for collaboration and communication. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) researchers recommend using mastery-oriented feedback to increase engagement and motivation to emphasize effort and practice rather than a fixed notion of performance. As students engage with the online portion of the StrongMind curriculum, they receive immediate and specific feedback as they complete practice and assessment activities. Through the use of targeted, response-contingent feedback,

students learn not only if their answer is correct or incorrect, but why. The StrongMind learning platform and courses utilize UDL principles to address variability in learners, reduce barriers, and create a digital learning environment that is usable to as many students as possible. In offering students multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement, StrongMind provides a learning approach that offers flexibility in the ways students access learning material, engage with it, and demonstrate what they know. Tools embedded within the courses also allow instructors the flexibility and control they need to provide students with the individualized support they require to ensure success.

Reading and Math Proficiency

Muskegon Covenant Academy recognizes the immense impact reading and math proficiency have on a student's future success. For instance, students who are not proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade are more likely to experience attendance, behavior, and course completion challenges. These challenges are predictors of grade retention and dropping out in later years. Muskegon Covenant Academy provides both math and reading intervention for students who need additional assistance or need to improve their basic skills. Muskegon Covenant Academy has a goal that, upon graduation, each student will successfully demonstrate 9th grade reading and 7th grade math proficiency. Reaching this goal will help to ensure students have the necessary skills to transition successfully to post-secondary opportunities, career training or the workforce. While reading and math intervention are available to all students at the academy, Muskegon Covenant Academy specifically schedules students for Recovery classes, based on proficiency levels determined through a skills assessment at enrollment, which will provide additional reading and/or math support and intervention.

- ★ MATHia is an adaptive 1-on-1 math learning platform specifically tailored to secondary grades that mirrors a human coach with more complexity and precision than any other math software. Its AI-driven personalization and coaching support ensure that every student gets the targeted path they need to be ready for end-of-course assessments.
- ★ FastForWord is an evidence-based, adaptive reading and language program that delivers 1-2 years gain in 40-60 hours of use for any struggling learner. FastForWord uses a brain-based approach that targets the root causes of reading difficulty to deliver lasting results that make better readers and lifelong learners.

**Online programs for intervention programs subject to change based on technology*

Graduation from Muskegon Covenant Academy

1. Graduation from Muskegon Covenant Academy implies that students have satisfactorily completed an approved course of study, have met the requirements laid forth via the Michigan Merit Curriculum and have passed any examinations and/or other requirements established by the school district.
2. It is the responsibility of the Director of Academic Progress, Supervisor of Academic Progress and School Leader to maintain a record system that will adequately provide the information necessary to assure that the above policy is enforced.
3. Although students may be primarily grouped by age into grades 9-12, the movement of students through the curriculum will be based strictly on their individual progress through the earning of credits.
4. Muskegon Covenant Academy requires 19 credits to graduate. Of those, 18 credits are courses set forth from MDE through completion of the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The remaining 1.0 credit is earned from successful completion of a reading and math proficiency course.

State of Michigan Graduation Requirements

19 Credits are required to earn a Muskegon Covenant Academy Diploma

One credit is the equivalent of two semesters (0.5 credits for each semester)

SUBJECT AREA	DESCRIPTION	PERSONAL CURRICULUM (PC) MODIFICATIONS*
English Language Arts (4 credits)	1 credit in each grade (9 th , 10 th , 11 th , 12 th)	No modification
Mathematics (4 credits)	1 credit in Algebra 1 credit in Geometry 1 credit in Advanced Algebra (Alg.II) 1 credit in a math or math-related course ➤ A math or math-related course is required in the final year of high school	Complete 3.5 math credits Complete a math or math-related course in final 2 years of HS Modify Advanced Algebra credit if: ❖ Complete just ½ credit of Advanced Algebra ❖ Complete a CTE program with same content as Advance Algebra ❖ Complete ½ credit of statistics, functions and data analysis, or technical math
Science (3 credits)	1 credit in Biology 1 credit in Physics or Chemistry 1 credit in any science, computer science or Career & Technical Program (CTE) (regardless of content)	No modification
Social Studies (3 credits)	1 credit in U.S. History 1 credit in World History .5 credit in Government .5 credit in Economics	No modification until 2 credits of Social Studies completed No modification of Civics Exchange 1 credit of social studies (not Civics) for an additional credit in English, math, science, or world language Exchange 1 credit of social studies (not Civics) for a CTE program
Physical Education and Health (1 credit)	.5 credit in Physical Education .5 credit in Health	Exchange ½ credit of Physical Education for additional credit in English, math, science, or world language Exchange ½ credit of Physical Education for a CTE program No modification of Health

Visual, Performing, Applied Arts (1 credit)	1 credit in Visual, Performing, and Applied Arts (VPA)	Exchange 1 credit of VPA for additional credit in English, math, science or world language Exchange 1 credit of VPA for a CTE program
World Language (2 credits)	2 credits in a World Language 1 of the 2 credits may be earned through a CTE Program. 1 of the 2 credits may be earned through an additional VPA credit.	No modification
Online Learning Experience	One experience or multiple experiences incorporated into one	No modification
Reading Proficiency	.5 credit in reading proficiency	Modifications may apply to transfer students coming in during their 12th grade year or students receiving special education or EL services.
Math Proficiency	.5 credit in math proficiency course	Modifications may apply to transfer students coming in during their 12th grade year or students receiving special education or EL services.

*Additional modifications may apply to transfer students who have completed two years of high school.

Class Standing According to Credits Earned in the Core Areas

Class Standing	Grade Level	Credits Earned Range
Freshman	Ninth (9)	0-4.5
Sophomore	Tenth (10)	5.0-9.5
Junior	Eleventh (11)	10-14.5
Senior	Twelfth (12)	1-19

Grading Scale	
A 100 - 94	C 76 - 74
A- 93 - 90	C- 73 - 70
B+ 89 - 87	D+ 69 - 67
B 86 - 84	D 66 - 64
B- 83 - 80	D- 63 - 60
C+ 79 - 77	F 59 & Below

Academic Dishonesty

Students must learn that in order to grow academically, they will be judged on their own work. We expect students to honor other people's work by giving credit in the form of reference and/or footnote for any borrowed words, ideas, or opinions, and by including quotation marks when copied exactly. When working on a team project, credit must be given to each person who contributes.

Students must understand that copying the words, ideas, or opinions of someone else without giving credit to that person in the form of footnotes or references is considered plagiarism. Whether deliberate or accidental, plagiarism is a serious offense. Students must always be responsible for their own work and not engage in any manner of cheating.

These types of academic dishonesty will result in loss of credit and/or failure according to the discretion of the teacher.

Deliberate plagiarism:

- Copying of a phrase, sentence or a longer passage from a source and passing it off as one's own.
- Summarizing or paraphrasing someone else's ideas without acknowledging that the work is not one's own.
- Obtaining a term paper and handing it in as one's own.

Accidental Plagiarism:

- Forgetting to place quotation marks around another writer's words.
- Omitting a source citation for another's idea because one is unaware of the need to acknowledge the idea.

Cheating:

- Obtaining a copy of tests or scoring devices.
- Copying another student's answers during a test.
- Providing another student questions or answers to, or copies of, actual test questions.
- Having or using non-permitted materials during tests.
- Duplicating another student's project or work for submission as one's own work.
- Having someone other than the student prepare the student's homework, paper, project, laboratory report or take-home test.
- Permitting another student to copy one's own homework, paper, project, laboratory report, or take-home test. Representing as one's own work the product of someone else's creativity.

Testing Out Procedure

In compliance with the Michigan School Code, Muskegon Covenant Academy will allow students to “test out” of a subject area for credit. To test out, a student must exhibit mastery of course content by attaining a grade of 80% or better on a comprehensive final examination. Because some end of the year exams do not serve as comprehensive measures of mastery of skill and/or content, the student may also be required to demonstrate mastery through basic assessments used in the class, which may include, but are not limited to, portfolios, performance, papers, projects, and/or presentations.

The following requirements will apply to the testing out procedure:

1. Credit earned will be based on successful mastery of the required assessment and recorded as “CREDIT” (CR).
2. The grade will not be included in the computation of the grade point average.
3. Credit will be accepted as fulfillment of a requirement in a course sequence.
4. Once credit is granted by “testing out”, a student may not receive credit for a lower course in that course sequence.
5. Credit toward fulfillment of graduation requirements will be granted for successful achievement of 80% or better on the final examination and/or completion of additional assessments mentioned above.

It is the discretion of the academy to determine if test out requests are given on specific dates throughout the school year or are completed on an as needed basis. Specific dates for “testing out” will be published in advance. Students may request a course syllabus and course outcomes to prepare for the examination and/or additional assessments.

NCAA eligibility may be affected by choosing the Testing Out option.

Title 1 Schoolwide Programming

Muskegon Covenant Academy receives supplemental Title I federal funding to support students struggling academically. Muskegon Covenant Academy recognizes the importance of parental involvement in the educational process. Parents and students are invaluable partners in our mission to prepare students for high school graduation. We encourage all our parents to participate in activities such as our annual Title I Meet Up, orientation, quarterly conferences, and MiCIP. An Annual Title I Parent Meet Up is held in compliance with ESSA laws at a convenient time, allowing parents to learn about the school’s program and their rights as partners in their child’s learning. Parents will be asked to review requirements and their right to be involved in Title I programs. Parents will be invited to communicate with the Title I Coordinator to provide feedback on specific sections of the Parent Involvement Policy over the course of two weeks following the Annual Parent Meeting. The Title I Coordinator will send a follow up survey after the Annual Title I Parent Meeting. The survey will provide parents an additional space for sharing suggestions in writing.

Special Education

Muskegon Covenant Academy meets the individual needs of students by using specially-designed instruction with a standards-based curriculum. Frequent assessment of student progress is necessary. We deliver special education programming and related services to Muskegon Covenant Academy students with disabilities at no cost to the parent, guardian, or student. Students with disabilities needing special education must receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). These services conform to the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Michigan outlines the legal guidelines for procedures involving programs and services for eligible students from birth to 26 years of age. Child Find is a component of IDEA that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth to 26, who need early intervention or special education services. In addition, Muskegon Covenant Academy makes the assurance that students with disabilities, as well as their parents/guardians, shall be provided with safeguards as required by law, throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process and to provide these

students with a free, appropriate, public education.

Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS) Team

The Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS) team is a committee of school personnel set up by the school to ensure ongoing and effective support for classroom teachers and students. The team provides a forum to discuss students' academic and behavior needs and to generate, initiate and monitor solutions that marshal the resources of the school, the family and the community. This process creates an awareness and understanding of the issues affecting the student.

504 Service Plan

Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria for special education may nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Students are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a documented mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in, or access to, an aspect of the school program.

If you have questions about your students 504 Plan please contact Muskegon Covenant Academy's Supervisor of Academic Progress (SOAP).

English Learners (EL)

Muskegon Covenant Academy will increase English proficiency of English Language Learners (EL) and meet academic achievement standards for grade promotion by providing high quality language instructional programs that are based on scientifically based research and demonstrate the effectiveness of English proficiency and achievement in the academic content area. In compliance with state and federal law, any student identified as English Learner will be identified by Muskegon Covenant Academy and will be supported accordingly. If you qualify for EL services, you are required to take state mandated WIDA testing at a designated testing site. Muskegon Covenant Academy has an EL teacher, students may be required to meet with the teacher weekly.

