



PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024 School Year

The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) is a public charter high school that inspires and engages students through project-based, student-centered instruction immersed in the natural sciences of Maine with a focus on agriculture, forestry, and the environment. MeANS challenges all students to connect with their education in order to grow as individuals, interact with their communities, and lead fulfilling lives.

A MeANS Student:

- ❖ Is inspired by the outdoors, experiential learning, and takes pride in creating real-world projects
- ❖ Is an independent learner that connects their career and college goals to their academic classes
- ❖ Values the culture of our school and seeks to foster strong relationships with peers and faculty

MeANS Values:

Respect

With an emphasis on honoring differences, MeANS encourages students to be compassionate and empathetic. Faculty, staff, and students employ restorative practices for community building and conflict resolution.

Responsibility

Our individualized curriculum builds confidence and empowers students to take ownership of their education. Skills such as self-advocacy and goal setting are developed alongside a commitment to helping others.

Community

MeANS connects with students and families through close relationships with advisors, teachers, and administrators. Students are expected to contribute positively to the school and are encouraged to take advantage of the larger learning context through volunteerism, internships, and college courses.

Teaching & Learning:

At MeANS we live our values of Respect, Responsibility, & Community every day. We are a proficiency-based school, and our academic projects are hands-on, collaborative, and focused on agriculture, forestry & the environment. Learning takes place in our classrooms, on our one-acre farm, our sugar bush, greenhouses, and on regular field trips to local ecological sites across the state of Maine during our seasonal intensives.

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences is guided by the following principles:

- Proficiency-based curriculum to earn diploma (translatable into credits as needed)
- Meeting basic expectations of Common Core Standards and Maine Learning Results
- Student voice, choice, and responsibility
- Experiential learning with an emphasis on sustainability in agriculture, forestry, & environmental sciences
- Real world learning and problem solving
- Authentic formative and summative assessment
- Development of a positive learning community
- Inclusion of family and community members wherever and whenever possible
- Year-round learning occurring anywhere and at any time
- Co-enrollment in courses at Maine Community Colleges and the UMaine System

YOUR EXPERIENCE as a student at MeANS will include:

Participation in Advisory:

Every student at MeANS is assigned an advisor when they begin their journey to graduation. Your advisor will be there to support you every day with academics, community building, and career & college preparation, while communicating with your families every week about your progress. Every semester, you will facilitate Student-Led Conferences for your family and advisors in order to reflect upon your growth and learning and set goals for yourselves for the year ahead. You will meet with your advisory every school day from 7:50-8:00a and on Wednesdays, for extended advisory, from 11:05-12:00p. Through our advisory program you will cover Habits of Mind and Guiding Principles standards required for graduation.

Developing a Personal Learning Plan:

Your Personal Learning Plan is a student directed tool that customizes your learning opportunities, broadens your perspectives and supports attainment of your goals through discovery, exploration and reflection in personal, academic, career and social areas.

Completing Academic Requirements:

Guided by your Personal Learning Plan, (PLP) you will work in areas of academic needs as well as strengths. Your plan will be unique to you and different from other student's plans.

Participation in Community Learning (CL) Days: You are required to participate in 6 CL Days during the year: These will be a combination of Community Service, Career/College exploration days, and at least 1 student choice. You will be responsible for scheduling, completing the form and providing pictures/documentation of your day. This information will be maintained in your PLP, in your advisory. Partnering with local community members, training opportunities, natural resource professionals and colleges, you will have significant opportunities to explore career paths and college choices.

MEANS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Taking part in a learning community which values:

The dignity and worth of each person, hard work, respect and non-judgment, inclusiveness, understanding, compassion, honesty, open-heartedness, democratic decision making, courage and trust.

Project Based Learning:

You will engage in an array of project-based learning opportunities. Project based learning is an instructional approach which engages your interests and motivations. Each project will be designed to answer or solve a problem and generally will reflect the type of learning and work people do every day in the real world. You will have an integrated learning experience through which difficult academic tasks become meaningful and essential in a variety of applications.

Intensives: Each quarter, students participate in a two-week intensive in which they explore a particular aspect of the natural sciences. After venturing out on field trips, conducting independent research, and partnering with local experts, students craft original projects and showcase their learning for families and community members during our seasonal festivals.

Intensives for 23/24

Grade	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
9th	Farming	Survival	Maple Sugaring	Invasive Species
10th	Apples	Forestry	Alternative Energy	Bees
11th	Rivers	Aquaculture	Animal Husbandry	Farm to Table
12th	Oceanography	Ice	Environment	Capstone Project

Courses for 23/24

Year	ELA	Science	Social Studies	Math
9th	English 9	Earth Science	Geography	Algebra 1A or Algebra 1B
10th	English 10	Biology	World History	Algebra 1B or Geometry
11th	English 11	Chemistry	US History	Geometry, Fin. Math, or Alg 2
12th	English 12	Physics	Civ, Gov, & Econ	Financial Math, Algebra II or KVCC



Aug 2023						
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School Hours: T, W, TH	7:50-2:15
F	7:50-12:30

Community Learning (CL):	6
Intensive Days (Bold):	31
Threshold Mondays (T)	9
Total Student Days (S):	175 (176 for New)
In-Service (IS):	10 days
Total Staff Days:	182

Student Led Conferences
Oct. 30 & Nov. 6, May 13 & 20

Intensives
10/3-13, 1/16-26, 3/12-3/22, 6/18-28

Grading Periods and Progress Reports
Quarter One 9/1 – 11/9, 10 weeks, PR: 11/17
Quarter Two 11/14 – 2/16, 11 weeks, PR: 3/1
Quarter Three 2/27 – 5/10, 10 weeks, PR: 5/17
Quarter Four 5/14 – 7/26, 10 weeks, PR: 7/26

Important Dates and First Days

New Family Orientation	Aug 28
New Campus Students	Aug 31
Returning Campus Students*	Sep 1
Threshold Students*	Sep 5
Threshold Graduation	July 19
Campus Senior Banquet	July 25
Campus Graduation	July 26

Rights and Responsibilities as a Student Include:

STUDENT RIGHTS

1. To feel safe in the school environment.
2. To take full advantage of learning opportunities and guide your course of study.
3. To work in an environment free from disruptions and unhealthy substances.
4. To respectfully express your opinions, ideas, thoughts, and concerns.
5. To expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from all members of the community.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To be caring, honest and work hard.
2. To do your best to learn.
3. To respect school rules, regulations, policies and state laws.
4. To treat all members of the community with full respect, fairness, and courtesy.
5. To build, maintain and when necessary, repair healthy relationships with other members of our learning community.
6. To show up on time and take part in all learning activities.

EXPECTATIONS:

Demonstrate our values of respect, responsibility, and community by taking care of yourself, each other, and this place we share.

At MeANS, we do not discriminate based on disability. We do not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, our program or activities (34 Code of Federal Regulations 104.8.)

Our expectations are that all community members of MeANS demonstrate values of respect when interacting with every person at MeANS whether student, parent, staff or visitors.

ATTENDANCE:

As a school built on relationships, we are committed to helping each student develop responsible habits of punctuality, attendance, communication, and follow through. Your participation in classroom activities is a vital part of your education and impacts the learning experience of our entire school community. The project-based nature of the curriculum we offer at MeANS provides learning opportunities that are collaborative and hands-on, and therefore cannot be replicated in a virtual space or through independent study.

Because of this, students will have four allowable absences each quarter. If you exceed that number, you will be required to attend a Monday remediation session for each day over and above the allowable absences listed below. Additionally, the Attendance Team will assess the root causes of the absenteeism and work with you and your family to implement strategies to address the issues moving forward.

Students in Threshold will complete a daily learning log and check in daily with their teacher/advisor.

Reporting Windows for Absences

Quarter 1: September 1st → November 9th (44 days) **Quarter 2:** November 14th → February 16th (48 days) **Quarter 3:** February 27th → May 10th (40 days) **Quarter 4:** May 14th → July 26th (42 days)

Truancy

Maine compulsory education laws require persons 6 years of age or older and under 17 years of age, to attend school unless they have graduated. Students are considered truant if they have 7 consecutive, unexcused absences from school or 10 cumulative unexcused absences during the school year. As a public high school, we are required to inform the Maine Department of Education once a student has been identified as truant.

Chronic Absenteeism

The Department of Education defines Chronic Absenteeism as when a student misses 10% or more of the days that they are enrolled in school. All absences (both excused and unexcused) count towards this percentage and a student is considered absent if they miss more than 50% of the school day.

Excusable Absences

There are, however, acceptable reasons for why a student may need to miss school that include:

- Personal illness: phone call required / 2+ consecutive absences require a doctor's note
- Appointment with a health professional that must be made during the school day (note provided by health care provider required)
- Observance of a recognized religious holiday: phone call required
- Family emergency: phone call required
- Homelessness
- A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose which has been pre-approved at least 2 weeks in advance by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction: [Independent Study Contract](#) must be completed and submitted 3 days prior to absence.

Tardiness

Students who arrive at school after 7:50 a.m. must sign in at the front office. If you are late due to one of the reasons listed above, the tardiness will be excused. If the tardiness is unexcused, you will receive a verbal warning and your parent will receive a phone call. Once the student is tardy 3 times, a parent will be contacted to address the chronic tardiness. If you know you are going to arrive late, please call the office at 207-238-4100 as soon as possible.

Early Dismissal

For reasons of safety and security, early dismissals require a phone call, or a note written by the legal guardian. Students must sign out in the main office prior to leaving school grounds. The absence will be excused if it meets one of the criteria established above. Please keep in mind that if a student misses 50% of the day or more, it will count toward the total number of absences.

Attendance Mailbox

If you will be absent or tardy, please have your parent/guardian contact the school at [207 - 238 - 4100](tel:207-238-4100) and leave a detailed message day or night. For an absence to be excused, it must meet one of the criteria established above, with the appropriate form of communication provided. Parents will receive automated correspondence regarding any absences noted for that day.

Individual Attendance Goals

Created quarters 2, 3, and 4 every year for each student by advisory.

BEHAVIOR:

Behavior that does not meet the expectations explained above in “Student Responsibilities” will be addressed through Restorative Practices including a Natural and Logical Consequences approach.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:

A Culture of Care in Schools is characterized by non-dominating relationships, where adults and children feel a sense of belonging and connectedness, have a culturally safe place for their voices to be heard, and are able to be self-determining. – Dr. Tom Cavanagh

At the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, we believe that all our students want to do well. Our approach to discipline is guided by the definition, which means *to teach*. An essential principle to this approach is that good relationships are central to learning, growth and a healthy school. In order to develop good relationships among all members of the learning community we will focus on building, maintaining and when necessary, repairing those relationships. Repairing these relationships may include community circles, peer mediations, problem-solving circles, resolution circles and restorative conferences.

Behavior that is repeated or unresponsive to a restorative approach will be addressed through referral to the Dean of Students, engagement cards, referral for counseling or assessment, enrichment (required time after school spent productively); community service, reduction in scheduled time at school until problem behavior is reduced or eliminated, or other approaches that hold promise for reducing the problem behavior.

Restorative practices will include conversations, circles, restorative conferences (tier meetings) that may include teachers, peers, administration and parents. Our goal is for all community members to recognize how our attitude and behaviors impact others. It is through these practices that we develop a culture of care in our school that ultimately provides the best learning environment for all community members.

Students are recognized for positive contributions to the community in a variety of ways. The benefits of positive contributions to the community include receiving “Golden Tickets”, student recognition through the school events, the option to participate in major school trips, first choice in special classes that are offered quarterly, and other incentives.

OVERVIEW OF POLICY AGAINST BULLYING OR HARASSMENT

Bullying, harassment (based on race, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability), and retaliation for reporting incidents of transgressions are prohibited. Because bullying and harassment are forms of disrespectful and unkind behavior that do not meet the expectations in this community, students exhibiting such behavior will be addressed as required by the seriousness of the incident. You have the right to feel valued and respected by students and staff while attending MeANS. You may make a complaint about bullying, harassment or any other forms of disrespect to any adult or pick up an anonymous reporting form from the student support center or office.

RATIONALE:

Bullying and harassment are against the law. When people bully or harass other people our learning community is damaged. Some may become uncomfortable or fearful and detach themselves from the community. While some become targets and others victimizers, all of us are affected because we are put in the position of speaking up or being silent. Bystanders are put in the position of being on one “side” or the other. Our challenge is to deal with these threats to our community in a way that helps repair the damage that has been done and prevents – as much as is possible – this behavior from repeating itself.

PROCESS:

When faculty witness bullying or harassment or a student or parent makes allegations of such behavior, the people directly involved will be required to have individual conferences with the faculty member, and the Assistant Head of School. Bullying and harassment are reportable to the Dept of Education and will be part of your permanent educational record.

Possible resolutions for first instances may include:

Restorative conferencing with students involved, individual contracts, counseling, and formal apologies.

Restorative Project

Reading material on kinds of harassment including but not limited to sexist, racist, homophobic

Restorative circle with parents

Possible resolutions for the second instance must include:

Restorative conferencing with parents and students (preferably **both** target and victimizer’s parents)

Presentation to risk review committee

May include any of the resolutions for first instances

Possible resolution for third instance must include:

Meeting of student (victimizer) and parents with risk review committee

Intervention and/or additional consequences as determined by the committee

May include any of the above resolutions for the first or second instances

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLENCE OR DRUGS:

At the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences physical violence and illegal substances are prohibited. Physical violence or dealing drugs can result in traditional long-term suspension and an expulsion hearing as well as the use of our restorative process. Because our community values teach students to show respect and create a safe community for all students no matter what their history, we do not tolerate physical violence.

MEANS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

DRESS CODE:

It is important to remember that much of your learning will take place in the real world. You will be outside on our campus, in all seasons and weather. This means you should dress accordingly. You will have space in your advisory to store boots, hats/gloves, sweatshirt, for your outside adventures! Students must wear clothing including both a shirt with pants or skirt, or the equivalent (for example dresses, leggings, or shorts) and shoes. Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides (under the arms). Clothing must cover undergarments (waistbands and straps excluded). Fabric covering breasts, genitals and buttocks must be opaque. Hats and other headwear must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible to school staff. Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled classroom activities including physical education, science labs, wood shop, and other activities where unique hazards exist. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as safety gear. Attire or grooming depicting or advocating violence, criminal activity, use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or hate speech are prohibited.

LANGUAGE CODE:

The use of profanity and intolerant language at the school, on the bus or on field trips is inappropriate, especially if used to disrespect another member of our learning community. Where necessary, such language will be addressed through our disciplinary process.

It is important to remember while in school, on campus, on field trips you are representing yourself and your families, as well as the school. Upholding our values of Respect, Responsibility and Community are always our priority.

CELL PHONES:

During the 2023-24 school year, MeANS students will be required to place their cell phones in a classroom "shoe bag" at the beginning of each class rotation period. Teachers will allow students to access their phones during breaks as necessary. Cell phone usage during electives and field trips will be at the discretion of the individual teachers and trip leaders.

If students refuse to follow this expectation, they will not be allowed to bring their phone to school

We expect the full engagement of our students and have found cell phones to be a distraction to the teaching and learning environment.

Music can be accessed through laptops. Please plan accordingly to transfer music from phone to laptop (icloud or other means of transferring music).

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS or DELAYS:

MeANS announces school cancellations and delays on our website, Facebook, WCSH channel 6, WABI, and other local TV stations for inclement weather.

VEHICLES:

Campus students who have completed a Vehicle Parking Permission agreement with their parents, and provided a copy of their license, insurance card and registration may park in the parking lot. They will be assigned a parking pass by Paula Taylor/Transportation Coordinator. This pass must be displayed on the rear-view mirror when parked on campus. Students must leave the car parked for the entire school day, unless parents have given permission to allow the student to leave for lunch. Student passengers must have **written parental permission**. A copy of license, insurance card and registration must be kept up to date in the office file. This is a privilege that may be revoked. Vehicles, while on school property, can be searched and prohibited items can be confiscated and turned over to parents or police as deemed necessary by school administrators.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE:

Authorized school personnel may conduct a reasonable search of a student, their backpack, or automobile on school premises or on a school-sponsored trip if they have a reasonable belief that a student is in possession of an item that is not allowed on campus, is illegal or a violation of state law. Illegal items including those that school authorities deemed to be a threat to the safety or security of students or others will be seized. Such items include, but are not limited to guns, knives, other dangerous weapons, lighters, matches, cigarettes, vape pens/paraphernalia, tobacco products, drugs/alcohol and drug paraphernalia.

“You will find something more in woods than in books. Trees and stones will teach you that which you can never learn from masters.” St. Bernard

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM:

The meals for MeANS are contracted through the Good Will-Hinckley Café. **School meals will be available to students at no charge this year, regardless of household income.** MeANS will be participating as a CEP school. The CEP allows schools that predominantly serve low-income children to offer free, nutritious school meals to all students through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The CEP uses information from other programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance Program for Needy Families (TANF) instead of traditional paper applications. No families will have to fill out a traditional Free/Reduced Meal form for school year 2024.

A breakfast program is available for all students. Breakfast is provided in the lobby of MeANS where students are called by floors. Lunch is provided across the campus at the Prescott Cafeteria. Students and staff walk to the café daily. The schedule provides for a 30-minute lunch period. A hot entrée as well as a salad bar and sandwich bar options are available. Students are responsible for returning their trays, cleaning their tables, and returning their chairs prior to leaving. Outside seating is available and students are responsible for cleaning the outside eating area.

Healthy meals are offered every school day. Meals meet nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If a child has a disability, as determined by a licensed medical authority, and the disability prevents the child from eating the regular school meal, substitutions may be made as prescribed by a licensed medical authority. If a substitution is needed, there will be no extra charge for the meal. Please note, however, that the school is not required to make a substitution, unless it meets the definition of disability and is supported by a complete medical statement form signed by the licensed medical authority.

We encourage all families to make sure their students are taking advantage of the free meals being offered daily. If you have any questions regarding the food program at MeANS please reach out to Good Will-Hinckley Kitchen Manager Katrina Guptill at (207) 238-4005 or kguptill@gwh.org.

While you will not be asked to fill out the standard Free/Reduced meal application we will be asking you to fill out an Economic Status Form to aid in applying for funding for Title I programs, funding and resources for after-school programs, funding provided to schools from the Maine State Legislature for essential programs and services at school, funding for special education, teacher loan forgiveness, and much, *much* more! This will be information collected and held by the school not by food service.

Federal and state governments use the aggregate data from the application to distribute education funding to schools in the state of Maine and across the county. In other words, **if there is no data to inform the needs of the community, it could result in less education funding for MeANS and for Maine.**

MEDICATION:

School personnel receive annual training as “unlicensed school personnel” to administer prescribed medications and authorized over-the-counter medicine. Medications, both prescription and nonprescription, can only be administered with parental written permission. The parent/guardian may request that medication

be administered to the student during the school day by completing the **Medication Permission Form** available from the school’s office. The written request must include an acknowledgement and agreement that unlicensed personnel may administer the medication as per the health care provider’s instructions. In addition, the request shall indicate that information regarding the student’s medication may be shared with appropriate school personnel. Parents may provide the reason (diagnosis) requiring the administration of medication.

All **parental requests must be accompanied by a written order from the student’s health care provider** substantiating the fact that the administration of a particular medication during the school day is necessary for the student’s health and attendance in school. Such order must include:

- a. The student’s name,
- b. The name of the medication,
- c. The dose,
- d. The route of administration (e.g., by mouth)
- e. Time interval for administration (e.g. before meals, every 4 hours)
- f. Any special instructions
- g. The name of the prescribing health care provider

All medications need to be delivered to the school’s office. At no time shall a student have medication in his/her possession in school unless the physician states an inhaler or Epi-pen needs to be with the student at all times. **All medication brought to school must be in the original container labeled by a pharmacist or physician.** All medications will be sent home at the end of the school year. Any medication left at school will be disposed of.

STUDENT SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF ASTHMA INHALERS AND EPINEPHRINE PENS: Students with allergies or asthma may be authorized by the school nurse to possess and self-administer emergency medication from an epinephrine pen (EpiPen) or asthma inhaler during the school day, during field trips and school-sponsored events, or while on a school bus. The student shall be authorized to possess and self-administer medication from an epinephrine pen or asthma inhaler if the following conditions have been met.

- The parent- (or student, if 18 years of age or older) must request in writing authorization of the student to self-administer medication from an epinephrine pen or asthma inhaler.
- The student must have the prior written approval of his/her primary health care provider, specifying the name and dosage of the medication, frequency with which it may be administered, and the circumstances that may warrant its use.
- The student’s parent/guardian should submit written verification to the school from the primary care provider confirming that the student has the knowledge and the skills to safely possess and use an epinephrine pen or asthma inhaler.
 - The school nurse shall evaluate the student’s technique to ensure proper and effective use of an epinephrine pen or asthma inhaler.

COMPUTER POLICY AND AGREEMENT:

Wise Use:

Technology must be used wisely, or it can be harmful to self, others and the community. Therefore, we expect that all technology including cell phones and computers will be used wisely. This means that any use that is harmful to self, others or the community will not be acceptable and subject to the restorative disciplinary process.

Purpose of the Instructional Network:

It is the policy of MeANS to include the use of computers as a necessary component of the educational program. The ability to use a computer wisely is a skill that must be taught to students to ensure their success in the 21st century. Therefore, MeANS students are given the right and privilege to use computers to fulfill educational requirements and to maintain important social connections.

One component of the Instructional Network is student access to the Internet. MeANS views the Internet as a resource provided for all students to enhance their education and social connectivity. Parents and/or guardians must keep in mind, however, that there are areas on the Internet that contain material they may view as inappropriate (such as pornography, vulgar jokes, violent and racist sites, statements of belief that they may consider immoral, etc.). While we have a site blockage system in place and teachers will supervise student use of the Internet, it is impossible to monitor a student's use every minute in a classroom situation. There will be times, no matter how diligent a teacher may be, when students may encounter objectionable material.

Rights and Responsibilities of Network/Internet Users:

Everyone who uses the Instructional Network and the Internet must read, understand, and sign the Internet use policy agreement.

All students will be granted full access to the Instructional Network and the Internet after signing the appropriate form. Access rights to the Internet will be terminated upon parental request.

The computers, file servers, and cabling that make up the Instructional Network are school property.

Therefore, any material stored on the computers or file servers may be viewed at any time by teachers, network administrators, or school administrators. Students should not save materials on the Network that they do not want others to view.

All users of the Instructional Network and the Internet have the right to a safe, non-threatening learning community. Any user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications should report them to a teacher, network administrator, or school administrator.

Users will select a password to ensure the security of their workplace on the Network. Users will have the ability to change their password as often as they like and should do so as soon as they suspect someone else has learned it. Users should never divulge their password to anyone else.

Since each user's work area is protected by a password known only to the user, everyone accessing the Network is personally responsible for any inappropriate materials found in his/her computer.

MEANS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Unwise use of the Network/Internet is subject to restorative disciplinary procedures. Examples of such inappropriate uses include, but are not limited to:

Creating harm to self, others or the community by –

- sending or displaying offensive materials or pictures,
- using obscene language,
- harassing, insulting, threatening, or attacking others,
- damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks,
- using another's password,
- trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- attempting to gain access to areas on the network where privileges have not been granted.

Any unwise use of the Network/Internet may result in withdrawal of the privilege of use or in restricted use.

Personally Owned Technology Equipment (Computers, tablets):

Students will conditionally be permitted to have supervised access to the internet at designated times using their own technology. It is not practical for MeANS to provide support to students regarding their own equipment. It is the owner's responsibility to handle personal equipment problems.

Infinite Campus/Empower

Campus student demographics, attendance, standards progress are all managed within our Infinite Campus SIS. Threshold students utilize Empower SIS for standard progress. Your progress/report cards will be sent to your Parent/Guardian a week after the quarter ends. It is important that you communicate any changes with your address, contact information to the Office Manager.

EMERGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Drills will be conducted in accordance with the legal requirements. Students must cooperate and remain silent while waiting for instructions during drills and emergencies.

If a full site evacuation is necessary, parents will be notified by email and phone calls of reunification pick up points. MeANS has comprehensive plans and policies related to emergencies or threats as required by law. Making a bomb threat is a crime under Maine law. According to policy EBCC, any student suspected of making a bomb threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school. This may include suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion. The making of a bomb threat will be considered deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9) and will be grounds for expulsion if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school.

SCHOOL RECORDS:

If you desire to discuss your school record, please make an appointment with the office. MeANS subscribes to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as approved by the U.S. 93rd Congress (PL-93-380).

Parent Information

Parent Annual Notice for Students Records:

Pupil records are collected and maintained to promote the instructions, guidance, and educational progress of the pupil and for legitimate educational research. Parents of eligible students (age 18 years or older) are entitled to certain rights and protection under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A complete copy of the student record policy may be obtained by contacting the building principal. However, the following items outline your rights.

The parent or eligible student has a right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Request the amendment of the student's educational records;
3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent allowed in accordance with 34 CFR, Section 99;
4. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education; and
5. Obtain a copy of the student records policy by contacting the building principal or searching the web site.

The three types of student records maintained by the school include:

- Academic information such as grades, progress reports, student work samples, achievement test data
- Statistical information including aptitude scores, mental ability, permanent school health records
- Directory information on students, such as names, ages, addresses, telephone number, grade, field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, and sports and awards received.

All directory information may be made public without notice, unless the school is notified in writing by July 1 for the upcoming school year or within 30 days after enrollment, whichever is later, that such information is to be withheld. Information from academic and statistical records will not be released to persons other than authorized school personnel without prior written consent. MeANS forwards educational records to other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

McKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION:

The Maine Department of Education and Maine schools follow the provisions of the federal [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#), which aims to minimize the educational disruptions experienced by homeless students <http://www.maine.gov/doe/homeless/index.html#contact>. Our Assistant Head of School is the Homeless Liaison, if you have questions about these rights.

See Dispute Resolution Procedures for Homeless Students and Families at the bottom of the page on our Parent/Student Site with Resources for Homelessness <https://sites.google.com/a/gwh.org/meanscommunity/home/need-help/shelters>

WORK PERMITS:

Federal and State Labor Laws regulating when and where a minor may work are quite extensive. Students who are eligible, may secure a work permit form through the Asst. Head of School. When applying for a permit, each student should have a birth certificate, should know the company for which he/she is going to work and the job in which he/she is going to be engaged. Without this information, no work permit may be issued.

TESTING POLICY:

Since we receive federal funds for education programs that are part of ESEA, we are required to report testing data. The law requires that all States adopt challenging academic standards and tests based on those standards. There must be at least three levels of scores for students who take these tests. This includes tests in math, reading, language arts and science and any other subject chosen by the state. States are required to develop English language proficiency tests for students who are English learners. Proficiency in a language is a measure of a person's ability to understand and communicate in that language or in a person's preferred mode of communication. Furthermore, states must develop alternate tests for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A school district may also request state approval to use a locally selected test for high school students that is different than the state test.

These academic tests provide important information to help teachers, schools, districts and states identify students' strengths and weaknesses. Test results and other information are used to improve academic and language instruction for students. These tests are also used to identify schools that may be in need of extra support to improve students' achievement. It is the goal of the district to have all students participate in state and local testing.

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences is required through the Maine Charter School Commission and Maine Law to have all students take the Maine Department of Education's selected SAT and MEA Science tests. We also must assess students using the NWEA tests twice a year (fall and spring).

We work hard to help students directly benefit from these tests by using the individual scores for each student as additional evidence toward applicable learning standards or targets required for graduation.

SCHOOL REPORT CARDS:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all states to provide an annual report card to inform stakeholders about the progress of students and schools on indicators of student achievement, graduation rates, status of ESEA accountability and information on fully certified teachers – information that is related to student success. You may contact our Assistant Head of School for our ESEA Report Cards.

TITLE 1 SERVICES:

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences uses the Title 1 funds it receives toward salaries for Ed Tech IIIs who support small group instruction and intervention services for students who qualify for Title 1 services in math or reading by demonstrating a performance level on assessments or coursework that shows the student is significantly behind typical grade level expectations. Parents are welcome to contact the Head of School at any time by phone 238-4100 or email with suggestions for goals for the Title 1 Program or use of funding for the following year. Title 1 topics are also a regular topic in our parent orientation meetings, parent advisory group meetings, and other family events, so please attend and ask questions or make suggestions at any of those events.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

A parent/legal guardian who has a complaint may call or submit in writing to the Head of School as soon as possible. The Head of School/designee shall investigate the complaint and provide written findings to the parent/legal guardian within twenty (20) business days, if practicable. These complaint procedures apply to all issues, including Title 1 service appeals.

A parent/legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the result of the local complaint process may file a complaint with the Chair of the MeANS Board of Directors. The Board Chair will review the results of the local complaint process and report back to the parent/guardian with next steps. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied with the result may contact the Maine Charter School Commission. The Maine Charter School Commission may initiate its own investigation at its sole discretion. The Commission shall issue a written report with specific findings to the parent/legal guardian and the school within 60 calendar days of receiving the complaint.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS:

Our enrollment procedures follow State Statute Title 20-A Section 2404 and Rules of Chapter 140.

If students currently enrolled in MeANS, the **Letter of Intent to Re-enroll** must be received by 3:30 on the day preceding the lottery (or April 1st if no lottery is needed) annually to secure the spot for the next school year. **Should this deadline not be met**, then the student wishing to return **loses the priority status** typically offered to returning students and will be placed on the waitlist in the order determined by lottery or date and time stamp ordered with all intent to enroll forms. In addition, MeANS will send a letter to the school district in which the student resides informing them that the student has not re-enrolled at MeANS.

No new students shall be enrolled on campus after the last school day in September for that academic year.

The procedures for admission will occur each year and students on the waiting list who are interested in enrolling in any subsequent year must submit a new Letter of Intent and participate in a lottery, if a lottery is necessary in subsequent years.

Student admissions priorities are determined in the following order:

1. Students enrolled in MeANS in a school year immediately preceding any lottery who have returned their intent to re-enroll form before the lottery date (or April 1 if no lottery is needed).
2. Siblings of students already enrolled in MeANS or selected in the lottery shall have an enrollment preference if there is capacity at that programming level.
3. Children of governing board members and employees may have an enrollment preference if there is capacity at that programming level, provided that they constitute no more than 10% of the school's total student population.

Faculty

Our school receives federal funds from programs that are part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended (2015). Throughout the school year, we will continue to provide you and your parent with important information about this law and your education. Based on current education law, teachers must have earned State certification and licensure. State certification and licensure is the training required to be a teacher.

You have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your (child's) teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). We will provide you with the following as soon as possible after the request has been made:

- a. If the teacher has met state certification and licensing requirements for grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction;
- b. If state certification and licensing requirements have been waived (is not being required at this time) for the teacher under emergency or other temporary status;
- c. If the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline for which they are certified or licensed; d. If the teacher has met State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements. These requirements apply to the professional discipline in which the teacher is working and may include providing English language instruction to English learners, special education or related services to students with disabilities, or both; and
- e. If your child is receiving Title 1 or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

Our faculty is committed to helping you develop the social, academic and critical thinking needed to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." Emerson

MEANS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

<u>MeANS Faculty</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Position</u>
Carrier, Kasey	kcarrier@maineacademy.org	238-4123	M203	9/10 Math Teacher
Chapman, Zeke	zchapman@maineacademy.org	238-4120	M003	Ed Tech I
Chase, Jeffry	jchase@maineacademy.org	238-4120	M002	Agricultural Specialist
Coleman, Evan	ecoleman@maineacademy.org	238-4110	A202	Curriculum Coordinator
Dennison, Becky	rdennison@maineacademy.org	238-4131	M004	Dean of Threshold
Fanjoy, Sean	sfanjoy@maineacademy.org	238-4103	A204	Special Education Math Teacher
Fortin, Kelsi	kfortin@maineacademy.org	238-4121	M103	9/10 Social Studies Teacher
Getchell, Sean	sgetchell@maineacademy.org	238-4125	M005	Custodian
Gudde, Elise	egudde@maineacademy.org	238-4116	A101	9/10 Science Teacher
Guptill, Katrina	kguptill@maineacademy.org	238-4005	Cafeteria	Prescott Food Service
Hagner, Thad	thagner@maineacademy.org	238-4100	Greenhouse	Americorp Agriculture Assistant
Henyan, Patrick	phenyan@maineacademy.org	238-4106	Office	Assistant Head of School
Hersey, Sonja	shersey@maineacademy.org	238-4108	A203	Special Education Ed. Tech III
Hilmer, Grace	ghilmer@maineacademy.org	238-4114	A104	School Social Worker
Hyde, Ashley	ahyde@maineacademy.org	238-4112	Office	Business Manager
Lee, Jill	jlee@maineacademy.org	238-4122	M201	11/12 Math Teacher
Littlefield, Mary	MLittlefield@maineacademy.org	238-4104	A201	Special Education ELA Teacher
Newberg, Matthew	mnewberg@maineacademy.org	238-4102	A104	Head of School
Parrinello, Frank	fparrinello@maineacademy.org	238-4117	M204	11/12 ELA Teacher
Poindexter, Jim	jpoindexter@maineacademy.org	238-4119	M202	9/10 ELA Teacher
Russel, Vincent	vrussell@maineacademy.org	238-4119	M104	11/12 Social Studies Teacher
Ryan, Joyce	JRyan@maineacademy.org	238-4110	Office	Office Manager
Schaedle, Luke	lschaedle@maineacademy.org	238-4011	Visitor Ctr.	Technology/Server
Smith, Rand	rsmith@maineacademy.org	238-4113	M102	11/12 Science Teacher
Taylor, Paula	ptaylor@maineacademy.org	238-4105	M002	Transportation Coordinator

Gwen

THRESHOLD

Mahlon Bickford	mbickford@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
Caleb Fletcher	cletcher@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
January Hapworth	jhapworth@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
Katie Hewitt	khewitt@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
Erica O'Toole	eotoole@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
Emanuel Pariser	epariser@maineacademy.org	School/Program Consultant
Ana Rothschild	jrothschild@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor
Karen Schott	kschott@maineacademy.org	Threshold Instructor

MEANS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Please Sign and Return this Page

This handbook is a summary of the school’s rules and expectations and is not a comprehensive statement of school procedures/practices.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the MeANS Student Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for reading, understanding and following the rules and expectations. I understand the consequences for failing to do so and the schools use of Restorative Practices. I understand that this handbook may be amended during the year without notice. This handbook is the latest version and will be available on the district website and is applicable to all students upon the implementation of any change. The administration will notify all parents and students in writing, where possible, of any changes to the handbook as soon as is practical.

Print Student’s Name: _____

Signature of Student/Date

Signature of Parent/Date