



3662 Poinsettia Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508
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New Branches Charter Academy 2024-2025 Family & Student Handbook & Code of Student Conduct *Positive Discipline Support Plan*

“A Partnership in Responsibility”

New Branches Charter Academy
Serving Grades K thru 8
3662 Poinsettia Avenue SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
Phone: 616-243-6221
Fax: 616-243-0305
Website: www.newbranches.org

Revised August 2024

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1 2024-25 School Calendar

New Branches Charter Academy | 2024-2025 CALENDAR

| AUGUST '24 | | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

14-15 New Teacher training
19-26 Staff PD
27 School starts
27 Trimester 1 begins
30 No School-Labor Day

| FEBRUARY '25 | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | |

3 Re-enrollment period begins
7 Early release @ 12:10
14-17 No school-midwinter break
21 Early release @ 12:10
28 Early release @ 12:10

| SEPTEMBER '24 | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

2 Labor Day-No school
6 Early release @ 12:10
9 GSRP begins
13 Early release @ 12:10
20 Early release @ 12:10
27 Early release @ 12:10

| MARCH '25 | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

3 Re-enrollment ends
7 Early release @ 12:10
7 Trimester 2 ends
10 Trimester 3 begins
14 No School PD Day
17 Open enrollment begins
21 Early release @ 12:10
28 Early release @ 12:10

| OCTOBER '24 | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

3 Family Night
4 No School-PD Day
7-18 Fall conferences
11 Early release @ 12:10
18 Early release @ 12:10
25 Early release @ 12:10

| APRIL '25 | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

4-11 No School-Spring Break
18 Early release @ 12:10
18 Open enrollment ends
25 Early release @ 12:10

| NOVEMBER '24 | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

1 No school-PD Day
8 Early release @ 12:10
15 Early release @ 12:10
22 Early release @ 12:10
25-26 No GSRP
26 Trimester 1 ends
27-29 No school - Thanksgiving break

| MAY '25 | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

2 Early release @ 12:10
7 Enrollment lottery date
9 Early release @ 12:10
16 Early release @ 12:10
23 Early release @ 12:10
26 No school - Memorial Day
29 Last day GSRP
30 Early release @ 12:10

| DECEMBER '24 | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

2 Trimester 2 begins
6 Early release @ 12:10
13 Early release @ 12:10
20 Early release @ 12:10
23-31 No school-Holiday Break

| JUNE '25 | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

6 Early release @ 12:10
12 Last day of school
12 Trimester 3 ends

| JANUARY '25 | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

1-3 No school-Holiday Break
10 Early release @ 12:10
17 Early release @ 12:10
20 No school-MLK Day
24 Early release @ 12:10
31 Early release @ 12:10

School hours: 8:10-3:10 Mon-Thurs, 8:10-12:10 Friday
Before School Care hours: 6:30-8:10
After School Care hours: 3:10-6:00

180 days
1,115.16 instructional hours

2 School Hours and Attendance Calls

The regular daily school schedule **begins at 8:10 AM and ends at 3:10 PM**. Please call our attendance line to report absences by 8:30AM: 616-243-6221 Option 1.

Transitional Kindergarten through eighth grade classrooms are open at 8:00 AM for all students. Students arriving in the classroom after 8:10 AM will be considered tardy. Class activities begin promptly at 8:10 AM. Students may not arrive at school prior to 8:00 AM unless registered and pre-paid for childcare. Students will go directly to the classroom.

3 School Closing Announcements

Notice of school cancellation is given by announcements on several radio and television stations. We also will contact families, by phone, through our automated School Messenger family contact program. Please monitor these stations for closing information. **Television Stations: WZZM, WOODTV8**

4 Academy Vision Statement

New Branches Charter Academy, in partnership with educators, students, families and community stakeholders, closes the achievement gap and transforms the human culture by developing problem solvers and life-long learners who are fully prepared for high school, college, global economy careers, and world change.

5 Academy Mission Statement

New Branches Charter Academy will provide a positive learning environment, along with a rigorous, academic and cultural program where our children learn to become healthy, responsible citizens, life-long learners, and world leaders.

6 Academy Core Values

Community—We strive to create a safe environment that fosters inclusiveness and belonging by students, parents, staff, and community stakeholders.

Perseverance—We always strive to push ourselves and our students to their fullest potential.

Responsibility—Students, parents and staff are respectful to each other. Students learn to understand their responsibilities and take initiative to act upon them in their local, national and world communities.

Diversity— We embrace and value working with families with rich cultural and diverse backgrounds. We recognize that immersion in a variety of cultures will prime our students to work and live in a global economy. We celebrate and honor all the perspectives and aspects of every culture and background that creates the fabric of our school culture.

Teamwork—We provide a respectful process for open communication, collaboration and the opportunity for everyone to realize their value in our school community.

Communication—We practice healthy, open and candid dialogue between all members of our school community. Healthy dialogue encourages necessary conversations and respects all parties.

Stewardship—We ensure that our teaching and operational principles and practices are morally sound, ethical, transparent, respectful, and honest.

7 Academy Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing body for the Academy. The Academy’s Authorizer Central Michigan University appoints our board members. Meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of each month at 6:00 PM at the Academy. Special meetings are scheduled when needed. All Board meeting notices are posted at the main entrance of the Academy and are open to the public.

The Academy Board contracts with Choice Schools Associates, LLC for management and employment services.

7.1 Academy Board of Directors

Eric Thomas-Ferrell, President

Angie Shadix, Member

Jeff VanDyke, Director

Josiah Roggenback, Director

7.2 School Administration

Terry Larkin, Principal

teresalarkin@choiceschools.com

616-243-6221 Ext.344

Tanner Maten, Assistant Principal

tannermaten@choiceschools.com

616-243-6221 Ext.322

7.3 Title IX Coordinator

Terry Larkin, Principal

teresalarkin@choiceschools.com

616-243-6221 Ext.344

7.4 Management Company

Choice Schools Associates, LLC

5251 Clyde Park Avenue Southwest

Wyoming, MI 49509

Phone: 616-785-8440

Fax: 616-785-8455

Ali DuBois

Area Superintendent

8 Educational Program

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) Preschool Program

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a preschool program funded by the state for four-year-old children. In order to enroll in the program each child must be at least 4 but not yet 5 years old by September 1st of this year, or be at least 4 but not yet 5 years old between September 2nd to December 1st of this year with a signed waiver. Families must provide their yearly income to determine qualifications and if the family is admitted into the GSRP program.

GSRP Program Philosophy:

GSRP is designed for children to have freedom to learn and play at his/her speed. A variety of educational and developmental activities will be available to the children as well as outdoor and indoor play time to promote physical development. All of these activities are to supplement a child's development and to promote success in experiencing the joys of learning.

GSRP Curriculum:

Connect4Learning (C4L) is a research-based curriculum comprising six units and 32 weeks of learning centers and lessons. It aims to synthesize research based approaches in four domains of learning: mathematics, science, literacy, and social-emotional development.

Connect4Learning uses a project-based approach, in which children work toward a larger goal, such as playing a coral-reef scavenger hunt or converting their classroom into a museum throughout a curriculum unit. Each lesson can be tailored to fit the schedule and requirements of any classroom setting. Observation opportunities and individualized instruction strategies are built into the curriculum.

Teachers regularly observe and record children's behavior, experiences and interests. Based on these careful observations, teachers are able to plan activities that will promote children's growth and development. They also use these notes in parent meetings, conferences, and home visits to help parents better understand their children's development.

8.1 Philosophy and Method

Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

Transitional Kindergarten acts as a bridge between preschool and Kindergarten and is designed to provide our youngest learners, or students who need more time developmentally, with the pivotal skills and experiences needed for success in Kindergarten.

Entering Kindergarten at an older age is an important early predictor for student success. Some studies indicate that students who are older when they enter Kindergarten demonstrate a significant boost in academic achievement, self-confidence, and healthful attitudes about school and learning (RAND, 2007).

Transitional Kindergarten is an option for younger children, who are old enough for kindergarten, to gain social and academic experience. The program, like Kindergarten, isn't mandatory but children must have their 5th birthday by September 1 of this year, or have their 5th birthday between September 2nd to December 1st of this year with a signed waiver to be eligible.

Students who enter TK traditionally are promoted to Kindergarten the next year, thus receiving two strong, foundational years of skill learning and practice. Assessment of student progress is continuous during the school year and students must meet required benchmarks to progress.

All Kindergarten applicants are screened by credentialed teachers prior to the school year to assess the proper placement in TK or a traditional Kindergarten classroom. Teachers assess knowledge of multiple skills including letter and number recognition, writing skills, fine motor skills, and social maturity. Recommendations for placement in TK or traditional Kindergarten are made to the parent based on the screening and a decision is made collaboratively.

The standards, curricula and teacher credentialing requirements in Transitional Kindergarten are different from those in preschool. Transitional Kindergarten is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, is an academic program, and is taught by fully credentialed teachers. Transitional Kindergarten builds on the skills children may have learned in preschool and serves as the first of a two-year Kindergarten program.

The curriculum in Transitional Kindergarten is modified to meet the needs of younger students. Transitional Kindergarten includes an emphasis on oral language development, literacy immersion, number sense, and it provides collaborative experiences that promote cooperation, self-confidence, self-regulation, how to handle conflicts, play, and healthy attitudes about school and learning.

The Common Core State Standards provide end-of-year standards for Kindergarten. NBKA has used the Common Core Standards to design end-of-year expectations for Transitional Kindergarten that are appropriately modified to reflect the first of a two-year Kindergarten program.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten environment is designed to provide the children an opportunity to build upon the skills they have attained in the preschool classroom. The kindergarten curriculum inspires children to develop inner discipline, self-assurance, and a love of learning through a rigorous English language arts and math program designed to teach students reading, writing, speaking, and listening, while developing deep vocabulary and broad background knowledge.

Elementary, Grades 1-5

The elementary curriculum is built upon the foundation laid in the lower elementary classrooms. New materials are introduced as the child moves from concrete to abstract thinking. The curriculum is integrated, individualized, academically challenging, and meets the developmental needs of each child, intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. The students experience individual, small and large group lessons, and projects. Subject areas include: language arts, math, social studies and science. Children build timelines, record science experiments, research and present written reports and projects, and learn computer skills. Field trips that relate to areas of study are scheduled to enhance the child's learning experience. Organizational skills and independence are developed through the use of homework planners, and weekly schedules. Class meetings/circles encourage cooperative efforts as questions of right and wrong lead to discussions on fairness, rules, and procedures. Also, valuable opportunities for academic dialogue serve as a venue for discussions about character development, responsibility, and accountability in our personal lives.

Middle School, Grades 6-8

With a "college to career connections" mindset, the middle school team addresses two pivotal questions: What do we want an eighth grade graduate to look like when they graduate from New Branches? What skills are necessary for success in a global economy? The overarching goal of New Branches' Middle School educational program is getting our students to work as a team while exposing them to the world of high school, post-secondary education and the world of work. The model also offers an academic curriculum based on Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

For a successful transition to high school, trade school and/or college and the workforce, we teach our students the following habits and skills to prepare them academically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and morally:

- How to be career-focused and environmentally conscious.
- How to articulate and communicate ideas verbally and in writing.
- How to be organized, self-managed and motivated.
- How to question the world around them and investigate answers.
- How to be confident in their abilities.
- How to be leaders in their school and community.
- How to be highly focused and driven on work, learning and life lessons.
- How to recognize issues and find workable means for dealing with problems and work with diverse people.
- How to be a disciplined thinker that is clear, rational, open minded, and informed by evidence.
- How to implement study skills, particularly for passing tests, quizzes and other exams.
- How to have the ability and stamina to deal with a rigorous workload.
- How to work and live with integrity.

- How to have courage to stand up for what you believe in, determination, strong character-to model and make a difference, and grit.
- How to deal with stress using coping techniques.

Educational Development Plans for Seventh and Eighth Grade Students

1. At the beginning of each school year, the students work with the teachers to develop and implement Educational Development Plans (EDPs) with all seventh and eighth grade students via one-on-one goal-setting meetings.
2. The student follows the Xello program, which starts out as assessments in seventh grade and follows students through high school.
3. In collaboration with teachers, parents, students and the Principal, students will have a copy of their EDPs by mid-October toward the goal of monitoring students' success.
4. Teachers and Principal use the data from students' EDPs to align lessons to students' career goals, interests and educational needs.
Parents, students, and teachers frequently meet to develop career paths that consist of revisiting students' goals and making sure students are on track toward obtaining their goals and career aspirations.

8.2 The Curriculum

Transitional Kindergarten-4th Grade

Wonders by McGraw Hill will be taught in Transitional Kindergarten through 4th grade. Wonders is an evidence-based K–4 ELA program that empowers students to take an active role in learning and exploration. Students will enjoy unparalleled opportunities to express and assess themselves through reading, writing, and speaking. They will encounter the right content at the right moment in their learning journey to promote strong educational outcomes for all.

5th-8th Grade English Language Arts

The language arts curriculum for grades 5-8 in English and Language Arts (ELA) is offered through EL Education. The curriculum combines standards-aligned content with effective instructional practice, bringing together the “what” and the “how” of the Common Core standards.

In our curriculum...

- Students get excited about learning through great books, compelling topics and ownership of their own learning.
- Teachers get a vision of the instructional practices that support a Common Core-aligned classroom and the tools to create it.

Four 8-week modules, with 3 units in each, comprise a full year's curriculum. Each module progresses in a standard sequence: Building Background Knowledge (Unit 1), Extended Reading

and Research (Unit 2), and Extended Writing (Unit 3). Modules are linked by “big ideas” and “guiding questions” that speak to both the standards and the content. Each module is anchored by one or more books—not textbooks or anthologies—that have been carefully chosen to take the guesswork out of selecting texts. All students read the same increasingly complex texts, and teachers are given lesson-specific strategies for meeting all students’ needs. Each module has 7 assessments – 3 mid-unit, 3 end-of-unit and one culminating performance task that always involves writing from evidence. Science and Social Studies content reinforces literacy strategies across the disciplines.

Information on the 3-8 curriculum can be found at:

<http://commoncoresuccess.ededucation.org/curriculum>

Eureka Math Squared: TK-8

Eureka Math Squared is a complete, Pre-K through 12 curriculum that carefully sequences the mathematical progressions into expertly crafted modules. Eureka Math Squared provides educators with a comprehensive suite of innovative curriculum, in-depth professional development, books, and support materials. Eureka Math, a Common Core-aligned curriculum published by the non-profit Great Minds Inc., equates mathematical concepts to stories, with the aim of developing conceptual understanding. It encourages students to use various mental strategies to solve problems, and to focus on the process instead of the answer.

Eureka Math in Sync digital suite makes knowledge unstoppable by taking everything you love about *Eureka Math* and adding short, digestible videos for each lesson. Downloadable, fillable PDFs allow students to show their work and communicate with teachers via annotations and comments. This hybrid learning environment lets teachers and students toggle seamlessly between home and classroom without developing any knowledge gaps.

Eureka Math has many parent-friendly features including: Homework Helpers, Parent Tip Sheets in English and Spanish, Curriculum Roadmaps, video tutorials, and parent support. Parents may learn more about Eureka Math through the Great Minds website: <https://greatminds.org/math>.

Social Studies TK-8:

Teachers in Michigan created the Social Studies curriculum aligned with the state standards and areas of focus for each grade level.

[Michigan Open Book Social Studies curriculum](#)

Kindergarten - Myself and Others

Students are encouraged to gain an increased awareness of themselves and the world around them in our entry level text in the series.

1st Grade - Families and Schools

Using both families and schools as a lens for study, students learn about geography, history, economics, and civics with strong connections to literacy.

2nd Grade - Community Studies

Learn about local communities as students explore the economics, geography, history and civics standards in a unique setting - their own backyard!

3rd Grade - Michigan Studies

The Michigan Studies book consists of four major units with sections within each focused on the four main disciplines and public policy.

4th Grade - United States Studies

Using the context of the United States, students learn significant social studies concepts within an increasingly complex social environment. They examine fundamental concepts in geography, civics and government, and economics through the lens of Michigan history and the United States. Expectations that particularly lend themselves to being taught through a historic, geographic, civic, or economic lens are denoted.

5th Grade - United States History

Building upon the geography, civics and government, and economics concepts of the United States mastered in fourth grade and historical inquiry from earlier grades, the fifth grade expectations begin a more discipline-centered approach concentrating on the early history of the United States. Students begin their study of American history with American Indian peoples before the arrival of European explorers and conclude with the adoption of the Bill of Rights in 1791.

6th Grade - World Geography

Students learn map studies including the five themes of geography, focusing on spatial thinking, and regions.

7th Grade - Ancient World History

Students will focus on the history of the ancient world from Eras 1-4, and include an introduction to the study of history.

8th Grade - United States History

Students will continue to learn the history of the United States from the Civil War period to present.

Science

TK-1 Mystery Science

Students will learn through discovery and hands-on activities how the world works through this engaging science curriculum. To learn more about Mystery Science, you may visit their link at: <https://mysteryscience.com>. Science lessons are also incorporated in the CKLA English Language Arts curriculum for Kindergarten and 3rd grade.

2-8 Foss Science

FOSS (Full Option Science System) is a research-based science curriculum for grades K-8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley. The best way for students to appreciate the scientific enterprise, learn important scientific and engineering concepts, and develop the ability to think well is to actively participate in scientific practices through their own investigations and analyses. The FOSS Program was created specifically to provide students and teachers with meaningful experiences through engaging with this active participation in scientific practices.

Physical Education

At New Branches we take pride in our physical education classes. We realize that P.E. is an integral phase in students' physical and social development. We are committed to giving our students the best instruction possible. The aim of the physical education program at New Branches is *to develop and improve students' personal fitness and motor skills by providing developmentally appropriate activities through purposeful, creative and enjoyable instruction.* By incorporating challenging yet achievable tasks, the students will attain positive attitudes about physical activity and movement. In the elementary years, locomotor movement, non-locomotor movement, manipulative skills, personal behavior, and fitness levels will be monitored and assessed throughout the school year.

| Social and Emotional Health | Nutrition and Physical Activity | Safety | Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs | Personal Health and Wellness | HIV & Reproductive Health |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Grade K | Grade K | Grade K | Grade K | Grade K | |
| Grade 1 | Grade 1 | Grade 1 | Grade 1 | Grade 1 | |
| Grade 2 | Grade 2 | Grade 2 | Grade 2 | Grade 2 | |
| Grade 3 | Grade 3 | Grade 3 | Grade 3 | Grade 3 | |
| Grade 4 | Grade 4 | Grade 4 | Grade 4 | Grade 4 | Grade 4 |
| Grade 5 | Grade 5 | Grade 5 | Grade 5 | Grade 5 | Grade 5 |
| Grade 6 | Grade 6 | Grade 6 | Grade 6 | Grade 6 | Grade 6 |
| Grade 7-8 | Grade 7-8 | Grade 7-8 | Grade 7-8 | Grade 7-8 | Grade 7-8 |

Health and Well-being Education

For grades Kindergarten through Eighth Grade, New Branches has adopted the Michigan Model for Health (Michigan Model for Health, 2014), which aims to give students the knowledge and skills needed to practice and maintain healthy behaviors and lifestyles. The model provides age-appropriate lessons addressing the most serious health challenges facing children, including: social and emotional health, nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, personal health and wellness and safety and HIV. K curriculum is teacher generated, based on a reduction in concepts of the kindergarten Michigan Model expectations.

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math

STEAM may be offered as an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. The end results are students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders, and learners of the 21st century.

Environmental Education

We believe students should have the opportunity to be responsible citizens in caring, respecting and learning about the environment. The environmental focus begins in K and progresses and builds upon knowledge of Michigan's natural resources, environmental concerns and being stewards of the Earth.

- Every classroom offers environmentally focused lessons to build sustainability in our world such as: weather, ecosystems, landforms, climate change, recycling, energy, and water quality.
- Students have the opportunity to participate and learn from environmentally focused science events.
- Community Service: working with Groundswell and other community partners.
- Field trips/learning excursions are created to give a well-rounded experience for students TK-8. Each grade level has an identified theme with an overarching question.
- Students learn in developing outdoor classrooms including the garden.
- Students learn work habits through gardening and taking care of the campus.

Eco-Art

New Branches Charter Academy encourages creativity in all students as creativity is an integral part in a well rounded education. We pride ourselves in our unique spin on an art education that combines our environmental science focus with the elements and principles of visual arts. Eco-Art is an art form that focuses on preserving life, resources, and the ecology of Earth by either using natural items from the environment or creating art inspired by or advocating for the environment. In Eco-Art, students will learn the elements and principles of visual arts through environmentally focused lessons, project based learning, campus projects, and discovery. The Eco-art classroom is not defined by four walls, as the students will spend time outside, on campus, to discover the Earth's ecology. Students are encouraged to investigate pieces of art, the artists who create them, art supplies, participate in discussions, develop listening skills, respectfully listen to differences in opinions, and develop positive relationships within the classroom.

Owl University Classroom Intervention:

Teachers will differentiate instruction in the classrooms for all students. An intense 35 minute intervention time for students will be scheduled during the school day. During this time teachers will work with smaller groups of students on skills and strategies to guide students to the next level, based on NWEA assessment scores and classroom assessments.

Title 1 Small Group Interventions

A period of time will be scheduled to provide additional practice in reading and/or math to students who are performing significantly below grade level in order to help students learn the foundational skills to get them on or above grade level as measured by the NWEA Measures of Academy Progress (MAP) and Essential Standards student progress. Students will meet in small groups to work on essential skills with an interventionist.

Online Intervention programs (in class and at home)

Lexia Core5 Reading and PowerUp Literacy (grades TK-8)

Built on the science of reading, Lexia® Core5® Reading is a research-proven program that accelerates the development of literacy skills for students of all abilities, helping them make the critical shift from learning to read to reading to learn.

Lexia Core5 follows an adaptive blended learning model that offers explicit, systematic, and personalized reading instruction. This approach allows educators to deliver differentiated literacy instruction to students of all abilities. By using Lexia's research-proven program, Core5 effectively reduces the risk of students not meeting grade-level standards while providing accelerated and on-track students the instruction they need to thrive. Your child will receive a login to access the program.

Lexia® PowerUp Literacy® accelerates literacy gains for students in grades 6–8 who are at risk of not meeting College- and Career-Ready Standards. Rooted in the science of reading and proven to be up to five times as effective as the average middle school reading intervention, PowerUp enables students to make multiple years of growth in a single academic year. PowerUp immerses students in an age-appropriate online learning experience that is tailored to their individual strengths and weaknesses. PowerUp's adaptive instructional model maximizes student learning and provides motivational tools to minimize the time required for students to start mastering grade-level skills. Your child will receive a login to access the program.

Lexia ELL

Lexia® English Language Development™ is an adaptive blended learning program that supports Emergent Bilingual students' English language acquisition through academic conversations. The program integrates speaking, listening, and grammar in the subjects of math, science, social studies, general knowledge, and biographies.

IXL is an online instruction and practice purchased by the school for students to use at home in math for all grades and science in grades 3-8 . Your child will receive a login to access the program.

9 Academic Guidelines

For students to be prepared and ready for instructional activities, students will be expected to be at school on time, to have completed assignments, and to have proper instructional materials with them. Teachers will provide parents with a list of supplies needed for each class.

9.1 Report Cards/Conferences/Progress Reports

During the first and second trimester, parents are expected to meet with the child's teacher(s) to review academic progress. Every elementary classroom teacher will arrange at least two planned conferences with each child's parent(s)/guardian per year. It is understood that educators shall, if necessary, arrange additional conferences with parents. Conferences with educators must be scheduled during non-instructional time. It may be necessary to hold a spring conference based on the level of a child's performance to discuss promotion or retention. The teacher will notify parents if a third conference is necessary, or the parent may request a conference at any time.

Parents may request Progress Reports at any time for their student by communicating with the child's teacher. Teacher's may choose to send home weekly or monthly progress reports through PowerSchool. In the event that a student has a pending grade of failure (F) or a grade that would affect their status, the parent and student will receive advance notice.

Report cards will be issued at the end of each trimester. Parents are encouraged to discuss the information on the report card with their child and to encourage excellence in achievement and behavior. The purpose of report cards is to communicate to parents and students the child's progress on the knowledge and skills the student is working on in class and to provide insight into the child's behavior. Report Cards for all students are distributed in November, March, and June.

9.2 Retention

Third Grade Reading Law

Beginning in Kindergarten, your child's literacy progress will be closely monitored. A variety of assessments will be used to help identify students who need more intensive reading instruction. Interventions will then be created to meet individual student's needs.

Within the first 30 days of school, all elementary students will be assessed to determine if a reading deficiency exists. If such a deficiency is identified a reading plan will be developed for that student which includes extra instruction or support, ongoing progress checks, and a read at home plan.

Students in third grade will be taking the M-STEP assessment in the spring. Students who do not meet the state's "cut score" will be identified. A notification will be sent to those students' parents indicating the need for additional reading support in the fourth grade.

Parents of students with a plan will be notified and provided with a copy of the plan (Individual Reading Intervention Plan-IRIP) as well as a read at home plan so that they can help their child succeed while at home.

Reading instruction must be a major focus in early elementary education. Family engagement and understanding is an important part of this effort.

Retention may be suggested if your student:

1. Has excessive absences and tardies that are having a negative impact on the student's academic progress;
2. Is not making necessary academic gains as defined by the school staff. If a teacher suggests retention, summer school will be mandatory. Summer school will stress academic content (Math/ELA). In recommending retention, the student's well being, emotional maturity, social skills and other factors will all be considered. The school will notify parents, as early in the school year as possible, that retention is a possibility in order to develop an intervention plan.

It is the board's policy that the final retention decision is to be made by the school administrator.

9.3 Student Portfolio/Work Files for TK-Third Grade Students

Your child's teacher will work with your child to compile a portfolio or file of their work throughout the year in key academic areas. The portfolio will provide a documented record of your child's developing knowledge base, skills, and work quality and will be shared during parent-teacher conferences.

9.4 Social Emotional Learning and Character Education Program

The Academy is committed to the development of children becoming responsible citizens. We work to build a strong, supportive community of learners in each classroom. Communication skills, conflict resolution, grace and courtesy, team building activities and character education

are a vital part of our curriculum.

Students at NBCA participate in a combination of programs focusing on social emotional learning and character education. Students in Grades Pre K-6 will learn through the Harmony curriculum and students in grades 7 and 8 will use the Character Choices and Be Nice programs. These programs are designed to help students develop their personal character, become lifelong learners and transform into quality citizens within their communities.

Harmony Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, Grades PreK-8

Harmony is a social emotional learning program for Pre-K to 8 grade students designed to foster intergender communication and understanding, connection, and community both in and outside the classroom and develop boys and girls into compassionate and caring adults. Our Online Learning Portal empowers Pre-K to 8 grade teachers with everything you need to successfully integrate our social emotional learning program into your classroom, including one-click navigation for all classroom activities, SEL stories, role-playing games and sing-along songs.

Three rigorous evaluations of Harmony's components have been conducted since the program's inception. Two studies focused on fifth-grade students participating in relationship-building activities and the other study evaluated the impact of the "Buddy Up" everyday activities on preschool peer relations. All three studies utilized quasi-experimental design and found the Sanford Harmony components to have positive impact on children's peer relations when compared to control groups.

Be Nice Program

be nice. is a mental health education, bully and suicide prevention initiative that creates a positive cultural change through simple daily actions. be nice. is more than a phrase. It's an Action Plan! Students will learn what it means to notice, invite, challenge, and empower.

9.5 Field Trips

Written parental or legal guardian permission is required for a student to go on any field trip off school grounds. Parents may sign a blanket permission slip for local (walking distance) field trips. For trips involving travel, teachers will inform parents of such details as destination, lunches, spending money, departure and arrival times, and any special rules. A permission slip will be sent home before each field trip involving travel. Teachers work to schedule field trips that are relevant to the school curriculum. The minimum guidelines for the supervision of field trips is for every 10 students there will be one adult chaperone. Student/adult ratios may vary with the nature of the field trip. Parents and guardians wishing to chaperone a group or join the field trip with their child must obtain the teacher's approval and have a completed volunteer application approved by the school office at least 1 week prior to the trip.

Students who disobey school rules and/or defy teacher authority may be denied the right to participate in field trips. Students who have demonstrated and documented behavior that is aggressive, harassing, or intimidating AT ANY TIME during the school year may be denied the opportunity to go on overnight field trips. The decision will be made by the Principal in consultation with the teacher(s) conducting the field trip. The Code of Student Conduct applies to students at school and on school related trips/activities away from school.

Students are expected to follow Academy rules and pay for any costs incurred. Parents who cannot afford such costs for their child's participation are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher to discuss options. Parents will always be given prior notice of field trips. The student who is not going on the field trip is to attend school. The student will be provided alternative learning opportunities at school during the school day.

9.6 Testing

The Academy administers state mandated assessments at grades 3rd-8th (M-STEP and PSAT). The Academy also administers a computer based adaptive assessment in math and reading three times a year in grades TK-8 (NWEA MAP) and three times a year in grades TK-6 (Acadience reading). This enables us to more effectively and accurately monitor the growth and identify the needs of our students. The results of the state assessment test, and the computer-based test, are used to guide instruction, target individual student needs, and assist in the improvement of curriculum and instruction. Parents will be sent individual scores of their children when they are available. Test scores will be included in the child's cumulative folder.

9.7 Special Education

The Academy attempts to provide appropriate educational programs for children who are identified with disabilities and who have an approved Individual Educational Plan. The Academy embraces the instructional practice known as inclusion. When the IEP calls for pullout services, the student will be permitted to leave the classroom to work with a properly trained professional educator. The goal of special education programming is to provide students with an educational plan that best meets their individual needs in the least restrictive environment. This means that, to the extent appropriate, students will be provided services within the regular education classroom with the necessary support.

The Academy enjoys an excellent working relationship with the local intermediate school district (ISD). The ISD provides a parent resource center which provides parents with comprehensive resources on rights of the disabled, responsibilities of the school, support systems for parents and children, and educational programs available.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, arrange to speak with your child's teacher. If appropriate, your child's teacher will consult with a Teacher Support Team for suggestions on classroom and instructional modifications. For further information on all special education services and programming, contact the Principal.

9.8 Homework

Homework is a necessary and integral part of a child's education. The purpose of homework is to reinforce those skills and concepts taught in the learning environment and will be assigned by the classroom teacher based on student needs. Homework also includes work not finished during class time. Parental support and cooperation are very important in this area. Helping students with their homework shows you are interested in their education. A request for homework for a child that is ill should be made the first morning the child is absent. This will allow time for the educator to organize the materials. Homework may be picked up in the office the following school day morning.

READ! 20 minutes of required reading each night is the most important homework for students.

9.9 Fundraising

Students may solicit only for Academy-sponsored activities. The Principal, or Board of Directors, when appropriate, must approve fundraisers in writing prior to announcement of fundraising activities, placing orders, or making commitments. Academy students are prohibited by Board Policy from door-to-door solicitation of any type in the community. There will be no exchange of money among students for any purpose unless authorized by the Principal.

9.10 Little Owlets Before and After School Care

Admission Criteria: Only students enrolled in the Academy are eligible for the Academy's Before and After School Child Care Program. Students must be pre-registered and prepaid to participate and there should not be any outstanding fees due. Interested parents should contact the front office staff that will inform you of the necessary documents for enrollment.

Before and After Care Program Hours

6:30 AM – 8:10 AM and 3:10 PM – 6:00 PM Monday-Thursday. Fridays 6:30 AM - 8:10 AM and 12:10 PM-6:00 PM.

- Doors open at 6:30 AM. We are not prepared to accept students prior to that time.
- Any child(ren) not picked up by 6:00 PM, will be assessed a charge of \$20.00 per every 15 minutes per child.

Fees and Billing:

- Daily rate per child is \$15.00 per day when school is open.
- Payments are due on a weekly basis by 6:00 pm each Friday.
- All balances must be paid each week or services will be suspended. If a family has a balance in childcare, the child will not be able to attend.
- All payments must be made by credit card/debit card (online only, preferred method), by cash to the school office, or by check addressed to New Branches Charter Academy. Online payments may be made at <https://newbranchescharteracademy.epaytrak.com/>.
- A \$25.00 fee will be charged to your account for checks returned by your bank for any

reason. A second occurrence will mandate that all future payments be paid by money order for the remainder of the school year.

Academy withdrawal of Student from the Before and After School Program:

The Academy reserves the right to exercise immediate withdrawal of any student or individual if it is deemed that such person(s) fails to abide by the rules established for the program. A student may be withdrawn from the program if fees are not paid. Written notice will be sent to the parent/guardian explaining reasons for withdrawal.

10 Dress Code Policy

General attire:

Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines. Students who are representing New Branches Charter Academy at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements.

Dress should allow students to participate comfortably in a variety of physical and outdoor activities. Clothing should cover the body adequately and should not be distracting. Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will need to contact their parent/s. It is our expectation that a proper change of clothing will be provided if requested. Parents are urged to see that their children are properly dressed for inclement or cold weather. Students do not go outdoors if the temperature is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit (wind chill factor), or if there is inclement weather.

Additional guidelines for ALL STUDENTS:

- Hair should be clean and maintained. Natural hair, including braids, afros, twists, and locks, are welcome.
- Hats, hood or any other hair coverings are not to be worn in the building
- Clothing must be properly worn (i.e, no sagging pants, crop tops that show the belly, low-cut shirts and bottoms that have holes above fingertip length, and bottoms shorter than fingertip length).
- No spaghetti straps or tank tops
- Shoes must be worn at all times and be appropriate for the purpose (ex. Sneakers worn for PE class, shoes for outdoors, boots worn during the winter). No house shoes/slippers should be worn at school.
- Buttons, patches, pins, or other accessories and clothing that are considered offensive and disruptive (sexually suggestive, profane, obscene, tobacco or alcohol advertisements, etc.) are not permitted.
- Sunglasses, hats, coats, and jackets may be worn outdoors only, and not in class.
- Pajamas are not to be worn to school.

We will frequently have special days where exceptions will be permitted, and will be

communicated, in advance to students, staff, and parents.

The dress code policy will be enforced for all students in all grade levels. The following procedure will be used for dress code violations:

- **1st Offense:** Call parent for change of clothes and review dress code policy
- **2nd Offense:** Verbal warning, phone call home, and review dress code policy
- **3rd Offense:** Verbal warning, phone call home, review dress code policy, and parent conference
- **4th Offense:** Possible detention or suspension

11 Parents

The Academy relies on parents for active involvement in their child's education, growth, and development. **It is the hope of the academy that all families will devote time to volunteer.** Parents are children's first and most effective teachers and are encouraged to become active partners with their children's teachers. Research clearly reports that a student's success is closely tied to a significant adult in his or her life.

11.1 Volunteers

It is the policy of the Academy to encourage volunteers to work in the school. A volunteer must complete a Volunteer Application each year and receive an I-CHAT background check to certify that they have not been charged with child abuse, neglect, or a felony. The Academy reserves the right to "approve" or "deny" any volunteer service upon review of the background check returned. The determination will be based upon the individual's background check information and their fitness to have the responsibility for the safety and well-being of children. Providing false information, or information contradicting the background check information, is grounds for immediate volunteer service denial.

All volunteers may be asked to attend an orientation meeting before working in a classroom with children. All volunteers must be clearly identified with a badge or lanyard. All volunteers will be under the supervision of the classroom teacher. Volunteers shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen or heard while working as a volunteer.

Volunteer activities include responsibilities such as being tutors, mentors, classroom assistants, and guest speakers. Parents, grandparents, and friends are encouraged to become volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please notify the office.

Volunteers are expected to follow the instructions given by the teacher at all times. All Volunteers must be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher. Volunteers must focus on student safety and are discouraged from activities such as being on cell phones during this time.

Volunteers may not bring younger siblings to school or on a field trip while volunteering, without permission of the Principal.

Volunteers must have approval to meet students at locations off school grounds, such as field trips.

11.2 Parent Education Meetings

Parent education evenings may be scheduled throughout the year. Different topics will be discussed to give you the opportunity to learn more about the Academy. The Academy's parent and educator organization, Parent Ambassadors, works together for the education and enrichment of the children. This is a voluntary organization that holds monthly meetings. For more information on this organization, see the front office.

11.3 Partnership in Responsibility

The Code of Student Conduct is titled "*Partnership in Responsibility*" in anticipation of parents, students, teachers, administration, support staff, and the Board of Directors forging a strong bond on behalf of the children of the Academy. The Partnership is based on mutual respect, responsibility, and results. You are encouraged to embrace the partnership philosophy and translate it into action.

11.4 Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

Parents have the right:

- To know that their child is cared for in a safe, supportive environment.
- To unlimited access to their children (unless prohibited by a court order).
- To access the school staff during the school's normal hours of operation.
- To be informed about serious misbehavior on the part of their own child.
- To be regularly informed of school activities.
- To inspect any instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum of their student.

Parents have the responsibility to fulfill their obligations as described in various portions of this handbook. These obligations include, but are not limited to:

- Keeping their child's records up to date.
- Letting the school office know if their child will not be attending on a regularly scheduled day.
- Following established procedures in accessing their child during the school day, as well as observing established procedures regarding pick-up/drop-off or occasions that require a child to leave early or arrive late.
- Noting any communications from the administrators or teachers regarding their child's behavior, and to cooperate in any efforts to bring about improvement in the situation.
- Attempting to attend school activities that involve parents.
- Informing the school of any significant changes that occur in the home.

11.5 Helping Your Child Learn

There is no more powerful teacher in a child's life than their parent or guardian. Establishing routines that safeguard children from worry and stress so that they can learn, and grow, is essential. As your student's guardian, you can help your child learn if you:

- Start each day with a calm beginning.
- Make sure your child is well rested with at least 9-12 hours of sleep each night.
- Encourage your child to have a healthy breakfast if not eating at school.
- Laugh and talk with your child about school experiences – listen attentively.
- Stress attendance and being on time for school each day.
- Acknowledge your child for special accomplishments.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Inform the teacher of any family situation that could influence your child's behavior.
- Have a special place for notes and notices about school events.
- Read each day to your child. Encourage reading for pleasure and utilize the public library regularly.
- Stress organization of your child's belongings.
- Encourage independence in your child by showing him/her what he/she can do by himself/herself.
- Work at home with skills taught at school.

12 General Information

12.1 Entry Age for Elementary

A child is eligible to enroll in kindergarten if he or she is at least five years of age on or before **September 1** of the school year of enrollment, or is at least five years of age between September 2 to December 1 of the school year of enrollment with a signed waiver. A child becoming six years of age before December 1 must be enrolled in school on the first day of the school year in which the child's sixth birthday occurs or must satisfy one of the exceptions stated in law. A child must remain in school until their sixteenth birthday.

12.2 Attendance

Regular school attendance is of the utmost importance to your child's adjustment to school and contributes to the realization of the importance of education. When they are not in school, students also miss valuable instruction and fall behind academically and socially. If you arrive late or must pick up your child early, please call the office where you will need to sign your child in and out. For specific attendance and excused absence requirements refer to The Student Code of Conduct.

12.3 Makeup Work for Absence from School

Students are responsible for getting and completing any work they have missed due to absence from class. Makeup work should be completed within three days of return to school for short-term absence of 1-2 days and within five days of return for absence of 3-5 days as agreed

upon with the classroom teacher. In cases of extended absence of more than five days due to illness, a student may request special consideration for additional time to make up work. Parents/guardians may request this in writing.

12.4 Visitors

All parents or visitors must report to the office upon entering the school grounds. A visitor sign-in will be available for the use of parents and pre-approved visitors to visit in the school. You are to stop in the office, sign-in, and tell the school secretary whom you wish to visit. All parents and approved visitors will be given a "Visitor's Badge", which must be worn and visible. Sign-in and approval procedures are necessary for the safe protection of our children and to avoid disruption of classes.

Visitors will be required to secure permission of the Principal or designated administration to be on school grounds. Visitors who are not known by the school secretary or the Principal will be required to present a form of official identification, for example, driver's license, to have their request to visit in the school or to be on school grounds considered. No one is to bypass the office and go directly to the classroom or to the playground area. The staff must provide safe, secure supervision of all children. Parents are welcome to visit in classrooms and must make advanced arrangements with the teacher for in-class visitation. We do not allow visitors to "drop in" as it may be a distraction to learning for the classroom. Small children are not permitted to visit classrooms during school hours.

Unauthorized persons must not loiter in the school use area or campus. Any person, who comes into the school area and does not properly sign in at the office, will be considered a trespasser. The person will be asked to leave the school area immediately. Failure to leave the school area will be reported to the Police Department for action.

12.5 Messages to Students and Staff

Messages to students and or staff must be dropped off or called into the school office. Messages will not be delivered when it will disrupt classroom activities. Parents are encouraged to communicate the message as early as possible to ensure timely delivery to the proper person. All staff members have email accounts that parents can communicate through. Safe, secure classrooms and disruption-free instruction require us to seek total cooperation of parents in not going directly to the classroom. Students are not allowed to use a cell phone during the school day.

12.6 Early Dismissal Requests

The student may need to leave school during the school day. The parent is to receive approval of the Principal or office personnel in advance by written or personal request for a justifiable reason, including such early dismissals for doctor's appointments, religious observations, family funerals, and other prearranged events. Medical excuse notes or other situational excuse notes are required to be submitted to the school office for such early dismissal to be excused.

Students will only be released to parents and designated adults. In child custody situations, the custodial parent must properly inform the Principal of any limitations. Excessive early dismissals and unexcused early dismissals will be viewed similarly to tardies.

Any early dismissal requests on the same day must be made before 2:00 PM. Requests after this time cause a disruption to typical dismissal routines. The school cannot guarantee these requests will be seen and communicated.

12.7 Vacations

The school discourages the practice of taking family vacations on school days or during times other than regular school vacation periods. If a student will be out of school for a family vacation, they will be responsible for making up any work upon returning. When you must schedule a family trip during Academy time, contact your child's teacher at least one (1) week in advance to discuss how your child will complete missed assignments. Time given for completion of make up work is (1) day for every day absent.

12.8 Emergencies

Most emergencies involve the weather. Procedures have been developed in an effort to ensure safety and security for all children when they are under the care of the Academy. Parents are encouraged to keep informed of weather patterns and possible school closings and to make sure childcare arrangements are in place for emergency closings.

12.9 Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire and tornado drills are regularly scheduled to educate students in safe practice in case of an emergency. The teacher will review rules of safety and evacuation routes with students. Evacuation routes and tornado watch locations are posted in each classroom and area of the Academy. The teacher or person responsible for a group of students will take attendance to determine the presence of all students who are in attendance on that day. Students and staff will return to class when the teacher is given approval—verbal or hand signal—by the Principal or school secretary.

12.10 Tornado Emergencies

Students will not be dismissed from school when there is a tornado watch, warning, or actual tornado. During a tornado watch, students will remain inside the building in designated areas, local radio stations will be monitored, and staff will take safety precautions. Students will be released to their parents or designated adult as requested. During a tornado warning or tornado, all students and staff members will remain in the building. Everyone will take shelter in designated areas and will follow outlined safety precautions. Students may be detained beyond the usual dismissal time. Parents who have come to the school to pick up students are encouraged to stay at school until the tornado warning or tornado has passed and safe conditions prevail. Out of respect for parental responsibility for their children, a student will be released to parents only.

12.11 Lock Down Drills

The State of Michigan has made it mandatory for schools to practice two Lock Down Drills per year. We will follow this mandate just as we do Fire Drills and Tornado Drills. These drills will be conducted in coordination with the local emergency management coordinator. All doors at the Academy are locked during school hours.

12.12 Emergency Closing During the School Day

In the event of severe weather or other unexpected emergencies, the school may be forced to dismiss students early. If school must be dismissed early, parents are encouraged to have prearranged, adult supervision of their children. Parents should discuss emergency procedures with their children in case there is nobody at home when the child arrives. Parents are expected to provide the school with a working emergency number in case of the child's illness or emergency closing. If the parent cannot be contacted, the school will make reasonable efforts to contact the person designated for emergency situations. The Academy will make use of the School Messenger automated contact system to reach parents/guardians for weather or building related emergencies, and the CrisisGo contact system for hazardous and crisis situations.

12.13 Academic Interventions

Students who are not on grade level will be given opportunities for in school interventions during the school year and for summer school to help them learn the required grade level material. Parents will be notified when their child is receiving interventions to establish support at home.

12.14 Child Find/Child Study

The objective of the Academy is to ensure that the child receives the instruction, support, and services needed to succeed in school. It is the Academy's intention to:

- Engage first in preventative and targeted instruction and intervention
- As appropriate, conduct comprehensive evaluations designed to determine the best instructional programs and accommodations for students while also ensuring that Child Find is properly implemented
- Design comprehensive evaluations to focus on each student's individual learning needs in the context of educational opportunities, performance, and responsiveness to high quality opportunities to learn over time
- Select every component of the evaluation based on its relevance for creating the student's instructional program.
- Consistent with the mandates in IDEA 2004, a comprehensive evaluation includes:
 - A variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child (Sec. 300.304(b)(1))
 - An observation of the student in the learning environment, including the regular classroom setting (Sec. 300.305(a)(1))

- Determination that underperformance is not primarily the result of a visual, hearing, or motor disability; intellectual disability; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency (Sec. 300.309(a)(3)(i-vi))
- Determination that underperformance is not primarily the result of a lack of instruction, i.e., student performance data indicating that the student (a) was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings delivered by qualified personnel (Sec. 300.309(b)(1)), and (b) received repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (Sec. 300.309(b)(2)), to ensure that underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction
- Also consistent with IDEA 2004, the Academy believes that:
- The determination of a specific learning disability must be made by the child's parents and a team of qualified professionals (Sec. 300.308)
- Parents must be provided with the results of repeated assessments of achievement (Sec. 300.309(b)(2))
- For students participating in a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) program, parents must be notified about their state's policies about the collection of student performance data, strategies for increasing the child's rate of learning, and their right to request an evaluation (Sec. 300.311(a)(7)(ii))
- The MTSS process must not be used to delay or deny an evaluation but should offer data, both academic and behavioral, to help problem solve and analyze issues regarding learning and help inform the development of effective instructional plans for students found to have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Evidence of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement or both should be included, and must be designed to help guide the development of the child's instructional program.

MTSS records can indicate whether or not the child (a) achieves adequately for age or grade level when provided with appropriate instruction, and (b) makes sufficient progress to meet age or grade level standards based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention. Evidence that the student is improving when provided with general education interventions indicates that the student is not in need of special education services, a requirement for placement in special education.

13 Meals

A free daily breakfast and lunch program is offered to all students at the Academy from an on-site kitchen. Menus are available in the front office and may be emailed. All foods served in the food service program as well as any other activities in which food is served must adhere to the wellness policy mandated by USDA. Foods must satisfy nutritional standards established by USDA.

Good nutrition is an important aspect of mental and physical well-being. We offer the following suggestions as a helpful guideline:

- Please pack a nutritious lunch which your child likes and will eat, if your child will not be

eating a school lunch.

- Large bags of candy or chips are not allowed at school.
- Send a reusable water bottle to school.
- Nuts and nut products are not allowed at school due to allergies.
- Bringing fast food to students for lunch is discouraged.

Your child's name should appear on the inside and outside of their lunch box and water bottle. All containers and utensils should be included and labeled. A cold pack should be put in the lunch box to keep items cold and healthy until eating time.

If your child has any food allergy or specific dietary needs or accommodations, A CACFP Request for Special Meals and/or Accommodations form is required to be completed and submitted to the school office

14 Snacks

Please pack a daily snack for your child, if needed. Elementary teachers will communicate a schedule if there is a snack time. Teachers may ask parents to donate pre-packaged snacks for the class. Please respect any notices regarding food allergies that are posted on your child's classroom bulletin board.

If your child must be restricted to certain food and/or is on a special diet, please inform the staff and indicate so on the Child Information Card. For your child's safety, please provide your child's daily snack.

14.1 Birthday Snacks and Holiday Parties

Sometimes families like to provide a special treat on a child's birthday. We welcome the opportunity to celebrate. Please speak to your child's teacher, in advance, about birthday treats or trinkets. Grades TK-8 have holiday parties throughout the year. All food must be pre-packaged only. Parties must comply with the USDA mandated wellness policy and practices.

15 Phone Use

Students may make school-related communication to parents or other designated childcare providers from the office, with permission from classroom teachers. Please make sure that after school rides are arranged in advance, so students do not need to use the telephone at the close of school to make such arrangements.

Student cell phones or other communication devices (ex. Smart watches, tablets) shall not be powered on, or in view, at any time during school hours. All personal devices must be powered off and stored in the student's backpack or in the classroom under teacher supervision. If these devices are powered on, or in view, they will be confiscated until the end of the day. A second offense will necessitate a parent meeting to retrieve the device. Further offenses will be

considered a violation of the Code of Conduct and subject to disciplinary action. The Academy's complete Personal Communication Device Policy can be found on the Academy website.

16 Pesticide Use

The Academy utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that utilizes all available and appropriate techniques to attain the goal of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize pest exclusion and biological controls. However, as with most pest control programs, chemical controls may also be utilized at our facility.

This notice has been provided in compliance with MCL324.8316. We are also required to notify you of your right to review the IPM Plan and IPM records.

Prior Notification Request

You also have the right to be informed prior to any application of an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide made in or at the school grounds or buildings during this school year, with the exception of bait or gel formulations. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be notified following any such application.

At least 48 hours before an application, advance notification will be given by 1) posting at commonly used entrances to the facility and 2) by Email. Advance notification flyers will be posted at the following commonly used entrances: main entrance.

The Principal is responsible for pesticide application procedures.

In addition to the above methods of notice, the parent/guardian is entitled to receive the notice by first-class U.S. mail postmarked at least 3 days before the application. If you need prior notification via U.S. mail, please complete the information below and send it to the school office.

PRIOR NOTIFICATION BY USPS MAIL REQUEST

PARENT NAME: _____
STUDENT NAME: _____
STREET ADDRESS: _____
CITY, ZIP: _____
DAY PHONE #: _____
EVENING PHONE #: _____

Please Check One:

- ☐ I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide application inside of the school.
- ☐ I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide application on the outside grounds of the school building.
- ☐ Both of the above.

Signature

Date

17 Transportation

Parents are responsible for transportation of their children to and from school if not utilizing school transportation. Parents dropping off or picking up their children are reminded to pay close attention to movement of students and vehicles in the parking area. The Handbook and Code of Conduct rules extend to the bus and any school sanctioned event on or off campus. Students are under the authority of the bus driver while they are on the bus. The driver is to enforce this Handbook and Code of Conduct and report all student behavior problems to the Principal who will be responsible for disciplinary action. Failure to follow this Handbook and Code of Conduct while on the bus may result in termination of the privilege of riding the school bus, in addition to other appropriate disciplinary actions.

Bus transportation for students is based on a first-come, first-served sign-up basis. Stops are made at common spots, not door-to-door, within a radius of four miles, where possible. Routes will then be determined based on the following factors:

- Students who live furthest from the school will be assigned first
- Students must ride the bus each day in order to use school transportation
- Students must be dropped off and picked up at the same spot

If changes must be made to your child's transportation, you must notify the Transportation Supervisor to discuss the possible changes. All parents and guardians of students choosing to use school transportation must sign a Transportation Agreement and follow all transportation rules and regulations. If there are any daily changes, parents must call the office by 2:00 to communicate a change.

18 Verbal Communication

In an effort to promote and enhance effective communication between parents, teachers and administration, we ask that any problems or concerns be routed to the appropriate person as soon as possible. Part of problem solving is making sure the right people are aware and involved in the resolution process.

19 Channels of Communication

| Classroom Teacher | Principal | Office Staff |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Child's Progress | School Policy | Absence Calls |
| Classroom Activities | Parent Education | Billing/Accounts |
| Classroom Assistance | Academic Policy | Registration |
| Class Procedures | Admissions | McKinney-Vento |
| Daily Scheduling | Donations | Dismissal Changes |
| Field Trips | Facilities | |
| | Legal Matters | |

Parents who wish to address specific issues or concerns about their child's education are asked to speak first to their child's classroom teacher to seek a suitable resolution. Unresolved issues should be brought to the attention of the Principal or designated representative. The Principal has primary responsibility for management of the school. The communications "chain of command" is the following:

1. Teacher
2. Student Advocate and/or Assistant Principal
3. Principal
4. Area Superintendent
5. Management Company
6. Academy Board

Except in extreme or prescribed situations, a teacher will discuss a behavior problem with the student and the parent before a referral is made for assistance from the Principal. Prescribed situations are listed in the Code of Student Conduct.

20 Academy Email

The Academy will communicate to families primarily through email through School Messenger by the Principal or Main Office. The emails will contain information about school activities and programs as well as an updated calendar for the month.

21 Medications/Immunizations

Students are not allowed to keep any type of medication in their possession during school hours. All medication should be sent to the school in a container labeled by the pharmacist. A written, signed, and dated directive from the physician must accompany any medication to be administered at school. This includes, but not limited to, over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, lotions, creams, and aspirin. The school is only authorized to dispense Band-Aids and water without a physician's written directive.

The academy encourages parents to arrange for students to take all medications at home, if possible. Medications will be administered at school, provided approved guidelines are followed. "Medication" includes prescription, non-prescription, and herbal medications, and includes those taken by mouth, by inhaler, those that are injectable, and those applied as drops to eyes, nose, or medications applied to the skin. Students are to register non-prescription medications in the office under the same guidelines as prescription medications.

For the safety of your child, the learning environment educator or office staff will dispense ALL medication with written permission from the parent, written physician's instructions, and administered in the presence of another adult.

1. Completed "Medication Permission Form"
2. All prescription medication must have a pharmaceutical label (student's name, doctor's name, and type of medication and dosage).

3. A parent/guardian must bring in all prescribed medication to the learning environment educator or the front office.
4. ALL medication will be locked up in the learning environment for security purposes.

A student who requires the use of an inhaler for relief or prevention of asthma symptoms will be allowed to carry and use the inhaler if there is written approval from the child's physician and parent/guardian are on record at the school and provided the Principal has been informed and has notified the child's teachers.

Individuals who administer medications will receive in-service training on policies and procedures related to this responsibility. An individual medication administration log will be kept in the student's permanent record until one year after graduation from high school.

Any adverse reaction to medication, as described on the physician's written instructions, and/or any errors made in the administration of medications shall be reported to the child's parent/guardian immediately.

State law and the local County Immunization Code require all students entering the Academy to provide evidence of having received the required immunizations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Rubella, Mumps, HIB shot, Hepatitis B, and Chicken Pox or a signed statement that a child has not been immunized because of religious or other reasons. State law and local County Immunization Code prohibit the Academy from admitting children without the required immunizations.

21.1 Illness

The school does not have facilities to care for the children when they are sick. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified using the information you provided on your Child Information Card. Please have a plan so that you, or your emergency person, will be able to pick your child up promptly if necessary. Children should not attend school when the following conditions are present:

- Temperature above 100 degrees.
- Unusual drowsiness, excessive sleep or the child appears ill.
- Vomiting two or more times in a 24-hour period.
- Three or more loose or watery bowel movements in a 24-hour period.
- Body rash with fever.
- Severe cough or difficulty breathing.
- Red swollen eyes or pus draining from eyes.
- Open areas on the skin
- Ringworm, lice, or pinworm.
- Any other confirmed communicable illnesses
- COVID: Parents are required to report any positive COVID cases in the household to the school. Any student who tests positive for COVID must isolate for the required number of

days per the Kent County Health Department. NBCA will follow the mandates issued by the Kent County Health Department.

Children should report all illnesses and injuries occurring in the Academy to their educator or supervisory personnel. Only immediate and temporary care will be given in the Academy. Parents will be notified by phone when a child needs additional care. For the health and well-being of our staff and students, parents will be responsible to make sure the child is picked up within the hour after notification. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make sure all emergency contact phone numbers are current.

Any student evidencing a rash, sores, or other physical problems will be excluded from the Academy. When a child is absent with a contagious disease or illness, the parent/guardian should notify the Academy office. In order for your child to be admitted back into the Academy, parents must comply with County Health guidelines. Please contact the Academy office for further information.

A student may be excused from physical education for one day with a note from the parent/guardian. Extended excuses will be honored upon receipt of a physician's note.

21.2 Child Information Card

The Parents will be asked to sign an emergency medical card to permit the teacher or adult in charge to secure medical assistance for the child in an emergency. The parents will be notified as quickly as possible of medical care being given to the child.

21.3 Insurance

Parents are encouraged to be sure their child has medical insurance. If the child does not have medical insurance and the parent wants insurance for the child, the parent is encouraged to notify the Principal so they can work together to secure insurance for the child.

22 Personal Property

The Academy will work with parents to protect personal property. Reasonable guidelines will contribute to our success.

School Materials: Students are responsible for taking care of school owned materials and are expected to pay replacement or damage costs if applicable.

Clothing: The Academy recognizes that all clothing is valuable and must be cared for. Proper care includes labeling articles that the child will most likely remove upon arrival at school. Items such as coats/jackets, hats, gloves, and boots should be labeled. The Academy does not assume responsibility for lost articles of clothing.

Money: Parents are encouraged to be sure the child has properly secured any money brought to school. If a large sum of money is required, parents are encouraged to see the teacher or office before or after school and make payment or the teacher will collect money upon the child's arrival at school. Parents are encouraged to place money sent to school in a sealed envelope with a note stating the reason the money is being sent. The child's name and teacher's name should be clearly written on the outside of the envelope. Parents are encouraged not to allow children to bring large amounts of money to school.

Electronic Equipment: Cellular phones, or other personal electronic devices, not school related, shall not be turned on at any time, and must be kept in a locker or backpack or under a teacher's supervision during school hours. The Academy does not assume responsibility for lost electronic devices.

23 Asbestos Management Plan

As per AHERA (40CFR 763.80) Rule, the Academy is required to notify all students, staff, legal guardians, outside contractors, and community members of the availability of the AHERA Management Plan for their inspection and review. A copy of this plan is available at the school office for your review during normal business hours. Periodic (6 month) inspections are performed by properly trained staff members. At this time there are no planned asbestos abatement activities for the upcoming year. Should the need for abatement arise, all building occupants and their legal guardians will be notified in writing in advance.

24 Behavioral Expectations

24.1 School Wide Behavior - PBIS

Students at the Academy have the right to be treated with respect by their teachers and classmates. They are to be treated equally and fairly with dignity. All students should be included in all activities and made to feel welcome in all activities of the Academy. Teachers work to facilitate internal discipline within each child. Staff members work as coaches for children, helping them to make good decisions and reflect on bad decisions in order to determine a better choice next time.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. It is a way to support everyone – especially students with disabilities – to create the kinds of schools where all students are successful.

Through classroom discussions, students acknowledge that certain behaviors, such as talking without permission, calling out, passing notes, bullying, students making fun of other students, and talking back to teachers, interfere with learning. Bullying will not be tolerated in the classroom or on school grounds and is considered intimidation and if severe enough "assault."

There are school wide behavior expectations posted throughout the buildings. These behaviors are modeled and taught to student's multiple times throughout the school year.

24.2 Restorative Practices

We work to help children recognize disruptive behavior and develop self-control out of respect for self and others. Disruptive students may be removed from the classroom temporarily until the teacher and or Principal is confident the student is ready to return to class as a responsible participant. A conference with parents and the Principal will be called for any student who repeatedly interferes with a teacher's ability to teach, another student's right to learn, or demonstrates an inability to improve behavior.

Students and parents need to know that the classroom teacher is authorized to suspend a student for one day for good cause. Behaviors that are considered major infractions are listed in the Code of Student Conduct and consequences for these behaviors are determined by the Principal. The Code of Conduct explains discipline procedures, including suspensions and appeals. If there is insignificant improvement in the child's behavior, the parent may be scheduled to spend a day with his/her child to observe the classroom dynamics.

24.3 Suspensions and Expulsions

Detentions, in and out of school suspensions, and/or expulsions are levels of consequences that are administered to students who demonstrate disobedient, disruptive, violent, disrespectful, threatening, or otherwise harmful behavior at school. Any student who has been suspended during the course of the school year may be ineligible to attend overnight field trips as a result. A student whose presence creates, or is likely to create, a specific threat or risk to the safety or well-being of the school community or any of its members will be suspended or expelled from school. The Code of Student Conduct clearly spells out the responsibilities of parents and students, appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, and consequences for unacceptable behaviors.

If a student's behaviors result in a discipline recommendation over 10 days suspension or expulsion, the school will consider the mitigating factors involved and consider using Restorative Practices as an alternative, or in addition to, suspension or expulsion. Please see the Code of Conduct for more information.

24.4 OK2Say Reporting and Threat Assessments

OK2Say

OK2SAY is a valuable tool for our academy, providing a safe and confidential way for students, staff, and community members to report concerns about safety, bullying, self-harm, and other issues. By utilizing OK2SAY, we foster a proactive environment where everyone can contribute to the well-being of our school community. Tips submitted through OK2SAY are taken seriously and addressed promptly, ensuring that potential threats are mitigated before they escalate. This

program empowers individuals to speak up without fear, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining a secure and supportive educational setting.

Threat Assessments

The Academy has a policy and evidence-based protocol for responding to threats of violence in our school. When a student makes an explicit or implicit threat or demonstrates concerning behaviors that may pose a danger to the safety of school staff, other students, or themselves, a school team will conduct a risk or suicide assessment, as appropriate. The goal of conducting these assessments is to provide assistance to the student being assessed, to support victims or potential victims, and to take appropriate preventive or corrective measures to maintain a safe and secure school environment. The team conducting these assessments include a school administrator, school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, and other staff members as needed. Our assessment procedures are followed regardless of disciplinary action. If the school team determines that one of these assessments need to be conducted with your child, you will be notified by a member of the school team, as collaboration between the school and family is essential to ensuring student safety.

If you have any questions regarding our risk or suicide assessment process, please contact Tanner Maten, Assistant Principal.

24.5 Playground Behavior

Students are provided with the opportunity to engage in unstructured, open-ended, social interaction during recesses. Recess time is supervised by a classroom teacher who is responsible for student safety. Equipment appropriate for use at recess time is available through classroom teachers. Consult with your child's teacher to find out if equipment from home is appropriate for use on the school playground. Equipment brought to school should be appropriate for group activity and should be shared with other students. Equipment such as skateboards and scooters are not allowed at school.

Children are expected to maintain the same level of respect on the playground as in the classroom. Respect for self, others and materials is essential. Students who disregard this will lose the privilege of recess until the next day where they have a chance to make a different choice. Recess is an important part of the total curriculum. When recess is held outside, ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO GO OUTSIDE. A student may be excused from recess for one day with a note from the parent/guardian. Extended excuses will be honored upon receipt of a physician's note. Parents are responsible to see that their child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

While on the playground, students are expected to:

- Use playground equipment and structures carefully
- Play within the designated areas and boundaries
- Share equipment and follow the rules of the game

- Leave all personal items at home that may be damaged or endanger the safety of others. (The building Principal is authorized to make judgments on these items.)

24.6 Breakfast and Lunch Behavior

Breakfast and lunchtime provide students with another opportunity to practice social skills in an informally structured environment. During this time students are expected to: speak softly and be considerate of classmates, remain seated while eating, clean up after themselves, and be courteous to the people in charge.

Breakfast and Lunch expected behaviors:

- Students are expected to follow the Code of Student Conduct.
- Students are expected to sit while eating.
- Students are to use quiet voices when conversing with other students.
- Students are expected to use good table manners and to clean up after eating.

24.7 Tobacco/Smoke Free School Zone

The use of any tobacco products and E-Cigarettes, within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited. Students will be subject to disciplinary procedures outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

24.8 Drug and Alcohol Use

The use and/or possession of drugs or alcohol are illegal and will be treated by the school as a serious offense. Any student found with or using alcoholic beverages or drugs during school hours, on school-provided transportation, or at school-related activities shall be referred to the Principal for long-term suspension or expulsion. The student's parent(s) will be notified and required to attend a conference with the Principal and possibly the Board of Directors. The police will be notified, and the student may be liable for arrest and prosecution.

24.9 Possession of Weapons

The Board prohibits students from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon in any setting under the control and supervision of the Academy for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Academy, including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Academy, a school-sponsored event, including athletic events, or in a school vehicle.

The term weapon means any object capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage or endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), that will expel a BB, pellet, or paintballs, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.

This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

The Educational Service Provider will refer any student who violates this policy to the student's parents or guardians and to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion.

The federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 requires school districts to expel a student from school for a period of not less than one year if it is determined that the student brought a firearm to school. Expulsion may be permanent.

24.10 Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (including cyber-bullying)

The Academy will not tolerate bullying of any kind, including cyber bullying, on its school grounds, during school-sponsored activities/events, or off-campus. The Academy Board's revised anti-bullying policy has been included as part of the Student Code of Conduct contained in this Handbook. You are encouraged to read the policy, understand that it is based upon law, and encourage your child to refrain from bullying and cyber-bullying activities and report incidents observed at school.

24.11 Non-Discrimination Policy

The Academy does not discriminate against applicants, employees, or students on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, disability, age, national origin, political belief, marital status, sex, age, height, or weight in its programs or activities. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated in Academy employment practices and/or educational programs or activities.

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, or any other federal or state regulations, may be directed to the Principal, the Michigan Department of Education, or the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

24.12 Sexual Harassment

The Academy is committed to providing a working and learning environment based on dignity and respect, free of harassment or intimidation. All those associated with the Academy are expected to foster a climate that is supportive, respectful, and conducive to teaching and learning. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and the Department of Education's implementing regulations prohibit discrimination based on sex in federally assisted education programs and activities.

"Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment of a student can deny or limit, based on sex, the

student's ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities in the school's program. Sexual harassment of students is, therefore, a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX under the circumstances provided in this guidance" ("Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, January 2001).

Sexual harassment is among the behaviors that are destructive to a positive working and learning climate, and as such is prohibited by state law, federal law, and school board policy. Any member of the school community who engages in sexual harassment as defined below will be in violation of this policy. The Employee Manual is explicit in its discussion of sexual harassment and consequences of inappropriate behavior by employees.

This policy encompasses behavior of adults towards adults or students, and students towards students or adults.

The Michigan Department of Education Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide has been included in this Handbook.

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Students can be victims of sexual harassment by either a staff member or another student. Essentially, any sexual behavior or speech, whether in person or through electronic devices, that is unwelcome falls within the definition of sexual harassment that is prohibited by the School. Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of any gender against a person of the same or another gender. Michigan law places certain additional requirements on a finding of unlawful sexual harassment, so any report of sexual harassment will be investigated by the School to determine an appropriate response to protect the victim.

Most sexual harassment falls into one of the following categories:

- Quid Pro Quo - A school employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
- Sexual Assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking
- Unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity "reasonable person" standard

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal or written harassment or abuse,
- Unwanted physical and/or sexual contact,
- Pressure for sexual activity,
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications,
- Unwelcome touching,
- Unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations,
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats including, but not limited to, one's grades, and job,

- Asking about, or telling about, sexual fantasies, sexual preferences, or sexual activities,
- Speculations about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history,
- Display of lewd or sexually explicit materials, inappropriate jokes, gestures, or language of a sexual nature,
- Leering or staring at someone in a sexual way, such as staring at a person's breasts, buttocks, or groin,
- Verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

NOTE: What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as sexual harassment by another person. Therefore, the victim should make clear to the harasser that the behavior is offensive and must stop. Taking this step can often end future unwelcome conduct. If you are unsuccessful at this approach or are too uncomfortable to talk with the harasser about it, then the School encourages you to follow the complaint procedures outlined below.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

All persons associated with the Academy are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that his/her behavior does not sexually harass any other person associated with the schools.
2. Reporting any observed or experienced harassment or mistreatment immediately to the Principal and cooperating fully in the investigation of alleged sexual harassment; and
3. Actively participating in the Academy's effort to prevent sexual harassment in the schools.

Retaliation of any form, including threats, intimidation, reprisal or harassment, towards any person who makes a sexual harassment complaint, or who assists in or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing is unlawful and will not be tolerated and can be considered grounds for dismissal of staff and/or removal of a student from school.

FALSE REPORTS:

False (fabricated) claims of sexual harassment can cause permanent damage to the victim of such claims and must therefore be treated as a very serious matter. A false claim may be considered grounds for dismissal of staff, or discipline including the removal from the educational setting for a student, who makes a false claim.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Reports and complaints of sexual harassment will be kept as confidential as possible consistent with the rights of all parties.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT TITLE IX COORDINATOR:

The Board of Directors has appointed the Principal, or their designee, as the Title IX Coordinator who will be responsible for processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:

1. If the harasser does not stop the behavior or the victim is uncomfortable confronting the harasser, or if the behavior warrants further action in the opinion of the victim, the victim should lodge a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator.
2. The school will respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.
3. Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator will offer appropriate supportive measures to restore or preserve equal access to the educational program or activity.
 - a. Supportive measures are available with or without the filing of a Formal Complaint.
 - b. Supportive measures provided to the Complainant or Respondent shall be maintained as confidential.
4. The school will not impose discipline sanctions against the respondent prior to the completion of the grievance process unless the Academy has done an individualized safety and risk analysis and determined that emergency removal is necessary in order to protect a student or other individual from an immediate threat to physical health or safety.
5. If there is an emergency removal, the Academy will provide the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately after the removal.
6. The Academy will confirm whether the Complainant wants to initiate or participate in the grievance process.
7. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will investigate the matter in accordance with the Academy's grievance procedures.
8. The Title IX Coordinator will file a formal complaint when necessary to avoid deliberate indifference if the Complainant chooses not to do so.
9. Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the Academy will provide the parties with all relevant notices, including the allegations of misconduct.
10. If a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator may offer to the parties an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. The informal resolution process may be used at any time prior to the decision-maker reaching a determination regarding responsibility.
11. In conducting the investigation of a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will conduct an investigation to determine if the facts constitute harassment. Specifically, the Academy will undertake an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, and provide that credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness. Throughout the grievance process, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility is on the Academy, not the parties. The Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
12. During the investigation, the parties may present witnesses, the investigator will conduct interviews, and both parties will have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any

evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint.

13. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will create an investigation report that summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to each party.
14. The Title IX Coordinator will appoint a decision-maker to issue a determination of responsibility. The decision-maker will apply the preponderance of the evidence standard.
15. If the decision-maker determines that the Respondent is responsible for engaging in sexual harassment, the decision-maker will recommend appropriate remedies, including disciplinary sanctions or consequences.
16. Both parties have the right to file an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, or from the Title IX Coordinators dismissal of a Formal Complaint, on the following bases:
 - a. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
 - b. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
 - c. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Academy's complete Sexual Harassment (Title IX) Policy and grievance procedures can be found on the Academy website.

STATE and FEDERAL REMEDIES:

In addition to the above, if someone believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment, he/she may file a formal complaint with either or both governing agencies set forth below. The complaint process does not prohibit filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC - 180 days; MCAD - 6 months).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
2. State of Michigan

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT INFORMATION GUIDE

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual remarks or behaviors. It can be verbal, physical, or visual. Here are a few examples of sexual harassment.

Verbal:

- Making sexual jokes, comments, or spreading rumors targeted at someone (in person or online)
- Making sexual jokes or comments about students' bodies or how they look or act
- Making jokes or comments about students' masculinity or femininity and/or who they are attracted to or love



Physical:

- Pulling at or touching someone's clothing in a sexual manner (like pulling down someone's pants or snapping a bra strap)
- Touching, pinching, or grabbing someone in a sexual way
- Brushing up against someone's body on purpose



Visual:

- Posting or sharing sexual comments, pictures, or videos
- Pressuring someone to take or send sexual pictures or videos ("nudes")



Sexual harassment can make someone feel many emotions



You may feel scared, uncomfortable, upset, embarrassed or angry.

When it comes to sexual harassment, what matters is how the action makes a person think or feel--not the intention of the person who did it.

Sexual harassment can happen anywhere or to anyone. It can take place in person or online. But no matter where sexual harassment happens, it is never OK. It is wrong and it is against the law.



What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is any sexual act that one person chooses to do to another person without consent (permission) through physical force, threats, or pressure (verbal or emotional).

Here are a few examples of sexual assault:

- Touching someone's genitals, breast, or butt without their permission (consent)
- Unwanted behavior or touch over or under clothes
- Unwanted kissing
- Physically forcing someone to perform a sexual act
- Threatening or pressuring a person to do any sexual act
- Unwanted vaginal, oral, or anal penetration with a body part or object (also known as rape)

**Sexually assaulting another person is wrong and it is against the law.
In Michigan statute, this is called "Criminal Sexual Conduct."**

About Consent

- Consent means that each person agrees or gives permission.
- Anyone can change their mind at any time.
- Consent means each person understands what is going on and agrees to all of it.
- Someone needs to get consent every single time.
- Just because someone said "yes" before, does not mean "yes" now.
- It is not OK to use threats, emotional pressure, or the fact that another person is drunk or high to get what you want.

If someone doesn't consent to sexual acts it is sexual assault.



What if This is Happening to Me?

It is not your fault. You are not alone.

- No one has the right to sexually harass or assault anyone else.
- You have the right to feel safe and respected.
- If you feel like you won't be harmed, tell them this is not okay and to stop.
- Consider telling a trusted adult if any of these behaviors happen to you. If the trusted adult is a teacher, coach, or school staff, they may have to tell someone else (like a principal, parents, etc.). If you're not sure if you are ready or want to tell a trusted adult at your school, you can talk to them without saying it happened to you ("I have a friend who...").
- If the first person isn't helpful, keep trying until you find someone who is.
- Speaking up is a brave thing to do. Don't be afraid to seek help from someone you trust.
- Resources listed on page 4 are available 24/7 to support you.

Scientific research tells us that people who experience traumatic events like sexual harassment and sexual assault have many different responses in their brains, bodies, feelings, and behaviors. However YOU respond to trauma is OK and is normal.

What if This is Happening to Someone I Know?

Believe. Listen. Support.



- Believe them! If someone tells you that someone has sexually harassed or assaulted them, know that it is very hard to tell someone about this and that person trusts and respects you enough to share this information. Let them know that what happened is not their fault and you are there to support them.
- Listen without judgment. Give them space and time to tell you what they feel comfortable sharing.
- Ask how you can support them. What you would need might differ from what your friend needs, so always ask. Let your friend decide who else can know.



Resources

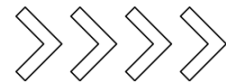
There is Help.

You can call or chat with any of the resources below 24/7. People who are trained are there to listen and support you no matter what. **You don't have to tell them your name.** They can connect you with people and organizations nearby who can help you with questions or needs.

Michigan's Sexual Assault Hotline (VOICES4)

Text: 866-238-1454 **Call:** 855-864-2374

Chat: <https://mcedsv.org/sexual-violence-hotline-chat/>



Michigan's Domestic/Dating Violence Hotline (VOICEDV)

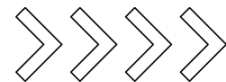
Text: 877-861-0222 **Call:** 866-864-2338

Chat: <https://mcedsv.org/hotline-domestic-violence/>



Youth Resources Web Page

<https://mcedsv.org/resources>



School Title IX Coordinator

If someone sexually assaulted or sexually harassed you at school or at a school event, you can choose to talk to your School District's Title IX Coordinator. Part of their responsibilities is to prevent and respond to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and discrimination based on sex and gender. Note: If you report to a Title IX Coordinator, they are required by law to follow up and may conduct an investigation.

If you report a sexual assault or sexual harassment incident, the policies forbid someone from retaliating or doing something to get back at you. See page 5 for your school's Title IX information and other related policies.

This resource was developed in response to Public Act 57 of 2023 by the Michigan Department of Education in partnership with the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCEDSV).

New Branches Charter Academy



Academy Title IX Coordinator

Teresa Larkin

3662 Poinsettia Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508

(616) 243-6221

teresalarkin@choiceschools.com

Academy Policies Related to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault are stated above.

For the complete policies on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault visit the Academy's nondiscrimination/Title IX webpage at newbranches.org/title-ix/ or scan the following.



The policies prohibit adverse action against a person for reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault.

25 Student Rights

The Academy Board has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights, including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from harassment and discrimination; the responsibility not to harass and discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspensions, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his or her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy in respect to the school's records.

The Board of Directors believes that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights and of the legal authority of the Academy Board to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior. The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through the Code of Student Conduct, which is distributed annually. Parents are required to sign the Code of Student Conduct as an acknowledgment that they have reviewed and discussed the Code with their children.

Children's Rights and Responsibilities

Children have the right:

- To experience a safe, supportive, and consistent environment.
- To use all of the program equipment, materials, and facilities on an equal basis with all of the other children.
- To receive respectful treatment.
- To experience discipline that is fair and non-punitive.
- To receive nurturing care from staff members.

Children have the responsibility:

- To be accountable for their actions.
- To respect the school rules that guide them while at school.
- To remain with the group and staff at all times.
- To care for materials and equipment properly.

25.1 Child Abuse or Neglect

Michigan State law rightfully requires the school to report any suspicious or obvious abuse or neglect of a child to the Michigan Department of Human Services. Please be aware that the staff takes this responsibility seriously and will act immediately to meet this reporting requirement of the law. Michigan DHS Children's Protective Services phone number is 855-444-3911.

25.2 Interrogations and Searches

25.2.1 Searches by Staff

The right to inspect students' cubbies, backpacks/book bags, and belongings is inherent in the authority granted school boards and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property. More detailed information on interrogations and searches is in the Code of Student Conduct. In exercise of that authority by school officials, it is incumbent upon them to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the school.

25.2.2 Interrogation by Police and Other Outside Agencies

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to try to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials and representatives of other agencies. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement and or agency officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school, Principal or designee will be present while the student is being questioned. If a school representative cannot be present, the questioning at school will be delayed until a school representative can be present.
2. An extensive effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian to ensure that the responsible individual is notified of the situation. To that end, the school will attempt to call every phone number on record as emergency contact(s) for the student. If no one responds to the phone call, the school will leave a voicemail indicating the urgency of a return call. If there is no answer at any phone number on record, the school will send an email to all emails on record. Unless there is an immediate threat of harm to the school, a student or a staff member, the school will delay the police interrogation for one (1) hour to provide the parent/guardian with time to respond to the efforts to notify them.
3. If custody and/or arrest is/are involved, the Principal will request that the law enforcement officials observe all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law.

25.3 Summary of Regulations Pertaining to Student Records

A parent has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student within 45 days after receipt of the written request unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and the student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee (\$.25 per page) may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials. The parent and student may request in writing to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school or a third party if desired.

25.4 Amendment of Record

The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and student have a right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference, and the Principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the decision may be appealed to the Board of Directors, or the person designated by the Board.

25.5 Confidentiality of Records

With some specific exceptions (see below), no individuals, or organizations but the parent, student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

25.6 Notification of Rights under FERPA and PPRA

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. The Principal is responsible for the supervision of student records in the school. Each student's records will be kept in a confidential file located at the student's school office. The information in a student's record file will be available for review only by the parents or legal guardian of a student, an adult student and those authorized by State and Federal law and Board policy/guidelines.

State and Federal law permits access by school officials who have a legitimate educational purpose. School officials for purpose of the Board's policy include a person employed by the Board as an administrator, supervisor, teacher/instructor (including substitutes), or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the Board has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, insurance carrier or medical consultant); a contractor, consultant, volunteer or other party to whom the Board had outsourced a service otherwise performed by Board employees (e.g. a therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks (including volunteers). An individual will have a "legitimate educational purpose" if the record is necessary in order for the school official/employee to perform an administrative, supervisory, or instructional task, or to perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family.

In addition to school officials with a legitimate educational purpose, the school may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- A. to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled.
- B. to authorized representatives of the Federal Government, or State and local educational authorities, such as the Michigan Department of Education. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs.
- C. in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received.
- D. to organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (1) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (2) administer student aid programs; or (3) improve instruction.
- E. to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- F. to parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- G. to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- H. to State and local officials or authorities in the juvenile justice system as it pertains to the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released.
- I. to appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- J. information the school has designated as "directory information," as defined in the "Notice of Directory Information and Opt Out Form" ***in the back of this handbook***, and subject to the restrictions explained below.
- K. to an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency, or tribal organization as defined in Federal law, who has the right to access a student's case plan as determined by the agency or organization, when such agency or organization is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student provided the education records and personally identifiable information will not be unlawfully released to third parties.
- L. to comply with a court order when a parent is a party to a court proceeding involving child abuse and neglect (as defined in section 3 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) or dependency.

A parent or adult student has the right to:

- A. inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days after the School Official receives a written request for access. The School Official will notify the parent or adult student of the time and place where the records can be inspected.
- B. request the amendment of the student's education records if the parent or adult student believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents or adult students who believe that a change is necessary should ask the School Official to correct the record. Such a request should be

made in writing and should identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or adult student will be informed of his/her right to request a hearing.

- C. consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except the extent that Federal and/or State law authorizes disclosure without consent.

SPECIFIC EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment ("PPRA") requires the Board to notify parents and eligible students and obtain consent to allow parents or eligible students to opt the student out of participating in certain school activities including socio-demographic surveys, analysis, or evaluations. This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes, or certain physical exams. The PPRA affords parents the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey that involves protected information. The school will provide parents, within a reasonable period prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys.

The Academy's FERPA and PPRA policies can be found on the Academy website. Any parent or student who believes that the Academy has failed to comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") or the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment ("PPRA"), may file a complaint online by selecting the complaint form option at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint> or by mailing the form directly to the Student Privacy Policy Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.

Code of Student Conduct Positive Discipline Support Plan

“A Partnership in Responsibility”

Revised August 2024

Introduction

Character Education Code of Student Conduct

The Code of Student Conduct provides behavior guidelines for development of good social skills, students as responsible citizens, and accelerated learning school culture. All stakeholders—students, parents, administration, faculty, and support staff—enter a partnership in responsibility to build positive character in our students that prepares them for college, work, military, parenthood, and community service.

The Harmony Social Emotional Learning and be.nice programs empowers students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and opportunities to become responsible members of the home, school, and community.

Everyone has rights and responsibilities. The Code of Student Conduct attempts to preserve individual rights in the school community and deliver academic excellence in a safe, emotionally secure community of learners. Diversity is our strength, and we pursue productive classrooms where all students find meaning, dignity, and sense of community.

The overarching goal of the Code of Student Conduct is to teach students self-discipline and good social skills. We want to keep students in school. We have implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) system which provides a framework for progressive and constructive discipline practices and in-school interventions for minor misbehaviors. Out of school suspension is reserved for serious infractions of the Code of Student Conduct.

Parents are our most valuable partners. We seek your cooperation and participation in the ongoing development of your child's academic knowledge, skills, and attitudes and social skills. We encourage you to read and review the Code of Student Conduct with your child and encourage acceptable behavior at school.

STUDENT RIGHTS

EDUCATION

The rights of all students are ensured by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Michigan and by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes. These rights, including the right to an education, shall be recognized without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disabling condition, or intellectual ability. Students have a right to a public education beginning with pre-kindergarten and extending through the twelfth grade.

Students, in all their diversity, are to be educated in a safe and supportive environment that fosters academic success and healthy development and that prioritizes keeping students in school.

ENVIRONMENT

Students have the right to expect a safe school environment in which to learn and a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

RESPECT

Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of the school staff and other students.

PROPERTY

Students have a right to expect that other students and school personnel will respect their personal property.

PARTICIPATION

Students have a right to participate in school activities, subject to qualification requirements and compliance with Board of Directors policies and administrative guidelines.

EXPRESSION

Students have the right to address policies both publicly and privately, in writing and orally. Students may advocate change in any law, policy, or regulation.

APPEAL

Students have the right to seek a review and change in policies and decisions concerning student conduct. A parent has the right to seek a change in a school policy or decision concerning his or her child.

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SECTION A: A PARTNERSHIP IN RESPONSIBILITY

The Academy is committed to respect for the rights of others. Rules governing discipline and conduct are written so that parents, students, teachers, and the Principal know what is expected of students. By working together under clearly stated and consistently enforced regulations, we can administer firm, fair and consistent discipline practices as called for by the US Department of Justice.

Parents, teachers, staff, the Principal, and the Board of Directors are responsible for helping students develop self-discipline and learn social skills required for work and college. The Code of Student Conduct delineates the partnership that the school and the larger-community share across several broad concepts.

Environment, which includes the climate of the school.

Education, which includes preparation and work habits.

Respect, which includes treatment of others.

Participation, which includes involvement in school activities; and

Expression, which includes dress and verbal and nonverbal issues.

These broad concepts appear in each statement of responsibilities contained in this handbook.

Beliefs

The following beliefs guided the development of the Code of Student Conduct:

1. That schools must be safe and secure for students and staff.
2. That students have rights and responsibilities in the learning environment.
3. That the school is for instruction and learning, and anything that distracts from the learning process must be dealt with by the Principal, faculty, and staff within progressive and positive discipline practices.
4. That students and their parents should be knowledgeable of school and classroom rules.
5. That students have a responsibility to exercise self-control over their own behavior and that teachers and support staff have the responsibility to teach students good social skills and acceptable behaviors.
6. That the responsibility for discipline is shared among students, school personnel, the Board of Directors, and parents.
7. That the school respects differences in discipline practices at home as long as they are within parameters of the law.
8. That students, who violate school and classroom rules, must be afforded their rights to due process, which are procedurally, morally, and legally fair and correct.

9. That students, when they violate school and classroom rules, should be assigned corrective measures with the purpose of teaching good social behaviors.
10. That disciplinary measures should be progressive, corrective, and preventive, unless the safety of students is an issue.
11. That disciplinary measures should be firm, consistent, and fair.
12. That the disciplinary measures of the school should be a problem-solving process and should focus on the causes of the infraction and learning acceptable behaviors.
13. That the assigning of disciplinary measures should be reasonable.
14. That students, who commit criminal acts, should be administered measures that are severe and swift when the safety of the general school population is at issue.

School Jurisdiction

The authority of the school over the conduct of students extends to the following locations:

1. On the school grounds during, before, and after school hours.
2. On school sponsored transportation for all school-related activities and the regular school day.
3. On the school grounds, as either a spectator or a participant at any other time when a school group is using the school.
4. Off the school grounds at any school-related activity, function, or event as a participant or a spectator.
5. When a student's conduct at any other time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline, or on protecting the safety and welfare of students or school/staff; and
6. When a student is using school telecommunications networks, accounts, school-issued electronic devices, or other school services.

Student Expression

The Principal will maintain open channels of communication through which students may express their individual or group concerns and suggestions that will be formally and informally deliberated.

We sincerely believe that continued recognition of students' rights and responsibilities will develop within our youth a student philosophy that will nurture their internal strengths, will deter the influence, and spread of degrading attitudes, and will perpetuate the American ideal of a responsible, democratic system of government.

SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Responsibilities

Environment

1. Assist the Principal and his/her staff in the operation of a safe and orderly school, where all students can learn and develop socially.
2. Be clean and dress in compliance with school rules of sanitation and safety in a fashion that will not disrupt classroom procedures and in a manner which conforms to the Academy's dress guidelines.
3. Obey school rules and/or the law concerning use, possession, distribution or sale of tobacco, marijuana, or controlled substances as defined under the Drug Control Act, drug paraphernalia as defined by the State of Michigan, imitation controlled substances, nonprescription or prescription drugs, or alcohol on school property, on the way to and from school, or while attending school-sponsored activities.
4. Obey laws and regulations, which forbid supplying, handling, using, transmitting, or possessing any type of weapon on school property, on the way to and from school, or at any school-sponsored event.
5. Report to the Principal or her staff incidents when your safety or the safety of others may be jeopardized.

Education

1. Support all students' right and opportunity for a free appropriate public education as provided by applicable federal, state, and local statutes, without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disability, or intellectual ability.
2. Take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school.
3. Complete all assigned work, study, and read.
4. Attend school regularly and punctually to achieve maximum learning.
5. Be prepared for learning by bringing materials and supplies to classes.

Respect

1. Be self-controlled and non-disruptive on school property and/or at school activities.
2. Be reasonable, modest, self-controlled, non-suggestive, non-intimidating, and considerate in your relationships with other students and with school employees.
3. Keep your language and gestures respectful and free of profanity or obscenities.
4. Respect private, public, and school property.
5. Be informed of laws and school rules regarding students' rights and responsibilities.

Participation

1. Support and participate in school activities, co-curricular and extra-curricular.
2. Remain on the school campus during the school day; be punctual in carrying out your schedule and take part in classroom activities.

Expression

1. Support the right to freedom of expression.
2. Ensure that your expressions do not interfere with the educational program or activities or with the rights of others.
3. Be sensitive to others in your choice of expressive clothing that you wear or carry, ensuring that it does not express obscene, racist, or sexist language or gestures or slanderous, libelous, racist, or sexist statements.
4. Be sensitive to others in your choice of expressive words that you say or write, ensuring that they are not obscene, slanderous, libelous, racist, or sexist.
5. Ensure that your expressions do not contribute to bullying or cyber-bullying of another student.
6. NOTE: The right to freedom of expression does NOT include threats toward other students, staff or the school.

Parent Responsibilities

Environment

1. Insist that your child is clean and dressed in compliance with school rules of sanitation and safety and within the school dress guidelines.
2. Ensure that your child is free of communicable disease and in good health.
3. Support school officials in maintaining a safe and orderly school environment, free of disruptions, which interfere with teaching, learning, and safety.
4. Ensure that you and your child(ren) understand school rules and/or the law concerning students' use, possession, distribution, or sale of tobacco, marijuana, or controlled substances as defined under the Drug Control Act, drug paraphernalia as defined by the School Code of Michigan, imitation controlled substances, nonprescription or prescription drugs, or alcohol on school property, on the way to or from school, or while attending school-sponsored activities.
5. Ensure that your child understands that supplying, handling, using, transmitting, or possessing any type of weapon on school property, on the way to or from school, or at any school-sponsored event is prohibited.

Education

1. Help support education for children as provided by applicable federal, state, and local statutes, without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disabling condition, or intellectual ability.
2. Make certain your child's attendance at school is regular and punctual and all absences are properly excused.
3. Instill in your child the desire to learn.
4. Become acquainted with your child's school, staff, curriculum, and activities.
5. Ensure that your child has the necessary materials and supplies needed for classes and activities.
6. Ensure that your child has a quiet and proper place to study at home.

Respect

1. Guide your child, from the earliest years of his or her life, to develop socially acceptable standards of behavior, to exercise self-control, and to be accountable for his or her actions.
2. Teach your child, by word and example, respect for law, for the authority of the school, and for the rights and property of others.
3. Know and understand the rules your child is expected to observe at school; be aware of the consequences for violations of these rules and accept legal responsibility for your child's actions.
4. Encourage your child to respect honest work and to develop an interest in exploring broader fields of knowledge.
5. Accept the right of the Board of Directors to require respectable behavior of all students and nonstudents at all activities involving the school.
6. Help your child understand and respect the purposes of schooling, learning, and teaching.

Participation

1. Send your child to school as required by The Michigan School Code, on time, every day, ready to learn.
2. Request and attend parent-teacher conferences.
3. Attend school functions and activities with your child.
4. Volunteer for school functions or assist when possible.

Expression

1. Encourage your child to conduct him or herself in an acceptable manner.
2. Encourage your child not to make obscene gestures or libelous, racist, or sexist statements or to use intimidating tactics toward others.
3. Help your child understand when free expression steps over the line and becomes bullying, threats, or sexual harassment. None of these behaviors are protected and will result in disciplinary action.
4. Encourage your child not to interfere with the educational progress of others or the educational program by using inappropriate verbal or nonverbal expressions.
5. Encourage your child to dress appropriately in the school uniform so that his or her appearance will not disrupt the educational process or activities.

Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

Environment

1. Reflect personal enthusiasm for teaching and learning and genuine concern for the individual student.
2. Express positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior.
3. Provide clear, reasonable classroom rules consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Project the image of your profession, your school, and education for everyone in a positive manner.
5. Be professional and be a role model for students.

6. Refer to the student's teacher or Principal any student whose behavior requires special attention.
7. Report all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect to your Principal as required by Michigan Law.

Education

1. Guide differentiated learning activities so students learn to think and reason.
2. Provide opportunities for students to develop socially acceptable skills, attitudes, and behaviors.
3. Provide meaningful schoolwork for students with the expectation that all students will be successful.
4. Inform parents regarding student achievement and behavior and consult with parents whenever necessary.
5. Teach each student as an individual on his/her own level.
6. Communicate with the Principal regarding academic achievement.

Respect

1. Guide students to assume responsibility for their actions and to respect the rights of others.
2. Be firm, consistent, and fair in enforcing school rules on school property and at all school-sponsored activities.
3. Demonstrate by word and personal example self-discipline and respect for law.
4. Develop positive relationships with parents and students.
5. Respect the dignity of everyone.

Participation

1. Assume the rights and responsibilities of collaborative culture and shared decision making.
2. Participate in the establishment of school rules and regulations regarding student behavior: explain these rules to students and require observance of them.
3. Assist the Principal in developing the school philosophy, objectives, and procedures for the efficient and orderly operation of the school.
4. Participate in school activities and sponsor co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Expression

1. Ensure that expressions by anyone do not interfere with meaningful instruction.
2. Encourage students to express themselves appropriately and respectfully.
3. Do not use language that is obscene, slanderous, racist, sexist, or sarcastic.
4. Encourage students, parents, other teachers, and other staff to use language that is not obscene, slanderous, racist, or sexist.
5. Represent your profession positively through your appearance and conduct at school and at school-sponsored events.
6. Refrain from initiation of or participation in sexual harassment activities.
7. Help educate students on the nature of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment.

Principal Responsibilities

Environment

1. Create the best teaching-learning conditions possible for student learning.
2. Create a safe, caring school environment for everyone.
3. Take the lead in establishing reasonable rules and regulations for the orderly operation of the school.
4. Make rules and regulations known and understood by students, parents, teachers, and staff.
5. Report all incidents of suspected child abuse or child neglect as required by Michigan Law.

Education

1. Organize school schedules and teaching assignments and require effective classroom management and instruction.
2. Maintain open lines of communication between school and home and between staff and administration.
3. Offer a complement of student activities, which provide interesting activities for all students.
4. Encourage the recognition of students' accomplishments.
5. Protect instructional time and ensure the best possible conditions for learning.
6. Ensure that discipline practices are progressive, constructive, and focused on developing self-discipline and social skills for career and college success.
7. Ensure that all students are encouraged to achieve high academic standards.

Respect

1. Be firm, fair, courteous, and consistent in all decisions affecting students, parents, and staff.
2. Demonstrate by word and personal example respect for law, self-discipline, and genuine concern for all persons.
3. Recognize that parents are a child's first teachers and listen to the concerns and suggestions of parents.

Participation

1. Provide leadership by creating a school culture where a collaborative culture can flourish, shared decision making is encouraged, and unity of purpose is achieved.
2. Become acquainted with students and parents by visiting classrooms, attending school activities and events, accepting opportunities to take part in community events, and inviting the community into the school.
3. Receive teacher or staff referrals of students with behavior problems, confer with these students, communicate with parents, and set up cooperative procedures for correcting student behavior and teaching good social skills.

Expression

1. Do not use language that is obscene, racist, sexist, libelous or sarcastic.

2. Encourage and ensure that students, parents, teachers, and other staff use appropriate expressions which are not obscene, racist, sexist, slanderous, disruptive, libelous, intimidating, or sarcastic.
3. Exemplify leadership qualities and represent your profession positively through your appearance and conduct at school, and at school-sponsored events, and in the community.
4. Ensure that students, parents, teachers, and staff members follow the appropriate dress guidelines for the school and for common decency and that guidelines are consistently and fairly enforced.
5. Be aware of and follow guidelines prohibiting bullying and sexual harassment.
6. Ensure that the school provides students and staff with education regarding appropriate online behavior and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Board of Directors and Management Responsibilities

Environment

1. Inform the community of what is expected of students and what the consequences are when rules are violated.
2. Give full support to school staff and others charged with the responsibility for managing the schools.

Education

1. Maintain a well-trained staff at all levels.
2. Develop programs and activities, which provide for all students, including those with special needs.
3. Provide vision for the school, which includes curricular programs and activities designed to provide students with opportunities to learn and develop.

Respect

Be fair, courteous, and consistent in making decisions regarding those students whose behavior problems have been appealed to the Board of Directors in accordance with state law.

Participation

1. Become acquainted with the Academy, its staff, and students by visiting buildings regularly and by attending school activities.
2. Encourage and support participatory decision-making.

Expression

1. Provide Policies regarding appropriate expressions by students, parents, teachers, and other staff members consistent with federal, state, and local laws.
2. Ensure and protect freedom of expression for all students, parents and caretakers, publics, and constituencies.

SECTION C: GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

School leadership, teachers, and support staff are responsible for ensuring that meaningful and engaging instruction takes place and that students who want a high-quality education, receive it. Educators share responsibility to teach students the social and emotional skills required to achieve success in school, including interventions to monitor and change behavior until the individual student demonstrates acceptable behavior as a student and member of the school community.

Attendance

Michigan law places responsibility on each student to attend school on time, every day regularly and on each parent/guardian to send their child to school every day. The Board of Directors requires that all students attend school during the days and hours that the Academy is in session. Students are expected to be at school every possible day because they miss valuable instructional time and fall behind in their studies. Attendance is also an important habit to learn in preparation for work. Each student is expected to receive a minimum of 1,098 hours of instruction to be promoted to the next grade or receive credit in coursework.

Help Your Child Succeed in Life: Build the Habit of Good School Attendance

DID YOU KNOW?

- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to get their child to school.
- Missing just five days of school means 30 hours of missed instruction.
- Starting in kindergarten, there is a direct link between absences and reading level.
- One in ten kindergarten and first grade students is chronically absent.
- Students who are chronically absent are 7.5 times more likely to drop out of high school.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and backpack the night before.
- Develop a back-up plan for how your child is getting to school in case something comes up. Call on a friend, family member or neighbor.
- Do not let your child stay home unless he or she is really sick. A stomachache can be a sign of anxiety or avoidance.
- Have your doctor fax or email the school directly.
- Talk to your teacher or Principal if you need additional help or resources

Parents are asked to call the school office to notify the school of their child's absence or to leave a voicemail (616-243-6221 Option 1) whenever their child will be absent from school. Parents are encouraged to notify the office manager prior to 9:00 AM. Parents are to provide valid written documentation stating the cause of absence for the absence to be excused; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Excused absences may be granted for the following reasons:

- A. Illness of the student. The Principal may require a doctor's statement. A doctor's statement of illness must be presented if a student is absent more than three consecutive days or more than ten absences during a semester.
- B. Illness in the immediate family, which requires absence of the student from school.
- C. Death in the immediate family (should not exceed three days).
- D. Recovery from an accident.
- E. Required court appearance. Parents are asked to notify the school in advance.
- F. Professional appointments. Parents need to notify the school in advance of the appointment and are encouraged to have the child return to school after the appointment.
- G. Religious holidays regularly observed by persons of the student's faith, provided the parent has given written notice in advance of the absence.
- H. Absences for other reasons as approved by the Principal upon request of the parent.

Upon return to school, a student is to check with his or her teacher(s) to schedule make-up work and turn in any excuse notes to the school office.

When a student accumulates 10% of total school days absent (total loss learning time due to unexcused absenteeism, tardiness, and early dismissal in combination), an absenteeism report will be submitted to the county truancy officer and the parents will attend a mandatory meeting with the Assistant Principal or Principal. This meeting will determine the course of action that will be taken, which may include the development of an attendance contract, an absenteeism report submitted to the truancy officer, possible withdrawal from the school, and possible petition to the juvenile court. If the family chooses not to participate in the meeting, or the student does not uphold the attendance contract, a second absenteeism report will be submitted to the county truancy officer. Students who are chronically absent may be recommended for retention.

We encourage family and students to strive for less than 5 absences each school year. The county office allows 5 uncounted excused absences (AU) per school year which does not count towards truancy. Any excused absences beyond 5 will be counted towards truancy (AC) absenteeism unless a physician's note is provided specifying the exact date(s) the student is to be excused and personally signed by the attending physician.

When a student is absent from school for ten consecutive days without knowledge of the Principal will be withdrawn from the Academy and the student's directory information will be reported to the truancy officer of the intermediate school district and other state and local agencies. The Principal will attempt to contact the student's parent/caretaker during the period of consecutive absences.

Student Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival and dismissal of students will be supervised by staff 10 minutes before school starts and 10 minutes after school dismisses. Parents may circle through the parking lot and drop-off their children at the entrance of the school; children should proceed to their designated area with their teacher. If you need to enter the building, you may park in the designated parking area. Students who are leaving school at the end of the school day are to be picked-up at the end of last regular class time. Students are to be picked-up by a parent/caretaker or person designated by the parent/caretaker and approved by the Principal immediately after school or report to after school childcare (when available and if registered). Students are not to be unsupervised at any time during the school day or before and after school.

If parents choose to have their child(ren) walk to and from school, parents must fill out a Walker Permission Form. Students in grades TK-5th grade will not be allowed to walk home alone without an older sibling.

A student who is picked up late three times will have a warning letter sent home to the parent. If a student is picked up late six times, an intervention plan will be developed with the parent and Principal.

If parents need to make any changes in the dismissal instruction of their child, please do so no later than 2:00 pm by contacting the school office.

Late Arrival

Students are tardy to school if they arrive to class after the school day begins for all students. Teachers are expected to begin opening exercises promptly and transition smoothly into instruction. A tardy student must report to the office with his/her parent/guardian upon arrival to be signed in by the parent/guardian and provide written or oral reason for tardiness to the office. The Principal, or his/her designee, will provide the student with a tardy pass to admit him or her to the class that is in session at the time.

A student who is tardy three times will receive a warning letter sent home to the parents for the parent's signature. If a student receives 6 unexcused tardies, an attendance intervention plan will be developed with the student, parent, and Principal. Tardy students interrupt learning for other students.

There are times when a deviation from a student's normal school schedule is necessary. Tardiness will be excused under the following circumstances:

1. Serious illness (accompanied by a parent's note or written doctor's notice)
2. Death in the family
3. Legally required presence at a court proceeding
4. School sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
5. Religious observations
6. Severe weather, fires, family tragedies
7. Pre-arranged late arrival approved by the Principal

When a child is tardy between classes, it is the responsibility of the student to receive a pass from the previous teacher. Teachers are encouraged to assist students in transition to the next class. Students arriving in the classroom after the start of class will be considered tardy. State guidelines require that all attendance must be documented and reported to the local Intermediate School District, including late arrivals.

Early Dismissal

The student may need to leave school during the school day. The parent is to receive approval of the Principal in advance by written or personal request for a justifiable reason, including early dismissals for doctor's appointments, religious observations, family funerals, and other pre-arranged events. Unexcused early dismissal will be counted as a tardy. Parents must report to the office to sign their child out. Students will only be released to parents and adults designated by the parent/caretaker and approved by the Principal. In child custody situations, the custodial parent must properly inform the Principal of any limitations. Michigan law calls for students to receive 1,098 hours of instruction.

Expressions and Limitations

Students may exercise the right to freedom of expression through speech, assembly, petition, and other lawful means and have the right to advocate change of any law, policy, or administrative guideline. The exercise of this right may not interfere with the rights of others, nor may oral or written student opinions be used to present material that falls into one or more of the following categories:

1. Material that reasonably leads the Principal or teacher to forecast substantial disruption of, or interference with, school activities or that endangers the health or safety of students.
2. Material that is libelous or slanderous - statements that are inaccurate or false statements that injure the person as to his or her reputation, cause personal humiliation, mental anguish, and suffering or other injuries.
3. Material that advocates the commission of a criminal act or is a criminal act as defined by the Criminal Code of the United States, the State of Michigan, the County, or the City of residence.
4. Material that is obscene as defined in the Michigan School Code, as amended.
5. Material, communications, and or actions that are considered to be bullying as defined in the Michigan School Code, as amended, and in Board Policy and administrative guidelines.

Distribution of Literature by Students and Nonstudents

The Principal or his/her designee shall coordinate distribution or display of literature by students enrolled in the school. The material must be approved by the Principal, must not be in violation of applicable Board of Directors Policy, and must bear the name of the sponsoring individuals or school organizations.

Search and Seizure

Desks, lockers, and storage spaces, which are provided to students without charge, are the property of the school. The Principal or designee may make general inspections on a periodic basis and may open desks, lockers, or storage spaces in the presence of a witness and examine the contents, including personal belongings of students, when there are reasonable grounds to believe that they contain illegal drugs, contraband, weapons, or stolen property, or that the student has violated or is violating state or federal laws, City Codes, or Policies of the Board of Directors, provided the search is conducted primarily for enforcing order and discipline in the school and not for criminal prosecution.

The Principal may also, to the full extent permitted by law and Board Policies, search and seize students and their personal effects, including electronic devices. Such a search is permissible only when there are reasonable grounds to believe that they contain evidence that the student has violated or is violating state or federal laws, City Codes, or Policies of the Board of Directors. Whenever possible, a search of a student's person or belongings will be conducted by the Principal in the presence of the student and another staff member.

Search of a student's intimate personal belongings shall be conducted only in exceptional circumstances, when the health or safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened. Reasonable efforts to locate the student shall be made prior to the search. If the student is present, the school official shall advise him/her of the circumstances justifying the search and seizure of the objects that the official believes the search may disclose. If the student is not present, he or she shall be informed of the search. Stolen items and items that are specifically prohibited by federal and state law, Board of Directors Policies, regulations of the County and City and or school administrative guidelines may be impounded. The student shall be given a receipt for any items impounded by school authorities, and parents shall be notified of any items impounded.

Search of a student's person shall be conducted by a staff member of the student's gender and only in exceptional circumstances, when the health and safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened. An extensive effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian to ensure that the responsible individual is notified of the situation and given an opportunity to be present for the search. To that end, the school will attempt to call every phone number on record as emergency contact(s) for the student. If no one responds to the phone call, the school will leave a voicemail indicating the urgency of a return call. If there is no answer at any phone number on record, the school will send an email to all emails on record. If the school is unable to locate a parent or guardian, the school may still conduct the search if the health or safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened. If there is no immediate threat to health or safety, the school will wait for one (1) hour for the parent/guardian to respond to the school's attempts to notify them of the impending search. If the parent or guardian does not respond within one (1) hour, the school will proceed with the search as authorized by law and Board policy. The school may turn the search over to the Police. The school official shall advise the student of the circumstances justifying the search and seizure of the objects that the official believes the search may disclose. Stolen items and items that are

specifically prohibited by federal and state law, Board of Directors Policies, regulations of the County and City and or school administrative guidelines may be impounded. The student shall be given a receipt for any items impounded by school authorities, and parents shall be notified of any items impounded.

Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (cyberspace as well)

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at school. "At school" is defined as on school premises, in a school-related vehicle, at school-sponsored events, or using telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider under control or ownership of the Academy. Bullying and cyberbullying that do not occur at school but cause a substantial disruption to the educational environment may be subject to disciplinary action according to Board Policy (Attached).

Bullying means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly. Cyberbullying means any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly. Any reference to bullying includes cyberbullying.

The Academy Board's revised anti-bullying policy is provided in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. You are encouraged to read the policy, understand that it is based upon law, and encourage your child to refrain from bullying activities/and report incidents that they observe at school.

Every student is called upon to report any situation that he or she believes to be bullying behavior directed toward a student or an employee. Employees are required to report bullying behavior to the Principal.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reference: The Matt Epling Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011, as amended by Public Act 478 of 2014 (MCL § 380.1310b).

The Board believes that a safe and nurturing educational environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Therefore, it is the policy of the Academy to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of its students. Appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of students, as well as administrators, faculty, staff, visitors, and volunteers.

Bullying and Cyberbullying are Prohibited

Bullying and cyberbullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is prohibited. All pupils are protected under this policy and bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying” means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
- B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
- D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

“Cyberbullying” means any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
- B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
- D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Since “bullying” also includes “cyberbullying,” any reference in this policy to “bullying” shall also be deemed to refer to “cyberbullying.”

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at school. “At school” is defined as on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or events, in a school-related vehicle, or using telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district. “Telecommunications access device” and “telecommunications service provider” mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying and cyberbullying that does not occur “at school,” as defined above, but that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

Reporting and Investigating Reports of Bullying

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that he or she believes to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to a teacher, a counselor, administrator, or other staff member. Staff members shall report any reports made by students or situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the ESP. Complaints against the ESP shall be reported to the Board. The school shall ensure the confidentiality for any individual who reports an act of bullying.

Under state law, a school employee, school volunteer, student, or parent or guardian who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in this policy and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. This immunity does not apply to a school official responsible for implementing this policy or for remedying the bullying, when acting in that capacity.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior. Making intentionally false accusations of bullying is likewise prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All complaints about bullying that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The ESP or designee is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, and up to and including exclusion from school property for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The Academy may utilize restorative practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community in the correction of bullying behavior, which may include victim-offender conferences that:

- A. Are initiated by the victim.
- B. Are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least 15, by the victim.
- C. Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team"); and
- D. Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, both the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified promptly in writing. In addition, administrators investigating alleged bullying may notify parents of the victim or perpetrator of bullying sooner than the conclusion of the investigation if circumstances dictate such earlier notification.

The Academy shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including the required notification of parents or guardians and any discipline and referrals.

The Principal is the school official responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

Confidentiality

The Academy will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information within education records. In addition, the identity of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying shall be and remain confidential. The Principal, or the Principal's designee, shall ensure that the name of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying is withheld from the alleged perpetrator and the perpetrator's parent(s), legal guardian(s) and representative(s), and is redacted from any report of bullying or cyberbullying that is publicly disclosed. Please note, however, that if the person reporting the act of bullying is the victim or his/her parent/legal guardian, it may not be possible to address the behavior without disclosing the victim to the alleged perpetrator. The school will discuss this with the victim and victim's parent/legal guardian prior to any such disclosure. Such disclosure must occur prior to any victim-offender conference.

Notification

This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students, and shall be posted on the Academy website.

Reporting

As required by state statute, the Academy shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and other required information to the Michigan Department of Education on an annual basis, according to the form and procedures established by the Department.

As required by state statute, the Academy's procedures with respect to bullying are contained within this policy. No administrative guidelines accompany this policy.

SECTION D: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Definition of Discipline

Discipline is the positive direction of behavior toward established standards of conduct, fully understood and based upon reason, judgment, and consideration of rights of others. Ideal discipline is self-directed and self-controlled. Schools, community, and parents share the responsibility for helping students develop self-discipline. When self-control falters and self-discipline fails, disciplinary action will be used to protect the rights of others and to ensure uninterrupted instruction by teachers for students.

The Principal and the staff will carry out a positive behavior intervention program to help children and families, teachers and support staff, reflect upon their actions and be proactive instead of reactive to teach students self-discipline and acceptable social skills for school and career and college readiness. Restorative Practices are at the core of what we do and are a positive way to repair relationships and positively change behavior. Intervention options need to consider disciplinary referrals as opportunities for learning, with exclusion reserved for the most serious offenses. The consequence must be reasonable in direct relationship to the seriousness of the misconduct or the pattern of misconduct.

Certain rules and procedures are established to guide students through constructive growth and readiness for careers and college. Parents, teachers, and others responsible for the welfare and education of these students need to cooperate to interpret and enforce these rules.

Mitigating Factors to be Considered

Except as otherwise noted below with respect to possession of a firearm in a weapon free school zone, if suspension or expulsion is considered, the Academy shall consider the following factors:

- A. the student's age
- B. the student's disciplinary history
- C. whether the student has a disability
- D. the seriousness of the violation or behavior
- E. whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- F. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- G. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

Restorative Practices

If the Academy determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community caused by the student's misconduct.

Restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that:

- A. Are initiated by the victim.

- B. Are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least 15, by the victim.
- C. Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team"); and
- D. Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

Permanent Expulsion

The following acts of misconduct at school, as defined by state law, may be subject to permanent expulsion from all public school in the State of Michigan:

- 1. Possession of a dangerous weapon**;
- 2. Arson
- 3. Plea, conviction or adjudication of criminal sexual conduct (regardless of where it occurred) against another student enrolled at the Academy;
- 4. Criminal Sexual Conduct at school or on school grounds;
- 5. Physical Assault at school, by a student grade 6 or above, against an employee, volunteer or contractor of the Academy.

Parents or students who are unsure of what conduct is prohibited by each act should consult with the Principal.

**Michigan law does not require the Board to permanently expel a student for possession of a dangerous weapon at school if there is clear and convincing evidence of one of the following:

- a. The student did not possess the object for use as a weapon or for delivery to another person for use as a weapon.
- b. The student did not knowingly possess the weapon.
- c. The student did not know or have reason to know that the object constituted a dangerous weapon.
- d. The student possessed the weapon at the suggestion, request, or direction, or with the express permission, of the school or police.

There is a rebuttable presumption that permanent expulsion is not justified for a dangerous weapon, other than a firearm, if both of the following are met:

- a. The Board determines in writing that at least one (1) of the factors listed above has been established in a clear and convincing manner; and
- b. The student has no history of suspension or expulsion.

In addition to the above, the Board will consider the mitigating factors listed above before making a decision to permanently expel a student.

If a student is permanently expelled, s/he may not attend any public school in the state of Michigan for a specified minimum duration of time. The law provides a process and timeline for parents/guardians to petition the Board for reinstatement of the student. The Principal will provide the parent/guardian with procedures to petition for the student to return to school. Parents/guardians should anticipate conditions for reinstatement being established.

For expulsions for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault on an employee, volunteer or contractor, the student will be referred the student to the Department of Human Services or Department of Community Health. In compliance with Federal law, the Principal will also refer any student expelled for possession of a dangerous weapon to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Parents will receive notice of any such referral.

Additional Mandatory Discipline

For students in grades 6 and above, Michigan law also requires the Board of Directors to remove a student who engages in physical assault against another student, bomb threat or similar threat. The removal may be either a suspension or expulsion but will not be a permanent expulsion. PLEASE NOTE: While an expulsion for one of these offenses is not technically a permanent expulsion from all Michigan public schools, please understand that the local school district may choose not to allow the student to enroll for the duration of the expulsion.

Behaviors Warranting Disciplinary Action

Students are expected to meet classroom and school expectations and are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, as set forth in the Michigan School Code. The purpose of disciplinary decisions is to develop self-discipline and social skills required for success in college and work. The positive discipline system is based on behavior intervention supports. Behaviors that interfere with the rights of students to achieve academic success and to be educated in a safe, secure environment are categorized into three groupings, with exclusion from school reserved for most serious infractions and repeated and habitual behaviors that deter teaching and learning.

If a student feels unsafe or threatened, the student or the student's parent/guardian is encouraged to contact the Principal immediately. Individual rights include individual responsibility within the bounds of reasonable behavior expected of all members of the school community. This applies especially to the freedom of fellow students to receive instruction. Educators must prioritize keeping students engaged in meaningful learning.

Various types of student misconduct are listed. The list is not all-inclusive, and a student who commits an act of misconduct not listed is still subject to disciplinary action.

1. Absenteeism
2. Appropriate Use of Electronic Communication Devices
3. Alcohol and Drugs, including the use, possession, distribution, and/or sale of alcohol and/or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or attempted use, distribution and/or sale of alcohol and/or drugs including but not limited to, controlled

substances as defined by law, marijuana, look-a-like or imitation drug substances and illegal chemical substances

4. Arson or attempted arson
5. Assault (or attempted assault) and Battery
6. Bullying/Cyber-bullying
7. Cheating/Academic Misconduct
8. Defacement of Property
9. Destruction of Property
10. Disorderly Conduct
11. Extortion
12. Failure to Serve Assigned Detention
13. False Fire Alarm or Bomb Threat
14. False Identification
15. Felony
16. Fighting
17. Fireworks
18. Forgery
19. Fraud
20. Gambling
21. Gang Activity
22. Harassment/Intimidation
23. Hazing
24. Improper, Negligent, or Reckless Operation of a Motor Vehicle
25. Inappropriate Dress
26. Insubordination/Unruly Conduct
27. Interference with School Authorities
28. Leaving school without Permission
29. Loitering
30. Microaggressions that are commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults.
31. Persistent Disobedience
32. Possession of Inappropriate Personal Property
33. Physical Assault
34. Profanity and/or Obscenity toward Students
35. Profanity and/or Obscenity toward Staff
36. Public Display of Affection
37. Robbery
38. Sexual Assault and Battery or Other Illegal Behavior
39. Sexual Misconduct that is indecent/consensual, amorous kissing or similar displays of affection, indecent exposure, or of a sexual nature
40. Sexual Harassment (Level 1)
41. Sexual Harassment (Level 2)

42. Smoking, possession or use of tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes/vaporizers and paraphernalia
43. Tardiness
44. Technology Abuse
45. Theft or Possession of Stolen Property
46. Threat/Coercion
47. Trespassing
48. Truancy
49. Weapons: Dangerous Instruments
50. Weapons: Dangerous Weapons
51. Weapons: Use of Legitimate Tools as Weapons (including, but not limited to, pens, pencils, compasses, and combs) Weapons: Look-a-Likes
52. Any violation of this code, policies of the Board of Directors, administrative guidelines, or local, state, or federal law
53. Any other conduct considered by the Principal or teachers to be disruptive, disrespectful, or disobedient.

In the following six cases, discipline referrals must be made immediately to the Principal:

1. Fighting
2. Assault and or battery toward a teacher or another student
3. Student actions that disrupt the class to the extent that the teacher's authority is being challenged and the teacher is losing control of the class
4. Student actions which indicate the use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other behavior-altering substances
5. Student actions that present a danger to the safety and well-being of anyone in the school
6. Other criminal acts in violation of local, state, or federal laws.

The Principal is to recommend long term suspension of more than ten days or expulsion for the following first-time offenses occurring on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or for school-related reasons:

1. Threats against the school
2. Arson or attempted arson, including setting fire to anything on school property
3. Assault and/or battery of an employee or student
4. Possession, use, or sale of a firearm or dangerous weapon
5. Manufacturing, growing, distribution, and/or sale of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, including all edibles containing controlled substances
6. Extortion, attempted extortion, robbery, and/or larceny
7. Immoral conduct
8. Hazing
9. Unlawful assembly and/or riot
10. Possession, use, distribution, sale, lighting, or discharge of explosive devices
11. Students found guilty or not innocent of a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injuries to others, regardless of where the crime occurred.

Discipline Procedures

At all times when students are under school authority, they are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectable manner. In an effort to maintain an orderly atmosphere in the school and on the school grounds, the teacher's authority extends to all students, whether or not the teacher teaches the student in class.

Disciplinary Actions

Disruptive student behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the teacher and/or Principal. Principal and staff are expected to use respectful and accountable intervention and restorative strategies, such as staff and student/parent conferences, auxiliary staff intervention and counseling programs, student programs for conflict resolution, peer mediation, anger management, anger prevention, and social skills. Intervention strategies may include anger management and conflict resolution programs for parents. Community based services may be called upon when appropriate. Actions taken by teachers may include but are not limited to:

1. Daily/weekly progress reports for students and parents
2. Time out in the classroom or other secure, supervised area
3. Conference with the student
4. Oral and/or written reprimand
5. Detention during, before and after school
6. In school alternative with another teacher
7. Relocation to another classroom for a brief period of time
8. Relocation to blended learning environment
9. Conference with a parent
10. Consultation with a behavior specialist
11. School service assignment
12. Denial of participation in school activities
13. Give students a choice of consequences
14. One-day suspension until a satisfactory conference with a parent is held.

A discipline referral should be sent to the Principal when the teacher has exhausted in-classroom actions and feels that the student's improper behavior cannot be corrected through classroom management practices without sacrificing safety and/or learning for other students.

After consultation with the student and the teacher (if needed), the Principal will determine the course of action required to provide a safe, secure school. Action taken by a Principal toward students who are disruptive may include but is not limited to:

1. A conference with the student and/or the parents
2. A verbal and or written reprimand
3. Consultation with behavior interventionist, social worker, counselor, and outside agencies
4. Entering into Individual Student Behavior Plan (ISBP) between student, parent, teacher, and Principal/designated representative

5. Academy appointed advisor to cooperate with parent/guardian to ensure follow-through of ISBP
6. Detention
7. Focused in school academic alternatives
8. Counseling and psychological services
9. School service assignment
10. Removal from co-curricular and extra-curricular programs until ISBP satisfied
11. Referral of student and parent/guardian to a parent program
12. Out-of-school suspension (OSS) (up to five days and up to ten days with approval of the Principal's supervisor);
13. Recommendation for long-term suspension (more than ten days) with approval of the Principal's supervisor and Board of Directors
14. Recommendation for expulsion with approval of the Principal's supervisor.

The Principal, with approval of his/her supervisor, may request an emotional, behavioral, and/or chemical dependency evaluation and treatment and/or counseling recommendation with attention to applicable special education rights afforded children with disabilities.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by Michigan law and is not to be used in any situation.

Incorrigible Behavior: A child is incorrigible when the child repeatedly or habitually engages in unacceptable behavior as defined in the Code of Student Conduct and disrupts the school and or classroom to the extent that the Principal's and or teacher's authority is being challenged. Incorrigible behavior is defined by the Michigan Revised School Code as "persistent disobedience." Incorrigible behavior, and other patterns of behavior, may result in long-term suspension (more than ten school days) of a student from the Academy. Parents and adult caregivers enter a partnership in responsibility with the Board of Directors to cooperate with the Principal, faculty, and staff to demonstrate responsible behavior in situations involving their child. The Principal and faculty expect parents/caretakers to share responsibility for each student's responsible actions, academically and behaviorally and to enter a partnership in responsibility.

Patterns of Behavior:

1. Parents send and do not support their children at school.
 - a. Parent's low expectations: academic and behavior
 - b. Parent's reluctance to take responsibility for their own actions
 - c. Parent being disrespectful to staff through verbal and non-verbal behavior
 - d. Parent's failure to check in properly, disruption of classrooms, and assaulting employees
 - e. Failure of parents to cooperate with school in behavior improvement plan
2. Students not accepting academic responsibility for being on grade level and above.
3. Student failure to attend school responsibly (absences, tardies, and not responsible).
4. Student discipline problems.
 - a. Bringing community issues to school and trying to solve them at school.

- b. Students having low expectations: academic and behavior.
- c. Student's reluctance to take responsibility for their own actions.
- d. Students talking back to teachers.
- e. Rude, disrespectful behavior that escalates into overly aggressive behavior.
- f. Not following teacher directions.
- g. Leaving classroom without teacher's permission.
- h. Lying about situations.
- i. Damaging school property.

Definitions. In or Out-of-school suspensions are considered in the following classifications:

- **Short-Term:** Short-term suspensions occur when a student is suspended for one school day, up to and including ten school days. The student's rights and privileges of attending school, including extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, are suspended. The child's teacher may suspend him or her for one day or until a parent comes to school and holds a satisfactory conference with the teacher. The Principal can suspend a student for up to ten school days with approval of the Principal's supervisor.

The Principal or designee must provide the student and the parent/guardian with oral or written notice of the misbehavior and an explanation of the situation. The student will be given the opportunity to tell the Principal his/her version of the event(s). The Principal's decision is final and not subject to appeal. The parent shall be notified in writing of the action taken.

An in-school suspension may be assigned instead of out-of-school based on the situation. A plan for the suspension will be developed by the Assistant Principal or Student Advocate. The student will be in-school but will not be participating with the class during this time under supervision. In-school suspensions may include specific workshops focusing on educating the student on appropriate behaviors and/or behavior managements, community service, restorative circles, reflective activities. Students must follow the Code of Student Conduct at all times.

- **Long-Term:** A student can be suspended for more than ten (10) days but less than sixty (60) days following approval of the Principal's recommendation by the Board of Directors or its appointed representative. Long Term Suspension from school excludes the student from regular school attendance and participation in academy activities until readmitted by the Board. The Standard of review is the preponderance of the evidence, and the school is required by law to do what is in the best interests of the school. While a student's individual situation will be considered, the decision must reflect what is best for all students and staff.
- **Expulsion:** A student can be expelled only by action of the Board of Directors based upon recommendation of the Principal or his/her designee. Expulsion from school excludes the student from regular school attendance and participation in academy

activities for the duration of the expulsion. An expulsion can be from sixty (60) school days up to one hundred eighty (180) school days.

- **Notification:** A letter from the Principal or his/her designee will be sent to the student's parent(s) when the student is assigned detention or out-of-school suspension or is recommended for long-term suspension or expulsion.

The suspension notice for in or *out-of-school suspension (ten or fewer days)* shall include at least the following information:

1. Reason(s) for the suspension and date(s) of suspension are to be clearly stated
2. A parent will be contacted to establish a date and time for a readmission conference with the Principal
3. The student will not be allowed to participate in classroom and school activities during the suspension period
4. The student is not to go on school property (for out-of-school suspension)
5. Appeal procedures shall be clearly stated in detail.

The suspension notice for long-term suspension/expulsion (greater than 10 days) shall include at least the following information:

First Notice and Invitation to Meet

1. The reason(s) for a long-term suspension or expulsion are to be clearly stated
2. A parent should be informed that an investigation is being conducted by the Principal and what the most severe recommendation might be
3. A date and time for a conference is given when a parent, accompanied by the student, are invited to come to school for a conference with the Principal or designee and/or other advisors to present and hear information
4. The student will not be allowed to participate in classroom and school activities during the suspension; and
5. The student is not to go on school property or attend school activities.
6. Information about whether the student will be able to continue to complete homework during the suspension. This is never an option for an expulsion.

Following the conference, the Principal will review the facts with his/her supervisor, and they may decide to recommend long-term suspension or expulsion to the Board of Directors. The Principal or his/her supervisor will inform the parent(s) and student of the recommendation to reinstate with conditions, long-term suspension, or expulsion. If the Principal recommends long-term suspension or expulsion, the Principal or his/her supervisor will write to the President of the Board and send a copy of the notice to the parent(s) including at least the following information:

Second Notice to the Parent/Guardian of Recommendation to the Board of Directors

1. The recommended action and reason(s) for the recommendation are clearly stated

2. The right of the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian to a hearing before the Board of Directors or its designees for long-term suspension and for expulsion recommendations, including the time, date, and location of the hearing
3. The right to inspect the student's school records and related documents
4. List of all witnesses that may testify
5. The right to an adult advocate, including parents, other adult advisors up to and including legal counsel
6. The right to a hearing held in closed session if requested by the student/parent
7. Copy of Board Policy 5610 Emergency Removal, Suspension and Expulsion of Students, including discipline hearing processes and appeal procedures.

Subsequently, the Principal will follow-up with the student and his or her parent or guardian of the time, place, and location of the hearing with the Board of Directors or its designee to ensure delivery of the notice and to respond to questions.

Students with Disabilities. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are responsible for following the Code of Student Conduct. Students with disabilities may be suspended for inappropriate behavior. In making decisions concerning inappropriate behavior by students in Special Education, the teacher and the Principal are to consult with the student's Special Education resource room teacher to ensure consistency with the student's IEP. Principal is responsible for consistency with specific special education procedures.

Principal may recommend a student with disabilities for long-term suspension or expulsion (greater than ten days) by following these procedures:

1. The Principal will follow regular procedures for long-term suspension or expulsion as described above.
2. Once the Principal has made a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion of a student with disabilities, he or she shall hold the Manifestation Determination Review to determine:
 1. if the student is eligible for special education services
 2. if the student is appropriately placed in a special education program; and
 3. if there is a causal relationship between the student's disabling condition and the conduct for which he or she is to be disciplined.
3. The parent will be notified in writing of the time and place of the hearing and its purpose.
4. If a student with a disability is suspended or expelled, the school shall offer free and appropriate public educational services for the duration of the suspension/expulsion or until the student enrolls in another school.

Appeal Procedures

In-school Disciplinary Actions and Out-of-School Suspensions of Ten (10) School Days or Less

There is no right of appeal for discipline decisions of ten (10) school days or less. Nonetheless, should a parent disagree with disciplinary action of the school in these situations, the parent is encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal to discuss the decision. If the parent is still dissatisfied after meeting with the Principal, the parent may contact the Superintendent in writing within three school days of the meeting with the Principal to provide the reasons the parent believes the disciplinary action is not warranted. The Superintendent's decision is final.

Expulsions and Long-Term Suspensions (more than ten days)

Long-term suspension of more than ten days and expulsion occur when the Board of Directors or a designee terminates the student's rights and privileges to attend school, including extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Long-term suspension is eleven (11) to fifty-nine (59) school days, while expulsion is for sixty (60) to one hundred eighty (180) school days. A permanent expulsion is for an indefinite period of time, the minimum of which is set by Michigan law. Reinstatement processes for permanently expelled students are outlined in Board Policy.

Following the Principal's recommendation for long term suspension of more than ten days or expulsion, the Board of Directors, or its designated representative, will hold a hearing within the ten days suspension period to determine whether to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion. The student and parent/guardian must be notified of the allegation, the recommended disciplinary action, the time, date, and location of the hearing, and of their right to attend and participate in the hearing. Prior to the hearing, families will be given an opportunity to review all evidence as well as a list of all persons scheduled to testify.

If the hearing is conducted by the Board of Directors, the decision is final and not subject to appeal. If it is held by a designee or hearing panel of 2 Board members, the parent may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors as follows:

Appeal requests must be made in writing by the parents to the Principal within five calendar days of receipt of the suspension decision, or the right to appeal is waived. The petition to appeal the designee's decision shall be in writing and contain the reason the designee's decision should be reviewed or reconsidered.

The parent/guardian is encouraged to provide the Board of Directors with any information that supports the parent/guardian's position.

All appeals of decisions by Board designated representatives shall be considered by the Board of Directors at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board shall make a final decision on the disciplinary action that is appropriate, and its decision shall be final.

CLOSING

“The Code of Student Conduct—A Partnership in Responsibility” has been developed to communicate the responsibilities that all stakeholders share in ensuring every student a safe, secure place for learning. Our Partnership relies on promises kept, trust, good faith, and a commitment to the well-being of all students.

SECTION E: CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT CHECKLIST

A parent or adult caretaker is expected to read this Code of Student Conduct carefully and review each section of this handbook with his or her child. The student and the parent are expected to sign the verification form and return the entire checklist to the school.

1. THE SCHOOL HAS AUTHORITY OVER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.
 - The school has authority over the school grounds before, during, and after school hours.
 - The school has authority off the school grounds at school-related events.
 - The school has authority over school-sponsored transportation.
 - The school has authority over activities on school-owned electronic devices regardless of where they are used.
2. LEARNING IS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF SCHOOL.
 - Students will be expected to behave in a way that provides for uninterrupted learning.
 - Come prepared with materials and assignments.
3. STUDENT ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT TO THE SCHOOL.
 - Students are expected to display positive attitudes, such as honesty, respect, tolerance, and courtesy.
4. STUDENTS ARE TO WEAR THE SCHOOL APPROVED UNIFORM.
 - Clothing must be clean and modest and consistent with dress guidelines.
 - Clothing should be free of profanity, obscenity, vulgarity, racist language, tobacco, substance or alcohol abuse.
5. STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT A SAFE SCHOOL.
 - School staff in cooperation with parents and students must ensure safe and secure places for teaching, learning, and school-related events.
 - Weapons and acts of violence will not be tolerated.
6. STUDENTS MUST LEARN TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS.
 - Students can expect courtesy, fairness, and respect.
 - Students must offer courtesy, fairness, and respect.
 - Bullying, harassment, and intimidation will not be tolerated.
7. STUDENTS MAY EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS.
 - Use suitable methods of expression and wait for an appropriate time.
 - Use of profanity or obscenity in language, gestures, and clothing will not be tolerated.
 - Threats are not protected expressions of student speech.

8. ATTENDING SCHOOL EACH DAY IS VERY IMPORTANT.
 - Students should be in school, on time, every day prepared for instruction.
9. VANDALISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
 - Personal and school property must be respected and cared for by everybody.
 - Damage or destruction of school property will not be tolerated.
 - Damage of the property of others will not be tolerated..
10. NBKA'S CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT IS FOR ALL STUDENTS.
 - Parents, students, and staff are responsible for knowing the contents of this booklet.
11. THE PRINCIPAL IS THE SCHOOL'S LEADER.
 - The Principal has the right to make a final decision when rules have been broken.
12. SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOR CAN RESULT IN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.
 - Suspension means that the student is not allowed to attend class for one or more days.
 - Long Term Suspension and Expulsion means that a student may not attend school or be present on school property.