



# Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School

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**Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School**

**Student & Family Handbook**

**School Year 2025-2026**

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***“Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, prior academic achievement, or housing status.”***

### **Letter from the Director**

Dear CCLCS Families,

On behalf of the entire staff at CCLCS, welcome to the new academic year! While this Student and Family Handbook documents important policies and shares useful information about school operations, it also provides a lens into our school's unique culture. Its contents provide our community with a framework for our words and deeds, based on the idea that for every situation in which we find ourselves, there exists a set of appropriate behaviors. I encourage you to discuss the contents of this handbook with your child, with the hope that certain pages answer important questions and/or generate valuable discussions. I also hope it will serve as a guide to better understand what makes Lighthouse special, including the policies and procedures in place to help guide us through both routine and occasionally complex situations that may arise during the school year. However lengthy, it is by no means exhaustive and is subject to alteration without notice.

Above all, Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School is a community of learning. Every member of the CCLCS community has a responsibility to oneself and to their peers to ensure that the school remains a creative, productive environment for social and intellectual growth. We believe that learning takes place most successfully in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. At the root of this belief are our mission's commitment to personal responsibility, consideration for others, respect for the environment, academic integrity, creative expression, and perseverance.

We believe that our community is strengthened when we cultivate in ourselves and in others appreciation of and respect for diversity of all kinds, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and religious affiliation. Both because of the kind of environment we aspire to live in every day, and because it is our duty to educate our students as scholars and as citizens, we strive to actively teach students to understand and value difference in its many forms. Our community is based on living these ideals, encouraging authority from within rather than from above.

In addition to the information provided about our policies and procedures, the handbook also provides guidance for families and informs you of your rights and responsibilities as guardians of students in a Massachusetts public school. We also have a copy of this handbook on file with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Every line item of this handbook serves as another link in building the kind of supportive community that helps our students thrive. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions, concerns or comments. In working in partnership with all of our families, we can assure that our students will have the best year possible!

Sincerely,

Benjamin Parsons, PhD  
Executive Director

## **School Origins**

### **Mission Statement**

Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School seeks to provide a supportive and challenging learning environment for middle school students, where teachers foster intellectual development and academic achievement in an atmosphere that celebrates learning as a lifelong pleasure.

We appreciate and understand middle school-aged students. We enjoy the often undervalued creativity and intellectual potential of this age group. We strive to provide an emotionally safe and supportive community, encouraging students to develop their strengths and risk new growth, while pursuing an academically rigorous curriculum. Wherever possible, students learn through experience, allowing them to be engaged in the process of discovery and to see the practical applications of classroom lessons.

Looking beyond the walls of the classroom, we collaborate with local partners to utilize the unique natural and creative resources on Cape Cod and reach out to global partners to broaden our cultural understanding and knowledge. Our graduates take with them the values of personal responsibility, consideration for others, respect for the environment, academic integrity, creative expression, and perseverance.

### **Governance**

As a Commonwealth Charter School, CCLCS is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of community members, parents and faculty representatives. Working closely with Administration and Staff, the Board evaluates the CCLCS Executive Director annually, and oversees DESE compliance, financial stability, faithfulness to the charter, and long-term organizational viability. Board meetings are held the third Monday of every month at 6PM unless otherwise noted. All meetings are open to the public with agendas posted on the school website and in the front window of the school. Meeting minutes are also posted on the website.

## **CCLCS Campus**

### **General Safety**

CCLCS is located in a commercial area. Consequently, the school has implemented specific procedures to ensure student safety, both on and off campus.

1. Evacuation Drills occur in accordance with the Town of Harwich police and fire ordinances and with our CCLCS crisis plan. Exits are clearly marked leading from or adjacent to each classroom.
2. According to best practices and DESE guidelines, CCLCS maintains both a Medical and Behavioral Health Emergency Response Plan (MBHERP) (submitted and approved by DESE) as well as an Emergency Operation Plan. Both of these documents are available to all stakeholders upon request.
3. Behavior while traveling off campus: When safety permits, students frequently travel off campus for various activities in school owned vehicles and parent-driven vehicles. There are several rules that must be followed to ensure the safety and driver liability:
  - a. Students must wear seat belts at all times.

- b. Behavior is not dependent upon whether or not the driver is a teacher, staff member or parent. All drivers must be respected.
  - c. The radio is controlled by the driver.
  - d. Students are not permitted to eat or drink in school vehicles without permission.
  - e. School vans are limited to 11 passengers in addition to one driver.
4. Students are not allowed to walk off campus before, during or after school unless accompanied by an adult or with written guardian permission.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance of the school premises is a community activity. Students are expected to help in the daily cleaning of the school by recycling, picking up after themselves, emptying trash containers in their classrooms, returning items to their proper places after using them, and refraining from throwing trash on the floor. Students are also responsible for keeping their belongings together.

## **School Policies**

### **Athletics**

CCLCS' Interscholastic Athletic Program fosters self-discipline, respect for self and others, and ethical competitiveness so as to promote personal responsibility, skill development, physical fitness, moral courage, altruism, as well as an appreciation for team and school spirit. The program operates under the guidance of the school athletic directors and adult school community members.

School teams compete against other public and private middle schools, as scheduled by the Athletic Director. CCLCS also competes in the Super Six MS conference for several sports. The school offers interscholastic middle school competition in boys/girls' cross country, boys/girls' soccer, field hockey, boys/girls' basketball, winter/spring co-ed track, tennis, boys' baseball, golf, and girls' softball. Students are entitled to self-select the team they would like to participate in based on their gender identity. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Middle Level Athletic Committee states that "Interscholastic schedules at the middle level should include all middle level grades within the building." To accommodate this directive, CCLCS abides by the following procedures:

- For each sports season, a limit of the number of participants allowed on the team will be set by the Athletic Director. This number will be determined by the resources available each season.
- If more students register for a sport than available spots, tryouts will be scheduled and team selection/cuts may need to be made. These decisions will be at the discretion of the coach and the athletic directors.

***Please note: A fee of \$70 is charged, per athlete per sport.***

### **- Playing Time Guidelines**

Student athletes at CCLCS bring a wide range of abilities and commitment levels to their sports. Some athletes are amongst the elite at their age levels, while others may be trying a sport for the first time. The playing time guidelines outlined here are designed to honor both kinds of athletic team participation. Committed competitive athletes deserve an experience that will hone their skills and enable them to meet their future athletic goals. Novice team members deserve the chance to experience the many benefits that result from successful participation in school-based team sport.

All eligible student athletes have the right to participate equally in practice sessions. Although coaches may at times “split squads” for smaller practices experiences, students of all ability levels should have equal practice time.

All eligible students suiting up for a specific contest are guaranteed to get playing time, as long as they are behaving appropriately, but playing time may not be equal. Coaches reserve the right to apportion playing time in a game in response to the flow of the contest. Coaches have the right to set playing rosters that differ from game to game. Coaches should set game rosters in an attempt to balance competitiveness and inclusiveness.

All policies outlined in this section of the Handbook are in accordance with rules and regulation of the MIAA Council.

### **- Academic Requirements for Student Athletes**

To participate on a team, student athletes are expected to maintain strong academic performance. During each sport season the Executive Director and/or Associate Director or their designees will review athletes' academic data and when necessary, generate an academic progress report. The report will generate a “Pass”, “Borderline” or “Fail” score, based on the following criteria:

- Pass = a C average or higher in all classes
- Borderline = a D average in one or more classes
- Pause = an F average in one or more classes

Any student athlete who receives a “Pause” score may result in a temporary suspension from the team until the grade is raised. A student must show academic progress to continue participating. Any student athlete who receives a “Borderline” will be given a timeline by which they must demonstrate academic progress. If a student does not meet said timeline, they may be suspended from the team. The suspension will remain in effect until academic progress has been demonstrated.

Any student with an unexcused absence from school on the day of a meet/game may not participate in the competition. Final decisions regarding academic eligibility and participation in athletics will be determined by school administration.

### **- Behavior of Student Athletes**

Student athletes are representatives of CCLCS and are expected to maintain proper school behavior at all times. Inappropriate behavior or poor sportsmanship, either in school or at a game or team function, is subject to the disciplinary code in the Student Responsibilities section of the CCLCS Student Handbook,

which includes a progressive approach. Serious infractions may result in a more significant response, possibly suspension or dismissal from the team. The Team Coach, Athletic Director, and CCLCS administration will work closely with students and their parents to address any misconduct. Any student who receives community service or other disciplinary action on the day of a game will be held responsible for that consequence.

## **Bullying Prevention and Reporting Policy**

### ***Approved by Board of Trustees 11/21/22***

The Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School (CCLCS) is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful learning environment for all students and staff and strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying, including without limitation, cyberbullying, of any of its students or staff by anyone and also strictly enforces a prohibition against retaliation of any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses, or has reliable information about bullying. School-based initiatives, developed collaboratively between school administration and personnel, students, families and community members will seek to (1) help students of all ages and abilities stay safe, act wisely, and believe in themselves; (2) help both students and adults to respond responsibly and effectively to reports of bullying.

CCLCS administers a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, CCLCS will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. Similar tools to the student survey will be used with faculty, staff, and parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs. This information will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. CCLCS will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

### **- Definitions**

**Bullying** is defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target/victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target/victim or damage to the target/victim's property; (ii) places the target/victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target/victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the



education process or the orderly operation of a school. For purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

**Cyberbullying** is further defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer or signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. **Cyberbullying** shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. **Cyberbullying** shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

**Aggressor or Perpetrator** is defined as a student or a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, school volunteer or a vendor, contractor or other person working under a contract with the school who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

**Hostile environment** is defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**School Staff** is defined to include, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**School** is defined to include the school, school grounds, travel to and from school and/or school sponsored events or functions, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school sponsored or school related activities, functions, programs whether on or off school grounds (such as social events, trips, sports events, or similar school sponsored events and functions), at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school, on the way to and from school or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school and at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school, if the act creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim or witnesses, infringes on the rights of the victim or witnesses at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Target** is defined as a student or an adult against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

#### **- Prohibition**

Bullying of students occurring in schools is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by CCLCS. Bullying can take many forms and can occur in any setting. Bullying can include, but is not limited to, intimidation such as name calling or threatening; social alienation such as shunning or spreading rumors; or physical aggression such as assaults on a student or attacks on a student's property. Bullying can create an atmosphere of fear for all members of the school community. It also can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that affects the ability of a student to attend school, learn in school, walk in school corridors, eat in the school cafeteria, play in the school yard or recreation areas, participate in or attend special or extracurricular activities or travel to and from school. Bullying behaviors that are not addressed can lead to devastating consequences for young people, including depression, drops in school performance and attendance. The failure to address bullying behaviors also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative behaviors.

Consistent with state law, CCLCS recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, housing status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics. CCLCS has safeguards in place to monitor the safety of students who may be more vulnerable to bullying because of these factors.

In accordance with M.G.L.C. 71B, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, all IEP Teams must consider whether eligible students have a disability that possibly affects social skills development and has the skills and proficiencies to respond to or avoid teasing, bullying or harassment in the school setting. When IEP Teams determine that this is the case for an eligible student, they will include specific supports in the IEP that may include, but are not limited to, accommodations, modifications, goals and/or services that will address student needs to provide all the student with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

#### **- Reporting**

**Reporting bullying or retaliation**--Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. Staff members are required to report immediately to the associate director and/or executive director any instance of bullying or retaliation that the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians or other individuals who are not staff members may be made anonymously. CCLCS will complete the bullying incident report form for all suspected reports of bullying or retaliation. The school phone number and all staff emails are published in the school handbook and easily accessed on the school website.

- **Reporting by Staff**--A staff member will report immediately to the associate director or executive director when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the associate director/executive director does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with CCLCS policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.
- **Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others**--CCLCS expects and encourages students, parents/guardians and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the associate director and/or the executive director. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents/guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a teacher, the school psychologist, the school nurse, the associate director, or the executive director.

### **Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation**

**Safety**---Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the director will assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; consider alternative academic groupings, pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, on the bus, or in any other school-based environment, identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The director will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. The director will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person (student, parents, guardians, etc.) who has reported bullying or retaliation, a person (student, parents, guardians, etc.) who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a person (student, parents, guardians, etc.) who provides information during an investigation, or a person (student, parents, guardians, etc.) who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

#### **Obligations to Notify Others**

**a. Notice to parents/guardians**---Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the director will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor of the incident and explain the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the director contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation.

**b. Notice to Another School or District**--If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, the director or designee will promptly notify by telephone the

principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action.

**c. Notice to Law Enforcement--**At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the director has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the director will notify the Harwich Police Department. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the director shall contact the Harwich Police Department if there is a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressors.

**d. Investigation--** The director or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. During the investigation, the director or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents/guardians, and others, as necessary. The director or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews may be conducted by the director or designee, other staff members as determined by the director or designee, and in consultation with the school psychologist and/or school nurse, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, given the obligation to investigate and address the matter, the director or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The director or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

**e. Determinations --** The director or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the director or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school activities. The director or designee will determine what remedial action is required, if any and determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the director or designee may refer the students to the Student Support Committee or to 1:1 interventional and/or therapeutic services to identify any underlying social or emotional issues that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for more social/emotional support.

The director or designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notices to parents/guardians must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding confidentiality of student records, the director or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent/guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The director or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

*Per Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws:*

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

#### **- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The director, associate director and/or school psychologist will develop and keep updated on at least a biennial basis as required by law, a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention. Such a plan shall, as required by law, be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.

The Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will address training and professional development for staff and will also address sharing information with parents/guardians and students about bullying and sharing information with students about bullying, including information on prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying and the potential legal consequences of engaging in bullying. Additionally, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include specific steps that schools will take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment.

### **Responses to Bullying**

**1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skill-building** -- Upon the director or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Skill-building approaches that the director or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curriculum.
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with the school psychologist, school nurse and health teacher.
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral support to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals.
- meeting with parents/guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curriculum and social skill building activities at home.
- adopting action/behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills
- using the Student Support Committee to address social/emotional/behavioral needs of students.

**2. Taking Disciplinary Action** -- If the director or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the director/designee, including the nature of the conduct and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the school's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline. This information is included in the Student Handbook.

If the director/designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

**3. Promoting Safety for the Target and others** -- The director/designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the director/designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur (recess, seminar, off-campus events, transitions between classes).

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the director/designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the director/designee will work with appropriate staff to implement them immediately.

**4. Training** -- Annual training in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying shall be provided for school employees and volunteers. Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all CCLCS students.

**5. Publication and Notice** -- Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms. Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at CCLCS shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan will be included in student and employee handbooks. The plan in its entirety shall be posted on the CCLCS website.

#### **- Resources and General Education**

**Access to Resources** -- CCLCS employs a full-time school psychologist, full-time school nurse, a full time social worker, and a full-time health/PE teacher. Students may also participate in social skills groups with the school psychologist, speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, school social worker, and teachers.

At all IEP meetings, the team determines if the student's disability affects social skills development or if the student is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing. If the team determines that the student's disability does impact the above-mentioned items, the team considers what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

#### **Academic and Non-Academic Activities**

- All students participate in a bullying/cyberbullying presentation from MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center from Bridgewater State University).
- The policy on Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying is reviewed annually with the students at the beginning of each school year and again when students are given the student handbook.
- Bullying prevention and healthy relationship building are key components of the CCLCS Health curriculum.
- Bullying prevention and healthy relationship building are topics in several novels in the ELA curriculum and in the Social Studies curriculum.

**Bullying Prevention Curricula** - Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

**General Teaching Approaches** -- The following are some approaches that CCLCS actively promotes to maintaining a safe and supportive environment, all of which underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives. At CCLCS we teach:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines.
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students.
- using appropriate and positive reinforcement, even when students require discipline.
- use of "Grow/Glow" and Think About It" sheets for students to identify, address and change their own behavior. Students then process the "Think About It" sheets with an adult. Parents are notified when students complete a "Think about It" sheet.
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students in and out of the classroom through cross-graded seminars and school clubs, such as Roots and Shoots, Student Government, Bird and Nature Club, Art Spark, etc.
- instruction and supervision of internet use and annual review and adherence to the CCLCS Responsible Use Policy.
- establishing an environment for creating a culture of kindness by modeling positive, empathetic behavior in our everyday lives.
- implementation of the EPIC model at CCLCS--CCLCS students are Engaged, show Personal Responsibility, Integrity, and are Considerate. Use of this model in grading students in all classes, including seminars.

- use of the Instructional Support Intervention Team (ISIT) process to address specific academic concerns for students.
- student Support Committee that meets bi-monthly to address and monitor students with social/emotional learning needs.
- access to our school psychologist and/or school social worker, when necessary, for emotional regulation and support

### **Clothing**

It is expected that students will take pride in their personal appearance at CCLCS. Student dress should be safe and conducive to learning. The dress code at CCLCS includes, but is not limited to, the following guidelines:

- Footwear must be worn to school and appropriate footwear must be worn to PE classes and Seminars. Students may not participate in PE class without proper footwear. Instead, they may be asked to complete a seated assignment or assist the teacher.
- Shirts must fully cover the chest area and only reveal minimal midriff.
- Shorts must conceal the buttocks at all times.
- Clothing that promotes the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco is prohibited.
- Clothing that promotes violence or has suggestive language is prohibited.

### **Concussion**

CCLCS seeks to provide a safe return to activity for all students following any injury, but particularly after a concussion. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, procedures have been developed to aid in ensuring that students with any type of head injury are referred appropriately to be diagnosed and treated by their primary care physician (PCP). Students will receive follow up medical care during the school day as directed by their PCP. Families/guardians are required to provide documentation from the PCP that states the student is cleared to return prior to resuming normal school activities.

CCLCS will make sure that all students, student athletes and their parents, coaches, athletic director, nurse and physician learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written material. The law requires that athletes and their parents inform the school nurse and their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season. If a student athlete becomes unconscious or suffers a suspected concussion during a game or practice, the law mandates removing the student from play or practice immediately and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional to “return to play.” The law also prohibits coaches, trainers and others from encouraging or permitting a student athlete to use sports equipment as a weapon or to engage in sports techniques that unreasonably endangers the health and safety of him/herself or other players. All athletes, their parents and coaches will participate in a yearly mandated training program before the start of the season.

### **Recognition of Concussion**

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. Concussions can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. You can’t “see” a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right



after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child/player reports any symptoms of concussion or if you notice the symptoms or signs yourself, seek medical attention right away.

| <b><u>Signs Observed By Others</u></b> | <b><u>Symptoms Reported by the Athlete</u></b> |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Athlete appears dazed or stunned       | Headache                                       |
| Confusion                              | Fatigue                                        |
| Forgets plays                          | Nausea or vomiting                             |
| Unsure about game, score, opponent     | Double vision, blurry vision                   |
| Moves clumsily                         | Sensitive to light or noise                    |
| Balance problems                       | Feels sluggish                                 |
| Personality change                     | Feels “foggy”                                  |
| Responds slowly to questions           | Problems concentrating                         |
| Forgets events prior or after the hit  | Problems remembering                           |
| Loss of consciousness                  |                                                |

These signs & symptoms, or any loss of consciousness, following a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body are indicative of a probable concussion. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent athletes will often under report symptoms or injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of coaches, parents and students is key for student athlete safety. Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion must be removed from the game or practice immediately. When in doubt, the athlete sits out. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The athlete may not return to play until they have been evaluated by a healthcare professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. For further information on concussions visit: <http://cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

### **Curriculum Exemption**

The curriculum at CCLCS is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, the Common Core State Standards and other subject specific national standards. Units of study are developed by departments and teachers. All activities that occur in our school are directly related to the goals and objectives of the curriculum and have distinct academic purposes. Exemption of a student from class is permissible only

for health classes or specific sections of the curriculum. Exemption from health class is permissible with a note from a student's guardian. The health teacher sends home notification to families before teaching the following units: sex education, Signs of Suicide training, and mindfulness education. Parents are given the opportunity to opt out at that time. Decisions regarding student exemption from classes for religious reasons are made in accordance with state and federal guidelines on a case-by-case basis. Below is the exemption procedure:

1. Legal guardians must write a letter or email to the Director stating their rationale for requesting that their child be exempted from a particular part of the curriculum.
2. This request for exemption will be reviewed by the Director and the teachers responsible for teaching the subject.
3. Their decision regarding the request will be communicated by letter or email to the parents.
5. Parents have the right to appeal that decision to a special committee of the Board of Trustees which deals with curricular issues. The Board must receive the appeal in writing. The Board has 30 days in which to respond to the written appeal.
6. If the parents are not happy with the Board's decision, they have the right to appeal to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **Discrimination**

CCLCS does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, program and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act), or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or religion in accordance with MA General Laws Chapter 76, Section 5. Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color and national origin. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 maintains no otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of their handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance. MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5 prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. If you have any questions, complaints or need any information regarding any of the above named Titles, please contact the coordinators as follows:

Title IX, Title VI, and ADA, Sexual Harassment Coordinator: Benjamin Parsons, Director  
504 Coordinator : Mary Marvullo, School Psychologist

Grievance procedure policy for students, parents and guardians who feel that a regulation has been applied inequitably or unjustly should follow the steps outlined below:

1. The aggrieved party should attempt remediation through a conference with the Homeroom Teacher or Academic Teacher involved. Should this prove to be unsatisfactory or undesirable, the grievance may be taken to the Directors.
2. The aggrieved party, if dissatisfied, may present his or her grievance to the Director who after hearing the facts and after consultation with the Teacher, takes any action he or she thinks is indicated.
3. If the aggrieved party feels that the solution or decision is not agreeable to him/her, they may appeal to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

### **Harassment**

CCLCS is committed to maintaining a school and work environment free of harassment of any kind, including harassment based on gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. CCLCS expects all employees and members of the school community to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner with concern for their fellow community members. Harassment in any form will not be tolerated. Harassment may include but is not limited to:

1. Repeated or persistent remarks that are bothersome to the recipient
2. Repeated or persistent remarks that have not ceased upon request
3. Intimidation for favors
4. Overt threats or demands
5. Unwanted physical contact
6. Display or circulation of written or electronic material or pictures of a derogatory nature

Any violation of this harassment policy should be brought to the attention of the administration, school psychologist or classroom teacher in the case of a student. In the case of an employee or school community member, violations should be brought to the attention of the Director. In the case of an alleged impropriety on the part of the Director, a report shall be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Upon such notice, an investigation will be completed, and appropriate action will be taken. Any employee or member of the school community found to have engaged in harassment shall be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to, a warning, suspension, or expulsion for students, and a warning, suspension, or termination of employment for staff. Under certain circumstance, harassment (particularly sexual harassment) may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law G.L. c. 119, 51A. CCLCS shall comply with Massachusetts laws in reporting suspected cases of child abuse.

### **Medical**

#### **- Nut Free**

CCLCS is a nut free school. This is to ensure the safety of students with severe allergies to nuts and products that contain nuts. Please carefully read labels to ensure that your child is not bringing to school any foods that may contain nuts.

- **Student Emergency Information Sheet**

The student emergency information sheet must be completed and returned as close to the first day of school as possible to be kept on file in the office. Three separate telephone numbers must be provided. Please be sure there is a local person listed who can be reached when you are not at home. Only first aid treatment can be provided at school. No student is allowed to leave the school alone when ill, and guardians are expected to provide transportation. Please inform the school nurse of any medical problems that could affect the student's performance in school. Medical documentation may be necessary and will need to be provided if requested.

- **Medication**

Students will not be permitted to have medicine in their possession during the school day or at any school-related event. No medication will be dispensed in school, unless prescribed by a physician. When a student is required to take medicine during school hours, a consent form must be signed by the legal guardian and physician before any such medicine will be dispensed. The medicine must be in a labeled prescription bottle and must contain no more than a 4 week / 20-day supply. All medications must be brought into the building and handed directly to the nurse by the student's guardian. The medicine will be kept in a secure location, monitored only by the school nurse and her designee. These rules also apply to all over the counter medications except Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen and Tums, which may be dispensed with written parental consent during the school day. Consent forms are available from the nurse. For students needing medication on long-distance or overnight field trips, the school will need a doctor's order, a signed guardian permission form, and the medication in a pharmacy-labeled bottle brought to the school, by an adult no less than a week before the trip. The bottle should contain only the amount of medication the student will need on the trip + 1. Per state regulations we may only dispense medications specifically how the doctor has prescribed them.

- **Physicals / Immunizations**

1. All students must be up to date and current on all immunizations required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This information must be on file in the office with the nurse. Failure to comply with this policy may cause your child to be excluded from school.
2. Parents should inform the school nurse of any immunizations or physical exams that a student received from a private physician, hospital, or medical center at any time so that each student's health record is kept current and accurate.
3. All students entering 7th grade must have the following immunizations:
  - a. 3 doses of Hepatitis B
  - b. 1 dose of Tdap
  - c. 3 doses of Polio
  - d. 2 dose of MMR
  - e. 1 dose of Varicella
  - f. 1 dose of MenACWY
4. All candidates for athletics must have a recent physical exam (within 13 months) on record before participation in a school sport, including practice.
5. All students must have a physical examination during elementary, middle and high school years.

- **Annual Health Screening**

1. Vision and hearing screening (grade 7)
2. Height, weight, BMI, and blood pressure screening (grade 7)
3. Scoliosis screening (all grades)

*If you have any questions regarding school health policies, please call the school nurse.*

**Physical Restraint**

CCLCS seeks to promote a safe and productive educational environment for its community members. In accordance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (603 C.M.R. 46.00), the law governing the use of physical restraint on students in public schools, CCLCS seeks to ensure that every student attending our school is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after lawful and other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind: 1. To administer a physical restraint only when necessary to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and 2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. In accordance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (603 C.M.R. 46.03), CCLCS seeks to ensure that:

**Prohibition:**

1. Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion shall be prohibited in public education programs
2. Prone restraint shall be prohibited in public education programs except on an individual student basis, and only under the following circumstances:
  - a. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
  - b. All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
  - c. There are no medication contraindications as documented by a licensed physician
  - d. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
  - e. The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603.CMR 46.03(I)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the administration; and;
  - f. The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(I)(b)1-5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation
3. Physical restraint, including prone physical restraint where permitted, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavioral interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances.

4. All physical restraints, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

**- Training**

Annual training is required for all staff and is to occur within the first month of each school year and for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. At the beginning of each school year, the executive director or their designee shall identify the program staff that are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Only trained school personnel pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04 (2) or 603 CMR 46.04 (3) shall administer physical restraints. Such staff shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. The content of the training shall include, but not limited to: 1. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternative methods to restraint, 2. Description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted, 3. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance, 4. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints, and 5. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint. See 603 CMR 46.03(3) and 46.03(4).

**- Proper Administration of Physical Restraint**

(1) Trained personnel. Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

(2) Use of force. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

(3) Safest method. A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.04(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.

(4) Duration of restraint. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

(5) Safety requirements. Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

- (a) No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall

continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.

- (b) Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- (c) If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the administration. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
- (d) Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- (e) After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

#### **- Alternatives to Physical Restraint**

There are a variety of appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. These alternative methods should be used first when seeking to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. Physical restraints only should be used as a last resort in emergency situations after these other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

Examples of interventions and less intrusive methods that may preclude the need for physical restraint include but are not limited to:

1. Active listening
2. Use of a low non-threatening voice
3. Limiting the number of adults providing direction to the student
4. Offering the student a choice
5. Not blocking the student's access to an escape route
6. Suggesting possible resolutions to the student
7. Avoiding dramatic gestures (waving arms, pointing, blocking motions, etc.)
8. Verbal prompt - A verbal prompt is communicating what is expected behavior by clearly stating instructions and expectations.
9. Full or partial physical cue - A full or partial physical cue is anytime an adult needs to temporarily place their hands on a student or physically redirects a student without force. These are used at increasing levels as needed to return a student safely back to task. See Physical Redirection and Physical Escort below.

10. Physical Escort - A physical escort is a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back, for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

11. Physical Redirection -A physical redirection is done by temporarily placing one hand on each of the student's shoulders, without force, and redirecting the student to the learning activity, classroom or safe location.

#### **- Methods for Preventing Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide**

##### **School-Level Supports**

The school will provide school-wide professional development focused on identifying and preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide, including individual behavior crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. In addition, the school-level crisis team will participate in professional development focused on preventative measures to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide, including individual behavior crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. The crisis team along with teachers and other school personnel will identify students who are potentially at-risk and review student social, emotional and behavior progress monthly at the Student Support Team Meeting (SST) and/or leadership team meeting to plan interventions and supports for students. The monthly meetings will include school counselors and social worker, school nurse, administration and if necessary, the school psychologist as a resource to plan appropriate interventions and supports for the students.

The school has a crisis team, which includes the Directors, nurse(s), social worker, and school psychologist when necessary. Members of the school's crisis team are trained in Safety Care.

For any student with a history of significant emotional/ behavior including at risk behavior (harm to self and/or others) and/or a student who may require physical restraint, the Team should develop a safety behavior intervention plan or crisis plan. The plan should include strategies and supports which may include specific de-escalation strategies, counseling services, monitoring protocol, data collection, and frequent review meetings (at least 2x monthly), etc. for the purpose of assessing progress and making necessary adjustments. Teams can request a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) or Safety Assessment and can refer to outside agencies if needed. Each grade has a functioning SST, which meets monthly (or more as needed) to discuss individual students and/or groups of students demonstrating problem behavior and mental health concerns. The team should include an administrator, teachers, school psychologist, and, if necessary, may include an outside agency representative. School staff should utilize the school district's various tools to help students who are exhibiting aggressive behavior.

##### **General De-Escalation Guidelines**

General guidelines for de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student include the following:

1. **Remain calm** -To possibly help prevent the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior use a neutral and level tone of voice, control one's facial expressions, and use a supportive non-threatening body language.



2. Obtain Assistance - Whenever possible, school personnel should immediately take steps to notify school administrators, the school's administrative response team, and/or other school personnel of a potentially dangerous situation and to obtain additional assistance.
3. One Person Speaks - In order to minimize the likelihood of confusion and/or the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior, having one person provide overall direction to the response and the follow up procedures is advisable. This often may be either the first trained staff person on the scene or the staff person with the most information about the particular situation.
4. Remove Student If Possible - The feasibility of having a student experiencing distress leave an area with other students and move to another more private and safe area in order to de-escalate should be considered.
5. Remove Other Students - If it is not feasible to have a student experiencing distress move to a more private and safe area in order to de-escalate, consider the feasibility of having other staff assist and monitor the removal of other students to another area within the school until the student de-escalates. If a student's behavior poses a risk to either themselves or another person, a trained staff member may consider physical restraint. *Restraint should only be used as a last resort and when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others.* Restraint may not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm. Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion are strictly prohibited. Prone restraint is permitted only under a very specific set of criteria with consent.

In the event that physical restraint is necessary, please adhere to the following procedures:

Role of All Staff and Families:

- All staff members (regardless of safety care status) should be familiar with the de-escalation strategies commonly utilized before (and to prevent) restraint.
- Families are encouraged to work with the school to make these connections at home as well.

Procedures for All Staff:

- Call office for assistance and request 2 adults
- When a second adult has arrived, evacuate class to a safer, calmer space
- Consult with appropriate staff post incident to relay any pertinent information

Procedures for Safety Care Specialists:

- Documentation in the form of an incident report including all relevant and required details

**- Periodic Review of Restraint Data**

The Executive Director or their designee shall conduct a monthly review of schoolwide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints schoolwide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The E.D. or their designee shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management practices and procedures, conduct additional staff training

on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

**- Use of Student Support Team**

This report will also include examining the use of a student support team for individual students. The E.D. or their designee shall convene a student support team to make an assessment of an individual student's needs if a student has been restrained on two (2) separate occasions within a seven (7) day period or three (3) times within a thirty (30) day period. Members of the student support team shall participate in the assessment. Each member of the student support team shall read written reports of restraint and any comments provided by the student and parent/guardian about such reports and the use of the restraints. In addition to review and discussion of such reports by the student support team, the assessment shall include an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved. The assessment shall conclude with a plan for addressing any factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions, as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future. The E.D. or their designee shall ensure that a record of each individual student reviewed by the student support team is maintained and made available for review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, upon request.

The E.D. should provide all families and students with information about behavioral supports and restraint prevention efforts that are utilized within their school annually. Additionally, the E.D. is expected to follow these administrative procedures with respect to identifying students who may be at risk of restraint and work with the student and their family along with the school counselor to identify and work on behavioral supports to prevent restraint from occurring. If a student is restrained, the E.D. is expected to follow these administrative procedures with respect to engaging the student and their family about the use of the restraint, the report regarding the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed and/or any other related matters. Additionally, the school counselor also should follow up with the student and their family regarding behavioral supports.

**- Complaint Procedures**

*Informal Resolution of Concern About Use of Physical Restraint*

Before initiating a formal complaint procedure, a student or his/her parent/guardian who has concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint, may seek to resolve his/her concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint by raising the issue with the Executive Director or their designee. The student and/or his/her parent/guardian should direct their concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint to the E.D. within ten (10) days of the parent/guardian's receipt of the written report from the school as detailed herein. The E.D. or their designee shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the complaint fairly and expeditiously. If the student and/or his/her parent/guardian are not satisfied with the resolution, or if the student and/or his/her parent/guardian does not choose informal resolution, then the student and/or his/her parent/guardian may proceed with the formal complaint process detailed herein.

### Formal Resolution of Concern About Use of Physical Restraint

A student or his/her parent/guardian, who has concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint, may seek to resolve his/her concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint by submitting a written complaint to the Board of Trustees. The student and/or his/her parent/guardian should submit this letter to the Board of Trustees within twenty (20) days of the parent/guardian's receipt of the written report from the school as detailed herein. The written complaint shall include (a) the name of the student; (b) the name of the school where the physical restraint allegedly occurred; (c) the name of the individuals involved in the alleged physical restraint; (d) the basis of the complaint or concern; and (e) corrective action being sought.

The Board of Trustees, through its designees, shall conduct an investigation into the complaint promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of its investigation, the Board of Trustees and/or its designees shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. The Board of Trustees and/or its designees will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as is feasible. After completing the formal investigation, the Board of Trustees shall contact the individual who filed the complaint regarding the outcome of its investigation and its determination as to whether any corrective action is warranted.

#### **- Reporting Requirements**

CCLCS staff shall report the use of any physical restraint as specified in 603 CMR 46.06(2). The staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the executive director of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the executive director or their designee. The director, or designee, shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the DESE, upon request. If the executive director has administered the restraint, they shall prepare the report and submit it to a team designated by the Board of Trustees for review.

The executive director or their designee shall verbally inform the student's guardians of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written notification postmarked no later than three working days following the use of restraint. If the school customarily provides a guardian of a student school related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the guardian in that language.

#### **- Notification of Rights under Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):
  - a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's guardian
  - b. Mental or psychological challenges of the student or student's family
  - c. Sexual behavior or attitudes
  - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
  - e. Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has close family relationships

- f. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors or ministers
  - g. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or guardian
  - h. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
    - a. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding
    - b. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision or scoliosis screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required by law
    - c. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others
  3. Inspect, upon request before administration or use:
    - a. Protected information surveys of students
    - b. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes
    - c. Instructional material used as part of the educational program

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years of age or an emancipated minor under State law. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
 U.S. Department of Education  
 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

### **Physical Education**

Emphasis is placed on effort and attitude as opposed to achievement. It is more important that students cooperate with others and try to succeed rather than measuring their success by the number of times they hit the ball or score a goal. Teamwork, encouragement and playing fairly, safely and with full effort are the keys to success in Physical Education classes. P.E. classes emphasize safety first and fun second. Students are to be responsible for their own safety and for the safety of those around them. Students shall refrain from engaging in play with the equipment until everyone is ready and will watch out for themselves and others at all times. Students are responsible for protecting themselves from the sun and weather. This means that students should remember to wear hats, sunblock and any other items necessary to keep themselves healthy outdoors. Students are encouraged to bring individual water bottles to class every day. Students should also wear clothing that they can move around in easily and clothing that is weather appropriate. Athletic sneakers must be worn to P.E. class.

### **Promotion and Retention Procedure**

CCLCS is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. We generally believe that it is appropriate for students to follow the typical chronological sequence of grades and the accompanying curriculum through the school. Children vary considerably in their academic, social,

physical and emotional development. Therefore, our instructional program in each class is adjusted to meet the needs of all students.

However, under some circumstances, it may be appropriate to consider repeating or skipping a grade. In these cases, we will use a number of factors in considering grade placement. These include: number of years retained/advanced, chronological age, academic progress, and developmental and social maturity. If applicable, the student's success with additional supports that have been provided will be considered. Grade placement recommendations are overseen by the Executive Director.

- **Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade.** Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the student(s) involved. Parents/guardians who wish to pursue that their student repeat or skip a grade must put their request in writing to the Executive Director. The final decision will rest with the Executive Director.

A parent/guardian who disagrees with the Executive Director's determination regarding retention or advancement may bring their concerns to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Within 15 days of notification, the Chairperson will discuss with the appropriate staff members the reasons for the determination and may confirm or override the Executive Director's decision.

## **Religion**

### **- Treatment of Religion in the Curriculum**

No staff person shall provide religious instruction, i.e., teach theology and dogma for the purpose of proselytizing. However, all staff may read from holy works, discuss the historical implications of a religion, and explore the religious beliefs of a culture or country as part of an academic subject's curriculum.

### **- Celebration of Religious Holidays**

In accordance with G.L. Ch. 151C, sec 2B, CCLCS recognizes and supports a staff person's or student's right to observe religious holidays. Any staff person wishing to observe a religious holiday that does not fall within regular school vacations may take a personal day. A student for whom a religious holiday falls outside the regular school vacations will be accommodated and shall be excused from attending classes on the religious holiday. The student will also be provided an opportunity to make up work missed due to the absence. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall occur to any student because of absence due to observance of religious holidays.

In accordance with G.L. Ch. 71, sec 31A, CCLCS has set the following guidelines around the celebration of religious holidays:

1. Musical selections for annual concerts, artistic displays, and other projects relating to holidays reflect the school's desire to provide students with a heightened awareness of the diversity of religions and cultures around the world.
2. Within the context of a curricular activity, religious holidays may be studied, the purpose of which is to further the educational and cultural experiences of students.

**- Translation and Oral Interpretation**

CCLCS is committed to providing written and oral translation of school documents to families who are unable to read or understand spoken English well. The school office will maintain a folder containing all school policy level documentation in various languages. Families can request translations or oral interpretation by filling out a translation / interpretation request form and submitting the form to the school's Director or their designee. Spanish and French translations and oral interpretations will be completed by school staff. Other translations and interpretations will be completed by outside service providers. Many special education materials have already been translated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and school personnel will use this resource when available.

**- Student Attendance**

In the event of a student absence, an email must be sent and received by [attendance@cclcs.info](mailto:attendance@cclcs.info) or a call placed to 774-408-7994. If a student is out ill for three consecutive days, a doctor's note must be provided to the school nurse prior to the student's return to school.

Consistent attendance is critical to the success of all students. The purpose of the CCLCS Attendance Program is to establish appropriate steps and actions that CCLCS can take to assist families struggling with daily attendance.

1. After 5 unexcused absences, families will receive an intermediary letter to the mailing address on file. (Please refer to "Operations" under "School Procedures" for the definition of "unexcused".)
2. After 3 more additional unexcused absences, a second letter will be sent requesting a meeting and indicating that a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) may be filed with the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The purpose of the meeting is to identify the primary reason for truancy (medical, psychological, refusal).\*
3. The team will convene to create an action plan to address absenteeism.
4. A CRA will be filed if a student reaches the next level of unexcused absences, as defined in the meeting and action plan.

\*Absenteeism Categories:

- Medical - proper documentation must be submitted to CCLCS
- Psychological - a meeting will be held with the student's legal guardian, school psychologist, school nurse, Executive & Associate Directors, and possibly the student. The meeting may also include community-based representatives. The team will set up an appropriate action plan to address absenteeism.
- Refusal / Defiance - a meeting will be held with the student's legal guardian, the Executive & Associate Directors, and the school's Attendance Officer. The meeting may also include a representative from the District Attorney's office. The team will set up an appropriate action plan to address absenteeism.

**Student Pregnancy**

CCLCS does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities on the basis of pregnancy status. Pregnant students shall have access to all areas of educational and extracurricular programming available to non-pregnant students. Pregnant students

shall have access to the services of the school nurse as needed in order to encourage maximum participation in school programming.

### **Student Records**

As of 1975 the State Board of Education has issued a complete set of regulations regarding the keeping of student records within our schools. These regulations were adopted to ensure the right of confidentiality and to provide for inspection of such records by parents and eligible students.

There are basically two types of records. The first is the permanent record, consisting of the very basic information such as name, address, phone number, birthdate, parents, courses and grades. The second is the temporary record, consisting of test scores, teacher evaluations and extracurricular activities. Parents and eligible students may inspect, obtain copies at a reasonable fee, and have interpreted, either by professionally qualified school personnel or a third party of their choice, any data contained in the student's record. Access will be provided as soon as possible and within 10 days of receipt of a written request made to the Executive Director. If there is a legal need for a non-custodial parent to have their rights of access restricted, the school will need to have a letter from the custodial parent explaining the situation. Additional paperwork may be requested.

### **Surveillance Camera Policy**

Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School (CCLCS) seeks to promote and foster school safety and a safe and effective educational and work environment. After having carefully considered and balanced the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy with Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School's interest and duty to promote the health, welfare, and safety of students and staff as well as the health, safety, and welfare of members of the general public who have occasion to use school facilities and enhance the protection of school property, Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School supports and reserves the right to place and use surveillance cameras, when necessary and appropriate, in its schools, school facilities, school buses and/or on its school grounds.

#### **A. Purpose of Surveillance Cameras**

The primary uses of surveillance cameras are as follows: (i) to promote a safe environment by deterring conduct that violates the law, Board of Trustees policy, and/or school-based rules; and (ii) to record images for future identification of individuals in the event of violations of law, Board of Trustees policy, and/or school-based rules; (iii) to aid in search of lost or missing children, and (iv) to assist emergency services personnel. Surveillance camera use is limited to uses that do not violate federal or state constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure, reasonable expectation of privacy and other applicable laws prohibiting wiretapping and electronic surveillance of oral communications. Surveillance cameras will be utilized in public areas of Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School's building, school buses, and school grounds deemed to be at risk for either vandalism or student misconduct. Surveillance cameras will not be used in the private areas of restrooms, showers, locker rooms and dressing rooms, and any other area in which there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Surveillance cameras also will not be used in private offices and classrooms. Surveillance cameras will not monitor or record sound and will not make audio recordings unless by Court Order and in compliance with wiretap statutes. The use of surveillance cameras and the monitoring of any resultant recordings will be conducted in a professional, ethical and legal manner and in a manner consistent with all existing policies

and state and federal laws and will not be based on a subject's personal characteristics, including race, gender, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or other protected class. Surveillance cameras are not a guarantee of safety but are a tool that helps deter crime and assist in promoting the safety and security of individuals and property. Surveillance cameras are implemented as a passive system; no school staff will be designated to view live events in real time. Additionally, surveillance cameras shall not utilize automatic identification, facial recognition, or automatic tracking technologies. Only authorized school personnel, as determined by school administration, shall be involved with and/or have access to surveillance cameras and any resultant recordings. Additionally, surveillance cameras will be installed and configured to prevent tampering with or unauthorized duplication of recorded information. Furthermore, no surveillance cameras will be installed unless said installation has been approved in advance by school administration in accordance with the process set forth below. Surveillance camera recordings are not considered "directory information" and may be subject to confidentiality restrictions, including but not limited to requirements under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In no instance will surveillance cameras be used to observe and/or evaluate the performance of staff or to monitor employees during non-working time. However, cameras may be used to monitor areas in which an employee works, even if there is only one employee in that area. Cameras installed or utilized for criminal investigations by law enforcement agencies are subject to appropriate state and federal laws and are excluded from the scope and application of this policy. This policy also does not apply to legitimate academic use of video cameras for educational purposes that have been approved by school administration.

#### B. Implementation, Installation of Surveillance Cameras

To further Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School's objectives, school administrators shall meet as necessary to develop, implement, and review school safety practices. The administrators shall also make recommendations regarding the implementation, installation and use of surveillance cameras. In determining the most appropriate use and implementation of surveillance cameras in the school, and/or on school grounds, school administration's recommendation will be guided by, at a minimum, the following considerations:

- Demonstrated need for the device at designated location(s);
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of proposed protocol(s);
- The use of additional, less intrusive means to further address the issue of school safety (e.g., restricted access to buildings, staff key fobs, increased lighting, alarms);
- Right to reasonable expectation of privacy and other legal considerations; and
- Expense involved to install and to maintain the use of surveillance cameras at designated location(s).

Additionally, school administration will conduct on an annual basis, an audit on the location, use and effectiveness of all authorized surveillance cameras.

The CCLCS Facilities Manager shall maintain a current up-to-date record of locations of installed surveillance cameras.

#### C. Monitoring

All employees involved in video monitoring of public areas will perform their duties in accordance with the practices outlined in this policy. Video surveillance monitors shall be located in areas to which access is controlled and shall not be viewable by unauthorized persons.



Video recording may only be monitored by school administration and other designated staff. No unapproved employees may monitor or view video or camera images for any reason except as necessary in the course of an investigation or adjudication. Any employee violating this policy may be disciplined, up to and including termination. All shall receive a copy of this policy and provide written acknowledgment that they have read and understand this policy. A log will be maintained by school administration that will record the name and date anytime a staff member views a recording.

#### D. Storage

Any video recording used for surveillance purposes shall be the sole property of Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School and stored for no more than one month after which such recordings will be promptly erased unless retained as part of an investigation, including criminal investigations, court proceedings (criminal or civil), or other bona fide uses, as approved by school administration; and school administration will be the custodian of such recordings and all such recordings shall be properly protected from unauthorized viewing. A record log will be kept of all instances of access to and use of recorded material.

#### E. Release of Information

Requests for viewing a recording must be made in writing to CCLCS school administration and all public records requests for recordings that are received will be forwarded to Legal Counsel for review. The request, other than public records requests, shall identify the individual for whom access is sought, the date(s) and/or time period(s) for which access is sought, and the rationale why access should be granted. If the request is granted, such viewing must occur in the presence of school administration. Under no circumstances will the video recording be duplicated and/or removed from the premises without the express written authorization of school administration or a Court Order.

#### F. Signage and Notification Regarding Use of Surveillance Cameras

Appropriate and conspicuous signage will be posted at the entrances to the school and on school grounds, and school buses notifying students, staff and members of the general public of the use of surveillance cameras. For exterior cameras, signage will be posted in a conspicuous place in close proximity to the surveillance camera; and for interior cameras, signage will be posted in a conspicuous place at or near the entrance to each place being monitored. Students and staff will receive additional notification, as appropriate, regarding the use of surveillance cameras. Such notification may include, but is not limited to, notice of the use of surveillance cameras being published in the student handbook, employee handbook and Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School's website. Such notification does not preclude, as deemed appropriate by school administration, the discussion of the use of surveillance cameras with staff and students to heighten awareness and help foster a sense of security.

#### G. Destruction and/or Tampering with Surveillance Cameras

Any individual who tampers with or destroys a video surveillance camera or any part of the video surveillance system will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as possible criminal charges.

### **Wellness**

Families are the primary teachers and caregivers of their children. The present and future health, safety and well being of students are also the concern of CCLCS. Schools have a duty to help prevent unnecessary injury, disease and chronic health conditions. Poor nutrition hampers academic achievement while increased physical activity leads to higher academic success. For students to learn to take responsibility for their own health and to adopt health-enhancing attitudes and behaviors:

- CCLCS will be a safe and healthy place for children and employees to learn and work, with a climate that nurtures learning, achievement and growth of character.
- All students will be taught the essential skills and knowledge they need to become “health literate” in order to make healthy choices and avoid behaviors that can damage their health and well-being.
- CCLCS will be organized to reinforce students’ adoption of healthy behaviors, and school staff will be encouraged to model healthy lifestyles.

Schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not healthy and fit, physically, mentally and socially.

The Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School recognizes the relationship between student well-being, health and wellness and student achievement, as well as the importance of comprehensive wellness policies. CCLCS is committed to protecting children’s health, well-being and ability to learn to their fullest potential by supporting a school environment that promotes healthy choices and fosters lifelong habits with respect to eating and physical activity. To achieve these goals, CCLCS has put in place wellness policies.

- **Nutritional Wellness** The goal at CCLCS is that all students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to make healthy nutrition choices throughout the school day through meals, snacks and beverages provided as part of the school meal program, at other times during the school day such as through food and nutrition education integrated in the health education curriculum, and in school events taking place outside of school hours.

The food service program will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods and beverages that:

- Meet the health and nutrition needs of students and adhere to or exceed the USDA school Meal regulations.
- Meet the Massachusetts School nutrition regulations, as applicable.
- Provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat for a minimum of 15 minutes for lunch and breakfast during morning homeroom.
- Ensure that no student goes hungry while in school.
- CCLCS will participate in available federal school meal programs.
- CCLCS will adhere to the nutritional standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. No low nutrition food will be sold for consumption from midnight to 30 minutes after the end of the school day.
- CCLCS will maintain the same nutritional standards for concession stands, booster sales, fundraising activities and school - sponsored or school - related events. High Nutritional valued food will be prominently displayed or offered at all school after hour fundraising events involving food and beverages.

**For the student this means:**

- Water bottles are encouraged. CCLCS has a water bottle filling station. Students are encouraged to keep their water bottles accessible at their desks.
- There will be no sharing of food at any time during the school day to ensure the health of

all of our community members.

- CCLCS will remain a Nut Free facility.
  - Students are not allowed to bring highly caffeinated, sugary snacks and drinks onto school grounds. This includes but is not limited to; coffee, hot chocolate, “fruit crushers” made with tea and sugar, energy drinks and pastries
  - No Candy should be brought to school. Gum is acceptable as it has shown to help focus as long as students are respectful of school property and other community members’ property as it pertains to where the gum ends up.
  - No in-class celebrations such as birthday parties or holidays involving food.
- 
- **Physical Wellness** goals at CCLCS ensure that all students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis throughout the school day through physical education classes, in before and after school activities such as intramurals, interscholastic athletics, active transportation (walking and biking to school), and physical activity integrated into the academic curriculum where appropriate. Additionally there will be daily recess periods with active play.

The Health, Physical Education and Athletics departments will provide all students including students with disabilities, and special health care needs, with access to a variety of opportunities for physical activity. These activities will;

- Adhere to or exceed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education standards.
- Ensure that students learn skills for lifelong activities
- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in physical activity through a range of programs including but not limited to intramurals, and competitive interscholastic athletics, and activities that are available to all students, regardless of skill level, such as intramurals and club level sports.
- All students will have at least 15 minutes of recess actively supervised by trained staff, preferably outdoors, during which the staff will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Students will not be permitted to attend school if in the prior 24 hours they had a fever or started taking antibiotics which require 24 hours to take effect.

**For the students this means:**

- Come to gym class prepared to participate, wearing appropriate footwear and outerwear to go outside on the fields.
- For interscholastic and club sports, maintain a current physical on file with the health office (one that has been completed within the last year).

**Health and Wellness** goals at CCLCS ensure that all students will receive encouragement, support, and education to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors through health education, including nutrition education and social emotional learning.

- Students receive health education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors.

- Social and Emotional learning ( SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.
- Health and nutrition education curriculum will be aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework and all other applicable state and federal standards. CCLCS will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs, and related core class curriculums and community services.

**For the student this means:**

- We respect the right of each community member to develop and express their own identity. This means we do not make jokes about other's race, ethnicity, languages spoken, gender, gender identity, physical appearance, religion, abilities, disabilities, culture, family members, values or other aspects of identity.
- We recognize our emotions and the emotions of others.
- We practice healthy communication skills by using "I statements", active listening, and empathy.
- We practice asking for consent, granting consent, and denying consent as the basis for all human interactions. We do not touch other people's belongings without consent.

**School Procedures**

**School Hours**

The student school day begins with homeroom at 8:35AM. In order to minimize foot traffic inside the building, students should not arrive on campus earlier than 8:10AM. Students arriving before 8:35AM are expected to attend outdoor recess until students are directed by an adult to enter the school building together at 8:35AM.

Bus riders will be scheduled to arrive at 8:35AM. Students are expected to be seated at all times on the bus. Students must be picked up after school or take the bus by 3:00PM unless they are participating in a school activity. We encourage families who plan to dismiss their student early to do so by 2:30PM whenever possible, so as to avoid the high activity in the office during the regularly scheduled dismissal process. Bus riders will be dismissed at 2:57, and car riders will be dismissed at 3:00PM. Drivers are asked to pull forward in 2 lanes to the staff member directing traffic.

**Student Schedules & Transitions**

All students will be assigned to a color group and letter group for the 25/26 school year. Students will attend 6 classes each day, traveling with their letter or color group.

**School Cancellation**

CCLCS will contact all families via phone AND email with school cancellations. Please be sure to check these on days when inclement weather is forecasted.

**Visitors**

All visitors must report to the front office upon arrival. Guardians should ring the main bell and await instructions from the office staff. A small table outside the office is available to sign your student both in and out. Should a visitor need to enter the building for a specified duration of time, they must sign in and receive a visitor badge from the main office.

### **Attendance**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires that all schools maintain a minimum of 95% attendance and holds the school accountable for ensuring that this requirement is met. The state of Massachusetts defines a student as chronically absent if they miss 18 or more days of school in one school year. Individual student attendance is reported to DESE daily. Tardiness and early dismissals are considered attendance issues. If your child will not be in school, the school must be notified no later than 8:30AM. Please call 774-408-7994 and leave a message. You may also email the school at [attendance@cclcs.info](mailto:attendance@cclcs.info). If a student is absent for two or more consecutive days, a homework packet may be requested.

Time on learning is of the utmost importance to CCLCS. Every effort will be made to address excessive tardies and absences informally. In the event that a student accumulates a substantial amount of tardies or absences, parents will be notified with a formal letter which will trigger a parent conference with the school administrators. Chronic absenteeism that remains unsolved may necessitate notification to the Department of Children and Families or the filing of a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) petition with the court system. Under state law, a school-aged child who is not excused from attendance and who willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a trimester is considered habitually truant. In addition, a hearing may be held with the parents and the school director, along with the student's team of teachers, for students with absences and/or tardies in excess of 15 days.

A student with absences in excess of 30 days will trigger an administrative review to determine if the student is eligible for promotion to the next grade level. Special help is provided for specific, documented, excused absences, such as medical issues.

### **Excused Absences**

To have an absence or tardy excused, legal guardians must call or email the school no later than 8:30AM on the day of the absence with a valid explanation (see below). If the school does not receive an email or phone call, the absence is unexcused. A doctor's or legal note will also be accepted. The following absences or tardies are considered excused with valid reason once the school has been notified:

- Illness of the student
- Doctor / dentist appointments
- Death in the family
- Quarantine
- Court proceedings
- Religious holidays

In the event that a student incurs 2 or more consecutive unexcused absences, a written note from a doctor or a legal note will be required for CCLCS to excuse any further absences. The following absences and/or tardies, and all other absences and/or tardies not listed above, are considered unexcused absences:

- Oversleeping
- Family vacations
- Visiting family
- School refusal / defiance

*Please note: It is at the discretion of the school to define and determine excused and unexcused absences.*

Early dismissals are listed on the morning attendance sheet. Please notify the school office when a student is to be dismissed early. Any student dismissed before 2:55PM must be signed out at the office except students dismissed early due to illness, who will be signed out by the school nurse. Students dismissed before 11:40AM will be marked absent for the day. A student must be present in school in order to participate in extracurricular activities after school, including sports and clubs. Students dismissed before or arriving after 11:40AM are considered absent, as they will be in attendance for less than half the school day. Students arriving after 8:40AM are considered tardy and must report to the front office to sign in.

### **Student Academic and/or Homeroom Group Change Procedure**

The procedure for an academic group change and/or a homeroom group change involves multiple steps to ensure a fair and well-considered decision-making process.

- Team Discussion and Decision:
  - The first level involves the student's current academic or homeroom team coming together for a group discussion. This can be facilitated by teachers, counselors, or designated team leaders.
  - During the discussion, the student's preferences, concerns, and reasons for wanting a group change will be considered.
  - The team members should collaboratively explore potential solutions and consider the factors mentioned, such as learner profile, group dynamics, friendships, and schedule.
- Administrative Assistance:
  - If, after the team discussion, a resolution cannot be reached, the matter can be escalated to the administration.
  - The administration will review the situation and consider the factors mentioned, making an informed decision that aligns with the best interests of the students and the overall school community.
- Consideration of Factors:
  - Throughout the process, several factors will be taken into consideration:
    - Learner Profile: Individual student strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and academic needs.
    - Group Dynamics: How students interact and work together as a team, and whether any disruptive patterns are present.

### **Breakfast, Lunch & Snack**

All students will be eligible to participate in our breakfast and lunch program. For the 25/26 school year, all meals provided by the school will be free of charge. CCLCS asks that families order food ahead of

time using the school website ([www.ezschoollapps.com/ParentLogin.aspx](http://www.ezschoollapps.com/ParentLogin.aspx)). The school is nut-free to ensure the safety of students who have severe allergies to nuts. Please make sure your student does not bring ANY food items that may contain nuts. Students who do not receive meals at school should bring a healthy snack and lunch along with a drink in their backpack. Because the school does not have a cafeteria, arrangements have been made with local restaurants so that we can offer breakfast and lunch every day to all grades. **Students are not permitted to bring soda, energy drinks, coffee or candy to school.** If your child will be tardy, please notify the office by 9:30 am or his/her breakfast and lunch will be canceled. Breakfast and lunch orders will be canceled for a student who is not present.

### **Transportation**

Families must provide transportation to and from school. For families from Bourne to Dennis, a parent-funded bus service for CCLCS students has been established. For information about this bus, please consult the school's website. DART and Flex buses operated by the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority are another option of which many families take advantage. A student Charlie Pass is available for students at the CCRTA transportation center in Hyannis. For schedules and contact information, please visit their website at [www.capecodtransit.org](http://www.capecodtransit.org).

### **Dismissal**

Because student safety is of paramount importance, special dismissal procedures have been implemented for the 25/26 school year and must be followed by all. After their last period class, students will be dismissed to their homeroom classroom to retrieve their personal devices. Students riding a yellow bus or public bus will be dismissed first and by grade level. Students being picked up will be dismissed from their homeroom classroom, as soon as the buses depart. Drivers will follow the designated traffic patterns and remain in their vehicle. Walkers will remain in the building until all cars have departed.

### **Safe Parent Carpool**

Halls Path should be used by all vehicles during the morning drop off. **The bus entrance may NOT BE USED by carpools during the morning drop off and afternoon pick up.** For personal vehicles, Halls Path is the only access road to the school. Earliest arriving parents for pick up are directed to park in lanes at the front of the school. Drivers should be off their phones and follow traffic directives from the school staff. During afternoon pick-up, there will be no parking in the lanes directly in front of the school, as this area is for buses who must have full visibility and no traffic hazards. For safety's sake, we require anytime someone other than a legal guardian or carpool member is picking up a child, that the office be notified by the guardian, identifying the person authorized to pick up the student.

### **Athletics & Clubs**

#### **Athletics**

CCLCS will be following DESE guidelines regarding athletic play and after-school activities for the 25/26 school year. Practices and games (including locations) will be scheduled and communicated by the school's Athletic Director. During the Fall sports season, CCLCS offers girls and boys soccer, girls field hockey and girls and boys cross country. During the winter season, CCLCS offers boys and girls basketball and co-ed track, and in the Spring season, CCLCS offers girls softball and boys baseball, co-ed track, golf, and tennis. Students are entitled to self-select the team they would like to participate on based on their gender identity. Athletes are expected to arrive at all practices on time and stay for the duration of

the practice, unless a guardian has communicated directly with the coach and other arrangements have been coordinated. Athletes will need to be picked up on time by their guardian after all practices. Transportation to and from scheduled games will be provided by coaches and parent volunteers. \*\* See Athletics Under School Policies for more information.

### **Clubs**

After school clubs vary each term and are led primarily by teachers and parent volunteers. Club offerings, including sign up and schedule details, will be provided in advance in the weekly school newsletter, titled “Notes to Home.”

### **Building Use**

For safety and liability reasons, public use of CCLCS buildings and vehicles is generally limited to school activities that are directed by CCLCS staff.

## **Student Services**

### **Counseling Services**

The individual counseling needs of students and their families are met in a variety of ways.

#### **In-school Counseling**

CCLCS offers the services of a school psychologist and a school social worker to assist students with problems that can be dealt with on a short-term basis. We have a tiered approach to counseling services and guardians of students needing additional support will be contacted in the event outside services will be required.

#### **Out of School Counseling**

In those cases where student or family needs exceed the domain of the school, guardians will be referred to professional services and counseling. In cases where a student is at risk, the school will intervene according to the mandates of Massachusetts educational law. The school psychologist or social worker is available at all times for immediate advice, intervention, and referral.

### **Special Education**

In accordance with Chapter 766 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, the school operates special education programs that fully meet the needs of students with Individual Educational Programs (IEPs). The school employs a Director of Student Services, a full-time school psychologist, three full-time special education teachers and several support staff. Parents with students who have special needs are urged to meet with the special education teachers as early in the school year as possible if they have questions about their child’s program.

### **504 Accommodation Plans**

Students with disabilities who do not require special education services to make progress in general education may be entitled to accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The school ensures that students with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to participate in all aspects of school on an equal basis with students without disabilities. If you have a child with a disability, please contact the school psychologist for more information on 504 accommodation plans.



### **Instructional Support Intervention Team**

A school team meets on an as needed basis to assist students who are experiencing educational, physical, or social & emotional difficulties. If you have concerns regarding your child's development please discuss with your child's teacher, school psychologist, social worker or the Director of Student Services.

### **“Portvisory” / Point People**

Every CCLCS student has been assigned a homeroom teacher/“advisor” at the school, with whom they will meet on a consistent basis. Almost every teacher and staff member serves as an Advisor, allowing advisory groups to consist of 9-12 students and will discuss a variety of topics. Advisory groups also create and compile student portfolios, which over time, exhibit a student's goals, accomplishments and reflections during their tenure at the school.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

State and federal regulations provide certain protections relevant to disciplinary action for students who are eligible for or may be eligible for special education services. Please refer to the “Student Responsibilities” section of the handbook for more information.

## **Student Responsibilities**

### School-wide Expectations



Show Respect and Kindness  
for Self and Community



Maintain Safe and Clean  
Environment



Engage in Productive Work

### **Statement of Purpose**

CCLCS seeks to encourage in each student a sense of self-discipline with individual responsibility and accountability for one's actions; self-respect as well as respect for others; and a personal code of conduct which reflects the values of family and the school community. In order for CCLCS to be successful, everyone in the school must do the following:

- Work towards educational goals and objectives of the school

- Preserve individual dignity and respect
- Recognize and honor the rights of others as well as ourselves

For students to learn, get along with each other, and feel happy, there must be an orderly atmosphere with fair, well understood rules. The goal of positive discipline is to turn poor behavior into good behavior. Guardians are important people in the school community. Family support reinforces the school's disciplinary effort and is crucial to assisting teachers by encouraging appropriate behavior. CCLCS, its teachers, families, students and volunteers are committed to creating an extraordinary educational environment in our school. Our school must be as safe, secure and incident-free as possible. We know that the learning process is substantially enhanced by order, cooperation, and respect. We, as a community, will abide by the Universal Student Contract that will preserve this educational environment. We support and defend high expectations and expect others to do the same.

### **Individual Rights and Responsibilities**

CCLCS, as a public school, recognizes the importance of its responsibility to educate students. We strive to establish a curriculum and a working community based on academic freedom. Certain individual rights and responsibilities are considered essential to our school community. They are the right to:

- Be respected as a member of the community. In turn, each student is responsible for treating others the way they would like to be treated and that is with “unconditional positive regard” for all in our community.
- Receive the best possible education. In turn, each student is responsible for being prepared to work in class and on homework to the best of their ability and for cooperating with teachers and classmates.
- Feel safe and secure in school. In turn, each student is responsible for following the discipline code of the school and to respect their classmates and their property.
- Be treated fairly. In turn, each student must accept the consequences for their actions.

### **Clear Expectations**

At the beginning of the school year each student at CCLCS is expected to understand and sign a copy of the behavioral contract below. This contract (referred to as the Universal Student Contract) translates the rights and responsibilities described above into a clear set of behavior expectations that help to guide student actions during their tenure at CCLCS.

### **Universal Student Contract**

The Universal Student Contract is designed to serve as a guide for helping students understand the impact of their behavior on the school community. The contract articulates behaviors that are most helpful in creating a safe, supportive environment where all students and adults can learn and develop to the best of their potential. The main value at the heart of the school's behavioral code is that all members of the school community respect each other and work to support each other. Putting the values of respect and support into action means that members of the CCLCS community must pledge to avoid certain behaviors that tend to harm others in the community and behaviors that can weaken the learning environment. This contract clearly spells out some of the behaviors that students agree to avoid in order to ensure a healthy, supportive learning environment. If a student is found to be a “repeat offender” and participates in

behaviors that break this contract on a regular basis, that student will receive an individualized behavior plan that spells out the consequences of breaking these rules in greater detail. The Universal Student Contract reads as follows:

“As a member of the learning community at CCLCS, I understand that my behavior is an important ingredient in building a strong, supportive community of learners, and I agree to follow all parts of the behavioral code described below in this document.” All students and guardians agree to the Universal Student Contract by signing the handbook letter:

- I agree to demonstrate respect for CCLCS through care of the building, school equipment and all school resources. This includes contributing to keeping our physical space clean and healthy, as well as taking care of and not damaging school property, from paper clips to vans.
- I agree to act as a thoughtful and responsible representative of CCLCS on school grounds and in public spaces. I recognize that I am a reflection of my community and should act with courtesy and consideration for the safety and comfort of others. This includes walking (not running) in the hallways and on the sidewalks, demonstrating appropriate language and behavior in school and using appropriate language and behavior on school trips.
- I agree to respect the learning climate at CCLCS by coming to classes prepared and on time, and by behaving appropriately and positively in the classroom setting so that the learning process is enhanced for all. This includes a commitment to honesty in my schoolwork, and not engaging in any form of cheating and plagiarism.
- I agree to never put down or pick on another student or staff member with my remarks or actions or participate in bullying other students. This includes being a bystander to bullying.
- I agree to avoid participating in gossip or in circulating information that could be designed to hurt somebody else’s feelings.
- I agree to avoid unwanted physical contact with other students and if a student or staff member asks me to stop such behavior, I will do so immediately.
- I agree to respect other people’s possessions and keep my hands off others’ items and anything that does not belong to me.
- I understand that if I break these rules, I will be hurting myself, my friends and the CCLCS community. In addition, I will risk earning penalties, ranging from loss of privileges to more serious penalties.
- I understand that a student who consistently breaks the rules may require an Individualized Behavior Contract with specific and very clear expectations and consequences.

### **Academic Integrity**

In submitting academic work, all students will abide by the following pledge:

“On my honor, I pledge this is my own work.” By abiding by this pledge, students internalize the value of academic honesty and understand the consequences of cheating.

The term “cheating”, includes but is not limited to:

- copying parts of or all of a homework assignment

- copying parts of or all of an essay
- copying parts of or all of a quiz or test
- copying internet or published material without proper citation and giving appropriate credit
- using a cheat sheet or any other unapproved piece of work to assist you on an assignment
- allowing other students to copy your work

All students and parents agree to the CCLCS Academic Integrity Policy by signing the handbook letter. CCLCS has a tiered system for determining disciplinary action on cheating (included below).

**Use of AI or Chat GPT3:** The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to deepen learning and comprehension is an emerging skill, and in certain classes and Digital Citizenship teaching units, students may be instructed to use it as a learning tool at the discretion of a teacher.

At no time during in-class assessments or assignments is AI to be used unless explicitly directed to by the instructor. Students should employ AI detection tools and checks prior to assignment submission to ensure their work is original and not mistakenly credited to an AI source.

First Offense:

- referral to Executive and Associate director
- notification to parents
- written apology to teacher
- possible partial or full loss of credit on an assignment

Second Offense:

- referral to Executive and Associate director
- notification to parents
- written apology to teacher
- Loss of partial or full credit on an assignment
- half day in school suspension where the assignment will be redone

Third Offense:

- referral to Executive and Associate director
- notification to parents
- written apology to teacher
- loss of full credit on assignment
- full day in school suspension where the assignment will be redone and additional work may be assigned
- possible withdrawal from extracurricular activities for an extended period of time

### **Responsible Use of Technology (RUP)**

All students and staff at CCLCS will have access to school-provided technology as part of their learning environment. It is expected that CCLCS community members will sign and abide by the RUP when using school issued technology. A more detailed description of the RUP can be found on the school website. CCLCS reserves the right to oversee and access all school related technology accounts at any time.

Students will not have access to a school issued device until the RUP is signed by the student and guardian.

- 1.) Usage - Students will use technology responsibly and ethically.
- 2.) Communication - Students will always be kind, supportive and respectful when using technology to interact with members of the school community and beyond. Community members, including but not limited students, staff, and guardians, will not use the CCLCS name, logo, or symbol on any personal social media posts and/or in conversations/dialogue unless it is for educational purposes only.
- 3.) Internet Information - Students may not use their CCLCS accounts to post to controversial discussion groups on the Internet or to any other controversial online public forums.
- 4.) Personal devices - Upon arrival at school, students will power off personal devices and turn them into their homeroom teacher [This includes mobile phones, smart watches, personal listening devices (earbuds/earpods)]. The main office will store student devices for the duration of the school day and return them to each student at dismissal. Students may turn their devices on once they have exited the building for the day.

### **Transportation Behavior/Expectations**

Whether traveling on the parent-funded Lighthouse bus, in CCLCS vans, or on public transportation, students are expected to behave appropriately and responsibly. The safety of our students and drivers must be considered paramount. All CCLCS community members, including students, staff, and family members, must act in a manner that does not jeopardize safety in any way. Safe behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Wearing a seat belt at all times
- Remaining seated at all times
- Keeping belongings securely tucked away
- Using personal devices appropriately, responsibly and respectfully
- Maintaining a reasonable noise level
- Treating other passengers respectfully and kindly

Furthermore, financial and legal issues require us to keep our vans functioning well into the future. Because of this, we ask students to comply with the following code of behavior in order to enjoy the privilege of using the school vans.

- Seat belts must be worn at all times
- No eating or drinking in the vans without permission from the driver
- Check the van as you leave and pitch in by removing any trash, articles of clothing, notebooks, pencils, backpacks and school equipment (these items can be left outside the office)
- No writing on or tearing material or upholstery in the van

Students neglecting these responsibilities may face disciplinary action.

### **Field Trip Behavior**

The curriculum at CCLCS often provides for learning experiences away from the school grounds. Field trips include, but are not limited to: Cape Cod Museum of Fine Arts, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Cape Cod National Seashore, local ponds and beaches. On these trips, it is important for all students to be responsible for their behavior. Inappropriate behavior (in person or virtually) may result in the loss of field trip privileges. The following rules are in addition to normal school rules.

- Students must give parents and other school community members assisting with field trips the same respect that they would provide to teachers.
- When asked by a driver of a van or bus to be quiet, students are required to do so.
- Consumption of food and drink is not permitted in the school vans without permission from the driver.
- Students must leave the vans clean and free of debris at the end of each trip.

### **Behavioral/Performance Expectations for Participation in Extended Field Trips**

The extended field trips at CCLCS are designed to build class cohesion, meet specific learning objectives, and serve as a fun reward for students' enthusiastic participation in the academic and civic life at our school. The success of the trips requires students, parents, chaperones and teachers to uphold very high standards of behavior. Living together in harmony for 5 days in the June heat of Maryland, the woods at Nature's Classroom or for 3 days in the White Mountains, requires a climate of mutual trust between students and staff. At CCLCS we have been able to build and maintain this trust, as evidenced by years of very successful trips.

The purpose of a class trip participation policy is to establish standards that demonstrate each student's desire and ability to participate in an extended educational off campus exploration productively, positively, and collaboratively. We strive to make these trips Positive Growth experiences for all students, but it does sometimes happen that students need to be excluded from a class trip. These exclusions are rare and are based on the student's behavioral and academic performance at school. In order to be included on a class trip, a student must meet the following academic standards:

- Complete at least 80% of homework assignments in all classes
- Complete all project work in all classes
- Have a passing class participation grade in all classes

Any student in danger of falling short of these standards will receive warnings when they fall out of compliance, so that they can complete the work necessary to be included in the trip. Students can also be excluded from overnight field trips for behavioral reasons. These behaviors include serious violations of the school rules, such as possession of drugs or weapons, vandalism, assault or harassment or multiple less serious violations.

Teachers will routinely review students' field trip participation status at weekly team meetings. Parents of students in danger of being excluded from trips will be informed with a letter from the school's Director at least one week before the trip, unless the event leading to the exclusion happens closer to the trip date.

### **Consequences for Breaking Rules**

Teachers and other adults in charge have a range of options available to address misconduct or misbehavior. As noted in the Student Behavior Contract, responses may vary depending upon how many

infractions a student accumulates. Teacher responses need to balance the need for consistency with the ability to appropriately judge the magnitude of a response in a given situation. Teacher responses will include the following tools:

- Verbal warnings / Reinforce behavioral expectations
- Adjustment to seating in the classroom
- Individual conference with the teacher
- Student completion of a “Classroom Conduct Reflection - Grow”
- Offense is logged in school electronic database
- Email or calls home to guardians to discuss a student’s behavior
- Guardian meetings with grade level teachers
- Asking the student to repair damages
- Sending the student to the Office

### **Office Referrals**

Behaviors requiring more than the responses listed above, but not serious enough to be classified as “very serious,” can be managed through an office referral, utilizing the “Think About It” process. This is a multi-step process that involves the following components:

1. Initial identification of the incident. At this stage, the staff member witnesses the incident and refers the student to the office for processing.
2. After initial verbal processing, the student is prompted to fill in a “Think About It” sheet (TAI sheet) in the office area.
3. After the sheet has been completed, the administrator determines the next steps and notes them on the form. Steps can include a student conference with teachers, a parental meeting or phone conference, or loss of privileges for the student. Staff should be sure to follow special protocols that may have been developed for students on behavioral plans.
4. The adult processing the incident informs all team members of the infraction, including the Executive & Associate Directors.
5. When a student is referred to the office, the Associate Director enters the incident onto the student’s electronic database file and records on the form how many TAI sheets the student has accumulated to date.
6. An accumulation of TAI sheets may result in suspension as well as a meeting with the student’s guardians to address the root causes of the behavior and to discuss strategies to improve behavior.

As mentioned in the Student Behavioral Contract, repeated misbehavior may require a more specific Individual Behavior Contract. Accumulation of the “Think About It” sheets may trigger review of the student’s eligibility for field trips, athletics, or other educational programming and activities. The review may determine that a student is ineligible, or it may trigger a warning letter.

### **Emergency Removal**

Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially or substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal’s judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary

removal shall not exceed two school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06 (2);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06 (2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or (3) as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and (d) or (3)(c) and (d), as applicable.

A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

### **Serious Infractions**

There are a wide range of other negative behaviors, similar to those described in the student contract, that can undermine the strength of the school community and thus require corrective action.

At CCLCS we have developed tools to respond to these situations. The tools are designed for clear identification, communication, restitution to the community and, when appropriate, sanctions to allow increased self-awareness for the offender and a safe and appropriate learning climate for the "victims" of the misbehavior. Behaviors requiring such intervention include but are not limited to:

- Disrespect or bullying directed towards teachers or other students
- Mistreatment of the physical setting or materials
- Disobeying or being disrespectful of teachers or other adults in charge
- Treating others badly because of their ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual preference, family background or general appearance (see discrimination / harassment policies in this handbook)
- Inappropriate or distracting items brought to school
- Unsafe behaviors in class or in shared spaces
- Poor sportsmanship in group settings
- Violation of the RUP
- Inappropriate language

### **Very Serious Infractions**

The following very serious infractions, several of which involve criminal offenses as well as violations of the school's rules, can result in a more substantial school response. These may include a possible emergency removal, an internal suspension (single or multi-day), an external suspension (single or



multi-day), an external suspension of up to 10 days, a long term suspension (greater than 10 days), or expulsion by the Director. When a student is excluded from the typical school day, the Director may establish a list of conditions that must be completely met before the student can be readmitted to school.

Any student externally suspended for 10 days or more or expelled may appeal the Director's decision, including the conditions for re-admittance, in writing to the Board of Trustees. The Board is the final arbiter in all disciplinary matters. If the Board upholds the Director's decision and the Director determines that the student has failed to meet the conditions set forth for re-admittance, the Director has final authority to deny the student's readmission back to school. These rules apply to behavior on the school premises or at school related functions. Very serious infractions may include, but are not limited to:

- Possession and/or use of a weapon
- Possession or use of explosives
- Possession, sale or distribution or use of drugs (illegal substances)
- Possession, sale or distribution or use of alcohol or alcoholic beverages
- Possession, sale, or distribution or use of tobacco products
- Misuse of over-the-counter drugs
- Extortion
- Giving false alarms
- Theft
- Arson
- Assault of staff or students
- Threatening the health and safety of staff or students (whether that threat be verbal, written and/or electronic, etc.)
- Battery of staff or students
- Vandalism
- Hazing, bullying and harassment
- Upon issuance of a felony complaint against the student, if the Director determines that continued presence in school will have a substantial detrimental effect on the school's welfare
- Any other action that seriously affects the educational process or safety of the school's staff and students

Additionally, any breaches of Federal law, Massachusetts state law or the by-laws of the Town of Harwich, will be handled in cooperation with the Harwich Police Department. It is also important that parents and students understand that according to the Massachusetts general laws ("A student may be expelled from a charter school based on criteria determined by the Board of Trustees and approved by the Secretary of Education with the advice of the administration and teachers; provided, M.G.L. ch 71, sec. 89), however, that charter school policies shall be consistent with sections 37H and 37H1/2."

### **Suspensions**

CCLCS rarely imposes suspensions for more than 1 day, and most suspensions are held in-house. Under MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, the Executive Director (or designee), when deciding consequences for a student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using removal as a consequence until other alternatives have been employed. Alternatives may

include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs - such as, mediation, conflict resolution, restorative practices and collaborative problem solving. Writing an essay, completing a research project, and/or other assignments may be part of the alternative consequence.

#### **In-School Suspension:**

In-school suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. An in-school suspension of more than 10 cumulative days in a school year will be subject to the procedures for long-term suspension.

#### **Out-of-School Suspension:**

Out of school suspension is a temporary exclusion from the activities of the regular classroom and school when it is considered appropriate by the administration. Every effort will be made to contact the parent to meet to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student time to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the administration will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The administration will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administration should consider in determining consequences for the student. Prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension of 10 days or less in a school year, an administrator will provide the student and his/her guardian with oral and written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.

**Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less.** The Executive Director may, at their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

**Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.** Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2 no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Some of the behaviors that may earn a suspension for disciplinary offenses are fighting; leaving the building; hitting or any aggressive touch of another person; refusal to do school work; bullying/harassment. Other examples are listed above under serious and very serious infractions.

Under the Due Process outlined on the following pages, **students facing a suspension of greater than 10 days** have enhanced procedural rights. Massachusetts law authorizes the suspension/removal from school for a maximum of 90 days, with the exception of conduct covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2 (being in possession of a dangerous weapon; in possession of a controlled substance; any act of

vandalism; an assault or threatening any school personnel; an assault on another student; or any act of violence).

- If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the Executive Director (or designee): the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and the right to appeal Executive Director's (or designee) decision to the Board Chair.
- The Executive Director will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the Executive Director must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The Executive Director is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Executive Director has sent written notice and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
- Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Executive Director and the parent. The Executive Director shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:
  - the disciplinary offense;
  - the basis for the charge;
  - the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
  - the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the administration concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
  - the date, time, and location of the hearing;
  - the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
  - if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the administration:
    - the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
    - the right to appeal the administration's decision to the Board of Trustees
- According to regulations, a Head of School/Executive Director may not impose a long-term suspension "without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing." Suspensions include Due Process provisions.
- If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in suspension of a student for more than 10 cumulative school days for the school year, the student may appeal the decision to the Board Chair.
- In order to do so the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the Board Chair within five (5) calendar days unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Board Chair shall grant the extension.
- The Board Chair shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Board Chair shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a

day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Board Chair to participate. The Board Chair shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time and location of the hearing.

- The Board Chair shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. If requested by the guardian, the Board Chair shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Board Chair shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made of the hearing, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Executive Director's hearing for long- term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).
- The Board Chair shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)1. through 4.
- If the Board Chair determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Board Chair may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Executive Director's, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Executive Director's decision.
- The decision of the Board Chair shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school or virtual school, with regard to the suspension. The decision of the Board Chair constitutes the final decision of the school district.

**Expulsion** means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H1/2.

Students are subject to expulsion (i.e. permanent exclusion) by the Executive Director for the conduct listed below (see also M.G.L. ch. 71 37H)

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse)
- Assault on fellow students, teachers, administrative staff or other educational personnel
- A felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H1/2.

This includes not only knives and guns, explosive devices and realistic replicas of such weapons, but also other objects used to assault another person or to otherwise create a dangerous situation, such as a baseball bat, a pair of scissors, matches or a lighter. While such objects would not always constitute "dangerous weapons", administrators and educational professionals will review the circumstances of each case and make a reasonable determination about whether a particular object in a student's possession constitutes a dangerous weapon in the school setting. Any illegal weapon will be turned over to the police department. Any student who brings a firearm to school must be expelled for a minimum of one school year, with exceptions granted only by the Board Chair. (The definition of a firearm includes, but is not limited to, guns (including a starter gun), bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices).

Students are also subject to long-term suspension or expulsion by the Executive Director when charged or convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, 37H1/2.

In serious cases, defined as involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights, the decision to suspend rather than expel may depend on whether the Director determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. This determination is made in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H, paragraph 2, 37H ½.

### **REFERRAL TO THE POLICE**

School officials generally report suspected criminal conduct that occurs at school or school-related events to the police. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, possession of weapons— such as guns or knives, possession of a controlled substance, and significant incidents of bullying, defamation of character, assault, vandalism, and theft. Reporting suspected criminal conduct is separate from any disciplinary action that school officials may take based upon the same conduct.

### **Suspension Recording Protocol**

Student suspensions are logged into the school's electronic system. When a student receives a suspension, the Director or the Director's designee will check the yearly record to assess the student's cumulative suspension data in order to assure that the school complies with all regulations with respect to student suspension requirements.

### **Due Process**

All students involved in a discipline concern will be afforded due process. Due process includes the student's right to be treated with fairness and respect, to be given the opportunity to share his or her side of a situation, and to be assigned consequences in a reasonable and impartial manner. Due process includes the right to request a review of any decision and the right to appeal through the school's appeal process. Nothing in state regulations prevents a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews of a school-related disciplinary incident.

Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on their misbehavior, to assume personal responsibility for their part in a situation, to brainstorm and or rehearse alternate methods of handling the situation, and to make amends, when practical, in an appropriate manner.

### **Standards and procedures ensuring due process for short- or long-term suspension and expulsion:**

#### **For a short-term suspension:**

(a) The purpose of the hearing with the Executive Director (or designee) is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Executive Director (or designee) will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also will have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Executive Director (or designee) should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05.

The Executive Director (or designee) will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Executive Director (or designee) should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Executive Director (or designee) will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

(c) The Executive Director (or designee) will notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination will be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

**For in-school suspension:**

(a) The Executive Director (or designee) may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

(b) The Executive Director (or designee) may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10, provided that the Executive Director (or designee) follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through (5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).

(c) The Executive Director (or designee) will inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Executive Director (or designee) determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director (or designee) will inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which will not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

(d) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the Executive Director (or designee) will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The Executive Director (or designee) will also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the Executive Director (or designee) is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts will constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

(e) The Executive Director (or designee) will send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the Executive Director (or designee) for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The Executive Director (or designee) will deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

**For a long-term suspension:**

(a) The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.

(b) At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
- The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
- The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Executive Director (or designee), and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request.
- If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The Executive Director (or designee) will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Executive Director (or designee) should consider in determining consequences for the student.

d) Based on the evidence, the Executive Director (or designee) will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Executive Director (or designee) will send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications or other method of delivery agreed to by the Executive Director (or designee) and the parent. If the Executive Director (or designee) decides to suspend the student, the written determination will:

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Executive Director (or designee);
- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a)
- Inform the student of the right to appeal the Executive Director (or designee)'s decision to the Board Chair or designee, but only if the Executive Director (or designee) has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal will be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and will include the following information stated in plain language:
  - the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Board Chair within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Board Chair an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days; and that
  - the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Board of Trustees decides to reverse the Executive Director (or designee)'s determination on appeal.

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Executive Director (or designee) will have the right to appeal the Executive Director (or designee)'s decision to the Board Chair. Long-term Suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom

activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

- The student or parent will file a notice of appeal with the Board Chair within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (d) 5.a. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Board Chair may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- The Board Chair will hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the Board Chair will grant the extension.
- The Board Chair will make a good effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Board Chair will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Board Chair to participate.
- The Board Chair will send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- The Board Chair will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be.
- The Board Chair will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which will be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Board Chair will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the Executive Director (or designee)'s hearing for long- term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).
- The Board Chair will issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)1.-4. If the Board Chair determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Board Chair may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Executive Director (or designee) but will not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Executive Director (or designee)'s decision.
- The decision of the Board Chair will be the final decision of the school district, charter school or virtual school with regard to the suspension.

**For an expulsion:**

(a) A student and the student's family will receive written notice of the charges, of the reasons and of the evidence for expulsion before the expulsion takes effect. A student will not be excluded from school without being afforded appropriate due process as set forth below. If, however, a student's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the administrator's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school before receiving due process pursuant to an Emergency Removal (see above for more information).

(b) A student and the student's family will receive written notice of their rights to a hearing with the Director before the expulsion takes effect. The notice will include the time, date, and location of the hearing and that an audio recording of the hearing will take place. The student's parent or guardian must be present at the hearing. The person charged with deciding the outcome at the hearing has the responsibility of using discretion. At the hearing, students and parents have the right to: bring counsel (at the family's expense), present evidence (through the student's own testimony of witnesses and through written evidence). After the hearing deliberations, the Director may, in their discretion, decide to suspend



rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Director to have violated either chapter 71, section 37H, paragraph (a) or (b).

(c) The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Director. If the Director instead decides to expel the student after the hearing, the Director shall give written notification at the hearing to the student and guardian of the student's right to appeal, of the process for appealing the expulsion, and of the opportunity to receive educational services. The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Director.

(d) For a 37H ½ charge, felony delinquency complaint, conviction, adjudication or admission of guilt, the Director may remove the student for a period of time up to expulsion if the Director determines the student's continued presence would have a detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student has 10 days from the date of expulsion to notify the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of an appeal.

**Any student who has been expelled or suspended for more than 10 days has the right to appeal to the Chair of the school's Board of Trustees:**

The student or the guardian of the student shall notify the Board Chair in writing to request an appeal. If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in the expulsion of a student or the suspension of a student for more than ten (10) days, the student may appeal the decision to the Board Chair. The student or parent or guardian of the student must notify the Board Chair in writing of a request for an appeal and not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension up to 7 calendar days.

The Board Chair must hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or Guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not filed within the 5 day timeframe, the Board Chair may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause. The Board Chair shall hold the hearing with the student and the student's parents or Guardians within the time frames described above. The Board Chair may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the Board Chair (or designee), makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and the right to counsel (at the family's expense). The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of section 37H. The Board Chair shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Director, including recommending an alternative educational program for the student. The Board Chair shall render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion.

**Suspension or Expulsion due to a felony complaint or conviction**

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H ½, Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal, Executive Director, or headmaster of a

school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal, Executive Director, or headmaster if said principal, Executive Director, or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Board Chair.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Board Chair. The student shall notify the Board Chair in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Board Chair shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Board Chair shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal/"Executive Director" or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Board Chair shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal/"Executive Director" or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal, Executive Director, or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Board Chair.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent / Board Chair. The student shall notify the superintendent / Board Chair, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent / Board Chair shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent / Board Chair shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, Executive Director or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**Description of educational services that will be made available for a student to make academic progress during the period of expulsion or long-term suspension (more than 10 days) once it is imposed.**

The Executive Director shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive educational services at the time the student is expelled, in accordance with MGL Chapter 76, Section 21; Chapter 71, Section 37H (e); 603 CMR 53.01 and 53.12 (1), (2) and (4). These educational services may be provided by school staff or contracted to accredited outside agencies. In either case, the school Director or designee will work with grade level teachers to assure that the program meets school curricular standards. The school's attendance officer or designee will work with the service provider to facilitate and verify student attendance in the program. If the student moves to another district during the period of expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an educational service plan.

**Special Disciplinary Procedures**

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H requires that all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin, may be subject to expulsion from school or school district by the Executive Director.
2. Any student who assaults an administrator, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from school or school district by the Executive Director.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1) or (2) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Executive Director. After said hearing the Executive Director may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Executive Director to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).
4. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Trustees. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of expulsion in which to notify the Board of Trustees of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Board of Trustees. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to the factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
5. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under section 21 of chapter 76.

### **Discipline of Students who are Eligible for Special Education Services**

In general, if a student has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove the student from his or her current educational placement for a period not to exceed (10) ten consecutive school days in any school year. If a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school sponsored event or carries a weapon to school or a school function or has repeated incidents of suspendable offenses, the school may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 calendar days. If a student has been placed in an interim educational setting as a result of disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not exceeding 45 days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed upon educational placement unless either a hearing officer orders another placement or guardians and the school agree on another placement.

Anytime the school wishes to remove your child from their current educational placement for more than (10) ten consecutive school days in any school year, for more than ten cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring, this constitutes a "change in placement". A change in placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. These include the following:

- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must send guardians a full statement of their procedural right (Notice of Procedural Safeguards) and inform guardians that the Team will consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for removal is related to the student's disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP. This consideration is called a "manifestation determination". Guardians have the right to participate as a member of the Team.
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement and/or upon determination that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the school must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the problematic behavior(s). If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team shall review its implementation and modify if necessary.

### **Consideration of Whether the Behavior is a Manifestation of the Student's Disability**

The law provides that the Team must consider evaluation information, observational information, the student's IEP and placement, and must determine whether the behavior prompting disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. The Team considers if the student understood the full impact and consequences of the behavior and further considered if the student's disability impaired the student's ability to control his or her behavior.

If the Team determines that the behavior was related to the student's disability, then the student may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use) until the IEP team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and guardians consent to that new IEP placement.

If the Team determines that the behavior was not related to the student's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline the student according to the school's code of conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding (10) ten school days, the school must provide your child with a free and

appropriate education (FAPE). The school must determine the educational services necessary for and the manner in which and location for providing these services.

### **In the Case of a Disagreement with the Team's Determination**

If a guardian disagrees with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with the decision relating to placement of a student in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, guardians have the right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

### **Discipline and Procedural Requirements Applied to Students not yet Determined to be Eligible for Special Education**

If, prior to the disciplinary action, a school district had knowledge that a student may be a student with a disability, then the school district makes all protections under law available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible for special education. The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

1. The guardian had expressed concern in writing; or
2. The guardian had requested an evaluation; or
3. School district staff had expressed concern that the student had a disability.

If the school district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to disciplinary action, the school district will complete an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility for special education. The expedited evaluation will be completed and delivered to the guardian via Team meeting discussions and reports within 15 school days from the school's receipt of a written consent to evaluate. If the student is found to have a disability and is eligible for special education services, then he or she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

### **Periodic Review of Discipline Data by Selected Populations**

On an annual basis, the school's Diversity, Belonging, Equity and Inclusion (DBEI) Committee will review discipline data to ensure that disciplinary measures do not target selected populations. Each spring, beginning in the spring of 2023, the committee will report their results to the Board of Trustees.

This report will disaggregate disciplinary data by race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English Language Learner status, and student disability status.

This report will include examining the use of in-school and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals and the impact of such actions on the selected student populations.

This report will replace a less formal annual assessment by the administrative team and will include recommendations for changes if appropriate.

### 2025/26 Board of Trustees Directory & Meeting Schedule

| <u>Name</u>         | <u>Position</u>        | <u>Meeting Dates</u> |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Tracy Murphy        | Chair                  | August 18th          |
| John Scichilone     | Trustee                | September 15th       |
| Michael McMillan    | Treasurer              | October 20th         |
| Caitlin Wojkowski   | Trustee                | November 17th        |
| Benjamin Parsons    | Executive Director     | December 15th        |
| Elizabeth Woelflein | Associate Director     | January 26th         |
| Josh Stewart        | Faculty Representative | February 23th        |
| Challis Crema       | Faculty Representative | March 16th           |
| Michael Grugan      | Clerk                  | April 20th           |
| James McAuliffe     | Vice Chair             | May 18th             |
| Rachel Lake         | Trustee                | June 15th            |

- All Board Meetings are open to the public. They begin at 6PM and convene in the 6th grade Science room.  
\*\* All dates are subject to change.