



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**&**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**2023-2024**

## PREFACE

This Student Handbook and Code of Conducts (the “Handbook”) applies to EVERY student who is enrolled at Royal Public Schools (the “School”). This Handbook and its content (i.e., student code of conduct) shall be in effect on school property and at any other property where teachers and school administrators have jurisdiction over students. For example, the Handbook shall apply to any student who is in attendance at school or at any school sponsored activity. The Student Handbook shall apply to any student whose conduct at any time or place conflicts with or obstructs the mission or operation of the Royal Public Schools or the safety and welfare of other students or employees. The Student Handbook shall also apply to students when they are being transported on school buses.

The Handbook and its code of conduct shall be applied equally throughout the school. The Handbook shall be reviewed carefully by faculty, staff, and administrators who are involved in student discipline. The Handbook will be available on the school’s website. The school shall, to the extent possible, obtain a written acknowledgment of receipt of the Handbook from the student and his/her parents. The Handbook provides information relating to attendance regulations and descriptions of various violations of conduct for which a student could receive disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation for expulsion from the school.

Matters such as student dress and/or discipline problems not specifically listed in the Handbook shall be within the jurisdiction of the school. The CEO or its designee is authorized to attach and amend local school rules to the Handbook provided school rules or discipline procedures do not conflict with the rules and procedures established by the Board. Amended rules to the Handbook shall be submitted for approval in the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Royal Public Schools  
San Antonio, TX

## **MISSION**

The mission of Royal is to spark our students' natural curiosity and love of learning and to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to lead successful and fulfilling lives.

## **VISION**

Our vision is to establish an educational system that prepares curious, knowledgeable, responsible, and well-rounded future leaders.

We believe that each child has a natural curiosity and love of learning, and each child has an individual intelligence, level of proficiency, and learning style. The school will help students cultivate their essential skills and ethical values and learn how to meet their potential. The school embraces the goals, objectives, and content in all subject areas and grade levels which have been established by charter application.

## **CORE VALUES**

- ✓ Genuine Respect
- ✓ Always Accountable
- ✓ Strive for Excellence
- ✓ Nurture the Whole Child
- ✓ Culture of Collaboration

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT**

Royal Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. For inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies, contact Dr. Soner Tarim, Title IX Coordinator [starim@royaltx.com](mailto:starim@royaltx.com). Concerns may be mailed to 4018 S. Presa St. San Antonio, TX 78223. Assistance may also be requested by phone at (832) 641-5588.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

In a school environment, discipline is often solely characterized by student behavior. Discipline encompasses not only student behavior but all elements that contribute to the teaching and learning environment. Those elements include but are not limited to policies, rules, procedures, expectations, and motivators. The management techniques ingrained in each of these elements are not systematically addressed within instructional techniques, thus our philosophy requires a formal school-wide discipline plan.

It is the philosophy of the school to create a positive discipline plan and learning environment in order to encourage appropriate student behavior. A strong, well-defined, universally communicated and consistently enforced discipline code will ensure that students understand what is expected of them, the consequences for noncompliance, and how and by whom their performance will be judged. The school strongly believes that specialized, individual, group, and universal interventions will have a greater likelihood of enabling students to change their behavior in a way that does not interfere with their learning or the learning of others than a model of discipline that relies solely on consequences for misbehavior. An added component to dealing with these students will be interventions such as anger management instruction, guidance counseling sessions, teacher-parent-student meetings, and other interventions designed to identify the root problems and teach appropriate behaviors.

The school's philosophy regarding student behavior supports the view that most behavior is directly influenced by the level that students perceive teachers, administrators, and staff care about them and the academic mission of the school. The school maintains the conviction that a safe and orderly school is essential toward meeting academic as well as social expectations. Effective discipline and adherence toward personal and common goals of excellence will be a key component of the school's philosophy. Royal believes that students should feel a sense of support and encouragement in all aspects of their education, where teachers are not viewed as adversaries, but rather concerned mentors with an interest in their academic interests and their emotional well-being. The school further feels that teachers, administrators, and staff should demonstrate the courage to model good character and engage actively in the behavioral standards adopted by the school.

Additionally, parents will be viewed as partners in the education of each student. In order to earn and maintain the behavioral policy support of parents, the school will provide clear, reasonable, and fair expectations that further the goals of instruction and the safety of all students and staff. The school will seek to work in collaboration with parents to turn incidents of poor student behavior into opportunities for personal growth, thereby reducing the probability of future disruption to the learning environment and damage to student self-esteem. The philosophy is that discipline directly affects student behavior. We will provide a strict environment where learning comes by enforcing rules, procedures, and high expectations.

The school recognizes that the Code of Conduct shall be based on legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension, dismissal, and recommendations for expulsions. We also acknowledge that students with disabilities will be disciplined only in accordance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Rehabilitation Act.

Royal Public Schools discipline plan is rooted in equipping students, teachers, and all other members of the school community with the tools needed to secure an optimal teaching and learning environment thus enhancing the opportunity for exemplary academic achievement and personal development.

## DEFINITIONS

**Bullying:** Engaging in behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to public education by use of threats, coercion, repeated harassment, abuse, and/or intimidation, whether physical, psychological, sexual or indirect through electronic, digital or telephonic means.

**Corporal Punishment:** Physically punishing a student for violation of the Code of Conduct; corporal punishment does not include that use of force necessary to (i) calm a disturbance; (ii) obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object; (iii) defend oneself; or (iv) protect persons or property.

**Disability:** Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual; a record of such impairment; being regarded as having such impairment; or having a specific disability, including, but not limited to, autism, mental retardation, specific learning disability, hearing impairment, speech/language impairment, visual impairment, serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment.

**Expulsion:** Removal of a student from the school for more than ten (10) days due to a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

**Gang:** Any organization with an identifying name, sign or symbol, or that individually or collectively engages in or has engaged in activity or conduct, or a pattern of activity or conduct that endangers or disrupts the safety of the school or members of the School community.

**IEP:** Individualized Education Plan developed for a student with a disability who qualifies to receive special education services.

**In-School Suspension:** A disciplinary measure taken by the Administration which allows a student to attend school, but which prohibits the student from attending regular classes.

**Manifestation Determination:** A meeting of teachers, parents, and relevant members of an IEP Team regarding the conduct of a student eligible to receive special Education services, during which the team evaluates all relevant information and any unique circumstances to determine whether (i) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability; or (ii) the conduct was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP.

**NOREP:** Notice of Recommended Educational Placement, which is presented to the parent(s) of a student who qualifies to receive special education services and recommends an appropriate placement for the student and discussed the appropriate educational program for the student.

**Possession:** Physical control over property, whether lost, found or stolen, which may include items contained in or on clothing, in lockers, storage areas or bags.

**School Grounds:** Any property owned or leased by, or licensed to the Charter School, and/or utilized by the school in association with any vendor.

**School Privileges:** Any school-related or school-sponsored activities or programs, including but not limited to, graduation ceremonies, dances, class trips, sports, clubs, recess, or any other extracurricular activities. Participation in these activities are privileges not rights.

**Serious Bodily Injury:** Bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

**Suspension:** Involuntary removal of a student from class and/or school attendance for a period of ten (10) school days or fewer.

**Trespass:** Entry upon school property without permission or when prohibited.

**Weapon:** any instrument, including, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument or tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, explosive device, pepper spray, mace, laser pointer and any other tool or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury to another.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Education	
<p><b>Right:</b> Students have the right to a public education, unimpaired because of gender, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, disability, parenthood, marital status, economic status, personal characteristics, or any reason not related to their individual capacities.</p>	<p><b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to avoid actions or activities that interfere with other students' rights to an unimpaired public education.</p>

Learning Environment	
<p><b>Right:</b> Students have the right to an orderly school and classroom environment that will promote learning for all students.</p>	<p><b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to ensure that their action does not disrupt the School or classroom environment, or school activities.</p>

Expression	
<p><b>Right:</b> Students have the right to express themselves in speech, writing and/or expression within the boundaries defined by federal and state law, and the policies established by the School.</p>	<p><b>Responsibilities:</b> Students have the responsibility to ensure that their expression does not disrupt the School or classroom environment, or school activities</p>

Possession and Distribution of Literature	
<p><b>Right:</b> Students have the right to possess and distribute literature, including, but not limited to, books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, handbills, or leaflets in accordance with federal, state and/or local law, and the policies established by the School. The Chief Administrative Officer or Principal has the authority to determine the time, place and manner of distribution.</p>	<p><b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to ensure that the literature they possess or distribute does not infringe upon the rights of others, and does not contain offensive language of a religious, racial or ethnic nature, or language that may be construed as harassing or obscene.</p>

<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Students have the right to their own religious beliefs and the exercise of those beliefs.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to ensure that the exercise of religious freedom does not infringe upon the Constitutional rights and freedom of religious expression of others.

<b>Privacy</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Students have the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures of their personal property and possessions. A search is reasonable if the school official has reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to not possess materials, objects, implements, and/or instruments that are prohibited by federal, state and/or local law or that may be disruptive or otherwise in violation of the School's Rules.

<b>Peaceful Assembly</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Students have the right to a peaceful assembly.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to secure approval for use of school facilities for assembly; to discuss with an administrator the appropriateness of the facility for the function; and to ensure that assembly does not disrupt the educational process. Lack of adequate supervision shall be grounds for disapproval of assembly.

<b>Transportation</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Students have the right to safe and orderly transportation to and from school or a school activity when transportation is provided.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Students have the responsibility to ensure that their conduct contributes to a safe and orderly atmosphere; to refrain from conduct which may cause a hazard to themselves, their fellow students, or to the public; and to refrain from violating federal, state and/or local laws or school policy regarding transportation. Students who fail to fulfill their responsibility may relinquish their right to transportation.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

<b>Enrollment</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Parents have the right to enroll their children in the school, regardless of their district of residence, within the enrollment guidelines established by the Board of Directors.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children who are enrolled in the Charter School attend school regularly, on time, and for the entire school day in accordance with state law and the policies set forth by the Board of Directors.

<b>Progress</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Parents have the right to receive regular official reports of their children's academic progress, through both written and oral communication.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Parents have the responsibility to assist the School and their children in achieving their academic potential, including planning a time and place for completing homework, and providing the necessary supervision while their children complete assignments. In addition, parents have the responsibility to attend and participate in all parent-teacher conferences.

<b>Language Preference</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Parents have the right to receive any oral and written communication from the school in the language used by the family in the home. This right includes the right to have a translator present at any disciplinary proceedings commenced against their child.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Parents have the responsibility to inform the school when they need to receive oral and written communication in a language other than English. This responsibility includes the responsibility to notify the school if a translator will be necessary at any disciplinary proceedings commenced against their child.

<b>Enforcement</b>	
<b>Right:</b> Parents have the right to ensure that the provisions of this Code are applied reasonably and fairly with respect to their children.	<b>Responsibility:</b> Parents have the responsibility to understand the rules set forth in this Code and to discuss expected behavior with their children, as well as to inform the Administration and/or the Board of Directors of their concerns regarding the application of this Code to their children in a calm and reasoned manner.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Royal Public Schools is committed to providing a learning environment that is conducive to the achievement of academic excellence and the development of age-appropriate social skills and relationships. Each student has the opportunity and the right to use school as a means for self-improvement and individual growth. In so doing, he/she is expected to conduct him or herself in a manner compatible with the school's function and in accordance with policies and regulations concerning student conduct and discipline, including but not limited to the grounds for suspension, expulsion, and classroom removal. Conduct that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the operation of a school, that interferes in any way with the public or private rights of other students or citizens, that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person, or that damages property, will result in disciplinary action.

### **General Guidelines**

The school personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines when imposing discipline:

1. A student shall be disciplined when necessary to improve the student's behavior, to maintain essential order, or to protect other students, school employees, or property.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

The Student Code of Conduct shall be:

1. Made available for review in the front office; and
2. The policy will be made available to the Parents in the Student Handbook that is signed by the parent when receiving the handbook during registration. The handbook is also posted on the school website for access and review as needed by the parent or guardian.

### **Revisions**

Revisions to the Student Code of Conduct approved by the Board during the year shall be made available promptly to students and parents, teachers, administrators, and others.

### **Corporal Punishment**

The school will not administer corporal punishment. Students shall not be spanked, paddled, or otherwise physically disciplined for violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Jurisdiction**

The school may discipline a student:

For any violation of the Code committed while a student is

1. On school property.
2. In transit to and from school.
3. Attending any school-related or school-sponsored activity, so long as the student is under the direction of a school employee;
4. On the school property of another Texas school district;
5. Attending another district's school-sponsored or school-related activity;
6. When a school employee or volunteer is a victim of retaliation no matter when or where it takes place; or
7. When a felony is committed.

## **Standards for Student Conduct**

### **Classroom Rules**

Students shall:

- Not disrupt classroom activities.
- Follow instructions and directives immediately.
- Not chew gum or bring food or drink in the building, except in designated food service areas. Not leave class without permission. Any student leaving class must have a hall pass.

### **School-Wide Rules**

Students shall:

- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline and control. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Demonstrate courtesy at all times.
- Meet school standards for grooming and dress.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights of others, including property and facilities of the school.
- Cooperate with and assist school personnel, including volunteers, in maintaining safety, order and discipline.

## **Progressive Discipline Policy**

The School's discipline policy provides a progression of interventions that accompany each successive disciplinary referral to the campus administration. At the administration office, students are encouraged to reflect on their actions, take a cooling-off period, and if necessary, ask for help in resolving ongoing issues. When a student violates classroom rules, teachers use interventions, such as verbal reminders, moving a student's seat, and one-on-one conversations after class and a phone call home. After documenting three interventions, including a phone call home, teachers will refer students to an administrator.

For highly disruptive or unsafe behaviors, students can receive an immediate referral to the campus administration. More serious school violations, including but not limited to:

- Physical violence
- Threatening others
- Vandalism
- Jeopardizing the safety of others
- Theft, and any other illegal or dangerous activities.

## **Progression of Administrative Referrals**

### **First Referral**

- Student reflects on actions
- Student meets with Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal and finds a way to repair his/her actions
- Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal calls parents to inform them of the situation.

### **Second Referral**

- Students reflect on his/her actions,
- Student meets with Counselor, Assistant Principal or Principal

- Student performs a repair and loses a recess
- Parents must meet with Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal.

### **Third Referral**

- Student reflects on his/her actions,
- Student meets with Counselor, Assistant Principal or Principal
- Students correct behavior and lose a recess.
- Parents and student should visit student's resident school to provide the student with perspective on his/her behavioral/educational choices.
- Student may be referred for additional counseling.

### **Fourth Referral**

- Student reflects on his/her actions,
- Student meets with Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal,
- Student corrects behavior and loses a recess.
- Student is referred for counseling or other remediation.
- Parent is encouraged to take student to visit the alternative/continuation school that student's district might require him/her to attend if student is expelled.
- Student loses field trip privileges for the semester and must perform an act of service to make up for the impact of his/her actions on his/her community.

### **Fifth Referral**

- Student reflects on his/her actions,
- Student meets with Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal, student corrects behavior and loses a recess. Student is suspended.
- Parents must attend a meeting where a behavior contract is created. Students will be referred for expulsion if he/she violates the contract.

### **Sixth Referral**

- Students are referred for expulsion.

## **Suspension/Expulsion**

The following list gives the school the *option* to expel but does not require expulsion for the listed offenses. Under this policy, the student may be expelled only when one of these offenses is committed on a campus, at a School-sponsored or School-related event or activity, or during transportation to or from a School-sponsored activity. Be aware that § 37.007 (the list that is in the Code) permits expulsions for certain listed non-school related criminal acts.

## **Notice of Expellable Offenses**

The Board hereby adopts the following policy and additions to the Code of Conduct and directs that the Chief Executive Officer disseminate this policy to all students and parents.

A student committing one of the following offenses, whether on campus, during transportation to or from a School-sponsored activity, or at a School-sponsored or School-related event or activity, is subject to expulsion.

- Stealing from students, staff, campus visitors, or theft or misuse of School property.

- Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail, including obtaining money or other objects of value from an unwilling person, or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
- Aggressive, disruptive action or group demonstration that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with School activities.
- Engaging in verbal abuse such as name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements, that may disrupt the school environment or incite violence.
- Insubordination.
- Directing disrespect or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers, other School employees or students.
- Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
- Hazing.
- Engaging in offensive conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or sexual abuse, whether verbal or physical, that may include requests for sexual favors or other intimidating sexual conduct directed toward other students or School employees.
- Possession of, or conspiracy to possess, any explosive or explosive device, or explosive-appearing device.
- Falsification of records, passes or other School-related documents.
- Possession or distribution of pornographic materials.
- Making or assisting in making threats, including threats against individuals, and bomb threats.
- Refusing to accept discipline management techniques proposed by a teacher or by administration.
- Any conduct that materially disrupts the school environment or educational process.
- Selling or trading on campus any item not authorized by the administration.
- Placing a prohibited substance in another person's food, drink and/or other possessions.
- Participating in gang-related activities.
- Using any electronic equipment (i.e., paging devices or cellular phones) in a manner that disrupts the peace or provokes hostility.
- Possessing, exhibiting or using a pellet gun, air-powered rifle, paint ball gun, BB- gun, sling-shot or other device which propels a projectile by compressed air or gas, chemical, springs or elastic material.
- Possessing, exhibiting or using devices that produce loud noises (cap guns, fireworks noise devices, etc.).
- Violating any rule set forth in this Code or School policy pertaining to computers and the Internet.
- Possessing or using a firearm or explosive devices.
- Possessing firearm or explosive device look-alikes (toy guns, fake guns, fake explosive devices).
- Possessing or using unloaded firearm accessories, components or parts (such as but not limited to a gun barrel, gun magazine, housing, grip, receiver, bolt, butt stock, scope, or firing mechanism).
- Possessing, exhibiting, or using weapons including but not limited to knives (regardless of design or length); brass knuckles or similar items;
- Possessing, exhibiting, or using any of the following:
  - tobacco products;
  - alcohol products;
  - matches, lighters;
  - a prescription drug not belonging to the person;
  - unlawful drugs or controlled substances;
  - any drug look-alike product;
  - any so-called designer legal drug, party pill, or synthetic drug.
- Pulling a fire alarm as a prank, in a building owned or operated by the School when there is no smoke, fire, or danger that requires evacuation.

- Repeatedly violating classroom standards of behavior or repeatedly creating classroom disturbances.
- Displaying or using mace or pepper spray or other similar substance.
- Possessing or using fireworks or stink bombs.
- Acts of discrimination relating to race, ethnicity or national origin.
- Sexual harassment, sexual acts.
- Possession of noxious chemicals or toxins.
- Assaults that cause or threaten bodily injury to another.
- Academic dishonesty, such as cheating and plagiarism.
- Computer misuse.
- Bullying.
- Bomb threats.
- Willful destruction or defacement of School property.
- Conduct punishable as a felony.
- Offenses listed in Texas Education Code § 37.007.
- Repeated minor offenses (including but not limited to repeated violations of the dress code).

### **Procedures for Suspensions and Expulsions**

#### **Suspensions**

The school may suspend a student for up to five school days for Student Code of Conduct violations. Suspension may be in-school or out-of-school in the discretion of the suspending administrator. Prior to the suspension, the principal or other designated administrator will hold an informal conference with the student. The purpose is to notify the student of the violations charged, the factual basis for the charges, and to permit the student to present his or her version of the incident. Parents or guardians will be notified of the suspension as soon as practically possible. The parents or guardians will be informed of the violations charged, and the factual basis for the charges. The administrator may offer, and the parents or guardians may request, a further conference with the principal or designee. The decision of the administration is final and may not be appealed to the Board of Directors.

The conditions of the suspension will be decided in the sole discretion of the administration. These conditions will address the number of days of the suspension, on-campus or off-campus suspension, exclusion from extra-curricular activities, the opportunity to receive credit for missed class work, and other conditions. A suspension may be combined with other discipline consequences in the sole discretion of the administration.

#### **Emergency Suspensions**

In an emergency, the administration may order the immediate suspension of a student for up to five school days if the student's presence at School or School-sponsored or School-related activities, threatens the health, safety, or welfare of himself/herself or others. A conference with the student will be held within three school days of the suspension. Parents/Guardians may attend this conference. The purpose is to notify the student of the violations charged, the factual basis for the charges, and to permit the student to present his or her version of the incident.

#### **Expulsions**

Expulsions, either permanent or for a specified period, may be imposed for those infractions of the Student Code of Conduct listed above (*see* Notice of Expellable Offenses). The decision of whether to suspend, expel or apply any lesser form of discipline will rely on an assessment of the facts and circumstances of each case. The length of the expulsion, the opportunity, if any, to return to the educational program, the conditions of return, and other conditions of the expulsion will be decided by the administration. An expulsion may be preceded by a suspension.

An expulsion affects, for the period of the expulsion, a general severance of the student from the right to attend the school and to receive educational services from the School. Expulsions can be permanent or for a period of time. The length of the expulsion, the opportunity, if any, to return to the educational program, the conditions of return, and other conditions of the expulsion will be decided by the administration.

### **Hearing Before the Principal**

Prior to a decision to expel, the administration shall conduct an expulsion hearing. The parents or guardians must be provided with at least twenty-four hours' prior notice of the hearing. The notice must include a statement of the offense or offenses with which the student is charged, notice that the student is potentially subject to discipline consequences including expulsion, and the time and place for the hearing. The hearing normally occurs within three school days of the date of the notice, but in cases in which a student has been suspended for a period exceeding five school days, the hearing shall not take place later than five school days of the date of the suspension (the parties may mutually agree to extend the date). The purpose of the hearing is to notify the student of the violations charged, the factual basis for the charges, and to allow the student to present his or her version of the incident. Parents or guardians may, but are not required, to attend and participate in the hearing. The parents or guardians may present evidence on the student's behalf, hear the school's evidence and witnesses, and may be represented by an attorney if they wish.

The hearing will be audio recorded or transcribed. An appropriate order in writing will thereafter issue. In the event of a decision to expel, the order will specify the length of the expulsion, and the right to appeal the order to the Board of Directors.

### **Appeal to the Board of Directors**

To affect an appeal, the parents or guardians must notify the Principal of the appeal in writing within seven calendar days of receipt of the order. The Board shall listen to the audio tape of the hearing, or review a hearing transcript, or take any other appropriate action in reaching a decision at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, or, in the discretion of the Board, at a specially called meeting.

The Board will notify the parents or guardians of its decision in writing. An appeal to the Board of an expulsion decision will not abate that decision pending the Board's review and final decision.

### **Placement of Students with Disabilities**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities (504 or special education under the IDEA) shall be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

### **Suspension/Expulsion Requirement**

A student with a disability shall not be removed from his or her current placement for disciplinary reasons and/or pending appeal to the Board of Directors for more than ten days without ARD Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim and otherwise in accordance with applicable law. If a special education due process appeal to a TEA special education hearing officer is made, the student with a disability shall remain in the then current education setting in place at the time such appeal.

## **DRESS CODE**

The school reserves the right to establish dress and grooming guidelines that are within the parameters of generally accepted community standards. Students are required to show proper attention to personal cleanliness. Fashions and fads that constitute a health hazard to one's self or others will not be permitted.

Student dress and personal hygiene must be of such character so as not to disrupt or distract from the educational environment of the school. Any form of dress or appearance so determined is prohibited. Students who are in violation of the dress code must immediately change into alternative clothing provided by the school

or parent to correct the violation. If it is not feasible to correct the violation, the student will be sent home.

The school's dress code:

1. Requires that shorts and skirts reach the tip of the middle finger when the hands are fully extended to the side. Slits in skirts and dresses must be to the kneecap.
2. Requires that any emerging trend, which is not addressed below, will be evaluated by the administration.
3. Requires the wearing of shoes.
4. Prohibits the wearing of apparel that may constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others. This includes wallet chains, belts (made of chain), etc.
5. Prohibits "dog collars", spiked bracelets, or chains that could be dangerous to persons or destructive to school property.
6. Requires that shirts/blouses/trousers be properly buttoned in accord with the design. See-through material must be worn with shirts, shorts, or skirt underneath.
7. Prohibits slogans or sayings written across sensitive areas of the body or written/pictorial graphics that draw attention to sensitive areas of the body (chest, buttocks, pelvis, etc.)
8. Prohibits the wearing of spandex clothing, biking pants, boxer shorts, or exercise clothing. Sweat suit clothing is permitted.
9. Prohibits canes or cane-like items unless approved by the school nurse.
10. Prohibits the wearing of tank tops, crop tops, mesh clothing, or bare midriff attire.
11. Prohibits the wearing of hats, sweat bands, head gear, and sunglasses in the building.
12. Prohibits the display of slogans or advertising of alcohol, tobacco products, or drug paraphernalia on clothing which by their controversial or obscene nature disrupt the educational setting or are sexual in nature and/or offensive to any ethnic group.
13. Prohibits the wearing of bandanas and handkerchiefs on heads, around necks, hanging out of the pocket or tied to any body part. Any clothing identified as gang related is strictly prohibited.
14. Prohibits the wearing of torn and/or ripped clothing that exposes sensitive areas of the body or presents a safety hazard.
15. Requires that pants or shorts be worn to the waist (no low-rise pants) and the pants be of a length, unrolled, which do not touch the floor.
16. Prohibits the wearing of oversized clothing which shall include pants, t-shirts, shirts, coats, and jackets.
17. Requires that coats, jackets, or garments designed for protection from outside elements shall not be worn in the building during the school day.
18. Prohibits the wearing of earrings and body rings in a location other than the ears, during physical education and other classes which may pose a health hazard. A teacher may require the removal of earrings or other jewelry, in such situations; to the extent such jewelry poses a health or safety hazard to the student or others.
19. Prohibits other ornamentation that attracts undue attention or is distracting or disruptive to classes.
20. Requires that tattoos displaying objectionable material must be covered. Objectionable material includes, but is not limited to, material determined to be obscene, profane, frightening, disgraceful, degrading or gang related.
21. Allows that individual arts and physical education teachers may set their own requirements for appropriate dress for their class.
22. Requires that the first period teacher check their students for dress code violations and send them to the office if there is a problem.
23. Permits that the administrative staff shall have the right to modify specific items in these regulations as school situations and activities merit.
24. Requires that in situations where a disagreement exists as to whether or not the attire is appropriate, the Principal shall make the final decision.

## GUIDELINES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

No student may engage in conduct, or encourage any other person to engage in conduct, that jeopardizes or threatens the health, safety or welfare of any member of the school community, or that disrupts or undermines the educational mission of the School.

None of the consequences listed below will be applied in such a manner as to discriminate against any student based on gender, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, disability, parenthood, marital status, economic status, personal characteristics, or any reason not related to his/her individual capacities, the administration of the School will impose consequences for behavior that falls within the range of consequences for a particular violation of this Code. The severity and/or nature of the consequence imposed will be based on factors including, but not limited to, age of the student, number of prior offenses, disability, and/or severity of the violation.

The school has the right to impose consequences for acts or behaviors that are not specifically delineated within this Code if those acts or behaviors threaten the health, safety and/or welfare of other members of the School community, or if those acts or behaviors disrupt the learning environment.

Various means may be used by school personnel to discourage or extinguish undesirable behaviors. Such means may include counseling the student; conferencing with the parent(s); assigning extra responsibilities at school; assigning community service; or imposing detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, expulsion for a period of more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or permanent expulsion.

Corporal punishment is discouraged by the school. However, it may be imposed as a consequence for violations of this Student Handbook. Only the principal or assistant principal may apply corporal punishment, and parents may excuse their children from physical punishment through written request.

School personnel may use reasonable force necessary to stop a disturbance which threatens the health, safety or well-being of another; to protect the school property; to gain possession from a student of a weapon or other instrumentality which is or may be used to cause injury to another; or to engage in self-defense.

## RULES

Students who engage in activities that violate any federal, state and/or local law may be subject to criminal charges and punishment in addition to any disciplinary measures undertaken by the school.

### **Rule 1: No student may disrupt the school or the learning environment.**

- Students shall act in a courteous manner at all times and toward all members of the school community and shall not engage in conduct which disrupts any school-sponsored or school-related educational program or activity.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  1. Disobedience
  2. Disrespect
  3. Dishonesty
  4. Failure to follow established school or classroom rules
  5. Failure to attend class without a valid excuse

6. Failure to comply with the established dress code
7. Failure to comply with the established attendance policy
8. Loitering and/or failure to provide identification upon request – No Loitering in hallways, restrooms, atrium or any areas in or out of school buildings
9. Possession or use of beepers, pagers, not including a calculator or digital watch, during school hours or programs.
10. Running or making of excessive noise in the School building

**Rule 2: No student shall use offensive language.**

- Students shall refrain from using language that may be classified as obscene, offensive or vulgar, or which would violate school policies regarding discrimination and/or harassment of any kind.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she makes libelous or slanderous remarks directed at another member of the school community.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she sends or forwards any offensive, sexually-oriented, obscene, vulgar, and/or threatening messages, picture, or symbols from any source to any member of the School community.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she wears or displays any colors or symbols with the intent to show or indicate allegiance to or affiliation with any gang.

**Rule 3: Students shall maintain good records of attendance.**

- Students shall adhere to the School's Attendance Policy.
- The following, although not exhaustive, will be considered violations of this Rule:
  1. Excessive absence
  2. Excessive lateness or tardiness
  3. Failure to report to class without a valid excuse (cutting class)
  4. Truancy

**Rule 4 Students shall maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity.**

- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she forges any paper, report, test or notes, or engages in any other type of cheating and/or copying of the work of another student.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she plagiarizes any publication or paraphrases any publication without appropriate citation.

**Rule 5: Students shall be respectful, self-controlled, non-disruptive and considerate in their relationships with all members of the school community.**

**Rule 6: Students shall not engage in gambling or take or place bets on chance for personal benefit.**

**Rule 7: Students shall not engage in improper use of technology.**

- Students shall respect the computer privileges granted to them and shall comply with the School's Acceptable Use Policy whenever they use the school's computers, equipment, network system or any other technology owned by or licensed through the School.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  1. Giving his/her password to another individual
  2. Using another's password
  3. Illegally downloading copyrighted material from the internet
  4. Purposely or recklessly visiting sites on the internet that contain sexually explicit or otherwise offensive materials
  5. Harming, damaging or disrupting hardware and/or software
  6. Harming or destroying the data of another person or student
  7. Harming or destroying the internet or other school networks
  8. Purposely or recklessly creating, downloading, or uploading a computer virus

9. Breaking into or hacking into other files or systems.
10. Accessing and/or altering school records, information or files without express permission
11. Conducting any business enterprise

**Rule 8: Students shall not damage, deface, destroy or steal school property or Personal property of another member of the school community.**

- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she creates graffiti, carves, tears, cuts or otherwise marks, regardless of whether the marking is permanent, property owned or leased by, or licensed to the school.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she steals or attempts to steal school property or any property leased or licensed to the school, or the personal property of another member of the School community while on school property or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.

**Rule 9: Students shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury to any member of the school community.**

- Students will be held responsible for their purposeful, reckless and negligent actions and the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their actions from the school as well as the police.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  1. Physical contact by pushing, shoving or hitting
  2. Physical contact by kicking
  3. Throwing any object that may cause injury to another at any member of the School community
  4. Biting
  5. Spitting
  6. Roughhousing or horseplay
  7. Verbal or physical confrontation/fighting

**Rule 10: Students shall not recklessly endanger any member of the School community.**

- Students shall not act in any manner which creates a substantial and unjustifiable risk of harm to others and indicates a conscious indifference to the consequences of the act. Any verbal or physical intimidation or fighting are prohibited.

**Rule 11: Students shall not falsely activate any fire alarm, security system, smoke detector or any other device which may cause disruption of the school community, fear or panic.**

- Any student who falsely activates any such device that results in a response by authorities including, but not limited to, the fire department, the police, emergency medical personnel, and/or results in evacuation of the School building(s) will be considered to have violated this Rule and may be subject to sanctions under federal, state and/or local law.

**Rule 12: Students may not possess, use, distribute or solicit the use or distribution of any tobacco product, vaporizing products (e-cigarettes) or related paraphernalia while on property owned by, leased or licensed to the school, or while at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.**

**Rule 13: Students shall not possess, use, distribute or solicit the use or distribution of any unauthorized prescription or non-prescription medication, drug, narcotic, hallucinogen, steroid, growth hormone, amphetamine, barbiturate, opiate, marijuana, inhalant, alcohol or any other intoxicant or related paraphernalia while on property owned by, leased or licensed to the school, or while at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.**

**Rule 14: Students shall not directly or indirectly communicate any threat to any member of the School community which places that person in fear or apprehension of injury, pain and/or ridicule.**

- Continual threats, harassment, bullying and/or intimidation are grounds for more serious disciplinary action.

**Rule 15: Students shall not** expose their genitalia to any member of the school community, nor shall they touch the genitalia of another.

**Rule 16: Students shall not leave** the school campus without permission. Leaving the School campus without permission is clearly a major safety concern.

- Violation of this rule will result in strong disciplinary action. Repeat offenders will be considered for expulsion from the school.

**Rule 17: No student shall engage in repeated violations of this Code.**

- A student will not be considered to have engaged in repeated violations of this Code unless all reasonable and appropriate remedial interventions have been undertaken by school personnel.
- A student who repeatedly violates this Code in disregard of reasonable and appropriate interventions may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

**Rule 18: Students shall not engage in any** activity which can reasonably be expected to have the effect of harassing, threatening or damaging the safety or reputation of any member of the school community.

- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule.
  1. Unwelcome sexual advances
  2. Requests for sexual relations and/or favors
  3. Sexual comments
  4. Sexually oriented gestures, sounds, remarks or comments
  5. Offensive remarks or comments related to a person's race, gender, religion, disability or national origin
  6. Efforts to intimidate or bully
- Any of the above conduct or any other conduct which may reasonably be considered as a violation of this Rule, whether in written, oral, electronic or digital form is subject to disciplinary consequences.

**Rule 19: Students shall not engage in any consensual sexual acts, nor shall they force or attempt to force any other member of the School community to engage in any sexual act.**

- For the purpose of this Rule, sexual acts include, but are not limited to:
  1. Intercourse
  2. Oral sex
  3. Groping sexual parts
  4. Simulated sex

**Rule 20: Students shall not cause** or attempt to cause physical injury or pain to any teacher, administrator, staff member or any other employee or agent of the school, or any member of the school community. No fighting or intimidation will be tolerated.

**Rule 21: Students shall not cause,** attempt to cause or threaten to cause serious bodily injury to any member of the school community with a weapon or without regard to the value of human life.

**Rule 22: Students shall not possess** on their person, in their clothing or belongings, or in any storage space or container provided by the school any weapon. Possession of any weapon at any time by a student is strictly prohibited.

- For the purposes of this Rule, "weapon" shall include all items listed in the definition provided within this Code, as well as any object not traditionally thought of as a weapon which is used in such a way that it causes or risks injury similar to that caused by any weapon.
- The following steps shall be taken by appropriate personnel at the school in the event a student violates this Rule:
  1. The student will be detained
  2. The incident will be immediately being reported to Police or any other appropriate authority
  3. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student will be immediately notified
  4. Expulsion may be recommended in accordance with the law of the State

5. A Serious Incident Report will be filed and will contain:
  - \* Circumstances of possession and discovery of the weapon
  - \* Action taken by Police or other authority in response to the call for assistance
  - \* Action taken by the School, including details of contact with parent(s) or guardian(s), filing of the report and notice to Police or other authority
  - \* An image of the weapon
  - \* A report to the State Education Agency

**Rule 23: Students shall not engage in or attempt to engage in any conduct which endangers the health, safety or welfare of any other member of the school community.**

- The following, although not exhaustive, will be considered violations of this Rule:
  1. Setting a fire on or in property owned by, leased or licensed to the school.
  2. Retaliating against any member of the school community who participated in any investigation or proceeding
  3. Activating the fire alarm, security system or other such device when there is no threat of fire or breach of security, and fire personnel, police or other authority is dispatched to the school.
  4. Planting, hiding or threatening to plant or hide any bomb or explosive device on property owned by, leased or licensed to the School.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

**Social Probation:** Social Probation is an effective learning technique to assist students in learning to make wise decisions and realizing the negative consequences of poor decisions. The purpose of social probation is to encourage students to act in a responsible and respectful manner.

A student may be placed on Social Probation for a period of time as a result of inappropriate behavior, attendance issues, failing to act in a safe and responsible manner or violations of school rules and regulations, school board policy or the law. The principal or members of the administrative team will determine when and for how long Social Probation will be assigned to a student. The student and parents /guardian will be notified in writing and all due process procedures will be followed when social probation is assigned to a student.

Social Probation at the school can include all or part of the following:

- 1) Not allowed to attend as a spectator or participant any school related activities after school hours or on weekends.
- 2) Not allowed to participate in any co-curricular, extra-curricular, athletic, social (dances and clubs), field trips, musical, artistic, dramatic, or any school related performances or events.
- 3) Not allowed in school or on school property outside of normal school hours.
- 4) Not allowed to participate in school related ceremonial events such as commencement, banquets and prom.
- 5) Limited hall passes privileges.

Participation in these school related activities is a privilege and not an absolute right.

**Detention:** Retaining the student after school hours with the parent and/or student being responsible for transportation of the student at the end of the detention period

**Suspension:** Exclusion from school for a period of between one (1) and ten (10) consecutive school days. No student may be suspended until the student has been informed of the reason(s) for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond, except when the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened. The parent(s) of a student will be notified immediately when their child has been suspended. Suspensions must not be made to run consecutively for a period of more than ten (10) school days.

With respect to the informal hearing, the school must provide the following to the student and/or the parent(s) guardian(s) to comport with due process:

1. Written notification of the reasons for the suspension;

2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing;
3. An opportunity to question any witness present at the hearing; and
4. An opportunity to speak and present witnesses on his/her own behalf

*Students have the responsibility to make up assignments, assessments and/or projects missed during the period of suspension within the guidelines set forth by the school.*

**EDGE (Engaging Discipline and Guidance into Education):** Exclusion from normal classes for a period that may exceed ten (10) consecutive school days, which takes place on school property. A student may not be given an EDGE assignment unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the EDGE assignment and has been given the opportunity to respond before the EDGE assignment becomes effective. Communication to the parent(s) must follow any EDGE assignment action taken by the school. If the EDGE assignment is for a period of more than ten (10) consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the Principal must be offered to the parent (s) or guardian (s) prior to the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) school day.

**Out-of-School Suspension:** Exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days which takes place off of school property.

**Expulsion:** Exclusion from school by the Board of Directors for a period exceeding ten (10) school days, or permanent expulsion from the school rolls. The student and parent (s) must be provided with a formal hearing prior to expulsion and all due process procedures must be followed. A student will be placed in his/her normal class during the period prior to the formal hearing and decision of the Board, except when an informal hearing reveals that the student's presence poses a threat to the health, safety, welfare or morals of others, and a formal hearing cannot be conducted within the period of the expulsion. In such a case, a student may be excluded for a period longer than ten (10) days as long as the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed, and the student will be provided with alternative education.

The formal hearing required for all expulsions may take place before the Board of Directors, an authorized committee of the Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board. If the formal hearing is conducted before a committee of the Board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the Board is required to expel the student. The School must provide the following to comport with due process:

1. Notification of the charges sent via e-mail or certified mail;
2. Sufficient notice (at least 3 days) of the time and place of the hearing;
3. The opportunity for a private hearing, unless the student or parent requests a public hearing;
4. Copies of any affidavits or statements (names and identifications redacted) of those witnesses against to the student;
5. The opportunity for the student to request that any witnesses (for his/her behalf) appear in person to answer questions;
6. The right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf; and
7. The opportunity to receive a record of the hearing at his/her own expense.

In addition, the student has the right to be represented by counsel at his/her expense and the hearing must be held with all reasonable speed.

## **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR VIOLATIONS OF RULES**

Students who are found to have engaged in conduct in violation of any one or more Level I Rules may be subject to one or more of the following consequences, intervention or disciplinary measures, or other measures deemed appropriate, reasonable and/or necessary by appropriate school personnel:

1. Discussion between the student and a teacher to discuss the incident
2. Discussion between the student and a counselor or intervention assistance team
3. Discussion between the student and the Chief Executive Officer or Principal

4. Lunch detention or series of detentions
5. Notice to parent(s) or guardian(s) informing them of the student's behavior
6. Temporary assignment to a disciplinary or "cooling off" location
7. Temporary assignment to a different class setting
8. Supervised mediation between any and all students involved in the incident
9. Social Probation which may include temporary or permanent restrictions on activities, including denial of participation in recess, school-sponsored or school-related activities, field trips and/or extracurricular activities
10. Temporary or permanent removal from transportation services in cases involving conduct while using transportation
11. Placement of the student in an alternative educational program
12. Referral to an appropriate counseling program within the school district of residence or another community mental health program
13. In-school suspension (EDGE)
14. Out-of-school suspension
15. Expulsion

**No Student Visitors:** No student from another school is permitted to visit the school during school hours. This includes any request to "shadow" a student or a staff member.

**Searches and Seizures:** Students have the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. However, all lockers or other storage areas that are owned or leased by or licensed through the school are to be considered property of the School for the purpose of this Code. No student may use his/her locker or storage area as a depository for anything of value, any substance, item or object that is prohibited by this Code or any federal, state or local law. No student may use his/her locker or storage area for any substance, item or object that constitutes or may constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of any member of the school community, or that may be disruptive or otherwise in violation of the school's rules.

The School has the authority to search a student's locker or storage area if a member of the School's faculty, staff or administration has reason to believe that the locker or storage area is being used for storage of any prohibited substance, item or object, of any contraband, or of any substance, item or object which poses a threat to the health, safety or welfare of any occupant of the School building(s), any member of the School community, or to the structural integrity of the School building(s), or is disruptive or otherwise in violation of the School's rules.

**Food or Beverages:** No food or beverages are permitted outside the atrium. Bottled water is the exception to this rule in designated areas. No beverages are permitted in the theaters at any time.

**Hall Passes:** Students are not permitted in the halls during class periods unless they are accompanied by a teacher or have a hall pass from an authorized staff member. The hall pass must be initialed by the teacher of record. This includes requests to miss all or part of a scheduled class.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of electronic devices where supportive of the general welfare and the instructional program of the school is endorsed. However, the use of electronic devices by students has been found not only disruptive but, in many instances, contributory to illegal purposes. Students are permitted to have cell phones. However, a student's cell phone is to be turned off during class time. In an emergency situation, parents may call the main office number to leave a message for their child. Please do not call your child's cell phone during school hours. All other messages will be delivered to your child. **The school will not assume responsibility for the loss or theft of electronic devices.**

**Student Fundraising:** Any fundraising in the school must be approved by the principal.

**College Visitations:** All requests for college visitation should be arranged with your counselor PRIOR to your actual visit. Approval forms will be issued by your counselor. Failure to receive advanced approval will result in an unexcused absence and denial of the privilege to make any additional college visits or to complete make-up work missed during the visit.

**Discipline of Students with Disabilities:** The Charter School shall comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) and any applicable federal and state statutes or regulations when disciplining students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities, and/or conduct injurious to themselves or others shall be disciplined in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEP), behavioral intervention plan, Title 22 Chapter 711 and relevant portions of Chapter 12 of the State Board of Education Regulations, IDEA 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and any other applicable federal or state law.

No student with a disability shall be expelled from the school if the student's misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability.

The school personnel may remove a student with a disability who violates this Code from his/her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, to another setting, or may suspend the student for not more than ten (10) school days to the same extent as those alternatives are applied to typical students. When determining whether to change the placement of a student with a disability who has violated this Code, school personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

If the School personnel seek to change the placement of a child with a disability due to a violation of this Code, the School, parent(s) and relevant members of the IEP Team must review all relevant information, including the student's IEP, teacher observations, and information provided by the parent(s), to determine whether the student's conduct was a manifestation of his/her disability. This manifestation determination must take place within ten (10) days of the date on which the decision was made to change the student's placement. A student's conduct will be considered a manifestation of his/her disability if:

- The conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability, or
- The conduct in question was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP.

If the student's conduct is determined not to have been a manifestation of the student's disability, the student may be disciplined to the same extent as are typical students. If the conduct is determined to have been manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP Team must:

1. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan, if one had not already been conducted;
2. Review a behavioral intervention plan that was already created, and modify it to address the behavior; and
3. Return the student to the placement from which he/she was removed, unless the parent(s) and School agree to a change in placement as part of a modification to the behavioral intervention plan.

In certain circumstances, students with disabilities may be removed to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days regardless of whether the behavior was manifestation of the student's disability. Such cases include, and are limited to, circumstances in which:

1. A student with a disability carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
2. A student with a disability knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school property, or at a school function; and
3. A student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another.

Regardless of whether the student's conduct is found to have been a manifestation of the student's disability, the parent(s) of the student must be notified of all procedural safeguards available to them under federal and state law no later than the date on which the decision to take disciplinary action against the student with a disability was made.

If the parent(s) of a student with a disability disagree with the manifestation determination or decision regarding appropriate placement for their child, or the school believes that the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or another, a hearing may be requested. A hearing officer will hear and make a determination regarding the above issues at the hearing. The hearing officer may order a change of placement for the student. During the appeal process the student will remain in the interim alternative setting to which he/she was initially removed until 45 days elapses or the parent(s) and School agree otherwise. Any hearing requested will take place on an expedited basis, and will occur within twenty (20) school days from the date the hearing was requested, with decision rendered within (10) school days thereafter.

Children who have not yet been determined to be eligible for a special education and related services under IDEA 2004 and who violate this Code may claim the protections afforded students with disabilities if the school had knowledge that the student had a disability prior to the behavior at issue. However, if the School had no knowledge that the student had a disability, the student may be disciplined as a typical student.

Regardless of status as a student with a disability, the School may report a crime that was committed by a student with a disability, and federal, state and/or local law enforcement and judicial authorities may exercise the powers afforded them under federal, state and/or local law in prosecuting such a crime.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES POLICY**

### **Attendance Requirement**

Royal Public Schools requires that every enrolled student comply with this attendance policy. Texas law requires that a student attends at least 90% of the days a class or school year is offered in order to receive credit or be considered for promotion. This requirement adopted by the school and applies to all students, including those served under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.

### **Impact on Promotion**

The average school year consists of approximately 180 instructional days. A student who is absent for more than 18 days during the school year falls below the 90% attendance requirement. Students who are absent for 18 days or more during the school year will not be eligible for automatic promotion to the next grade level. To be considered for promotion, the students are required to complete the school's summer school or attendance recovery program, as assigned. Failure to complete the required summer school program may result in retention at the current grade level.

### **Applicability to All Students**

The school establishes attendance expectations to ensure that all students are socially and academically prepared for successful matriculation. To support this goal, the school implements a "no-zero grade" policy for work missed due to absences, allowing students the opportunity to maintain academic progress and remain eligible for promotion.

In accordance with Texas Education Code §25.092, all students are expected to meet attendance requirements. Students who accumulate 18 or more days of absences during the school year may be assigned to Summer School as an intervention to recover missed instructional time and demonstrate readiness for the next grade level.

This requirement applies to all students, including those in good academic standing and those receiving special education services or accommodation under Section 504. Attendance expectations are applied consistently, while individual circumstances may be reviewed in accordance with applicable laws.

### **Attendance Review Committee**

In accordance with Texas law, an Attendance Review Committee may review cases involving excessive absences and determine whether extenuating circumstances justify promotion. Completion of summer school may still be required as a condition for promotion.

### **Parent Notification**

Parents/guardians will be notified as students approach excessive absence thresholds and will be informed of the risk of retention due to attendance. Parents must submit a written explanation of their child's absence within three (3) school days of the student's return. Acceptable reasons for excused absences include:

1. Student illness or doctor visit
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Inclement weather makes it dangerous for students to attend school.
4. Legal quarantine

Observance of religious holidays (with appropriate verification)

Excuses must be dated and include the reason for the absence and the signature of the parent, guardian, or physician. Any absence not meeting these criteria, or not approved by the principal or designee, will be considered unexcused.

### **Attendance Interventions**

Parents will receive notice upon student absences. On the third consecutive absence, parents will be contacted. Upon the fifth unexcused absence, parents/guardians will be required to attend a truancy meeting with the principal. Parents may excuse up to three (3) absences per school year with a written note. After this limit, a medical provider's note will be required. Doctor's notes will be accepted at any time.

### **Pre-Approved Absences**

Parents/guardians may request pre-approval for absences due to travel or other educational opportunities. Requests must be submitted in writing at least seven (7) school days in advance. The principal will determine whether the absence will be excused or unexcused.

### **Tardiness/Check-In**

Students arriving at 8:00 AM or later are considered tardy and must check in through the front office. Students arriving after 11:00 AM will be counted absent for the day unless they provide a doctor's note, in which case the absence may be adjusted.

### **Check-Out Procedure**

Students may not leave school without being checked out through the front office. A parent/guardian or authorized adult must sign the student out and present valid identification. Only individuals listed on the student's registration form may check out a student unless prior written authorization is provided.

Students checking out before 11:00 AM and not returning will be counted absent for the day.

No individual under the age of 18 may check out a student. Students will remain in class until the parent/guardian arrives and the checkout process is completed. Students will not be permitted to check out after 2:30 PM unless prior arrangements have been made or extenuating circumstances exist, as determined by the principal or designee.

## STUDENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

**PURPOSE:** The Royal Board is committed to providing its students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment free from harassment, bullying, discrimination, and hazing. These forms of dangerous and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

"Bullying" means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior on or off of school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, cyberbullying or written, electronic, verbal, or physical actions that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics contained in this policy. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, hazing, harassment, intimidation, or menacing acts of a student which may, but need not be, based on the student's race, color, sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
- Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
- Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function.
- Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the Internet, cell phones, instant messaging, emailing or other technical means.

**Hostile environment** means the perception by an affected student that the conduct of another student constitutes a threat of violence or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, would agree that the conduct constitutes bullying, threat of assault, or assault.

**Violence** means the unjustified infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student.

**Threat** means a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action to cause fear of harm. The intention may be communicated through an electronic, written, verbal, or physical act to cause fear, mental distress, or interference in the school environment. The intention may be expressly stated or implied and the person communicating the threat has the ability to carry out the threat.

**Threat of Violence** means an unjustified expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.

**Intimidation** means an unjustified threat or other action that is intended to cause fear or apprehension in a student.

**Student** as used in this policy means a person who is enrolled in the Royal Public Schools.

**Harassment** is defined as knowingly pursuing a pattern of conduct, whether physical, verbal, written or electronic, that is intended to annoy, alarm or terrorize another person. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal acts, teasing, use of sarcasm and jokes;
- name-calling and belittling;
- nonverbal behavior such as graphic or written statements; or
- conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating.

**Disability Harassment** means intimidation or abusive behavior towards a student that is based on the student's disability and creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying the student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services or opportunities in the school.

**Racial Harassment** consists of physical, verbal, written or electronic conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment;
- has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
- otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic opportunities.

**Sexual Harassment** means any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other inappropriate physical, verbal or written conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may take place under any of the following circumstances:

- when submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of obtaining an education; or
- submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's education; or
- that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

**Hazing** means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of harm to a person, in order for that student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or for any other purpose. Hazing includes, but is not limited, to:

- any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body;
- any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health of the student; or
- any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, subjects the student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARASSMENT STATEMENT

Students at the School have the right to education in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Harassment occurs when a student demands a sexual favor, or otherwise threatens, intimidates, annoys, alarms, causes substantial emotional distress, or creates a hostile environment for another based on the other's gender, age, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status or beliefs. Discrimination occurs when a rule or established practice confers privileges on or denies privileges to a

particular class of persons based on race, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status or beliefs.

If a student believes he/she is the victim of harassment or discrimination, he/she shall report the alleged harassment or discrimination to the Principal, or to another Administrator if the Principal is the accused. Any student who believes he/she is the victim of harassment or discrimination may likewise make a complaint to the Board of Directors in accordance with the Complaint Policy established by the Board. The school and/or the Board of Directors will undertake to investigate the student's complaint thoroughly and completely and will maintain confidentiality to the extent allowed by federal, state or local law and the policies established by the Board of Directors of the School.

Nothing in this Code shall be construed to discourage or prohibit a student who feels he/she has been the subject of criminal activity or a criminal offense from contacting the police or other appropriate authority. To the extent anything in this Code could be construed to conflict with federal and/or state law, the federal and/or state law applies.