

**2025-2026**  
**CODE OF CONDUCT**



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**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
926 W SEDGLEY AVE.  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19140**

Welcome to the Laboratory Charter School of Communication and Languages (LAB) where all students and parents are invited to be a part of making our school successful. A student in this school is expected to actively engage in learning and follow the rules that have been established for the safety and welfare of the entire student body. The policies and procedures contained in this Code of Conduct have been carefully prepared and presented to enable you to enhance your educational program.

Students' success at LAB will be directly proportional to all of our efforts. We encourage you to strive to make your school experience an educationally sound and productive one. You will also receive a complete copy of the Charter School Student and Parent Handbook. Please review this Code of Conduct with your child, as they will be held accountable for all rules and expectations contained in both areas.

You will also need to complete, sign and return all forms contained in the Student and Parent Handbook, which will also include this Code of Conduct.

Laboratory Charter School recognizes the importance of a comprehensive Parent/Student Handbook as well as a Code of Conduct that complies with the regulations set forth by Pennsylvania School Law. The purpose of this document is to outline the reasons why it is crucial for our school to have policies that adhere to these legal requirements. By ensuring compliance, we aim to foster a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment for all students, while also providing clear guidelines and expectations for parents and guardians.

**Legal Obligations:** Pennsylvania School Law establishes a framework of regulations that govern the operation of educational institutions within the state. Complying with these laws is not only necessary to maintain the legality of our school but also crucial for safeguarding the rights and well-being of our students and their families. A Parent/Student Handbook that aligns with Pennsylvania School Law demonstrates our commitment to upholding legal requirements and ensuring transparency in our policies and procedures.

**Clarity and Consistency:** Having a Code of Conduct compliant with Pennsylvania School Law ensures that all parents, students, and staff members are provided with consistent and accurate information regarding school policies, procedures, and expectations. Clarity in these areas is vital to foster a positive school culture, promote effective communication, and avoid any misunderstandings or disputes. By following state regulations, we can provide a clear roadmap for parents and students to navigate the educational journey at our school.

**Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination:** Pennsylvania School Law emphasizes the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination in educational settings. By incorporating these principles into our Code of Conduct, we can establish a fair and inclusive environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their race, gender, religion, disability, or any other protected characteristic. Compliance with state laws ensures that our policies and procedures are free from bias and discrimination.

**Safety and Well- Being:** Pennsylvania School Law includes provisions related to student safety and well-being, covering areas such as bullying prevention, emergency procedures, and reporting protocols. By aligning our Code of Conduct with these regulations, we prioritize the physical and emotional safety of our students. Clear guidelines on reporting incidents, addressing conflicts, and responding to emergencies enable us to create a secure and nurturing environment conducive to learning and personal growth.

**Parental Involvement and Engagement:** A compliant code of Conduct facilitates meaningful parental involvement and engagement in their child's education. By clearly outlining the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for parents, we encourage their active participation in school activities, events, and decision-making processes. Compliance with Pennsylvania School Law helps establish a strong partnership between the school and parents, strengthening collaboration and ensuring the best possible educational experience for our students.

**Conclusion:** Having a Code of Conduct compliant with Pennsylvania School Law is crucial for the Laboratory Charter School to meet legal obligations, provide clarity and consistency, promote equal treatment and non-discrimination, prioritize student safety and well-being, and enhance parental involvement and engagement. By adhering to these regulations, we create an environment that nurtures academic excellence, personal growth, and a strong sense of community.

The Board of Trustees of Laboratory Charter School has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. Students are expected to assume that the rules contained in this Code of Conduct remain in effect unless specifically repealed, altered or waived in writing by the Board of Trustees.

**Non-Discrimination:** Laboratory Charter School complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws in providing equal opportunity to all Charter School students. Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P. S. § 951—963), a student may not be denied access to a free and full public education, nor may a student be subject to disciplinary action on account of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

### Scope of the Student Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to the conduct of Laboratory Charter School students that occur:

On school grounds at any time;

Off school grounds at any school-related activity, function or event;

Off school grounds when the conduct may reasonably be expected to (i) undermine school authority; (ii) endanger the safety of students, teachers, administrators, or any other member of the school community; or (iii) disrupt the school; and

While traveling to and from school on school buses or vans, or on public transportation.

## USE OF VIDEO AND AUDIO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

Both of LAB's Campuses have video surveillance on and around school property and on school buses to protect school property and the health, safety and welfare of the students and employees. Video recordings may be used as a basis for any disciplinary action for any violation of law and/or school rules.

Further, video recordings may be furnished to police in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

School buses may be equipped with video and audio recording devices which provide video and audio surveillance for safety, security, and disciplinary purposes. Students, their parents/guardians, and, where applicable, school bus drivers and passengers will be notified as to the presence and possible activation of any video and audio recording devices.

The purpose of surveillance monitoring on school buses is to provide a safe environment for students, school personnel and contracted personnel. Surveillance monitoring will assist as a deterrent to misconduct which jeopardizes the safety of students and other permitted occupants of school buses, however it does not ensure the elimination of misconduct and cannot guarantee the absolute safety of those on board.  
Dress Code and Uniform

### Purpose

The Board recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. Gender Expansive and Transgender students shall have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression to the extent that such dress does not conflict with school rules or other Board policies or administrative regulations.

### Uniforms

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Student's Rights and Responsibilities, Chapter 12, Laboratory Charter School has a mandatory uniform policy for all students in grades K-8. All Students are required to dress in the manner adopted by their schools. Students who persistently fail to dress for school as required by their schools' uniform programs will need to participate in parent meetings to coordinate support for the family to comply with the uniform policy. Students shall also observe basic standards of cleanliness, modesty, and good grooming. Students shall dress in a manner that neither disrupts the educational program nor pose a safety hazard.

### *Uniform Options for Kindergarten thru Fifth Grade Students*

Pupils will wear a long or short-sleeved light blue shirt with a collar with navy blue pants, skirt, skorts, or jumper. Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Students will also wear a long or short-sleeved light blue shirt with a collar and navy blue pants or shorts.

### *Uniform Options for Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Grade Students*

Pupils will wear either a long or short sleeved light blue shirt that has a collar with either navy blue pants, skirt, skorts, or jumper. Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Or, students will wear either a long or short sleeved light blue shirt that has a collar and navy-blue pants or shorts.

All students are expected to adhere to this uniform policy. Failure to wear the school uniform will result in the need to participate in parent meetings to coordinate support for the family to comply with the uniform policy.

Oversized clothing is not permitted. Undergarments should not be visible. Short shorts or mini-skirts will not be permitted. Hats, scarves, and headbands are not permitted, except for religious reasons. Hoodies are not permitted under any circumstances. Students may not wear large dangling earrings or jewelry, sandals, flip flops, or high heels.

### *Gym Uniforms*

In order to implement our physical education program, proper attire is necessary. Preparation for class is part of the student's overall subject grade. We require the following clothing to meet the needs of personal cleanliness and maximum safety:  
Navy blue sweat pants or shorts (K-8)  
Navy Blue Crew Neck Sweat Shirt or Light Blue Collared shirt (K-8)  
Black Sneakers

All students are expected to wear the uniforms described above when on campus and during school hours from Monday through Friday.

A uniform bank will be available on campus for students to change into the appropriate attire if they have not come to school according to the uniform policy. Uniforms from the uniform bank are to be returned by the end of the school day and washed on campus.

### **The school uniform consists of:**

- i Bottoms/Tops: Navy Blue
- i Shirts: Light Blue

- i Crewneck sweaters or crewneck sweatshirts: Navy Blue, no words or lettering (with the exception of Laboratory Charter School)
- i Black Shoes or Sneakers Must be close-toe (no sandals or flipflops), must not light up or make noise, and must not have wheels
- i No hoods, hoodies, hats, or coats may be worn inside the school

### *Authority*

The Board has the authority to impose limitations on students' dress in school.

The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents/guardians to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices disrupt the educational program of the schools or affect the health and safety of others.

When student dress may constitute student expression, Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials shall apply.

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, technical education, extracurricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to ensure the health or safety of the student.

### *Delegation of Responsibility*

The building principal or the principal's designee shall be responsible to monitor student dress and grooming, and to enforce school rules governing student dress and grooming.

The CEO or the designee shall ensure that all rules implementing this policy impose only the minimum necessary restrictions on the exercise of the student's taste and individuality.

Staff members shall be instructed to demonstrate by example positive attitudes toward neatness, cleanliness, propriety, modesty, and good sense in attire and appearance.

### **Electronic Devices**

The LAB policy prohibits cell phones, headphones, iPads, iPods, Smart Watches, ear pods/earphones, tablets, kindle devices, and any other electronic devices. Phone calls -

sending or receiving, texting, audio, or video recording and texting - sending and receiving are prohibited during the school day, including in the schoolyard before and after school and during the breakfast and lunch program.

- ï The school will not assume any responsibility if these items are brought to school and lost or stolen.
- ï Having cell phones, headphones, or other electronic devices at LAB is a Code of Conduct violation and subject to discipline.
- ï If a student is on a phone and in violation of the cell phone policy, the cell phone will be taken and **ONLY** returned to a parent or guardian.
- ï Students are not permitted to order outside food at any time due to lunch regulation laws, including the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, and school rules around cell phone usage.

### **Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning**

LAB fully embraces a Restorative Practices approach. This school-wide culture system is built around strengthening and repairing respectful and trusting relationships both in the classroom and across the school community. Students and staff are expected to demonstrate positive behavior, pro-social thinking, and social-emotional competencies. Students and Staff acknowledge when harm is done and opportunities are provided to give back to the community they harmed and repair relationships they have damaged. This concept of honoring the community and the relationships within our community is a foundation of LAB.

Restorative practices (RP) is an approach and set of tools for building, improving and repairing relationships. It is a community-centered, needs-based framework for cultivating healthy home, school, neighborhood and workplace communities. The faithful implementation of RP increases social and emotional intelligence, decreases high-risk behavior, and addresses harm effectively. RP strives to honor all voices (including and especially those voices that are traditionally and systematically silenced, like children's), to hold people accountable for their words, behaviors and actions, and to contribute to the repair of new and existing trauma. The consistent, school-wide use of restorative practices significantly reduces classroom disruptions, suspensions, and violence by centering the good of the community and its relationships, promoting social-emotional competence, encouraging trauma-informed decisions, and promoting cultural competency.

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. Schoolwide SEL is a systemic approach to integrating academic, social, and emotional learning across classrooms and the school building in collaboration with families and community partners. The schoolwide use of SEL fosters learning and promotes equitable outcomes for all students.

RP and Schoolwide SEL are distinct approaches to creating and sustaining connected communities but are grounded in similar principles and often complement and fortify one another. Lab Charter recognizes the importance of RP and Schoolwide SEL and is committed to cultivating a connected community through the faithful implementation of both. The implementation process is planned for and led by key stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. Each year, specific goals are developed and customized for each campus, but in general, a restorative school cultivates a strong sense of community through the consistent use of the following tools and processes:

- ï Community-building or proactive dialogue circles
- ï Responsive dialogue circles
- ï Affective statements
- ï Restorative questions and conversations
- ï Formal conferences

These tools and processes provide pathways to relationship-building and to repairing harm. They allow school community members to learn about one another and resolve issues and conflict. They are instrumental to the implementation process, an overview of which follows.

### Overview of the Schoolwide RP + SEL Implementation at LAB

Whole school transformation necessitates the faithful implementation of restorative and SEL practices at the individual, organizational, and systemic levels. The shift from a traditional, typically punitive school model to a restorative one requires a period of 3-5 years well spent. Educators, administrators, support services professionals, parents, community partners and school personnel all play key roles in the transformation process. They must work to embody restorative and social-emotional philosophies, understand deeply their frameworks and tools, and commit to applying and imparting their strategies on a moment-to-moment basis.

The model school incorporates restorative and SEL practices at every possible turn—we see a commitment to relationship building, to minimizing shame, and to cultivating experiences of joy and authentic pride. Approaches to discipline, school-wide rituals, grading policies, classroom routines, interactions between members of the school community, and even the posters we see in a school’s hallways reflect an unwavering commitment to restorative and SEL practices.

Lab Charter has implemented or begun implementing the following practices as part of its committed to becoming a restorative, attuned school environment:

- ï Partnering with The Restorative Project, an organization dedicated to school transformation, in order to ensure the faithful implementation of the RP/SEL program.

- ï Designating a qualified professional to serve as a full-time RP/SEL coach at each Lab Charter campus.
- ï Providing whole school professional development so that all adults who interact with Lab Charter students do so in a healthy manner.
- ï Providing monthly parent workshops designed to impart RP and SEL strategies to families.
- ï Coaching teachers and staff as they become familiar with and adopt RP and SEL strategies.
- ï Forming a champion team that consists of key stakeholders responsible for leading implementation efforts.
- ï Committing to a quarterly review process where key members of the community, including students and parents, provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation efforts.

### In-House Restorative and SEL Practices Leadership: The Champion Team

The champion team is vital to the faithful implementation of restorative and SEL practices. This team of key stakeholders works to build internal capacity and supports grade-, department- and eventually school-wide capacity. Members of the champion team lead a school's transformation process.

Ideally, the champion team consists of multiple educators representing a variety of grade levels and pedagogical perspectives; at least one administrator; a counselor, social worker or other support staff person; parents; and other members of the school community, often including students. If possible, each member of the champion team directs the execution of some aspect of the champion team selection process is therefore tailored to identify members of the school community who exhibit the following qualities:

- ï Positive concept of all children
- ï Positive relationships with students
- ï Belief in people's capacity to change
- ï Strong and compassionate classroom management (if applicable)
- ï Ability to lead by example (a penchant for coaching a bonus)
- ï Restorative mindset, replete with empathy and tenacity
- ï Free to dedicate the time necessary to implementation

Champion teams generally consist of 7 to 9 school community members and meet weekly or bi-weekly. Additionally, the champion team does not work in isolation of committees like school climate or instructional leadership teams; instead, members of the champion team work to integrate restorative and SEL practices into current school alliances.

Questions about Lab Charter's school-wide RP and SEL implementation should be directed to [therestorativeprojecttrp@gmail.com](mailto:therestorativeprojecttrp@gmail.com).



## Progressive Discipline Framework

LAB Staff address Level I and Level II behaviors that are teacher-managed with the Universal Progressive Classroom Management System below:

- ï Step 1: Positive Teacher Redirection
- ï Step 2: Teacher to Student Conversation
- ï Step 3: Lunch Detention
- ï Step 4: Positive Family Contact
- ï Step 5: Discipline Referral
- ï Step 6: Family, Teacher, Administrator Conference

Students will go through this process when the action can be handled at the teacher level. For all other actions/behaviors that cannot be handled by the teacher, those will be handled via LAB's Code of Conduct.

Students who display any of the following actions shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, as stated in the Pennsylvania School Code and LAB's Code of Conduct. Actions are leveled based on disciplinary consequences. Any action can receive the suggested consequence, a lesser, or a more severe consequence based on the severity and repetition of the action and the effect that it has on others.

The list is not exhaustive of all behaviors that may result in disciplinary action. The progressive discipline framework is divided into four levels. Each level represents progressively more serious acts of inappropriate behaviors and consequences. The level of discipline imposed is based on the severity of the misbehavior.

### **§ 12.2. Student responsibilities.**

- (a) Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and homework, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students are responsible to share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- (b) No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- (c) Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- (d) It is the responsibility of the students to conform to the following:

- (1) Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
- (2) Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
- (3) Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
- (4) Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for the students enrolled therein.
- (5) Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
- (6) Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
- (7) Attend school daily and be on time at all classes and other school functions.
- (8) Make up work when absent from school.
- (9) Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by local school authorities.
- (10) Report accurately in student media.
- (11) Not use obscene language in student media or on school premises.

### **§ 12.3. School rules.**

(e) The governing board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. The rulemaking power, however, is not unlimited; it must operate within statutory and constitutional restraints. A governing board has only those powers that are enumerated in the statutes of the Commonwealth, or that may reasonably be implied or necessary for the orderly operation of the school.

(f) Governing boards may not make rules that are arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory or outside their grant of authority from the General Assembly. A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose.

(g) Each governing board shall adopt a code of student conduct that includes policies governing student discipline and a listing of students' rights and responsibilities as outlined in this chapter. This conduct code shall be published and distributed to students and parents or guardians. Copies of the code shall also be available in each school library.

## Student Behavior and Discipline

The table of the Code of Conduct provides definitions for behaviors that are considered dangerous and/or disruptive to the school learning environment and community. The behavior matrix also provides guidance as to the levels of interventions and consequences that school administrators can implement for specific violations. Please see the full table beginning on page 44

Laboratory Charter School's is committed to achieving educational equity and reducing disproportionality in exclusionary discipline. It is expected that all staff follow the MTSS process to ensure students are receiving appropriate supports prior to a serious incident.

Parents/guardians who have any questions or concerns related to discipline are encouraged to contact the school principal.

### Suspension Procedures

According to Pennsylvania law, suspension is defined as the denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for any period of up to ten (10) days. Suspensions must be preceded by notification to the student and parent/guardian in writing. For the purposes of Laboratory Charter School's Code of Conduct, suspensions comprise of three categories: in-school, short-term, and long-term.

#### In-School Suspensions

In-school Suspension is an exclusion from a classroom for disciplinary purposes that allow a student to remain under the direct supervision of school personnel. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision.

#### Out-of-School Suspensions

Students in **3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade** may be suspended when they have violated the Code of Conduct and a suspension is deemed appropriate for the offense. Suspensions vary in length:

1. **Short-term Suspension** is an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of **one to three days**.
2. **Long-term Suspension** is an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of **four to ten school days**.

Students who are suspended must meet with the principal or designee before the suspension unless it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is compromised. During the conference, the student should be given a suspension notice. The parent/guardian must also be notified and a parent conference should be scheduled before or upon the student's reinstatement to school after suspension.



Kindergarten, first, and second grade students may NOT be suspended unless their actions result in serious bodily injury to self, others or they create an unsafe environment. In order to prove serious bodily injury, the school must provide medical documentation and a Serious Incident Report to the Chief Executive of Operations to notify of the serious bodily injury.

### Level I Discipline

Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct, which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, or student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved.

Professional staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:

- ï Complete a Behavior Concern document to be signed by parent
- ï Call home to parent
- ï Loss of free choice time
- ï Intentional seating
- ï Parent shadowing
- ï Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher
- ï Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in behavior that supports our Caring School Community
- ï Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior in a Caring School Community

### *Level II Discipline*

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against people or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety or well-being of others.

Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided. Signed Behavior Concern forms and a listing of phone call home dates are submitted to the office.

Students guilty of a Level II offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by administration, including, but not limited to the following:

- ï Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher and/or administration via the Mandatory Parent/Guardian Meeting invitation.

- ï Restriction from programs and special assemblies
- ï Assignment to lunch detention
- ï Partial or full day school suspension
- ï Participation in cleaning/repair of damage caused to the school related environment
- ï Saturday School Detention
- ï Financial restitution for repairing or replacing any damage caused to the school-related environment or materials.
- ï \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)
- ï Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in Caring School behavior
- ï Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the school's goals and desired Caring School behavior.

### *Level III Discipline*

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruption of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct.

These offenses must be reported to the administration. Offenses that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in the assignment of multiple days of school suspension, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the administration is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services will be given, if not already provided.

A Serious Behavior form, any new Behavior Concern forms and phone call(s) home documentation are submitted to the office.

Students guilty of a Level III offense may receive any discipline management technique appropriate for the situation as determined by the administration, including but not limited to the following:

- ï Restriction from programs and special assemblies
- ï Full day out of --school suspension; Number of days as determined by administration
- ï Saturday Detention
- ï Participation in the cleaning or repair of any damage caused to the school- related environment

- ï Financial restitution for the repair or replacement of any damage caused to the school-related environment or materials.
- ï Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and related Caring School behaviors
- ï Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired Caring School behaviors
- ï Any disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct, and desired Caring School behaviors

### Level IV Discipline

Level IV discipline offenses represent the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the administration. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from school and/or school sponsored activities, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the school administration is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of support services should be given if not already provided.

Certain behaviors have been identified that require an automatic office referral. In these cases, teachers should fill out a Serious Behavior form without needing to go through the steps of the classroom discipline procedure. It is the discretion of the teacher if the student is sent to the office immediately or the referral is submitted after class. This list is not all-inclusive:

- ï Fighting or confrontational behavior
- ï Profanity
- ï Racial Slurs in class
- ï Refusing to surrender electronic devices
- ï Vandalism or defacing school property
- ï Non-compliance/defiance

Students guilty of a Level IV offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the administration, including but not limited to the following:

- ï Restriction from programs and special assemblies
- ï Suspension from school; Number of days determined by administration and county policy

- ï Participation in the cleaning or repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
- ï Financial restitution for the repair or replacement of any damage caused to the school-related environment or materials
- ï \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects an understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the Caring School behavior
- ï Appearance before the Disciplinary Community for Due Process proceedings

## Suspensions

### **Level 4: Immediate Referral**

- ï Fighting or confrontational behavior
- ï Profanity or obscenity towards any staff member.
- ï Threats – any overt or verbal action towards personnel.
- ï Racial Slurs
- ï Refusing to surrender electronic device
- ï Disrespect to any staff member.
- ï Smoking in the building or on school grounds.
- ï Leaving school grounds without permission.
- ï Cutting class.
- ï Leaving class without permission.

### ***A student is subject to immediate suspension, expulsion and arrest for the following reasons:***

- ï Forgery.
- ï Destruction, vandalism, graffiti, and/or theft of school property.
- ï Pulling fire alarms.
- ï Assault on another student or staff member.
- ï Possession and/or use of illegal weapons.
- ï Possession use and sale of marijuana or any illegal drugs.
- ï Pornography.

### ***Violations of these rules can result in:***

- ï Suspension from school for up to 10 days.
- ï Placement in an alternative school.
- ï Suspension of extracurricular privileges.
- ï Loss of eligibility for awards.
- ï Exclusion from special activities such as trips, dances, and move-up day exercises.
- ï Recommendation for transfer to another educational environment or expulsion from school.

## **Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination**

### ***Bullying***

Laboratory Charter School recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety and on the learning environment at school. LAB also recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, and detracts from a safe environment.

LAB defines bullying as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, psychological or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

- ï Substantially interfering with a student's education
- ï Creating a threatening school environment
- ï Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

### ***Bullying is further characterized by the following three (3) criteria:***

- ï It is aggressive behavior or intentional harm doing
- ï It is carried out repeatedly over time
- ï It occurs between people where there is an imbalance of power (I.e., physical strength, mental capacity, popularity, or social skills)

## Harassment

It is Laboratory Charter School's policy to maintain an educational environment in which harassment including sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence in any form is not tolerated.

LAB defines harassment as verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, disability, or other protected classification.

Harassment includes unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal, or nonverbal acts, including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets, and name-calling; ridicule or mockery; insults or put-downs; offensive objects or pictures; physical assaults or threats; intimidation; sexual misconduct; or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance when:

- ï Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive and;
- ï A reasonable person in the complainant's position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school.

Harassment does not have to include the intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

## Discrimination

Discrimination: To treat individuals differently based on a protected classification including race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, disability, or other protected classification. A single incident of discrimination may implicate more than one protected class.

Laboratory Charter School does not discriminate in employment, education programs, or activities based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity, expression (known or perceived), sex, handicap, disability, nationality, citizenship, union membership, or limited English proficiency.

Laboratory Charter School's policy of non-discrimination extends to all other legally protected classifications as listed below:

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA), is a federal law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities and, together with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), ensures to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, parents, staff, and community members the right of equal access to services and accommodations provided by LAB.

**The Bullying/ Harassment/ Discrimination Policy will be reviewed with all students at least once a year and will be posted on the school webpage.**

### Disciplinary Statement

A school is judged by the actions of its students in and out of school. At all times when students are under school jurisdiction, they are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner. In an effort to maintain an orderly atmosphere in the school and on school grounds, the authority of any teacher or school personnel extends over all students.

#### **Consequences:**

The Laboratory Charter School does not tolerate bullying of any type, whether verbally or physically, electronically or in writing. A student who violates this code will be subject to severe consequences, which include a parental conference, loss of school privileges, exclusion from school-sponsored activities, suspension from school, expulsion, counseling, therapy outside of school, and referral to law enforcement officials.

#### Students Convicted or Adjudicated Delinquent For Sexual Assault

While schools have limited authority to impose code of conduct consequences for conduct outside the school setting, Pennsylvania law establishes disciplinary requirements when a student has been convicted or adjudicated delinquent of sexual assault upon another district student. School setting – means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school

#### **Sexual assault – means any of the following offenses:**

- i Rape.

- ï Statutory sexual assault.
- ï Involuntary deviate sexual intercourse.
- ï Sexual assault.
- ï Aggravated indecent assault.
- ï Indecent assault.

## Student Responsibilities

Students who have been convicted or adjudicated delinquent for sexual assault of another student in the school district must give notice to the school within 72 hours of the conviction or adjudication.

## School Responsibilities

If a convicted or adjudicated student has not already been expelled, transferred to another school or an AEDY Transition Program, or if the victim attends the same school, LAB will act to either transfer the student to another school, transfer the student to an AEDY Transition Program, or expel the student. Prior to any transfer or expulsion, LAB must provide due process. In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, prior to implementing any disciplinary removal or considering a change of placement for the student, LAB will coordinate with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, and Board policies.

If the sexual assault occurred in a school setting the school principal or administrator will notify the Title IX Coordinator who will determine whether the incident has been addressed in accordance with the School District of Philadelphia's Harassment and Discrimination policy and procedures.

The District will ensure that the convicted or adjudicated student is prohibited from taking part in the following activities at the same time as the victim:

- ï Attend the same school.
- ï Receive transportation in the same school vehicle.
- ï Participate in the same school-sponsored activity.

## Return to school

A student who is expelled, transferred or reassigned, may return to the student's originally assigned school only if one (1) of the following circumstances occur:

The victim is no longer enrolled in the district. The conviction or adjudication has been reversed and is not pending appeal.

### Transfer Students

When LAB receives a student, who transfers from a public or private school during or after an expulsion period for an act or offense involving a sexual assault conviction or adjudication, the district may assign that student to an alternative assignment or may provide alternative education services.

Prior to admission to the District, a parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a student is required, upon registration, to provide a sworn statement or affirmation stating whether the student was previously or is presently expelled under the provisions of this section. The registration shall include the name of the school from which the student was expelled with the dates of expulsion and shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record. Any willful false statement made under this subsection shall be subject to 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

### Philadelphia Police Department Referrals

Some of the behavior infractions in the code of conduct are also considered crimes according to Pennsylvania state law. Laboratory Charter School has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) that explicitly states which crimes must be reported to PPD.

The crimes that must be reported to the Philadelphia Police Department are as follows:

- Abductions and Attempts
- Assaults
- Bomb Scares
- Burglary
- Drug & Alcohol Offenses
- Fire & False Alarms (Arson)
- Graffiti (if racial or threatening in nature)
- Child Abuse

Hate Crimes  
Morals Offenses (sexual in nature)  
Property Damage  
Robbery  
Theft  
Trespassing  
Weapons Offenses

Students eleven (11) years old and younger will not be subject to arrest unless they have committed one of the enumerated crimes listed in the memorandum of understanding. Parents or guardians of victims and suspects should be contacted immediately about their child's involvement and attempts to contact parents should be documented.

LAB also has a memorandum of understanding regarding the Diversion Program with the Philadelphia Police department. This program permits PPD to offer alternatives to arrest and criminal prosecution, such as social service supports. The Diversion Program allows the Philadelphia Police Department to divert a student from arrest if that student has committed a non-violent offense in school and has no prior arrests. In those cases, the student will receive services from the Department of Human Services.  
Act 26 Expulsions

If a student is found with a weapon in his or her possession, on school property, or on the way to or from school, the student must be recommended for expulsion. If a student is ten years or older, the police must be called.

*Act 26 Violations (K – 12):* Act 26 of 1995, amended Pennsylvania's School Code Pennsylvania law that requires the expulsion for at least one year of any student who possesses a weapon on school property, at a school function, or on a bus to and from school. A weapon is defined by Pennsylvania school law as "any knife, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and (anything else) capable of inflicting serious bodily injury". This definition may include box cutters, kitchen knives, pen – knives on key – chains, and other common household items. Act 26 requires that the police are notified and the students entitled to a formal hearing.

#### *§ 12.5. Corporal Punishment.*

Corporal punishment is defined as physically punishing a student for an infraction of the discipline policy. Use of corporal punishment is prohibited. Teachers and school authorities may use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

To quell a disturbance.

To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.

For the purpose of self-defense.

For the protection of persons or property.

*§ 12.6. Exclusions from school.*

(a) The governing board shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain students with disabilities shall be governed by § 14.143 (relating to disciplinary placements) and 34 CFR 300.519—300.529 (relating to discipline procedures).

(b) Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days.

(i) Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.

(ii) A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened. (iii) The parents or guardians and the superintendent of the district shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.

When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements in §12.8(c) (relating to hearings). Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10-school day period.

Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the governing board. Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing under § 12.8.

During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the governing board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except as set forth in subsection (d). If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

Students who are under 18 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.

The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent.

Within 30 days of action by the governing board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school district written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school entity shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1482). If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school entity may take action in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

#### *Due Process Required*

Expulsion is exclusion from school for a period of more than 10 days. Due process requires that a student subject to expulsion be afforded a hearing. In re Appeal of JAD, 782 A.2d 1069 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2001).

Where student was expelled from school for approximately 30 days, due process required that the student be given a formal hearing. Oravetz v. West Allegheny School District, 74 Pa. D. & C.2d 733 (1975).

#### *Expulsion Appropriate*

None of the provisions of this section relating to expulsions provide that an expulsion decision, otherwise proper, cannot stand if the expelled student was also suspended for the same offense, and if the period of suspension exceeded the regulatory maximum, due to the failure, for undisclosed reasons, of a student to return to school for a three-day period following a suspension, Porter v. Board of School Directors of Clairton School District, 445 A.2d 1386 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1982).

#### *School Board Review*

This regulation clearly provides that the decision to suspend a student for no more than 10 days is within the power of the principal. Thus, although the school board agreed to consider the issue of the students' suspensions,

that special meeting was nothing more than a gratuitous gesture to the students and their parents. The board's acquiescence to hold the meeting was purely voluntary, and its affirmation of the principal's decision had no legal consequence. *Burns v. Hitchcock*, 683 A.2d 1322 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1996).

### *Smoking*

School regulations which restricted student smoker's use of restrooms were not unconstitutional where they were not arbitrary, unreasonable or capricious. *Figuroa v. Thompson*, 1 Pa. D. & C.3d 266 (1975).

### *§ 12.7. Exclusion from classes—in-school suspension.*

A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective. Communication to the parents or guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by the school. (c) When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in § 12.8 (relating to hearings).

(d) The student's school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

### *§ 12.8. Hearings.*

Laboratory Charter School outlines the informal and formal hearing rights that families and students are afforded based on Chapter 12.8 of Pennsylvania's School Code, specifically in cases of suspension and expulsion:

*Informal Hearings for Long Suspensions (More Than 3 Days):*

Laboratory Charter School follows Pennsylvania law, which requires that when a suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing (as per § 12.8(c)). Families should be given notice of the reasons for suspension in writing (as per § 12.8(c)(i)).

Families should be given sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing (as per § 12.8(c)(iii)).

A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing (as per § 12.8(c)(iii)).

A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on their own behalf (as per § 12.8(c)(iv)).

The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension (as per § 12.8(c)(v)).

*Formal Hearings for Expulsions (Exclusion for More Than 10 Days):*

Expulsions require a prior formal hearing (as per § 12.6(2)). Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians (as per § 12.8(b)(1)).

At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given, and hearing procedures shall be included with the notice (as per § 12.8(b)(2)).

The hearing may be held privately unless the student or parent requests a public hearing (as per § 8(b)(3)).

The student may be represented by counsel, and a parent or guardian may attend the hearing (as per § 8(b)(4)).

The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against them and to request that witnesses appear in person (as per § 12.8(b)(5) and (b)(6)).

The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on their own behalf (as per § 12.8(b)(7)).

A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing (as per § 12.8(b)(8)). The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed upon by both parties (as per § 12.8(b)(9)). Notice of the right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to

the student with the expulsion decision (as per § 12.8(b)(10)).

These rights are in accordance with due process requirements as outlined in the Pennsylvania School Code. Laboratory Charter School provides clear procedures and notice to ensure that students and their families are aware of their rights during suspension and expulsion processes and that these processes are conducted fairly and transparently.

General. Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.

### *Formal hearings.*

A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the governing board or an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board. When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a majority vote of the entire governing board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing: Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.

At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request to reschedule the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.

The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.

The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.

The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf. A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.

The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be

delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:

- (a) Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400—1482). (iii) In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
- (b) Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.
- (c) Informal hearings.  
Informal hearings should be offered to families within the first 5 days of any long suspension (more than 3 days).  
Families should be given notice of the reasons for suspension in writing.  
Families should be given sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.

A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.  
A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.

The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.

The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:

Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.  
Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.  
A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.  
A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.  
The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

### *Due Process*

Due process requirements must be observed in school hearings. Failure to

notify the student of all charges pending against such student violates due process and a new hearing must be granted. *Yatron by Yatron v. Hamburg Area School District*, 631 A.2d 758 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1993); appeal denied 647 A.2d 906 (Pa. 1994).

*§ 12.9. Freedom of expression.*

The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

Students shall have the right to express themselves unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens serious harm to the school or community, encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another individual's rights.

Students may use publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, armbands and any other means of common communication, provided that the use of public school communications facilities shall be in accordance with the regulations of the authority in charge of those facilities.

Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.

Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views. Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on posted or distributed materials. School officials may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property.

Bulletin boards must conform to the following:

School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards. Bulletin board space should be provided for the use of students and student organizations.

School officials may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that the materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards. School newspapers and publications must conform to the following:

Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).

School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.

School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.

Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers must identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and establish a limitation on the time required to decide. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.

Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students. (h) The wearing of buttons, badges or armbands shall be permitted as another form of expression within the restrictions listed in subsection (c).

(h) School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.

(i)

A proper time and place set for distribution is one that would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.

The place of the activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.

#### *§ 12.10. Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance.*

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his country and its flag.

Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the Flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.

Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

#### *§ 12.11. Hair and dress.*

The governing board may establish dress codes or require that students wear school uniforms.

Policies may apply to individual school buildings or to all school buildings. Students have the right to govern the length or style of their hair, including facial hair. Any limitation of this right must include evidence that length or

style of hair causes disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard. When length or style of the hair presents a health or safety hazard, some types of covering shall be used.

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extracurricular activities or other situations when special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.

Students have the responsibility to keep themselves, their clothes and their hair clean. School officials may impose limitations on student participation in the regular instructional program when there is evidence that the lack of cleanliness constitutes a health hazard.

### *Exclusion (suspension or expulsion)*

Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period from 1 to 10 consecutive school days.

Exclusion from classes—in-school suspension A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.

When a suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements in § 12.8(c) (relating to hearings) of the Pennsylvania School Code.

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent based on governing board recommendations. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing under § 12.8. pursuant to the Pennsylvania Code.

Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.

#### Definitions

Suspension — Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive schooldays.

Expulsion - Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board of School Directors for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may be permanent expulsion from school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing by the Board of School Directors in accordance with procedures established by the Office of the CEO or designee, the Board

Policy Statement and the CEO or designee’s Administrative Policy regarding “Expulsion Hearings” in this section, and regulations of the State Board of Education of Pennsylvania, Chapter 12.

**Self—Discipline** - The ability to control one’s behavior in order to conform to school rules and other age-appropriate and desirable behavioral norms.

**Temporary Alternative Educational Placement** — A temporary setting within the school for a period of one (1) to three (3) consecutive school days where the student continues to receive educational services according to his/her IEP.

### *Guidelines for Developing Self-Discipline*

The development and maintenance of self-discipline is an integral aspect of learning.

Each professional staff member, as a part of the normal teacher—learning process, shall develop and emphasize self-disciplinary procedures with students.

Each staff member is responsible for contributing to the maintenance of these standards of behavior which are conducive to learning not only in the classroom but in corridors, the cafeteria and throughout the school site.

### *Disciplinary Action*

Under these School wide guidelines, basic standards of behavior shall be developed and then reviewed annually within each building of Laboratory Charter School.

Appropriate and consistent action shall be taken not only in the classroom, but throughout the entire building to maintain these standards. Punishment (or consequences) will be proportional to the severity of the infraction with consideration of academic consequences associated with discipline.

Building administrators shall be responsible for maintaining such standards building-wide.

The individuality of each student and each incident shall be taken into consideration in any disciplinary action.

If a student is suspended from school, a building administrator shall contact the parents or guardian by telephone or face-to-face prior to re-admittance of the student.

### *Suspension Procedures: General*

The student shall be told the reason for the suspension and shall be afforded the opportunity to review the charges before the suspension becomes effective. This shall be the responsibility of the assistant principal or principal suspending the student. The reason for the suspension also shall be stated in written correspondence to the home.

Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.

The student and parents/guardians are notified of the suspension in the following manner:

The student is given a copy of the suspension letter and instructed to hand carry it home to the parents/guardians, where appropriate.

The appropriate assistant principal/principal personally contacts by telephone the parents/guardians, if possible.

If the assistant principal/principal contacts the parent by telephone, a letter is sent via regular mail or electronic mail to the parent on the same day the student is suspended. A copy of that letter must be forwarded to the individual with student attendance reporting responsibilities: student's file, the Pupil Services/Special Education Office, and others at the discretion of the principal.

If the assistant principal/principal is unable to contact the parents/guardians by telephone, a letter is sent by the school via regular mail or electronic mail to the parents/guardians on the same day the child is suspended. A copy of that letter must be forwarded to the individual with student attendance reporting responsibilities; student's file; the Pupil Services/Special Education Office, and others at the discretion of the principal.

Students shall be permitted to make up exams and work missed while suspended.

One-Day to Three-Day Suspensions (One (1) to Three (3) School Days):

The suspension shall not be for a period longer than three (3) school days, unless the infraction involves a serious or repeated offense.

In the case of a less serious or isolated offense, the suspension letter shall indicate that a conference with the parents/guardians is to be arranged prior to readmission and that it is the responsibility of the

parents/guardians to contact the school to arrange the conference.

If during the conference the principal/assistant principal determines that further suspension and/or referral to the Office of the CEO or designee for possible expulsion proceedings is appropriate, then the principal/assistant principal shall schedule a principal's conference and offer to hold the conference within five (5) school days of the initial suspension date. At the conference, the principal shall generate the extended suspension letter, attached hereto as Attachment 1b, and deliver it to the parents/guardians before they leave the conference, if possible. If the principal is unable to deliver the letter to the parents/guardians at that time, then the letter shall be hand delivered, if possible, and sent via regular mail or email.

Students shall be permitted to make up exams and work missed while suspended.

#### *Extended Suspension or Expulsion*

Recommendation for suspension or expulsion when made to the CEO or designee for action shall include:

A chronology of the incident(s).

Statement(s) by those involved in crucial incident(s).

Statement(s) of student status from educators currently involved with student(s).

A review and recommendation by the principal or CEO or designee.

As soon as extended suspension or expulsion is considered as a possible course of action, the principal shall consult with the CEO or designee and request legal guidance on the matter.

The CEO or designee shall review such information, including the student's file, and recommend to the Board the setting of a hearing to consider possible expulsion from school.

#### *Suspension Procedures: (Four (4) to Ten (10) School Days)*

Suspension beyond three (3) school days shall generally be reserved for more serious or persistent infractions of school rules. Such suspensions may be assigned only by a building principal or assistant principal in the principal's absence.

After reviewing a three (3) school day suspension, the principal may

consider the offense serious enough to warrant further discipline, the principal may extend the suspension up to ten (10) school days and/or refer the matter to the CEO or designee for possible expulsion proceedings. If the principal extends the suspension and/or refers the matter to the CEO or designee, the principal must offer an informal hearing to the student and parents/guardians within five (5) school days after the suspension. Notification procedures as outlined above in Suspension Procedures: General (#2A through D) are to be followed.

To ensure due process, the following requirements are to be observed with respect to the informal hearing:

The principal must present to the parents/guardians and to the student a notification for the informal hearing. A copy of that letter must be forwarded to the individual with student attendance reporting responsibilities; student's file; the Special Education Office, if the student is receiving special education services or thought to be an eligible student; and others at the discretion of the principal.

Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing is to be given. Attempts must be made to arrange such meetings for mutually convenient times.

A student must be given the right to cross-examine any witnesses presented by the principal.

The student must be extended the right to speak and produce witnesses.

As this is an informal hearing, tape recording of the meeting is not permitted. There is no entitlement to legal representation at the hearing for either the student or the school.

If, after the informal hearing, the principal deems it advisable to extend the suspension up to ten (10) school days and/or refer the matter to the CEO or designee for possible expulsion proceedings, the principal may do so. The action must be confirmed in writing by mail or electronic mail to the parents/guardians. A copy of that correspondence must be forwarded to the individual with student attendance reporting responsibilities; student's file; the Pupil Services/Special Education Office, and others at the discretion of the principal.

Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten (10) school day period, unless the principal determines that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, as long as the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. The principal may request a readmission conference at the termination of the suspension.

Students shall be permitted to make up examinations and work missed while being disciplined by suspensions.

#### Multiple Suspension Procedures

Whenever any student shall have had multiple suspensions adding up to eight (8) days or one (1) ten-day (10) suspension his/her case must be reviewed by the building principal. The building principal also may review any suspension offense that, in his/her opinion constitutes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of other students or school employees. Such review may include, but is not limited to, a conference with the parents/guardians.

After such a review and conference, the principal may elect to readmit the student, extend the suspension, and/or refer the matter to the CEO or designee for possible expulsion proceedings.

In cases requiring such referral, it shall be necessary for the principal to administer a ten (10) school day suspension in order to ensure adequate time for the referral. All procedures relating to a suspension from four to ten school days (see prior sections) including an informal hearing will be followed. In cases requiring referral to the CEO or designee, the parents/guardians must be notified of the ten (10) school day suspension and referral.

A copy of that correspondence must be forwarded to the CEO or designee, in addition to the individual with student attendance reporting responsibilities; student's file; the Pupil Services/Special Education Office and others at the discretion of the principal. After a conference, if the CEO or designee does not elect to readmit the student, the student must be referred to the Board of School Directors for an exclusion hearing in accordance with the procedures established for such proceedings in the Board Policy Statement.

#### *Administrative Policy Regarding Expulsion Hearings in this section.*

In accordance with School Code Section 1317.2 - Exclusion for Possession of Weapons

A "school district or area vocational-technical school shall expel, for a period of not less than one year, any student who is determined to have brought a weapon onto or is in possession of a weapon on any school property, any school-sponsored activity or any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity." Refer to Board Policy Statement Regarding "Weapons — Prohibition" in the Community Relations Section.

Expulsion shall be conducted pursuant to all applicable regulations as

outlined in Board Policy Statement and the CEO or designee's Administrative Procedure Regarding Expulsion Hearings in this section.

The CEO or designee of a school district or an administrative director of an area vocational- technical school may recommend discipline short of expulsion on a "case- by- case basis." The CEO or designee, in the case of an exceptional student, will take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. §1400, et seq.).

The CEO or designee can make an alternative assignment or provide alternative educational services during this period of expulsion.

The CEO or designee shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this section to local law enforcement officials.

The CEO or designee shall report to the Department of Education all incidents relating to expulsions for possession of a weapon on school grounds, school sponsored activities or public conveyances providing transportation to a school or school- sponsored activity. Reports shall include all information as required under School Code Sections 1302-A and 1303-B.

#### In-School Suspension Procedures/Temporary Alternative Educational Placement

No student may receive an in-school suspension or temporary alternative educational placement unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.

Communication to the parents/guardians shall follow the suspension action taken by the school.

In-school suspension beyond three (3) school days shall generally be reserved for more serious or persistent infractions of school rules. Such suspensions may be assigned only by a building principal or assistant principal in the principal's absence.

Students shall be provided with appropriate school work while on in-school suspension.

During the period of in-school suspension or, the student shall be recorded as in attendance.

#### *Discipline for Students with Disabilities*

Discipline of Students with Disabilities attending Laboratory 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 and 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. Students with disabilities who are being excluded from school 10 consecutive or 15 24 non-consecutive are afforded a manifestation hearing and all due process rights under the Disciplinary Exclusion and Hearing Policy on the Laboratory Charter School website at <https://thelaboratorycharterschool.site/child-find-notice-2/>

Students with disabilities, even if expelled, must be provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Students Identified as Intellectually Disabled: Students who are identified as intellectually disabled can only be removed (suspension, interim disciplinary placement, or expulsion) from the school building if there is written agreement from the parent/guardian or written approval from the Bureau of Special Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE can be contacted by calling 717-783-6913 or by visiting their website – <http://www.pde.state.pa.us>.

All Other Students Receiving Special Education Services (includes students with a 504 Plan): The school may suspend students who are receiving special education services and cease educational services for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or fifteen (15) cumulative school days in one school year without providing special education services as outlined in their IEP.

If schools are considering any of the following disciplinary actions for students receiving special education services or students with a 504 service plan, the action steps listed below must be completed:

Suspension for a behavior for which the student has received 10 cumulative days of suspension during this school year.

More than 15 school days cumulatively

When school days constitute a pattern of exclusion

Request for a disciplinary hearing and transfer.

Referral for expulsion.

#### Action Steps:

Provide written notice to the parent/guardian of the recommended disciplinary action and provide an invitation to participate in the

Manifestation Determination Meeting with the student's IEP team. The purpose of the Manifestation Determination meeting is to answer two questions:

Was the conduct caused by, or did it have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability?

Was the conduct a direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP?

The manifestation determination must take place within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a student with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct. The manifestation determination is conducted by the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team (as determined by the parent and the LEA)

During the Manifestation Determination Meeting, the student's most recent evaluation, IEP and placement will be reviewed as well as the details of the incident which led to the need for discipline.

If the behavior IS a manifestation of the student's disability, the proposed disciplinary action may not be implemented. When necessary, the team should review and revise the existing behavior intervention plan or complete a functional behavior assessment and intervention plan to address the specific behavior and include in the IEP those services and modifications that will enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and help prevent the problem behavior from recurring.

If the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, school officials may proceed with the recommended disciplinary action in accord with the Code of Conduct.

A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) must be issued with the results of this determination and a copy of the Procedural Safeguard Notice (PSN) must be given to the parent/guardian.

ï If the incident involves one of the following special circumstances, an interim placement will be assigned (an assignment to an alternative educational setting for up to 45 days).

NOTE: An interim placement can be requested regardless of whether the behavior is considered a manifestation of the student's disability. While assigned to the alternative setting, the IEP team should review and revise the existing behavior intervention plan and the IEP to include services and modifications that will enable the student to return to their educational setting.

\*If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision that is made at the Manifestation Determination Meeting, they can request an expedited Special Education Hearing and the Commonwealth- appointed hearing officer will review the manifestation determination. Directions on requesting a hearing can be found in the NOREP and must be completed within ten (10) days

*Special Circumstances:*

The student carried a dangerous weapon\* to school or a school function.  
The student knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function.  
The student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

If the behavior is not one of these three special circumstances, is a manifestation of the student's disability and the student is likely to cause injury to themselves or others, a school administrator can request an expedited hearing conducted by a special education hearing officer to obtain an interim placement for up to 45 days. This request should be made by a school administrator to the Office of General Counsel.

\*NOTE: A "dangerous weapon" is a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.

If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

Students who are under 18 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.

The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the CEO or designee.

Within 30 days of action by the governing board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school entity shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1482).

### *Alternative Instruction*

Local school officials may determine the amount and type of alternative instruction necessary and appropriate in each case involving an expelled student. *Abremski v. Southeastern School District*, 421 A.2d 485 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1980).

### *Appeal; No Expulsion*

Where the discipline imposed upon the student was three 15-minute after-school detention sessions, the student has no right to a hearing or appeal, as there is no such recourse provided by the regulations. *Schmader v. Warren County School District*, 808 A.2d 596 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2002); appeal denied 820 A.2d 163 (Pa. 2003).

There is no provision in the regulations for an appeal of a school board decision to suspend a student for 10 days or less. *In re Appeal of JAD*, 782 A.2d 1069 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2001); appeal denied at 796 A.2d 987 (Pa. 2002).

### *Due Process Required*

Expulsion is exclusion from school for a period of more than 10 days. Due process requires that a student subject to expulsion be afforded a hearing. *In re Appeal of JAD*, 782 A.2d 1069 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2001).

Where student was expelled from school for approximately 30 days, due process required that the student be given a formal hearing. *Oravetz v. West Allegheny School District*, 74 Pa. D. & C.2d 733 (1975).

### *Substance Abuse*

Drug and alcohol abuse prevent students from achieving their potential. For this reason, LAB has a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for students experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol. School personnel will provide appropriate referrals to counseling/support services for students. Any student at LAB exhibiting behavioral symptoms indicating alcohol and substance abuse will be escorted by school personnel to the Health Suite and the parent will be notified or medical services if applicable.

Symptoms may include intoxication, slurred speech, an unsteady walk, impaired coordination, slowed reflexes, an odor, a physical expression, brief intense euphoria, repetitive physical mannerisms (e.g., lip chewing, constant grinding of teeth, and constant scratching), violence, a blank expression, sexual promiscuity, nausea, and an elevated heart rate.

If a student exhibits the above symptoms or any other not stated, school administration will notify the CEO or designee of the situation and follow the school's protocol. Parents/guardians are responsible for seeking outside treatment for their child. LAB must receive a treatment plan and regular updates from the outside treatment agency. To ensure LAB's receipt of regular updates from the outside treatment agency, parents/guardians must sign a limited release of information form. The MTSS Coordinator or School Counselor can provide the release/exchange of information form. § 12.14. Searches.

The governing board of every school entity shall adopt reasonable policies and procedures regarding student searches. The local education agency shall notify students and their parents or guardians of the policies and procedures regarding student searches.

Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.

### *Search Policy*

LAB holds the right to search any and all lockers, bags, and clothing. Prior to a locker and/or bag search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present unless school officials have reason to suspect that the locker and/or bag contain/possess materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and/or safety of students and staff.

Parents/guardians and students should be aware of the following:

The school maintains a record of every locker number and every lock combination.

The school assumes no responsibility for loss of students' personal property.

Random "locker sweeps" and bag searches are conducted periodically throughout the year.

Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding. At least two (2) staff members will be present when searching a student's locker, bag, or person.

Person searches will be limited to shoes, outerwear, pockets, and use of wands or detector, unless performed by the police.

Some campuses may require all students, staff, and visitors to enter through a metal detector and pass all personal belongings and bags through a

scanner or and get screened via a wand prior to entry into the building.

## § 12.16. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this document, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**Corporal punishment**—A form of physical discipline that is intended to cause pain and fear and in which a student is spanked, paddled or hit on any part of the body with a hand or instrument.

**Governing board**—The board of school directors of a school district, joint school committee of a joint school or joint vocational school, intermediate unit board of directors, or the board of trustees of a charter school or cyber-charter school.

**Prekindergarten**—A program operated by a school district or by a community agency under contract from a school district that is open to children who are at least 3 years of age and completed prior to the school district’s entry age for kindergarten, unless individual exceptions to the age requirements are made by the school district.

**School entity**—A local public education provider (for example—public school, charter school, cyber-charter school, area vocational-technical school or intermediate unit).

**Student assistance program**—A systematic process designed to assist school personnel to identify issues, including alcohol, drugs and others, which pose a barrier to a student’s learning and school success. Student assistance is a systematic process using effective and accountable professional techniques to mobilize school resources to remove the barriers to learning, and, when the problem is beyond the scope of the school, to assist the parent and the student with information so they may access services within the community.

**Student services**—Services designed by a school entity to support the instructional program and to help students attain their educational and career goals.

Services may include school guidance counseling, health services (under Article XIV of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. §§ 14-1401—14-1423) and 28 Pa. Code Chapter 23 (relating to school health)), psychological services, social work and home and school visitor services. School entities may supplement, but may not supplant, these services through school-based, school-linked, or coordinated services provided by locally available social and human services agencies.

§ 12.42. Student assistance program.

School entities shall plan and provide for a student assistance program under section 1547(g) of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P.S. § 15-1547(g) regarding alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse program).

### *Cyberbullying*

Cyberbullying including, but not limited to, harassing, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyber stalking will not be tolerated. Users should not be mean or send emails or post comments with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student or staff member and create for the targeted student/staff a hostile school environment. All use of technology and LAB Equipment must conform with prohibitions against harassment, intimidating and bullying.

Engaging in these behaviors or in any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person will result in disciplinary action in accordance with LAB's Schools Code of Conduct and immediate loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Users should remember that online activities may be monitored.

### *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504*

#### TITLE VI, IX, SECTIONS 503 & 504

Laboratory Charter School shall not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or any other legally-protected classification. This policy is in accordance with State and Federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodations, grievance procedure, and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Sections 503 and 504 may be obtained by contacting the School District.

#### ESEA TITLE I

Title I is a federally-funded program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Title I provides school districts with extra resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools and ensures that poor and minority children have the same opportunity as other children to meet challenging academic standards. At Laboratory Charter School, the funding for this program is used in the elementary grades to support reading and math achievement. Part-time, highly qualified teachers provide extra

reading/math support and serve as part of the building team under the leadership of the principal. Parent/guardian involvement is an integral part of the program with scheduled meetings and presentations at the building and district level.

### *Right to Request Teacher Qualification*

If you are the parent/guardian of a student attending a school receiving Title I funds, you have the right to request the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child.

Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects they teach;

Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances;

The teacher's college major, as well as any advanced degrees they may have attained; 4. Whether any paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please send a request in writing to your child's principal. In addition to specifying the information which you would like to receive, please be certain to include your name, address, and a telephone number at which you can be contacted during the day. You will be notified if your child is being taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not considered to be highly qualified for the subject area in which they are teaching.

### *Child Find*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act includes the Child Find mandate.

Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This obligation to identify all children who may need special education services exists even if the school is not providing special education services to the child.

The IDEA requires all States to develop and implement a practical method of determining which children with disabilities are receiving special education and related services and which children are not. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3); Wrights law: Special Education Law, pages 72, 206-207).

### Who is Covered by Child Find?

Schools are required to locate, identify and evaluate all regular education children from age 6 through age 21, and age 6 through age 22 for students identified under Chapter 14. The Child Find mandate applies to all children who reside within a State, including children who attend private schools and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3). This includes all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children who receive passing grades and are "advancing from grade to grade."

### *Why is Child Find Necessary?*

The primary purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to ensure that all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education, including special education and related services that are "designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living ..." (20 U.S.C. 1400(d); Wrights law: Special Education Law, pages 48, 207)

Another purpose of the law is to help each State implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated multi-disciplinary system of Early Intervention Services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Young children with disabilities must receive appropriate early intervention services to "prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living."

Congress encourages states to provide Early Intervention Services so children with developmental delays and other disabilities will receive treatment early. Congress enacted the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers to provide interagency coordination of services to children from birth to two years of age. Under IDEA, states must ensure that children with disabilities are eligible for special education services by age three.

### *How is Child Find Implemented?*

The Child Find mandate requires each state to devise a practical method to determine which children are receiving the needed special education services, and which children are not. After identifying children who may need services, all necessary evaluations must be completed on these children, at no cost to parents.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates "general public notice obligations", i.e., using notices to inform and educate the public about the need to locate and identify all children with disabilities.

What methods should schools use to identify and locate children who may need special education services?

In one case, the Court compared estimates of children with disabilities in the general population to the number of youngsters who had been identified by the school district to determine if the district had made adequate efforts to identify children under the Child Find mandate. See *Akers v. Bolton*, 531 F. Supp. 300 (D. Kan 1981).

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Education Department has accepted plans that include door-to-door surveys, brochure mailings, public education programs and other public meetings, physician referrals, contacts with day care providers, and surveys of private school personnel. See *Luling, TX Indep. School Dist., 1975-1985 EHLR 257:417*. [Note: EHLR is now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Law Reporter (IDELR) and is available in many school district and law libraries. It is published by LRP Publications.

### *Section 504*

Section 504 is a Federal (Civil Rights) law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 ensures that the child with a disability has equal access to an education. The child may receive accommodations and modifications.

Unlike the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 does not require a public school to provide an individualized educational program (IEP) that is designed to meet a child's unique needs and provide the child with educational benefit. Under Section 504, fewer procedural safeguards are available to the child with a disability and the child's parents than under IDEA.

All public schools and school districts, as well as all public charter schools and magnet schools, that receive Federal financial assistance from the Department must comply with Section 504.

Section 504 provides a broad spectrum of protections against discrimination on the basis of disability.

All qualified elementary and secondary public-school students who meet the definition of an individual with a disability under Section 504 are entitled to receive regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet their individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met.

Section 504 also requires, among other things, that a student with a disability receive an equal opportunity to participate in athletics and

extracurricular activities, and to be free from bullying and harassment based on disability.

## *The Meaning of Disability Under Section 504*

Below is a discussion of what it means to be a student or individual with a disability, and of related terms that help to comprehensively define disability as it is used in Section 504 and its implementing regulations.

**Disability.** Under Section 504, an individual with a disability (also referred to as a student with advisability in the elementary and secondary education context) is defined as a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

The determination of whether a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (and therefore has a disability) must be made on a case by case basis. In addition, when determining if someone meets the definition of a disability, the definition must be understood to provide broad coverage of individuals.

**Physical or mental impairments:** Section 504 defines a physical or mental impairment as any • physiological disorder or condition, • cosmetic disfigurement, or • anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine.

The Section 504 definition of physical and mental impairment also includes any mental or psychological disorder. The definition does not include all specific diseases and conditions that may be physical or mental impairments because of the difficulty of ensuring the completeness of such a list.

Major bodily functions are also major life activities under the law, and these major bodily functions include functions of the bowel, bladder, and brain; normal cell growth; and the immune, endocrine (for example, thyroid, pituitary, and pancreas), respiratory, reproductive, circulatory, digestive, and neurological systems.

Laboratory Charter School published the following Annual Notice in the school's Parent- Student Handbook and on the school's website:  
<https://thelaboratorycharterschool.site/>

It is the policy of Laboratory Charter School that all students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, who need special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a Federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1200 et. 40 seq.

("IDEA 2004"). Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code requires the publication of a notice to parents sufficient to inform parents of children applying to or already enrolled in the Laboratory Charter School of (1) available special education services and programs, (2) how to request those services and programs, and of (3) systematic screening activities that lead to the identification, location and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in Laboratory Charter School. The purpose of this Annual Notice is to comply with the school's obligations under Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. This Annual Notice is made available both in the school's Parent-Student Handbook and on the school's website: [www.labcharter.com](http://www.labcharter.com) Additionally, each school must prominently display a Child Find poster explaining the procedure for requesting evaluation.

### *Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)*

Laboratory Charter School provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students that are found eligible for special education services.

### *Qualifying for Special Education and Related Services*

Under the Federal IDEA 2004, there are two steps for a student to qualify for special education and related services. The first step is a finding that the student has one or more of the following disabilities that interfere with his or her educational performance: (1) autism or pervasive developmental disorder, (2) deaf-blindness, (3) deafness, (4) emotional disturbance, (5) hearing impairment, (6) intellectual disability (formerly known as mental retardation), (7) multiple disabilities, (8) orthopedic impairment, (9) other health impairment (includes ADD, ADHD, epilepsy, etc.), (10) specific learning disability, (11) speech or language impairment, (12) traumatic brain injury, and/or (13) visual impairment including blindness. IDEA 2004 provides legal definitions of the above-listed disabilities, which may differ from those terms used in medical or clinical practice or daily language. The second step in determining eligibility for special education and related services is a finding by the school's multidisciplinary team (MDT) that the student with one or more of these disabilities needs specially-designed instruction.

### **What Parents Can Do If They Think Their Child May Qualify for Special Education**

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request, at any time, that the school conduct a multi-disciplinary evaluation. Some potential signs of a student having a qualifying disability include experiencing years of difficulties in reading, writing or solving math

problems, difficulties focusing and concentrating on schoolwork, difficulties sitting still in the classroom, and difficulties controlling emotions (such as anxiety and depression) and/or behaviors. Requests for a multidisciplinary evaluation must be made in writing to the school's Director of Special Education at [hillary.el@labcharter.com](mailto:hillary.el@labcharter.com) or 267-817-4720. If a parent makes an oral request for a multi-disciplinary evaluation, the school shall provide the parent with a form for that purpose.

If the school denies the parents' request for an evaluation, the parents have the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or through voluntary alternative dispute resolution such as mediation as outlined in the Procedural safeguards which can be found on the school's website.

### *Laboratory Charter School's Screening and Referral Processes*

Through our systematic screening and referral processes, Laboratory Charter School identifies and refers for evaluation students who are thought to be eligible for special education services. These screening and referral processes include the benchmark assessments, standardized reading and mathematics assessments, classroom performance, vision and hearing screenings, and the comprehensive MTSS system

The school regularly assesses the current achievement and performance of the child, designs school-based interventions, and assesses the effectiveness of interventions. The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation is not to be considered an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services. If a concern can be addressed without special education services, or if the concern is the result of limited English proficiency or the lack of appropriate instruction, a recommendation may be made for systematic interventions through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS process).

Parents have the right to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time, regardless of the outcome of the screening process. Moreover, screening or pre-referral intervention activities may not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request an evaluation, at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of screening or pre-referral intervention activities

If parents need additional information, they should call or email the school's Special Education Director @[hillary.el@labcharter.com](mailto:hillary.el@labcharter.com) or 267-817-4720.

### **Title IX**

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex and gender based discrimination. In line with federal regulations (Title IX), the district defines Title IX sexual harassment as any instance of quid pro quo harassment by a school's employee; any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access; any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act).

Examples of potential Title IX Sexual Harassment violations are:

Bullying or Harassment based on sex or gender identity or expression •

Bullying or Harassment based on Pregnant or Parenting status

Bullying or harassment in the form of:

- Comments, threats, gestures, or rumors of a sexual nature
- Sharing/showing images/videos of a sexual nature
- Non-consensual sex acts and sexual violence

Such conduct must have taken place during a district education program or activity and against a person in the United States to qualify as sexual harassment subject to Title IX regulations.

\*NOTE: Not all unwelcome sexual conduct meets the definition of Title IX sexual harassment. Conduct that does not meet this definition might be considered harassment as defined in the Behavior Matrix of the Code of Conduct.

If there are concerns or questions related to Title IX, please contact:

Inquiries related to students: Dr. Andrea Coleman-Hill ,  
momofacms@gmail.com

Inquiries related to employees: Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator

**Title IX Co-Coordinator**

Joan Belynda-Brown , jbbrown@labcharter.com  
926 W. Sedgley Ave, Phila, PA 19140

Reporting

Any school community member can report bullying, harassment and/or discrimination and all reports will be investigated. There are numerous

ways to make a report:

Submitting a complaint via Safe2Say or by phone at:

1-844SAF2SAY (723-2729)

Emailing the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator directly at  
momofacms@gmail.com

Reporting the incident to the building principal or designee, or to any other member of the school staff, including teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, and administrators.

## Investigations

Laboratory Charter School takes all violations of the Code of Conduct seriously, including allegations of bullying, harassment and discrimination. A School Administrator or designee will conduct investigations into any alleged Code of Conduct violation. This includes conduct that occurs off - grounds, virtually, and/or after-hours (including weekends), if the conduct materially impacts the school community (meaning the conduct has a noticeable or considerable impact).

## Important Notes:

- i Some alleged conduct may require a notification to the Philadelphia Police Department
- i Some alleged conduct may require a notification to Childline as LAB employees are mandated reporters.
- i If the complaint includes allegations of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or harassment based on sexual orientation, notify the Title IX Coordinator before proceeding with an investigation or discipline.
- i Parents/Guardians must be notified of all serious incidents involving their student/s however, schools do not need parent permission to investigate or obtain statements related to alleged misconduct.
- i At times, it may be necessary to share some information about a serious incident with the school community (parents and students). Schools should conference with the CEO or designee when considering if a letter/communication will be sent.
- i In some cases, Central Office and Human Resources will lead or be involved in an investigation.
- i Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth Policy Summary:

When a student or a student's parent or guardian, as appropriate, notifies the school administration that the student will assert a gender identity that differs from previous representations or records, the school will begin treating the student consistent with the student's gender identity.

## Conclusion:

In conclusion, Laboratory Charter School's Code of Conduct aligns with Pennsylvania Charter School legal codes, specifically Chapter 12.6 and Chapter 12.8 of the Pennsylvania School Code, to ensure that students and their families are afforded due process rights during suspension and expulsion proceedings.

The school's Code of Conduct outlines clear procedures for both informal and formal hearings, ensuring transparency and fairness in disciplinary actions. These procedures include notifying parents or guardians of charges, providing adequate notice of hearings, offering the right to legal representation, and allowing students to present witnesses and cross-examine witnesses against them. Additionally, the school abides by timelines for holding hearings and provides information about the right to appeal expulsion decisions.

The Code of Conduct ensures that students and their families are well-informed about their rights during these processes, as dictated by the Pennsylvania School Code. It outlines specific procedures for both informal and formal hearings, depending on the severity of the disciplinary action. The school considers the rights of students, such as the right to representation, the right to question witnesses, and the right to present their own case.

Furthermore, the Code emphasizes the importance of communication with parents and guardians, ensuring they are informed of the reasons for suspension or expulsion and offered opportunities to participate in the process. This not only upholds the principles of due process but also fosters a sense of transparency and cooperation between the school and families.

Laboratory Charter School's commitment to following Pennsylvania's Charter School legal codes demonstrates its dedication to providing a fair and just educational environment for all students, even in cases of disciplinary action. By adhering to these regulations and procedures, the school strives to maintain a balanced approach to discipline while upholding the rights and well-being of its students.

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## Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an “X that level isn’t warranted.	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
1	<b>Profane or obscene Language or Gestures.</b> Students who curse or use insulting or sexually explicit language/gestures	Grades K-8	X	X	X
2	<b>Inappropriate Use of an Electronic Device.</b> Students who engage in acts including, but not limited to, sexting (sending sexual images or videos), videotaping fights, videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy, or posting content that materially impacts the school community (meaning the conduct has a noticeable or considerable impact). This includes the inappropriate use of Chromebooks or other district devices.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
3	<b>Forgery/Alteration of Grades, Excuse Notes, or School Documents.</b> Students who reproduce the signature of another with the intent to deceive or alter the official school. Records such as grades, attendance, or reports.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
4	<b>Cheating.</b> Students who submit or intend to submit work that is not their own.	Grades K-8	X	X	X
5	<b>Unauthorized Entry into School Property.</b> Students who	Grades K-8	X	X	X

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an "X that level isn't warranted.	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	gain entry to a school building or who allow others into a school building via an unauthorized door or at an unauthorized time, including during out-of-school suspension.				
6	<b>Destruction of Property</b> (totaling less than \$500). Students who damage or deface the school property of another school community member.	Grades K-8	X	X	X
7	Destruction of Property (Totaling \$500 or more). Students who damage or deface school property or the personal property of another school community member.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
8	Theft. (Less than (500). Students who take school property or the personal property of another school community member.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	X	X
9	Theft. (More than \$500). Students who take school property or the personal property of another school community member.	Grades K-8	Grades K-8	Grades K-8	Grades K-8
10	<b>Extortion. (Must be by use of threatened force).</b> Students who obtain money, property, or services from another school community member by expressed or implied threat of force.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
11	<b>Robbery (Must be by use of force)</b> Students who take or attempt to take the property of another school community member by force, threat of force, or by	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an “X that level isn’t warranted.	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	putting the victim in fear				
12	<b>Mutual Fight:</b> Students who willingly engage in a one-on-one physical altercation	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	X	X
13	<b>Mutual Group Fight.</b> Students who willingly engage in physical altercations with multiple willing participants. This is a physical altercation in which no participants are identified as aggressors or victims.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
14	<b>Instigation and/or Participation in a Group Assault.</b> Students who instigate or participate in an assault by multiple students on one or more other students. This is a physical confrontation in which participants can be identified as aggressors and victims.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
15	<b>Simple Assault.</b> Students who hit, punch, kick, stab, or physically harm a school community member in any way, intentionally and without provocation. This does not include accidental physical contact, such as a teacher being struck while breaking up a fight.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
16	<b>Assault Causing Serious Bodily Injury.</b> Students who intentionally engage in an act that causes serious bodily injury to another school community member.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
17	<b>Inappropriate Touch/Exposure.</b> Students who engage in unwanted touching of another school community member either with their own body or with an object or who expose a part of their body to another school	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	<p>Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an “X that level isn’t warranted.</p>	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	community member. Examples may include hugging or other touching that may not be sexual in nature.				
18	<p><b>Bullying/Cyberbullying.</b> Bullying is repeated intentional conduct (physical, psychological, verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic) that is directed at another student or students. It could happen in or outside of a school setting, is severe, persistent, or pervasive, and has one of the following effects: (1) substantially interfere with a student’s education, (2) creates a hostile learning environment, r (3) substantially disrupts school operation. Bullying occurs within an interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power (i.e., one person is physically larger, stronger, mentally quicker, or socially more powerful). Cyberbullying occurs through electronic communication devices, including but not limited to social networking, e-mail, messaging, texts, tweets, etc.</p>	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
19	<p><b>Harassment.</b> Students who engage in unwelcome verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual’s gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status, and/or political beliefs. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be</p>	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an “X that level isn’t warranted.	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.				
20	<b>Title IX Sexual Harassment.</b> Any welcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive denies a person equal educational access. This includes any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stealing as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VA WA).	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
21	<b>Hazing.</b> Students who, for the purpose of initiating or enhancing a student’s membership in an organization, cause or force that student to violate any criminal law, consume a substance that subjects the student to harm, endure physical, mental, or sexual brutality, or perform any activity that endangers another.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
22	<b>Sexual Misconduct.</b> Students who engage in a consensual sexual act on 22 school property or during school-sponsored activity/event.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
23	<b>Threats/Intimidation.</b> Students who introduce fear or a sense of inferiority in another school community member. This includes threatening to engage in an act that causes harm. Threats can be made verbally, in writing, or with gestures.**	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
24	<b>Threatening Mass Violence.</b> Students who threaten to	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
		Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an "X that level isn't warranted.	In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	engage in an act that causes serious physical harm or creates a substantial risk of serious physical harm to member(s) of a school community.**				
25	<b>Possession and/or Use of Tobacco or Electronic Smoking Devices.</b> Students who use or possess tobacco or any electronic smoking device on 25 school district property or at school-sponsored events. This includes but is not limited to products containing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, cigars, vaping kits, and hookah.	Grades K-8	X	X	X
26	<b>Possession and/or Use of Alcohol and/or Drugs.</b> Students who are found to be in possession or who use alcohol or other drugs on school property or at a school-sponsored event. This includes drugs in edible form.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	X
27	<b>Distribution of Alcohol and/or Drugs.</b> Students who are found to be selling alcohol or drugs. This includes drugs in edible form.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
28	<b>Possession of Incendiary Devices and/ or Explosives.</b> Students who are 28 are found to be in possession of incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, bombs, firecrackers, bombshells, and or/other explosives.	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
29	<b>Use of Incendiary Devices and/or Explosives.</b> Students who use or activate incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, bombs, firecrackers, bombshells,	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an "X that level isn't warranted.	Level 1: Interventions	Level 2: Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	Level 3: Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	Level 4: Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
	and/or other explosives. This may include starting an accidental or intentional fire.				
30	<p><b>Possession/Use of a Weapon.</b> Students who possess any object, device, or instrument which, in its inherent and functional purpose, is intended to be a weapon. This includes firearms, whether loaded or not, cap guns, pellet guns, BB guns, knives, box cutters, cutting instruments, nunchaku, electronic shock devices, or mace.</p> <p>This does not include toys (ex., gel blasters) or ordinary objects, such as school supplies that may have been used during an altercation.</p>	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
31	<p><b>Reckless Endangerment.</b> Students who take any action that creates substantial risk such that serious bodily harm could result in any person. For example, throwing objects across a room or out of a window that could harm another community member.</p>	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
32	<p><b>Gang Affiliation.</b> A student who engages in dangerous activities on behalf of an identified gang to commit disruptive or illegal acts within the school.</p>	Grades K-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8	Grades 3-8
<p><b>**Any statement issued by a student that constitutes a threat to another person or property will be taken seriously and investigated. Parents/Guardians will be contacted, and appropriate agencies may necessarily become involved. Students and families must understand that even though a student may have issued a comment in jest or in a joking manner, we must still investigate these statements. Because it is extremely</b></p>					

X	Code of Conduct: Behavior Violations	Interventions & Responses			
	Please read carefully the following behavior definitions below and the corresponding level of interventions. Where there is an "X" that level isn't warranted.	<b>Level 1:</b> Interventions	<b>Level 2:</b> Interventions, Referrals & Short- Term Suspension	<b>Level 3:</b> Interventions, Referrals & Long- Term Suspension	<b>Level 4:</b> Expulsion Referral
		In-School Only	Out of School Suspensions (OSS) 1-3 days	OSS days:- 4-6 (ICEO notification)  OSS Days: 7-10 (CEO notification)	Managed by Principal (CEO notification)
<b>difficult for us to determine intent on the part of the speaker, we are required to treat such comments as threats.</b>					



## Additional School Guidelines

1. Glass bottles are **prohibited**.
2. Card playing or dice throwing that involves gambling is prohibited.
3. Smoking or possession of tobacco and/or nicotine products is not permitted.
4. Throwing of rocks, snow or ice on school property, while walking to and from school, or at busstops, is not allowed.
5. Pornography of ANY kind is not allowed.
6. The school is not equipped to secure valuable items. Please do not bring such items to school. This includes any electronic device.
7. No student is to remain after school unless under the direct supervision of a faculty member.
8. All students must be picked up on time.
9. Gum chewing and sunflower seeds are not allowed.

## Weapons

Any student found in possession of any weapon (whether used or not), must, by law, be turned over to the police for arrest; suspended, and recommended for expulsion from Laboratory School of Communication and Languages.

## Academics

### Grading:

**The following scale will be used for grading:**

Letter Grade	Numerical Value
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

## LAB CHARTER PLAN FOR RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

**Restorative practices (RP)** is an approach and set of tools for building, improving and repairing relationships. It is a community-centered, needs-based framework for cultivating healthy home, school, neighborhood and workplace communities. The faithful implementation of RP increases social and emotional intelligence, decreases high-risk behavior, and addresses harm effectively. RP strives to honor all voices (including and especially those voices that are traditionally and systematically silenced, like children's), to hold people accountable for their words, behaviors and actions, and to contribute to the repair of new and existing trauma. The consistent, school-wide use of restorative practices significantly reduces classroom disruptions, suspensions, and violence by centering the good of the community and its relationships, promoting social-emotional competence, encouraging trauma-informed decisions, and promoting cultural competency.

**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. **Schoolwide SEL is a systemic approach to integrating academic, social, and emotional learning across classrooms and the school building in collaboration with families and community partners.** The schoolwide use of SEL fosters learning and promotes equitable outcomes for all students.

RP and Schoolwide SEL are distinct approaches to creating and sustaining connected communities, but are grounded in similar principles and often complement and fortify one another. Lab Charter recognizes the importance of both RP and Schoolwide SEL and is therefore committed to cultivating a connected community through the faithful implementation of both. The implementation process is planned for and led by key stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents and community members. Each year, specific goals are developed and customized for each campus, but in general, a restorative school cultivates a strong sense of community through the consistent use of the following tools and processes:

- ï Community-building or proactive dialogue circles
- ï Responsive dialogue circles
- ï Affective statements
- ï Restorative questions and conversations
- ï Formal conferences

These tools and processes provide pathways to relationship-building and to repairing harm. They allow members of the school community to learn about one another and to resolve issues and conflict. They are instrumental to the implementation process, an overview of which follows.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOLWIDE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES + SEL IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

Whole school transformation necessitates the faithful implementation of restorative and SEL practices at the individual, organizational and systemic level. The shift from a traditional, typically punitive school model to a restorative one requires a period of 3-5 years well spent. Educators, administrators, support services professionals, parents, community partners and district personnel all play key roles in the transformation process. They must work to embody restorative and social emotional philosophies, understand deeply their frameworks and tools, and commit to applying and imparting their strategies on a moment-to-moment basis.

The model school incorporates restorative and SEL practices at every possible turn—we see a commitment to relationship building, to minimizing shame, and to cultivating experiences of joy and authentic pride. Approaches to discipline, school-wide rituals, grading policies, classroom routines, interactions between members of the school community, and even the posters we see in a school’s hallways reflect an unwavering commitment to restorative and SEL practices.

Lab Charter has implemented or begun implementing the following practices as part of its committed to becoming a restorative, attuned school environment:

- ï Partnering with The Restorative Project, an organization dedicated to school transformation, in order to ensure the faithful implementation of the RP/SEL program.
- ï Designating a qualified professional to serve as a full-time RP/SEL coach at each Lab Charter campus.
- ï Providing whole school professional development so that all adults who interact with Lab Charter students do so in a healthy manner.
- ï Providing monthly parent workshops designed to impart RP and SEL strategies to families.
- ï Coaching teachers and staff as they become familiar with and adopt RP and SEL strategies.
- ï Forming a champion team that consists of key stakeholders responsible for leading implementation efforts.
- ï Committing to a quarterly review process where key members of the community, including students and parents, provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation efforts.

## **IN-HOUSE RESTORATIVE AND SEL PRACTICES LEADERSHIP: THE CHAMPION TEAM**

The champion team is vital to the faithful implementation of restorative and SEL practices. This team of key stakeholders works to build internal capacity and supports grade-, department- and eventually school-wide capacity. Members of the champion team lead a school’s transformation process.

Ideally, the champion team consists of multiple educators representing a variety of grade levels and pedagogical perspectives; at least one administrator; a counselor, social worker or other support staff person; parents; and other members of the school community, often including students. If possible, each member of the champion team directs the execution of some aspect of champion team selection process is therefore tailored to identify members of the school community who exhibit the following qualities:

- ï Positive concept of all children
- ï Positive relationships with students
- ï Belief in people’s capacity to change
- ï Strong and compassionate classroom management (if applicable)
- ï Ability to lead by example (a penchant for coaching a bonus)
- ï Restorative mindset, replete with empathy and tenacity
- ï Free to dedicate the time necessary to implementation

Champion teams generally consist of 7 to 9 school community members and meet weekly or bi-weekly. Additionally, the champion team does not work in isolation of committees like school climate or instructional leadership teams; instead, members of the champion team work to integrate restorative and SEL practices into current school alliances.

Questions about Lab Charter’s school-wide RP and SEL implementation should be directed to [therestorativeprojectrp@gmail.com](mailto:therestorativeprojectrp@gmail.com).

## Student Code of Conduct Consequences for Disciplinary Infractions

Students who continuously fail to meet their responsibilities face certain actions: full suspension or expulsion. However, student behavior policies assume that the vast majority of LAB Charter students are cooperative young people who respect the personal property and right of others.

Those few students who behave in an unacceptable manner, which disrupts the learning environment or threatens the safety of others, subject themselves to parent conferences, detentions, out of school suspension or exclusion from school. Lab will support all students who are expelled. Students on out of school suspension are not permitted in the building or yard unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. All students who are suspended or expelled which includes student with disabilities will be reinstated following a conference with a parent or legal guardian. In accordance with **PA School Code 12.8 (c)**, Lab students have the right to an informal hearing to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or why the student should not be suspended.

The CEO shall develop administrative procedures to implement Due Process Rights in accordance with the **PA School Code 12.6 & 12.8 – Exclusion from School & Hearings**. All students who have been excluded from school for a period of more than 10 days; due process requires that the student be afforded a hearing. All students who have been expelled for approximately 30 days; due process requires the students be given a formal hearing. Additionally, students shall be given the opportunity to appeal an expulsion decision. Names of students who are disciplined shall not be a part of the Lab Charter School's Board agenda, minutes of the public meeting or public record. Students shall be identified by Student Identification number only.

### Informal Hearings Rights:

The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the parent and student to meet with the appropriate school officials to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student has been suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The following will occur:

- A. Notification of the suspension will be given in writing to the parent or guardian and to the student.
- B. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing/conference.
- C. The school officials shall hold the informal hearing/conference within the first five days of the suspension no later than day three of the suspension.
- D. The parent or guardian may request to review and have a copy of the student's records and any witness statements, with other student names and information redacted. Photographs and video recordings of the incident may be shown to

the parent/guardian but copies may not be provided.

- E. The school administrator will discuss the student's problem behavior and ways to correct it.
- F. The school administrators will inform the parent/guardian of any further disciplinary action.
- G. Ability of the student to produce a witness, right to speak and to question any witnesses.
- H. *Schoolwork for students with more than four days (4) suspension must be provided to the parent/guardian at the conference, which is due upon reinstatement.*

#### Formal Hearing Rights:

The formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. The hearing will be held before the Governing Board (GB) and Chief Education Officer (CEO) of the Laboratory Charter School of Communication and Languages. If deemed by the GB and CEO, a qualified hearing examiner may be appointed. When a hearing is conducted a majority vote of the entire committee is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regards to the formal hearing:

- A. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parent/guardian by certified mail.
- B. At least three days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given and included in the notice shall be the following: A copy of the LAB's expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and the hearing procedures.
- C. The hearing shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges unless mutually agreed to by both parties to reschedule.
- D. ***Hearings may be delayed for:*** 1. Laboratory reports needed from law enforcement agencies, 2. Evaluations or other court proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. 1400-1482), 3. Juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or the best interest of the victim.
- E. Hearing will be held in private unless the student or parent/guardian requests a public hearing.
- F. The student may hire legal counsel at the expense of the parent and parent/guardian may attend the hearing.
- G. The student has the right to the names of witnesses and copies of statements and affidavits of the witnesses.
- H. The student has the right to request witnesses to appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- I. The student has the right to testify and present his or her own witnesses to testify on his or her behalf.
- J. A written or audio copy shall be kept of the hearing. At their own expense,

the student is entitled to a copy. Any student who is indigent shall receive a copy at no expense.

- k. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

### Progressive Discipline Framework

Students who commit any of the following offenses shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, as stated in the Pennsylvania School Code. Offenses are leveled based on disciplinary consequence. Any offense can receive the suggested consequence, a lesser, or a more severe consequence based on the severity and repetition of the offense and the effect that it has on others. The list is not exhaustive of all behaviors that may result in disciplinary action. The progressive discipline framework is divided into four levels. Each level represents progressively more serious acts of inappropriate behaviors and consequences. The level of discipline imposed is based on the severity of the misbehavior.

#### **Level I Discipline**

Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct, which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, or student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved.

Professional staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Complete a Behavior Concern document to be signed by parent
2. Call home to parent
3. Loss of free choice time
4. Intentional seating
5. Parent shadowing
6. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher
7. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in behavior that supports our Caring School Community
8. \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior in a Caring School Community

## **Level II Discipline**

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against people or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety or well-being of others. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided. Signed Behavior Concern forms and a listing of phone call home dates are submitted to the office.

Students guilty of a Level II offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by administration, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher and/or administration via the Mandatory Parent/Guardian Meeting invitation.
2. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
3. Assignment to lunch detention
4. Partial or full day school suspension
5. Participation in cleaning/repair of damage caused to the school related environment
6. Saturday School Detention
7. Financial restitution for repair or replacement of any damage caused to the school related environment or materials.
8. \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)
9. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in Caring School behavior
10. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the school's goals and desired Caring School behavior.

## **Level III Discipline**

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruption of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the administration. Offenses that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in the assignment of multiple days of school suspension, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the administration is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services will be given, if not already provided.

A Serious Behavior form, any new Behavior Concern forms and phone call(s) home

documentation are submitted to the office.

Student guilty of a Level III offense may receive any discipline management technique appropriate for the situation as determined by the administration, including but not limited to the following:

1. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
2. Full day out of -school suspension; Number of days as determined by administration
3. Saturday Detention
4. Participation in the cleaning or repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
5. Financial restitution for the repair or replacement of any damage caused to the school-related environment or materials.
6. \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and related Caring School behaviors
7. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired Caring School behaviors
8. Any disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct, and desired Caring School behaviors

#### **Level IV Discipline**

Level IV discipline offenses represent the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to administration. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from school and/or school sponsored activities, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the school administration is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of support services should be given if not already provided.

Certain behaviors have been identified that require an automatic office referral. In these cases, teachers should fill out a Serious Behavior form without needing to go through the steps of the classroom discipline procedure. It is the discretion of the teacher if the student is sent to the office immediately or the referral is submitted after class. This list is not all inclusive:

- ✓ Fighting or confrontational behavior
- ✓ Profanity
- ✓ Racial Slurs in class
- ✓ Refusing to surrender electronic devices
- ✓ Vandalism or defacing school property
- ✓ Non-compliance/defiance

Students guilty of a Level IV offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the administration, including but not limited to the following:

1. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
2. Suspension from school; Number of days determined by administration and county policy
3. Participation in the cleaning or repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
4. Financial restitution for the repair or replacement of any damage caused to the school-related environment or materials
5. \*Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the Caring School behavior
6. Appearance before the Disciplinary Community for Due Process proceedings

Disruptive Behaviors	Consequence Levels			
	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Failure to follow classroom rules/Creating disruption	✓			
Failure to carry hall-pass	✓			
Truancy/Excessive tardiness/Cutting class	✓			
Possession of inappropriate personal items	✓			
Profane or obscene language or Gestures	✓			
Inappropriate use of an electronic device	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mutual fighting (without serious bodily injury)	✓	✓		
Forgery of administrator, teacher, or parent's guardian's Signature	✓	✓		
Alteration of grade reporting, excuse notes, and/or school Documents	✓	✓	✓	✓
Destruction and/or theft of property (less than \$500)	✓	✓	✓	
Harassment (including Sexual Harassment)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bullying/cyber-bullying	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intimidation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sexual Act (consensual)	✓	✓	✓	
Threatening students/staff with aggravated assault		✓	✓	✓

Destruction and/or theft of property (totaling \$500 or more)		✓	✓	✓
Breaking and entering school Property		✓	✓	✓
Robbery		✓	✓	✓
Extortion		✓	✓	✓
Mutual fighting (with documented serious bodily injury)		✓	✓	✓
Simple assault on a school community member		✓	✓	✓
Possession of alcohol and/or Drugs		✓	✓	✓
Possession and/or use of fireworks, incendiary devices and/or explosives		✓	✓	✓
Instigation and/or participation in a group assault		✓	✓	✓
Aggravated Assault		✓	✓	✓
Sexual act (non-consensual)		✓	✓	✓
Possession of a weapon				✓
Reckless endangerment		✓	✓	✓

**\*Please be advised that this IS NOT an all-inclusive list, as there may be infractions that are not listed but rise to the level of a suspension, expulsion, and/or police or legal involvement. Additionally, Consequence Levels are not mutually exclusive.**

## Suspensions

### *Level 4: Immediate Referral*

1. Fighting or confrontational behavior
2. Profanity or obscenity towards any staff member.
3. Threats – any overt or verbal action towards personnel.
4. Racial Slurs
5. Refusing to surrender electronic device
6. Disrespect to any staff member.
7. Smoking in the building or on school grounds.
8. Leaving school grounds without permission.
9. Cutting class.
10. Leaving class without permission.

*A student is subject to immediate suspension, expulsion and arrest for the following reasons:*

1. Forgery.
2. Destruction, vandalism, graffiti, and/or theft of school property.
3. Pulling fire alarms.
4. Assault on another student or staff member.
5. Possession and/or use of illegal weapons.
6. Possession use and sale of marijuana or any illegal drugs.
7. Pornography.

*Violations of these rules can result in:*

1. Suspension from school for up to 10 days.
2. Placement in an alternative school.
3. Suspension of extracurricular privileges.
4. Loss of eligibility for awards.
5. Exclusion from special activities such as trips, dances, and move-up day exercises.
6. Recommendation for transfer to another educational environment or expulsion from school.

## BULLYING POLICY

Under Pennsylvania law, bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or series of acts directed at another student or students. The act is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creating a threatening environment, or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory messages, stories, images, pictures or website postings including, but not limited to, blogs, "Instagram," "twitter," "Facebook," and "YouTube," to harass, intimidate, threaten or terrorize another student, teacher or staff member of LAB.

Pursuant to Act 61 of 2008 each school entity must adopt a policy or amend its existing policy relating to bullying and incorporate the policy into the school entity's Code of Student Conduct required under 22 Pa Code Section 12.3(c). The Laboratory Charter School strives to provide a safe, positive learning experience for its students. Therefore, it shall be the policy of LAB to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyber bullying in any form are not tolerated.

**Cyber bullying** includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs); **Bullying** shall mean unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at a student by another student; that has the effect of:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

Students or parents should report bullying or cyber bullying complaints to their teacher or any staff member. Any teacher or staff member that receives a bullying or cyber bullying complaint shall gather information or seek administrative assistance to determine if bullying or cyber bullying has occurred. After the information has been gathered, the Principal shall be notified of the complaint. The Principal will determine the need for further investigation or for appropriate intervention, which may result in administrative discipline to ensure that the conduct ceases.

### **Bullying Policy and Disciplinary Actions**

### **Bullying Policy Review and Communication**

The bullying policy will be reviewed with all students at least once a year and will be

posted on the school's webpage. This complies with PA School Code § 13-1303.1-A, which mandates annual policy review and dissemination to students and parents.

### **Disciplinary Statement**

A school is judged by the actions of its students, both in and out of school. At all times when students are under school jurisdiction, they are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner. To maintain an orderly atmosphere within the school and on school grounds, the authority of any teacher or school personnel extends over all students, as stipulated in PA School Code § 12.5.

### **Consequences for Bullying**

The Laboratory Charter School does not tolerate any form of bullying, whether verbal, physical, electronic, or written. Students who violate this policy will face severe consequences, which may include:

Parental conference

Loss of school privileges

Exclusion from school-sponsored activities

Suspension from school

Expulsion

Counseling

Therapy outside of school

Referral to law enforcement officials

These measures align with PA School Code § 13-1317.2 and § 13-1303.1-A, which require schools to implement strict disciplinary actions for bullying and violence.

### **Act 26 Expulsions**

If a student is found in possession of a weapon on school property, or on the way to or from school, the student must be recommended for expulsion. For students aged ten years or older, the police must be notified. Act 26 of 1995, which amended Pennsylvania's School Code, mandates the expulsion for at least one year of any student who possesses a weapon on school property, at a school function, or on a bus to and from school. A weapon is defined by Pennsylvania school law as "any knife, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other item capable of inflicting serious bodily injury" (PA School Code § 13-1317.2).

### **Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion)**

**Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion:**

**Suspension:** Exclusion from school for a period from 1 to 10 consecutive school days (PA School Code § 12.6(b)).

A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.

When a suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with PA School Code § 12.8(c).

**Expulsion:** Exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent based on governing board recommendations. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing under PA School Code § 12.8.

### **Definitions**

**Suspension:** Exclusion from school for a period of one to ten consecutive school days (PA School Code § 12.6(b)).

**Expulsion:** Exclusion from school by the Board of School Directors for a period exceeding ten school days and may be permanent expulsion from school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing by the Board of School Directors in accordance with PA School Code § 12.8.

### **Guidelines for Developing Self-Discipline**

The development and maintenance of self-discipline are integral to learning.

Each professional staff member, as part of the normal teaching-learning process, shall develop and emphasize self-disciplinary procedures with students.

Each staff member is responsible for maintaining behavioral standards conducive to learning throughout the school site.

### **Disciplinary Action at the Building Level**

Basic standards of behavior shall be developed and reviewed annually within each building.

Appropriate and consistent action shall be taken to maintain these standards.

Building administrators are responsible for maintaining these standards building-wide.

The individuality of each student and incident shall be considered in any disciplinary action.

If a student is suspended from school, a building administrator shall contact the parents or guardians by telephone or face-to-face prior to the student's readmittance.

### **Due Process for Student Discipline**

## **Introduction to Due Process**

Due process is a constitutional guarantee that ensures fair treatment through the normal judicial system, especially as a citizen's entitlement. In the context of student discipline, due process ensures that students are treated fairly and that their rights are protected when disciplinary actions are taken against them. Laboratory Charter School adheres to the due process requirements as outlined in both federal and state laws to ensure that all disciplinary actions are conducted in a fair and just manner.

## **General Principles of Due Process**

Due process in the school setting involves two fundamental principles: substantive due process and procedural due process.

**Substantive Due Process:** This ensures that the school's disciplinary actions are reasonable and not arbitrary. The rules and regulations governing student behavior must be clear, fair, and designed to serve a legitimate educational purpose.

**Procedural Due Process:** This ensures that students are given a fair procedure before being disciplined. This includes being informed of the charges against them, being given an opportunity to present their side of the story, and having access to an impartial decision-maker.

## **Procedural Due Process in Student Discipline**

### **For Suspensions (1 to 3 Days)**

**Notification of Suspension:** The student must be informed of the reasons for the suspension. This is typically done verbally by the assistant principal or principal.

**Opportunity to Respond:** The student must be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension becomes effective.

**Written Notification:** A written notice detailing the reasons for the suspension and the duration must be provided to the parents or guardians. This notice should be sent home with the student and mailed or emailed to the parents or guardians.

**Opportunity for a Conference:** For less serious offenses, a parental conference should be arranged prior to the student's readmission.

### **For Suspensions (4 to 10 Days)**

**Informal Hearing:** If the suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parent must be given the opportunity for an informal hearing. This hearing must be consistent with the requirements in PA School Code § 12.8(c).

The hearing should take place within five school days of the initial suspension date.

The student and parents/guardians must be notified of the time and place of the hearing.

The student must be allowed to present their side, produce witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school.

Legal representation is not required but can be allowed.

**Written Notification:** The reasons for the extended suspension must be provided in writing to the parents or guardians, along with a summary of the informal hearing.

### **For Expulsions (More Than 10 Days)**

**Formal Hearing:** Expulsions require a formal hearing before the Board of School Directors. This hearing must comply with the due process requirements outlined in PA School Code § 12.8.

The student must be informed in writing of the charges against them.

The student and parents/guardians must be given sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.

The hearing must be held in a fair and impartial manner.

The student has the right to be represented by counsel.

The student has the right to cross-examine witnesses and to present their own witnesses and evidence.

The hearing must be recorded, and a transcript made available to the student and parents/guardians upon request.

**Decision and Appeal:** The Board of School Directors must issue a written decision outlining the reasons for the expulsion. The student and parents/guardians have the right to appeal the decision to the appropriate court.

### ***Special Considerations for Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities are afforded additional protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**Manifestation Determination:** Before a student with a disability can be suspended for more than ten consecutive days or face expulsion, a manifestation determination review must be conducted to determine if the behavior in question was a manifestation of the student's disability.

If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, the student cannot be disciplined in the same manner as non-disabled students.

If the behavior is not a manifestation, the student may be disciplined in the same manner as non-disabled students, but must continue to receive educational services.

**Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES):** In cases involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, a student with a disability may be placed in an IAES for up to 45 school

days, even if the behavior is a manifestation of the disability.

### **Notification and Documentation**

**Written Notice:** All disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions, must be documented in writing. Parents or guardians must be informed through formal written communication, detailing the reasons for the disciplinary action and the procedures followed.

**Record Keeping:** Detailed records of all disciplinary actions, hearings, and decisions must be maintained in the student's file. This includes all correspondence, notices, and transcripts of hearings.

### **Legal References**

The following Pennsylvania school laws underpin the due process requirements for student discipline:

PA School Code § 12.6: **Relates to exclusion from school and due process rights.**

PA School Code § 12.8: **Outlines the procedures for hearings and appeals.**

PA School Code § 13-1303.1-A: **Addresses bullying policies and procedures.**

PA School Code § 13-1317.2: **Pertains to expulsions for weapon possession and other serious offenses.**

By adhering to these guidelines and legal requirements, the Laboratory Charter School ensures that all students are treated fairly and justly in matters of discipline, maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development.

### **The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504**

#### **The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

**Child Find Mandate** The IDEA includes the Child Find mandate, requiring all school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This obligation persists even if the school is not currently providing special education services to the child. States must develop and implement practical methods to determine which children with disabilities are receiving special education and related services and which are not (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3); Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, pages 72, 206-207).

**Who is Covered by Child Find?** Schools are required to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities from birth through age 21, including those in private and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)). This includes all children suspected of having a disability, even those who receive passing grades and are advancing from

grade to grade (34 CFR 300.111(c)). The law does not require children to be labeled or classified by their disability (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)(B); 34 CFR 300.111(d)).

**Why is Child Find Necessary?** The primary purpose of the IDEA is to ensure that all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living (20 U.S.C. 1400(d); Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, pages 48, 207). Another purpose is to help each state implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated multi-disciplinary system of Early Intervention Services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, preparing them for further education, employment, and independent living.

**How is Child Find Implemented?** States must devise practical methods to determine which children are receiving needed special education services and which are not. After identifying children who may need services, all necessary evaluations must be completed at no cost to parents. Public notices are used to inform and educate the public about the need to locate and identify all children with disabilities.

School districts use various methods to identify and locate children who may need special education services, such as door-to-door surveys, brochure mailings, public education programs, physician referrals, and surveys of private school personnel.

## **Section 504**

**Overview:** Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. It ensures that children with disabilities have equal access to education and may receive accommodations and modifications. Unlike IDEA, Section 504 does not require a public school to provide an individualized educational program (IEP) but ensures that the child's needs are met as adequately as those of non-disabled students.

**Coverage:** All public schools, school districts, public charter schools, and magnet schools that receive federal financial assistance must comply with Section 504. It provides broad protections against discrimination and ensures that students with disabilities receive regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet their individual educational needs.

**Definition of Disability:** Under Section 504, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, functions of major bodily systems such as neurological, musculoskeletal, respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive, and endocrine systems.

## **Annual Notice**

Laboratory Charter School published the following Annual Notice in the school's Parent-

Student Handbook and on the school's website: <https://thelaboratorycharterschool.site/>

It is the policy of Laboratory Charter School that all students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, who need special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1200 et. seq. ("IDEA 2004"). Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code mandates the publication of a notice to inform parents of available special education services, how to request these services, and systematic screening activities that lead to the identification, location, and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in Laboratory Charter School. This Annual Notice is provided in the school's Parent-Student Handbook and on the school's website: [www.labcharter.com](http://www.labcharter.com).

### **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

Laboratory Charter School provides FAPE to students eligible for special education services. To qualify, a student must have one or more disabilities that interfere with their educational performance and require specially designed instruction. Disabilities include autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment including blindness.

### **What Parents Can Do?**

Parents who believe their child may qualify for special education can request a multidisciplinary evaluation at any time. Signs of a qualifying disability include difficulties in reading, writing, math, focusing, sitting still, and controlling emotions or behaviors. Requests should be made in writing to the school's Director of Special Education at [hillary.el@labcharter.com](mailto:hillary.el@labcharter.com) or 267-817-4720.

### **Screening and Referral Processes**

Laboratory Charter School identifies and refers students for evaluation through systematic screening and referral processes, including benchmark assessments, standardized tests, classroom performance, vision and hearing screenings, and the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Parents can request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time, regardless of the screening outcome. Screening or pre-referral activities do not bar a parent's right to request an evaluation.

### **Parental Consent**

The school cannot conduct an evaluation without written parental consent. Consent for evaluation does not imply consent for special education services. For more information, parents can access the Procedural Safeguards Notice on the Laboratory Charter website and the PaTTAN website: [www.Pattan.net](http://www.Pattan.net).

Policy: Recording and Process for Use of Recorded Information

Renewal Conditions Documents (Article I. Paragraph I.9, Page 9-10) - Part 2 12/1/2022

Further, by December 1, 2022, the Board of Trustees has adopted and submitted to the Charter Schools Office for review and approval a Recording Policy and Process which addresses:

Video recording only in designated common areas of the Charter School facilities and not in bathrooms, classrooms, offices, and teacher and staff common gathering rooms.

To ensure safety of the staff, students, and community is an increasingly violent society, The Laboratory Charter School installed an audio and video recording system funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education PCCD grant in 2020. The system was installed in ONLY in ALL common areas of the school buildings including entry areas, hallways, foyers, and public conference rooms. At no time were recording devices installed in classrooms, bathrooms, offices, or staff lounges.

Signage (Large Yellow 11x14 signs and Small white 5x7 signs) is clearly and has always posted at all entryways and throughout the entire building of both campuses.

All recording devices left by the School District of Philadelphia were removed from classrooms and staff offices by the installation vendor.

All video recording was disconnected as a prior condition of Charter Renewal. The following Notarized sworn statement was submitted to the Charter Schools Office via an Epicenter upload.

SWORN CERTIFICATION ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE LABORATORY CHARTERSCHOOL

On this 1st day of November 2022, on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Laboratory Charter School, (the "Board") I, Alan B. Epstein, Esquire, certify that all capability of audio recording of persons at the two campuses of the Laboratory Charter School have been discontinued and state in support thereof as follows:

I am the attorney currently serving the Board of Trustees of the Laboratory.

I am aware that included at Article I, Paragraph 1.9 of the Conditions for Renewal of the Laboratory Charter School, it is required that all capability of audio recording through the surveillance equipment installed throughout the common area of the School's two campuses be discontinued on or before November 1, 2022.

I have been authorized by the Board of Trustees of the Laboratory Charter School to certify that all audio recording through the video security system has ceased and been discontinued on or before the aforesaid November 1, 2022 deadline.

I certify that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge information and belief.

(i) The storage, maintenance and use of previously recorded video and audio recordings, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and the Federal and Pennsylvania Wiretap laws.

The recording system is maintained on servers in both buildings. The system has an automatic “write over” feature which does not allow for long term storage of recordings.

The Board of Trustees shall revise the Parent/Student Handbook and School Guidelines, Employee Handbook, and Student Records Policy as necessary to advise all students, families and staff regarding the approved recording policy and the storage, maintenance and use of any recordings.

This information is included in the Parent and Student Handbook as well as on the Website: [thelaboratorycharterschool.com](http://thelaboratorycharterschool.com).

The Board of Trustees shall revise, post and maintain openly visible signage at each entrance to the school facilities, at sign-in areas, and at other appropriate common areas of the Charter School advising of the video recording.

Signage (Large Yellow 11x14 signs and Small white 5x7 signs) is clearly and has been posted since the installation of the system at all entryways and throughout the entire building of both campuses.

Access to any recordings shall be limited to the Charter School’s Chief Executive Officer, the technical vendor (currently K12.IT) and as otherwise determined by the Board of Trustees through board action.

In the case that the recordings have not been written over by the system, the BUILDING PRINCIPAL can alert the CEO that a recording is needed for an investigation or serious incident. The CEO must approve the Building Principal’s contact via email with the technology Company K.12.IT. The request for the recording is then made in writing via email to the Technology Company (K12.IT) for a specific recording by the Building Principal. Once the request is received K12.IT will forward the request to the CEO to ensure that the request matches what the CEO approved the Building Principal to request. Once confirmed, the recording is recovered and sent to the Director of Technology via a secure download to be viewed by the Building Principal.

Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (ECPA), **18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2523**

## **View Federal Statutes**

### **Background**

The Electronic Communications Privacy Act and the Stored Wire Electronic Communications Act are commonly referred together as the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) of 1986. The ECPA updated the Federal Wiretap Act of 1968, which addressed interception of conversations using "hard" telephone lines, but did not apply to interception of computer and other digital and electronic

communications. Several subsequent pieces of legislation, including The USA PATRIOT Act, clarify and update the ECPA to keep pace with the evolution of new communications technologies and methods, including easing restrictions on law enforcement access to stored communications in some cases.

### **General Provisions**

The ECPA, as amended, protects wire, oral, and electronic communications while those communications are being made, are in transit, and when they are stored on computers. The Act applies to email, telephone conversations, and data stored electronically.

### **Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

"The structure of the SCA reflects a series of classifications that indicate the drafters' judgments about what kinds of information implicate greater or lesser privacy interests. For example, the drafters saw greater privacy interests in the content of stored emails than in subscriber account information. Similarly, the drafters believed that computing services available 'to the public' required more strict [sic] regulation than services not available to the public...To protect the array of privacy interests identified by its drafters, the [Act] offers varying degrees of legal protection depending on the perceived importance of the privacy interest involved. Some information can be obtained from providers with a subpoena; other information requires a special court order; and still other information requires a search warrant. In addition, some types of legal process require notice to the subscriber, while other types do not."

The Act reflects a general approach of providing greater privacy protection for materials in which there are greater privacy interests. For a more in-depth analysis, U.S. Dept. of Justice, *Searching and Seizing Computers and Obtaining Electronic Evidence In Criminal Investigations* (2009), pp. 115-116, (287pp | 1.01mb | PDF).

### **Specific Provisions**

The ECPA has three titles:

Title I of the ECPA, which is often referred to as the Wiretap Act, prohibits the intentional actual or attempted interception, use, disclosure, or "procure[ment] [of] any other person to intercept or endeavor to intercept any wire, oral, or electronic communication." Title I also prohibits the use of illegally obtained communications as evidence. 18 U.S.C. § 2515..

Exceptions. Title I provides exceptions for operators and service providers for uses "in the normal course of his employment while engaged in any activity which is a necessary incident to the rendition of his service" and for "persons authorized by law to intercept wire, oral, or electronic communications or to conduct electronic surveillance, as defined in section 101 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978." 18 U.S.C. § 2511. It provides procedures for Federal, State, and other government officers to obtain judicial authorization for intercepting such communications, and regulates the use and disclosure of information obtained through authorized wiretapping. 18 U.S.C. §§

2516-2518. A judge may issue a warrant authorizing interception of communications for up to 30 days upon a showing of probable cause that the interception will reveal evidence that an individual is committing, has committed, or is about to commit a "particular offense" listed in Section 2516. 18 U.S.C. § 2518.

Title II of the ECPA, which is called the Stored Communications Act (SCA), protects the privacy of the contents of files stored by service providers and of records held about the subscriber by service providers, such as subscriber name, billing records, or IP addresses. 18 U.S.C. §§ 2701-12.

Title III of the ECPA, which addresses pen register and trap and trace devices, requires government entities to obtain a court order authorizing the installation and use of a pen register (a device that captures the dialed numbers and related information to which outgoing calls or communications are made by the subject) and/or a trap and trace (a device that captures the numbers and related information from which incoming calls and communications coming to the subject have originated). 18 U.S.C. §§ 3121 – 3127. No actual communications are intercepted by a pen register or trap and trace. The authorization order can be issued on the basis of certification by the applicant that the information likely to be obtained is relevant to an ongoing criminal investigation being conducted by the applicant's agency.

#### **Amendments**

The ECPA was significantly amended by the Communications Assistance to Law Enforcement Act (CALEA) in 1994, the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001, the USA PATRIOT reauthorization acts in 2006, and the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 (116pp | 303kb | PDF). Other acts have made specific amendments of lesser significance.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504

Understanding Child Find Under IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) includes a mandate known as Child Find. Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their jurisdiction, regardless of the severity of the disabilities. This mandate ensures that all children who may need special education services are identified, even if they are not currently receiving these services from the school.

#### **Legal Basis for Child Find:**

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 300.111**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

#### **Who is Covered by Child Find?**

Child Find applies to all children from birth through age 21 residing within a state. This

includes children attending private and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state. It covers children suspected of having a disability, including those who receive passing grades and are advancing from grade to grade.

**Key Provisions:**

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 300.111(c)-(d)**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

**Why is Child Find Necessary?**

The primary purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to ensure that all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

**Purpose and Implementation:**

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1400(d)**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 300.111(a)**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

**Early Intervention Services**

Another critical aspect of IDEA is to help states implement a comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. This early intervention aims to prepare young children for future education and life.

**Early Intervention Provisions:**

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1431**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 303.1**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Sections 711.21-711.22**

**How is Child Find Implemented?**

Each state is required to develop and implement practical methods to determine which children are receiving special education and related services and which are not. Schools must use various methods to identify and locate children who may need special education services, including public notices, door-to-door surveys, public education programs, physician referrals, contacts with daycare providers, and surveys of private school personnel.

## **Implementation Strategies:**

Federal Case Law: **Akers v. Bolton, 531 F. Supp. 300 (D. Kan 1981)**

Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Guidelines: **Luling, TX Indep. School Dist., 1975-1985 EHLR 257:417**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. It ensures that children with disabilities have equal access to education, including accommodations and modifications. Unlike IDEA, Section 504 does not require an individualized educational program (IEP) but ensures that students with disabilities receive education that meets their needs as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities.

### **Key Provisions of Section 504:**

Statute: **29 U.S.C. § 794**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR Part 104**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Sections 711.21-711.22**

Key Protections Under Section 504:

Equal access to education

Accommodations and modifications

Protection from discrimination and harassment

Participation in athletics and extracurricular activities

By adhering to these federal and state laws, the Laboratory Charter School ensures that all children with disabilities are identified, located, and evaluated to receive the appropriate educational services they need.

## **Laboratory Charter School's Child Find Procedure**

### **Overview**

The Child Find mandate, part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), requires school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who may need special education services. This mandate applies to all children within the district's jurisdiction, regardless of the severity of their disabilities or their enrollment status.

## **Legal Basis**

The legal framework for Child Find is established by both federal and state laws, specifically:

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 300.111**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

These laws ensure that all children with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including special education and related services tailored to their unique needs.

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

In addition to IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ensures that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations and modifications to access education equally. Unlike IDEA, Section 504 does not require an IEP but ensures that the needs of students with disabilities are met as adequately as those of non-disabled students.

Legal Basis for Section 504:

Statute: **29 U.S.C. § 794**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR Part 104**

By following these procedures and legal requirements, Laboratory Charter School ensures that all children with disabilities are identified, located, and evaluated to receive the appropriate educational services they need. This comprehensive approach supports the school's commitment to providing an inclusive and equitable education for all students.

## **The Meaning of Disability Under Section 504**

### **Definition and Scope**

**Disability:** Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, an individual with a disability, particularly in the context of elementary and secondary education, is defined as a person who:

Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Has a record of such an impairment.

Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Legal Reference: **29 U.S.C. § 794, 34 CFR § 104.3(j)(1).**

The determination of whether a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity must be made on a case-by-case basis, providing

broad coverage of individuals.

**Major Life Activities and Bodily Functions:** Major life activities include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Major bodily functions include, but are not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Legal Reference: **34 CFR § 104.3(j)(2)(ii).**

### **Examples**

A student with a visual impairment who cannot read regular print with glasses is substantially limited in the major life activity of seeing.

A student with an orthopedic impairment who cannot walk is substantially limited in the major life activity of walking.

A student with diabetes requiring insulin injections is substantially limited in the operation of a major bodily function, specifically the endocrine system.

These students must be evaluated to determine their need for special education and/or related services under Section 504 regulations.

Legal Reference: **29 U.S.C. § 794, 34 CFR § 104.35.**

### **Laboratory Charter School's Child Find Procedure Overview**

The Child Find mandate, part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), obliges school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who may need special education services. This mandate applies to all children within the district's jurisdiction, irrespective of the severity of their disabilities or their enrollment status.

Legal References:

IDEA Statute: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)**

Federal Regulations: **34 CFR § 300.111**

Pennsylvania School Code: **Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

### **Procedure**

Identification and Referral

**Coverage:** The Child Find mandate covers children from birth through age 21, including those in private schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state. This includes children suspected of having a disability, even if they receive passing grades and are advancing from grade to grade.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3), 34 CFR § 300.111(c), Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

Referral Sources: Referrals can come from teachers, parents, doctors, or other agencies. The school also conducts screenings and evaluations to identify potential disabilities.

### **Screening and Evaluation**

**Initial Screening:** The school conducts regular screenings, including vision and hearing tests, and academic assessments. These screenings help identify students who may need further evaluation.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3), 34 CFR § 300.111, Chapter 711, Title 22, Section 711.21**

**Comprehensive Evaluation:** If a potential disability is identified, a comprehensive evaluation is conducted at no cost to the parents. This evaluation includes a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414, 34 CFR §§ 300.301-300.306**

### **Parental Consent and Involvement**

**Consent for Evaluation:** Before conducting any evaluations, the school must obtain written consent from the parents. This ensures that parents are fully informed and agree to the evaluation process.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(a)(1)(D), 34 CFR § 300.300**

**Parental Involvement:** Parents are involved throughout the process, from the initial referral to the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the child is found eligible for services.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(d), 34 CFR § 300.322**

### **Determination of Eligibility**

**Multidisciplinary Team:** A team of professionals, including the child's parents, reviews the evaluation results to determine if the child is eligible for special education services. The team considers whether the child has one or more disabilities as defined by IDEA and if the disability affects the child's educational performance.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(b)(4), 34 CFR § 300.306**

**Development of IEP:** If the child is eligible, the team develops an IEP tailored to the child's specific needs. The IEP outlines the special education services and supports the child will receive.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(d), 34 CFR § 300.320**

## Annual Review and Re-evaluation

**IEP Review:** The IEP is reviewed at least once a year to ensure that the child's needs are being met and to make any necessary adjustments.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(4), 34 CFR § 300.324**

**Re-evaluation:** At least every three years, a comprehensive re-evaluation is conducted to determine if the child continues to be eligible for special education services and if their needs have changed.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(a)(2), 34 CFR § 300.303**

## Public Notice and Awareness

**Public Awareness Campaigns:** The school is required to inform the public about the Child Find process. This includes posting notices on the school website, distributing brochures, and conducting public awareness programs.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)(A), 34 CFR § 300.111**

## Annual Notice and FAPE

Laboratory Charter School publishes an Annual Notice in the Parent-Student Handbook and on the school's website, informing parents of the available special education services and programs, how to request these services, and the systematic screening activities in place.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. ("IDEA 2004"), Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code**

## Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Laboratory Charter School provides FAPE to students eligible for special education services, ensuring that they receive education designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1400(d), 34 CFR § 300.101**

## Qualifying for Special Education and Related Services

To qualify for special education services, a student must be found to have one or more disabilities that interfere with their educational performance and require specially designed instruction.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414, 34 CFR §§ 300.8, 300.304**

## Parental Rights and Consent

Parents have the right to request a multidisciplinary evaluation at any time. Written consent is required for evaluations, and parents must be informed of their rights

throughout the process.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1414(a)(1)(D), 34 CFR §§ 300.300, 300.504**

### **Screening and Referral Processes**

Laboratory Charter School utilizes systematic screening and referral processes, including benchmark assessments, standardized tests, and vision and hearing screenings, to identify students who may need special education services.

Legal References: **20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3), 34 CFR §§ 300.111, 300.301-300.306**

By adhering to these detailed procedures and legal requirements, Laboratory Charter School ensures that all children with disabilities are appropriately identified, located, and evaluated, thereby providing them with the necessary educational services and supports to succeed.

### **Homework Policy**

At Laboratory Charter School, homework is an essential component of the learning process and is assigned appropriately based on the subject and topic. Teachers assign homework daily to reinforce classroom instruction and promote independent learning. In accordance with Pennsylvania education guidelines, the school encourages parents and guardians to take an active interest in their child's homework by:

*Asking about homework every day.*

*Providing a designated time and a suitable place for study or home activities.*

*Making resource materials available.*

*Checking the work for correctness and neatness.*

*Arranging with the teacher for homework assignments when the student's physical condition necessitates an absence.*

*Homework assignments will contribute to a maximum of 5% of the student's overall grade.*

Legal References: **While Pennsylvania School Code does not specify a precise requirement for homework policies, schools are encouraged to establish guidelines that support student learning and parental involvement.**

### **How to Study Effectively**

#### **Attitude**

**Positive Mindset:** Approach your studies with a positive attitude. Work independently and seek help only after you have attempted to solve problems on your own. Use library and online resources effectively.

## **Concentration**

**Focus:** Learning requires concentration. Stay focused on your task to complete it more efficiently.

## **Study Environment**

**Dedicated Study Space:** Have a specific, well-lit, and quiet place at home for studying. Ensure this area is free from distractions to maximize productivity.

## **Reading and Understanding Assignments**

**Initial Reading:** Start by reading the entire assignment rapidly to get an overview of the basic content.

**In-depth Reading:** Reread the assignment slowly to understand the content, details, explanations, and directions. Take notes, make outlines, and collaborate with classmates for better understanding.

## **Managing Long-Term Projects**

**Daily Progress:** Break down long-term projects into manageable tasks and work on them a little each day. This approach prevents last-minute rush and ensures higher quality work.

By adhering to these guidelines, students can effectively manage their homework and develop strong study habits that will benefit them throughout their academic journey.

## **Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance**

### **Distinguished Honors**

To achieve Distinguished Honors, a student must maintain a grade of "A" in all subjects, without any unsatisfactory marks in behavior.

### **Perfect Attendance**

A student is recognized for perfect attendance by having no absences or tardiness, whether excused or unexcused, throughout the academic period.

### **Report Cards**

Parents are expected to attend parent teacher conferences when scheduled. Parent conference notices will be sent home. An informed parent produces a successful student.

### **Visitors**

**COVID 19 – LAB Charter will follow the Health Department Protocol for screening.**

Visitors will be EXTREMELY limited in the school building for safety reasons.

All visitors must first report to the Main Office. All visitors MUST present a proper state

ID or driver's license in good standing. Expired ID's will not be accepted. Legal action will be taken against any person on school grounds or in the building who has not made the proper arrangements for visitation. Students may not bring younger children or friends to school.

### **Nurse/Health Suite**

It is important for LAB to have every student's emergency information on file so that we may contact parents/guardians quickly if necessary. Students who become ill at school may be picked up and signed out in the main office.

### **Immunizations**

Students must be immunized in accordance with Pennsylvania state laws before enrolling in a Pennsylvania public school. For any questions regarding immunizations or health records, please contact the school nurse.

### **Immunization Requirements**

All students must be fully immunized or have an approved exemption before being admitted to any public, private, or parochial school in Pennsylvania. This mandate is enforced by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Philadelphia County Board of Health, and The Laboratory Charter School. The objective of this requirement is to protect students from preventable communicable diseases and their associated medical and educational complications.

### **Exemptions**

**There are two types of exemptions:**

**Religious Exemption:** Students are exempt from immunization if the parent or guardian submits a written objection based on religious or ethical grounds.

**Medical Exemption:** Students are exempt from immunization if a physician or their designee provides a written statement indicating that immunization is detrimental to the child's health. Once the physician determines that immunization is no longer harmful, the exemption becomes invalid, and the child must be immunized.

In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child is exempt from immunization, the child will be excluded from school until a competent medical authority determines it is safe for the child to return.

### **Disposition of Immunization Records**

When a student transfers from one school to another, the parent should request the Certificate of Immunization from the current school and provide it to the new school. This Certificate will accompany the student upon transferring, graduating, withdrawing, or otherwise leaving The Laboratory Charter School.

## IMMUNIZATION CHART

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Required Number of Doses</b>	<b>Grades K to 8</b>
<b>Diphtheria, Tetanus and Acellular Pertussis-DTap</b>	<b>Four Doses</b>	<b>All Grades</b>
<b>Poliomyelitis/IPV</b>	<b>Four Doses</b>	<b>All Grades</b>
<b>Measles, Mumps, and Rubella</b>	<b>Two Doses</b>	<b>All Grades</b>
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<b>Three Doses</b>	<b>All Grades</b>
<b>Varicella/Chicken Pox</b>	<b>Two Dose</b>	<b>All Grades</b>
<p><b>In addition to the immunizations listed above, before entering 7th grade, Philadelphia students must receive the additional vaccines listed below. All doses must be given at the appropriate age and Interval. Parents should talk with their pediatrician for more information.</b></p>		
<b>Meningococcal conjugate (MCV4)</b>  <b>Acellular Pertussis-</b>	<b>One Dose</b> <b>One Dose</b>	

<b>DTap</b>		
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**The following health services will be provided by the Laboratory Charter School for all attending students Kindergarten to grade Eight:**

Medical examinations

Dental examinations

Vision screening test

Hearing screening test

Height and weight measurements

Maintenance of medical and dental records

Threshold Screening Test

Special examinations

Scoliosis Screening

Parents who need vaccines or additional services for their children can visit any of the listed Philadelphia City Health Centers. To schedule an appointment call: 215.685.2933.

**Philadelphia Health Centers**

Health Center 2 - 1700 S. Broad Street Health Center 3 - 555 S. 43rd Street Health Center 4 - 4400 Haverford Ave Health Center 5 - 1900 N. 20th Street Health Center 6 - 301 Girard Ave

Health Center 9 - E. 131 E. Cheltenham Ave Health Center 10 - 2230 Cottman Ave

Health Center 12 - 2840 W. Dauphin Street (Strawberry Mansion)

**PRESCRIPTION AND NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL**

Parents who wish to have prescription medications given to their child during school hours should ask the designated school staff member for a "Request for Administration of Medication" (Form MED-I). The form must be filled out and signed by the child's doctor and the parent. The parent, not the child, should bring the medication to the school.

Medication will only be retained by the school if it has been packaged and labeled by a Registered Pharmacist according to accepted pharmaceutical standards. The medication

label must include: patient's name, pharmacy name, pharmacy address and phone, prescription number, prescription date (current), name of medication, dosage, form, and expiration date, instructions for administration, and name of prescribing health care provider. Medication must be packaged with a safety cap.

If your child has any health problems or is taking prescription medication for any reason, even though it does not have to be given in school, it is important for you to inform the school. Many medications have side effects that school staff can help you look for.

Over the counter (non-prescription) medications must also be brought to school by the child's parent or guardian. It must be accompanied by a written confirmation by a qualified health care provider on a prescription form or letterhead. This confirmation must contain the proper dosage and the time the medication is to be taken. Written parental approval is also required. If there is no note from a parent, supplying the necessary information, the child will not be permitted to take the medication. Over the counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's container with directions for use intact on the label or box.

### Health Suite Information

No student will be admitted to LAB Charter School until the state mandated immunization requirements are met.

Board of Education policy states first aid is only to be given for school injuries at the time they occur.

Injuries and illnesses that happen at home must be cared for at home.

Students who become ill while in school will get a pass to the nurse from the staff in charge. The nurse will notify the home.

No sick student will be sent home unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Students do not leave the building to go home at any time without being signed out by the parent.

### Telephone Use

Parents should make all necessary plans and arrangements for after school dismissal before leaving home each morning so that the school telephones can be used for business purposes only. Students may not receive phone calls while in school. Parent/guardians should not try to contact their child by cell phone, as all mobile communication devices are not allowed in school. Any cell phone that is seen or heard by a staff member will be confiscated and the appropriate consequences assigned. Cell phones will only be returned to parents. All parents must sign a form acknowledging receipt of the returned cell phone.

### Parent and School Associations

We encourage all parents to become active members of our LAB Parent Organization,

Parents As Partners In Education. Flyers will be distributed throughout the year with information regarding drives, meetings, and other activities.

### **Universal Breakfast and Lunch Programs**

Under Federal guidelines of Title I, LAB Charter School operates a free breakfast and lunch programs for all students. Parents do not need to complete breakfast or lunch applications.

Breakfast will be served from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. each morning.

Unless your child attends the breakfast program, please do not send your child to school before 8:15 AM. We do not offer before or after school care.

**MOBILE FOOD DELIVERIES ARE NOT ALLOWED AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR STUDENTS.**

### **Fire Drills**

Monthly fire drills are required by state law. Signs are posted in each room giving emergency evacuation procedures. The following must be observed when the bell sounds signaling a fire drill:

Close windows and leave lights on.

Classroom doors unlocked and closed.

Follow the staff member in charge.

Walk rapidly. Do Not Run.

Stay with your class or group.

Talking is prohibited.

Do not re-enter the building until given the “all clear” signal.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION (SHELTER-IN-PLACE) DRILLS**

We will have at least one shelter in place drill each school year. The reason for this drill is to make the students aware of the procedure in case of a school lockdown for any reason. This drill will teach the children what to do and where to report to in the case of a lockdown emergency.

### **School Uniform**

The LAB Charter School has a mandatory uniform policy that will be enforced by the school. LAB Charter School's uniform is as follows:

GIRLS GRADES K-8

NAVY BLUE JUMPER OR SKIRT  
SHORT SLEEVE LIGHT BLUE POLO W/LOGO  
LONG SLEEVE LIGHT BLUE POLO W/LOGO  
NAVY V-NECK CARDIGAN WITH LOGO  
NAVY BLUE PANTS  
SS BLUE PETER PAN BLOUSE  
LS BLUE PETER PAN BLOUSE  
BOYS GRADES K-8  
SHORT SLEEVE LIGHT BLUE POLO W/LOGO  
LONG SLEEVE LIGHT BLUE POLO W/LOGO  
NAVY V-NECK CARDIGAN WITH LOGO  
BOYS NAVY BLUE PANTS 4-16 27H-38H  
GYMWEAR GRADES K-8  
LIGHT BLUE GYM TEE W/LOGO  
NAVY BLUE GYM PANTS W/LOGO

No oversize shirts, baggy pants, hoodies, sandals, or flip flops. Students WILL be excluded from school activities and special programs SUCH AS ASSEMBLIES, PROMOTION CEREMONIES, FIELD TRIPS, SCHOOL DANCES, SCHOOL CARNIVALS, SCHOOL MOVIES, SPECIAL AWARDS, MOVE-UP DAY, ETC. if not in uniform ON A DAILY BASIS. Students who need assistance with uniforms should contact the Home and School Visitor/Parent Liaison.

IF STUDENTS ARE NOT IN UNIFORM PARENTS WILL BE CONTACTED AND REQUIRED TO BRING THE STUDENT A PROPER UNIFORM.

### **NCLB: Parent's Right to Know Qualifications of Child's Teachers**

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Note: Congress has reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the statute formerly known as No Child Left Behind. The new statute, Every Student Succeeds Act, was signed into law by President Obama on December 10, 2015.

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Did you know you have a right to know the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals? Did you know that your school district must notify you of your right to request information about the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals?

At the beginning of the school year, the school district must notify parents of all children who attend Title I schools of their right to request information about the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;

Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.

The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

### **Qualifications of Substitute Teachers**

Is your child being taught by a substitute teacher? If your child has been taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified for 4 consecutive weeks, your school district must notify you of this fact. This requirement applies to substitute teachers, many of whom do not meet "highly qualified" requirements. [Source: NCLB, Title I, Section 1111(h)(6)]

### **How to Request Information about Teacher Qualifications**

If you want to learn the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals, you need to write a letter to request this information from the school.

Since people often lack confidence in their ability to write letters, we wrote a sample letter that you can use as a template. Just change the identifying information - your name, address and phone number, your child's name, school, and principal, etc.

The letter to request teacher qualifications is in two formats:

In pdf: <https://www.Wrights law.com/info/nclb.ltr.teacher.qual.pdf>

In Word: <https://www.Wrights law.com/info/nclb.ltr.teacher.qual.doc>

You may want to print a copy of the article, Teacher Quality: Frequently Asked Questions from the U. S. Department of Education, and include this with your letter. [no longer available]

Learn how to write effective letters - and why you need to learn this skill.

If you have our book, Wrights law: From Emotions to Advocacy, look at the two chapters about writing letters. These chapters include more than a dozen letters to the school that you can tailor to your circumstances.

## **LAB CHARTER SCHOOL**

### **SCHOOL-WIDE RULES**

#### **School Guidelines**

Be Safe

Be Prepared

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be a Problem Solver

#### **School Expectations**

Arrive on Time: **Punctuality is essential.**

Complete All Assignments: **Ensure all tasks are finished on time.**

Wear the School Uniform: **Adhere to the school dress code.**

Keep Hands and Feet to Yourself: **Maintain personal space at all times.**

No Bullying or Fighting: **Engage in positive and respectful behavior.**

No Electronic Devices: **Do not bring cell phones, headphones, or other electronic gadgets to school.**

#### **Resources for Parents of IEP and 504 Students**

##### **The Arc of Pennsylvania**

Address: **101 South Second Street, Suite 8, Harrisburg, PA 17101**

Phone: **800-692-7258**

Website: **[www.thearca.org](http://www.thearca.org)**

##### **Parent Education Network (PEN)**

Address: **2107 Industrial Highway, York, PA 17402-2223**

Phone:

**717-600-0100 (Voice/TTY)**

**800-522-5827 (Voice/TTY)**

**800-441-5028 (Spanish in PA)**

Fax: **717-600-8101**

Website: [www.parentednet.org](http://www.parentednet.org)

**Parent Education and Advocacy Leadership Center (PEAL)**

Address: **1119 Penn Avenue, Suite 400, Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

Phone:

**412-281-4404 (Voice)**

**866-950-1040 (Voice)**

**412-281-4409 (TTY)**

Fax: **412-281-4408**

Website: [www.pealcenter.org](http://www.pealcenter.org)

**Hispanics United for Exceptional Children (HUNE, Inc.)**

Address: **202 West Cecil B. Moore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19122**

Phone: **215-425-6203 (Voice)**

Fax: **215-425-6204**

Website: [www.huneinc.org](http://www.huneinc.org)

**The Mentor Parent Program, Inc.**

Address: **P.O. Box 47, Pittsfield, PA 16340**

Phone:

**814-563-3470 (Voice)**

**888-447-1431 (Voice in PA)**

**800-855-1155 (TTY)**

Fax: **814-563-3445**

Website: [www.mentorparent.org](http://www.mentorparent.org)

**Disabilities Rights Network**

Address: **1414 North Cameron Street, Suite C, Harrisburg, PA 17103**

Phone:

**800-692-7443 (Toll-Free Voice)**

**877-375-7139 (TDD)**

**717-236-8110 (Voice)**

**717-346-0293 (TDD)**

**Fax: 717-236-0192**

**Website: [www.drnpa.org](http://www.drnpa.org)**

### **Pennsylvania Bar Association**

**Address: 100 South Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101**

**Phone: 800-932-0311**

**Website: [www.pabar.org](http://www.pabar.org)**

### **Bureau of Special Education's ConsultLine**

**Phone: 800-879-2301**

**ConsultLine personnel are available to parents and advocates of children with disabilities to explain federal and state laws relating to special education, describe options available to parents, inform parents of procedural safeguards, identify other agencies and support services, and describe available remedies and procedures.**

### **Office for Dispute Resolution**

**Address: 6340 Flank Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112-2764**

**Phone:**

**717-541-4960**

**800-222-3353 (Toll free in PA only)**

**800-654-4984 (TTY)**

**Fax: 717-657-5983**

**Website: [odr.pattan.net](http://odr.pattan.net)**

**The Office for Dispute Resolution administers the mediation and due process systems statewide and provides training and services regarding alternative dispute resolution methods.**

**The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)**

Harrisburg: **800-360-7282**

King of Prussia: **800-441-3215**

Pittsburgh: **800-446-5607**

**Website:** [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net)



## **Title I LEA and School Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2025-2026**

The Laboratory Charter School is dedicated to the philosophy that parent involvement is integral to the success of each student, and that forging a strong partnership between school and the home is essential in order to provide a quality education to all students.

Therefore, Lab will implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in accordance with Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). This federal statute defines "parent and family engagement" as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- ï That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- ï That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- ï That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
- ï The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1118 of the ESEA.

Laboratory Charter School has developed this Title I School Parent and Family Engagement Policy in conjunction with our Parent Involvement Committee on February 15, 2017 to inform our school community. This policy will be posted on Lab's website for accessibility to parents and members of the community, will be distributed at the annual Title I meeting and will be in the Student-Parent Handbook.

### **School Responsibilities**

In order to involve parents in the Title I Program, The Laboratory Charter School will:

- ï Convene an annual Title I meeting to inform parents of The Laboratory Charter School's participation in the Title I Program, the Program's requirements and parents' involvement and rights.

- ï Hold parent meetings at various times throughout the school year in order to familiarize parents with The Laboratory Charter School's Title I Program. In addition, conferences with the Principal and teachers may be scheduled as needed in order to facilitate open communication.
- ï Involve parents in an organized, ongoing and timely way, in the planning, review and improvement of the Title I Program, Parent Compact, and Parent Involvement Policy.
- ï Provide parents with a description and explanation of The Laboratory Charter School's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels that students are expected to meet.
- ï Communicate with parents through fliers, calendars, student folders, website postings, letters/notices, and electronic means.
- ï Provide parents with timely information about the Title I Program.
- ï Provide assistance to parents in understanding the State's academic content standards and student achievement standards, academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress, with encouragement to work with teachers to improve the achievement of their children
- ï Provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their academic achievement and, as appropriate, to foster parent involvement.
- ï Disseminate to parents' data regarding their child's achievement, progress reports, and classroom and standardized assessment results, to enable parents to know of, and to remain actively engaged in, their child's educational progress.
- ï Provide, if requested by parents, opportunities for additional meetings for solicitation of suggestions from parents and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child. The Laboratory Charter School will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practically possible.
- ï Provide a written agreement (School-Parent Compact) explaining the roles of parent, student and staff to be signed by all parties responsible for academic achievement in an effort to improve his/her skill levels as a student enters the Title I Pull-out Program.
- ï Provide a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet State academic standards
- ï Inform parents that their children will be taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified, should the need arise



- i Periodic Parent Partnership meetings will provide recommendations, materials, and training to help parents work with their child to improve academic achievement and to help parents better understand the State's academic standards and results of local assessments.
- i The Laboratory Charter School will provide programs or activities throughout the year encourage parents to become active participants in increasing student achievement and learning such as Back to School Night, Parent Partnership Meetings, Kindergarten Readiness Workshops, High School Readiness Meeting, and Parent-Teacher Conferences.

### **School-Parent Compact**

Incorporated as a component of the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, The Laboratory Charter School distributes to parents of participating children the attached School- Parent Compact. The Compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. It describes specific ways that The Laboratory Charter School and families will partner to help children achieve the State's high academic standards. It addresses not only items suggested by parents of Title I students, but also the following legally required items:

- i The ways parents will be responsible for supporting their child's learning
- i The importance of ongoing communication between parents and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences; frequent reports on student progress; access to staff; opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their children's class; and opportunities to observe classroom activities.

This policy was adopted by The Laboratory Charter School for the 2021-2022 school year, and will be in effect for the period of one year. This policy will be placed on the school website so that all parents of participating Title I, Part A children have access to it. Please direct any questions to the building principals at each site.

*Parents can always contact our Parent Coordinator at [parents@labcharter.com](mailto:parents@labcharter.com), or at 267-817-4720 with any feedback, comments, questions, or concerns as well as to volunteer, join the parent group, (Parents As Partners In Education), or simply ask questions about the school curriculum and operations.*



## Laboratory Charter School's School-Family Compact (2025-2026)

**THE LABORATORY CHARTER SCHOOL** and the parents of students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement. The compact also outlines the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the state's academic standards.

### *Required School-Parent Compact Provisions*

#### School Responsibilities

The Laboratory Charter School is committed to providing a high-quality curriculum and instruction within a supportive and effective learning environment. This commitment enables participating children to achieve their potential and meet Pennsylvania's student academic achievement standards. To ensure this:

- ï All teachers are required to meet Pennsylvania's statutory and regulatory requirements related to appropriate certification of school personnel.
- ï Title I support services will include participation in small group direct instruction using both pull-out and push-in models, as well as differentiated classroom instruction.
- ï Classroom teachers will collaborate with achievement support teachers to determine the best instructional methods, strategies, and skill development for students served in the Title I programs.
- ï Achievement support teachers and instructional assistants will provide a quality curriculum and instruction in a positive learning environment to help children achieve success.

## The Role of Achievement Support Teachers

Achievement support teachers will:

- ï Respect and acknowledge every child's strengths and differences.
- ï Believe that every child can learn if given appropriate time, quality instruction, and specific expectations for learning.
- ï Provide challenging and engaging educational experiences at the child's instructional level to maximize learning.
- ï Recognize that parents play an important role in their child's education and are vital to their success.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences and Reporting

The Laboratory Charter School is dedicated to fostering strong communication and collaboration with parents. To this end, the school will hold biannual parent-teacher conferences scheduled after the first and third report card periods.

## Student Reports

Parents will receive various reports to stay informed about their child's progress:

- ï **Report Cards:** Parents will receive a report card at the end of each of the six marking periods, approximately every six weeks.
- ï **Habits of Work and Behavior Reports:** These will be provided in the Fall and Spring.
- ï **Trimester Progress Reports:** For students receiving pull-out instruction, parents will also receive progress reports from the achievement support teacher at the end of each trimester.

## Consultation Availability

The Laboratory Charter School staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:

- ï **Scheduled Conferences:** Before and after school conferences can be scheduled through the office as needed.
- ï **Trimester Conferences:** Conferences will be offered to parents at the end of each trimester.
- ï **Communication:** Parents may contact teachers, staff, or the principal via telephone, letter, or email.

## Parent Responsibilities

Parents are integral to their children's education and are expected to provide an appropriate learning environment at home. To support their children's learning, parents should:

- ÿ Return documents and forms promptly.
- ÿ Ensure their child attends school on time, well-fed, and well-rested regularly.
- ÿ Monitor school assignments and provide necessary support.
- ÿ Create a home atmosphere conducive to learning.
- ÿ Limit and monitor television viewing.
- ÿ Encourage respect for all members of the school community and school property.
- ÿ Promote positive use of their child's extracurricular time.
- ÿ Stay informed about their child's education by reviewing all school communications and responding promptly.

Parents can always contact our Parent Coordinator at [parents@labcharter.com](mailto:parents@labcharter.com) or 267-817-4720 with any feedback, comments, questions, or concerns. Additionally, parents are encouraged to volunteer, join the parent group (Parents As Partners In Education), or complete the Parent Survey at any time during the year.

## Student Commitment

Students are responsible, in part, for their own success and recognize that education is important. Students will:

- ÿ Demonstrate a positive attitude toward learning and school.
- ÿ Be responsible for completing homework on time that reflects quality and accuracy.
- ÿ Follow teacher instructions in a cooperative manner.
- ÿ Seek help and assistance when needed.
- ÿ Do daily work that is neat and reflects the student's best effort.
- ÿ Be respectful to all school members and to school property

## Conclusion

The collaboration between school personnel, parents, and students is vital for providing the best possible education. This partnership ensures that children are supported both at school and at home, fostering an environment where every student can achieve their potential.

## 2025-2026 Equity Plan

Under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that accept Title I funding must develop an equity plan. This plan ensures that poor and minority students in Title I schools are not disproportionately taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers. The following outlines our LEA's equity plan, based on data from the 2019-20 school year:

### *1. Teacher Assignment Analysis*

We analyze how teachers are assigned to minority and low-income students using the following data points:

- ï **School Improvement Status:** TSI (Targeted Support and Improvement) or A-TSI (Additional Targeted Support and Improvement)
- ï **School Poverty Percentage:** 94%
- ï **School Minority Percentage:** 97%
- ï **Percentage of Minority and Low-Income Students Taught by Appropriately Certified Teachers:** 87%
- ï **Percentage of Minority and Low-Income Students Taught by Out-of-Field Teachers:** 0%
- ï **Percentage of Minority and Low-Income Students Taught by New Teachers:** 65%
- ï **Percentage of Minority and Low-Income Students Taught by Experienced Teachers:** 35%
- ï **Percentage of Minority and Low-Income Students Taught by Ineffective Teachers:** 0%

### *2. Identifying Possible Inequities*

Our analysis has not identified any inequities based on minority or poverty status. Key factors include:

- ï Small class sizes
- ï Daily small group instruction for 100% of students
- ï 100% student access to computers
- ï Consistent use of academic strategies in both regular and special education settings
- ï Provision of breakfast and lunch for all students
- ï Availability of extended day programs for all students
- ï Staff training in Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning
- ï Use of MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) and Child Find to identify and assist students needing additional support

### *3. Strategies to Ensure Equitable Teacher Distribution*

To ensure low-income and minority students are not disproportionately taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, we implement the following strategies:

- ï **Benchmarking Assessments:** Using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) for ELA and Exact Path for Reading, Writing, and Math
- ï **Pre and Post Testing:** Applied in all classes to assess student progress
- ï **Data Team Meetings:** Regular meetings to discuss necessary academic adjustments
- ï **Instructional Strategies:** Use of CUBE, RACE, Pre-teaching, Summarizing, CFU's, tiered instruction, PSSA data, and classroom-based measurements to accommodate diverse learning needs

### *4. Evaluating Strategy Effectiveness*

We use the following methods to determine the effectiveness of our strategies:

- ï **MTSS and Child Find:** Identifying students needing additional support
- ï **Benchmark Assessments:** Monitoring student progress towards PDE/SAS benchmarks
- ï **Professional Development:** 10 days of training during summer and half-day sessions each month to ensure staff support
- ï **Weekly Data Meetings:** Monitoring and supporting early learning of skills

## *Importance of a Compliant Parent/Student Handbook*

### *Legal Compliance*

Adhering to Pennsylvania School Law ensures that LCS operates fairly, transparently, and accountably. A compliant Parent/Student Handbook demonstrates LCS's commitment to upholding the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

### *Clarity and Consistency*

A compliant handbook provides clear guidelines and policies for parents and students, outlining rights, responsibilities, and expectations to promote fairness and accountability, thereby fostering a harmonious and productive learning environment.

### *Protection of Student Rights*

Incorporating Pennsylvania School Law into the handbook ensures students receive equal educational opportunities and fair treatment, covering areas such as disciplinary procedures, anti-bullying policies, attendance requirements, and special education services.

### *Parental Engagement and Communication*

A compliant handbook encourages parental engagement and establishes open communication lines between parents, students, and the school. It serves as a comprehensive resource that informs parents about their rights, responsibilities, and the school's educational approach, fostering strong partnerships and enhancing the educational experience for students.

### **Liability and Risk Management**

Outlining safety protocols, liability limitations, and procedures for incidents within the school premises or during school-sponsored activities helps manage risks and provides a safe learning environment for all students.

### *Adaptability and Accountability*

Staying compliant with Pennsylvania School Law demonstrates LCS's commitment to adaptability and accountability, showing that the school remains informed about current regulations and aligns its policies and procedures accordingly.

### **Conclusion**

A Parent/Student Handbook compliant with Pennsylvania School Law is crucial for Laboratory Charter School. It ensures legal compliance, promotes clarity and consistency, protects student rights, encourages parental engagement, manages liability, and fosters adaptability and accountability. This commitment ultimately supports the well-being, rights, and educational success of both students and parents at LCS.

**Title I Parent Survey 2025-2026**

**Dear Parent or Guardian:** We are in the process of conducting an evaluation of our parental involvement program for the 2025-2026 school year. We are hoping to stay in-person for learning this year and we would like your input into our Title 1, 2, 3, and 4 Federal Programs. The Federal Programs fund things such as academics, professional development, parent activities, technology, and interventions for students. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. The responses will be used to improve the Federal Programs Parental Involvement Program.

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Do you feel welcome in your child’s school?</u>		
<u>2</u>	<u>Does your school encourage you to be involved in your child’s education?</u>		
<u>3</u>	<u>Do you know what it means to be a Title I School and what your rights are?</u>		
<u>4</u>	<u>Do you know how additional help with reading and/or mathematics is given to students through the Title I program?</u>		
<u>5</u>	<u>Do you know what your child should know and be able to do in reading and/or mathematics for the grade he/she is in? (Academic Content Standards)</u>		
<u>6</u>	<u>Does the Title I School-Parent Compact help to remind you about things you can do to help your child do better in school?</u>		
<u>7</u>	<u>Do you have any suggested changes for the Parent Involvement Policy?</u>		

Prior to Covid-19, did you participate in any of the following activities offered this year?

Please check all that apply:

	<u>Annual Meeting of Federal Programs</u>		<u>Family Reading/Math Nights</u>
	<u>Parent Advisory Committees/Councils</u>		<u>Development of School-Parent Compact</u>
	<u>Federal Programs Planning/Evaluation for the 2020-2021 school year</u>		<u>Explanation of Adequate Yearly Progress, School Improvement, Interventions, Healthy and Safe Schools, Professional Development, Parent Programs, Student Data</u>
	<u>Explanation of State Standards and Curriculum</u>		<u>Volunteering in the Classroom, Understanding what your child is being taught</u>
	<u>Feedback on Parent Involvement Plan</u>		<u>Parent-teacher Conferences</u>

**Did you receive a copy of the following three documents this year:**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
LAB Parent Involvement Policy		
LAB Right to Know Letter		
LAB Parent/Student Compact		
LAB Parents as Partners In Education Information		

**Please List Any Additional Questions, Comments, or Concerns You Have In Order To Improve The Federal Programs At LAB Charter:**

**Name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Campus \_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you wish to be contacted by a LAB Charter Staff member to discuss this survey? If so, please provide:**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Email: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_**

**Campus: \_\_\_\_\_**

**If you have further feedback or wish to contact the school, Mr. King, Parent Coordinator is always available to assist you. He can be reached at [parents@labcharter.com](mailto:parents@labcharter.com), or 267-817-4720. Please return all surveys to LAB Charter.**

**Thanks for your time,**

**The LAB Charter School Staff**

## Parent and Family Handbook Page for Your Signature

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understand, and

(Parent-Please Print Your First and Last Name.)

agree with what the School and Parent Handbook and School Guidelines, Parent and Family Engagement Policy, School-Family Compact, and Equity Plan. I discussed it with mychild to ensure that he/she understands it as well.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Child Signature

Date

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # 1

Phone # 2

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: This Parent/Student Handbook and School Guidelines follows Pennsylvania Charter School Law and reflects the policies and procedures in effect as of its publication. Any updates or changes to the policies will be communicated to parents and students in a timely manner.

Please consult the school administration for any questions or clarifications regarding the information contained in this handbook.

