

Old Sturbridge Academy

CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Family Handbook

(updated August 2018)

**2 Old Sturbridge Village Road
Sturbridge, MA 01566**

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Mission Statement

Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School, an EL (formerly Expeditionary Learning) school working in partnership with Old Sturbridge Village, will provide K-8 students with rigorous, real-world learning experiences in a supportive and nurturing school community, helping all students to become reflective inquirers, articulate communicators, critical thinkers, and skilled problem solvers. Representing all aspects of the diversity spectrum, our students will meet or exceed grade-level expectations in all subject areas. A culture of quality will permeate the school and our students will graduate with an understanding of how they learn best and how to advocate for the resources they need when they are challenged.

History of Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School

Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School (the Academy) was granted a charter on February 28th, 2017 after a few years of intensive planning and preparation. As a charter public school, the Academy is accessible by lottery to any family living in Massachusetts, but preference is given to students from the towns of Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Holland, Monson, North Brookfield, Palmer, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Wales, and Webster. Charter schools were introduced in Massachusetts via the 1993 Education Reform Act passed by the Legislature. Charter schools are independently managed public schools that operate under a five-year charter granted by the Massachusetts Board of Education. The Academy partners with EL Education, a national network of over 150 schools that has demonstrated strong results working with students from all backgrounds, especially students from economically disadvantaged households, English language learners, and students with special learning needs. In EL Education Schools, the core practices implemented create school environments that promote deep engagement in learning that allows students to achieve at high levels.

Charter schools have the freedom to organize around a core mission, curriculum, theme, or teaching method, and are allowed to control their own budgets and employ teachers and staff. In return for this freedom, a charter school must demonstrate strong academic results and organizational viability. Parents and guardians choose to send their children to charter schools. Students are selected by random public lottery when demand exceeds the number of seats available. Charter schools are public schools embodying freedom, choice, and accountability.

EL Education Design Principles

The Academy is part of a national network of EL schools. These design principles express EL's philosophy of education and its core values. Drawn from the work of Outward Bound's founder, Kurt Hahn, and other educational leaders, they shape school culture and provide a foundation for the moral purpose of schools.

The Primacy of Self-Discovery: Learning happens best with emotion, challenge, and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. In EL schools, students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover that they can do more than they think they can.

The Having of Wonderful Ideas: Teaching in EL schools fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.

The Responsibility for Learning: Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of an EL school encourages both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.

Empathy and Caring: Learning is fostered best in communities where the ideas of teachers and students are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small in EL schools with a caring adult looking after

the progress and acting as an advocate for each child. Older students mentor younger ones, therefore students feel physically and emotionally safe.

Success and Failure: All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. It is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.

Collaboration and Competition: Individual development and group development are integrated so that the values of friendship, trust, and group action are clear. Students are encouraged to compete not against each other, but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.

Diversity and Inclusion: Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. In EL schools, students investigate and value their different histories and talents as well as those of other communities and cultures. Schools and learning groups are heterogeneous.

The Natural World: A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the Earth and of future generations.

Solitude and Reflection: Students and teachers need time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections, and create their own ideas. They also need time to exchange their reflections with other students and with adults.

Service and Compassion: We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and one of an EL school's primary functions is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service.



Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for governance and holds the charter for the Academy that was granted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The Board of Trustees defines the mission of the Academy, develops policies and changes them when appropriate, hires qualified personnel to oversee the Academy's day-to-day operations while holding them accountable for meeting established goals, and formulates a long-range plan and charter school accountability plans that will ensure the Academy's continued stability. The board ensures that the Academy is complying with all of the state and federal laws that apply, and that the Academy is operating in accordance with its charter and with any approved amendments to said charter. Board of Trustees meetings are held regularly with appropriate notice that can be found on <http://www.osacps.org/board-of-trustees-meeting.html> and are open to the public. Members of the Academy community as well as the general public may comment on docketed agenda items during the public comment period of the board meetings. When the agenda calls for it, community members may engage with the school board around particular topics at the discretion of the board. Minutes from each month's meeting are available on the Academy's website after they are formally approved and adopted by the Board. A parent representative will be elected to serve on the Academy Board of Trustees.

Keith Blanchette- is a partner in Stolberg, Ebbeling & Blanchette, LLP in Worcester, MA. Keith is a member of the Executive Committee of the Worcester State University Foundation Board, a member of the American Red Cross Board, and an Easter Seals of Massachusetts board member. Keith has a B.S. in Business Administration from Worcester State University and is a certified public accountant.

Pamela Boisvert- is currently the ED of Massachusetts Education and Career Opportunities Inc. She is a former board member of the Washington-based Council for Opportunity in Education (COE). She is currently a member of the advisory boards for the Massachusetts Dept. of Higher Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance, the Latino Education Institute, and the New England regional office of the United Negro College Fund. She and her husband were the 2015-16 co-chairs of the United Way of Central Mass' Annual Campaign, the first chairs to be selected from the nonprofit sector. She is a former board member of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Mass. Higher Education Assistance Corp., Mass. Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Dynamy, Inc., and Girls Inc. of Worcester.

Reed Hillman- is a graduate of Suffolk Law School, as well as a former Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police, where he was responsible for more than 2,600 law enforcement personnel and an annual budget of over \$200 million. Reed served as a Massachusetts State representative from 2000-2004 and was a candidate for Lieutenant Governor in 2006. He currently teaches criminal justice courses at Mt. Wachusett Community College in Gardner, MA.

Richard McGrath - is the President and ED of McGrath Insurance Group, Inc., an agency with annual premiums exceeding \$20 million and 22 employees, including specialists in personal, commercial and life insurance, and employee benefits. He earned his bachelor's degree from Southern New Hampshire University, and completed the Executive Leadership and Development Program at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School.

Daniel Pear- is Assistant Director and Athletic Director for the EL Education-based Springfield Renaissance School, where he was a founding member. At Springfield Renaissance School, Dan serves a member of the Race and Equity Team, the Innovation Team and the School Centered Decision Making Team. Dan holds a Bachelor's of Science from Springfield College, a Master's of Science from Lesley University, and a certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Administration from Fitchburg State College.

Jasmin Rivas- is the program coordinator in Southbridge, MA for YOU Inc., one of the leading child welfare, behavioral health, and education agencies in Massachusetts. Jasmin manages Voices with Choices (VWC), a program targeting children 9-19 and Focus on Youth. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Tri-Community YMCA. She is the recipient of the Youth Empowerment Award of Aspira of Massachusetts. She

holds a B.A. from Worcester State University and is bilingual in Spanish and English.

Daniel Soucy- is the Endowed Chair of Civic Engagement, Chair of the Liberal Arts and Sciences, and a Professor of Philosophy at Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC). He also serves as a member of the Medical Ethics Board for Heywood Hospital. He worked for many years at Old Sturbridge Village, primarily as a blacksmith and farmer. He serves on the MA Department of Higher Education Committee on Civic Learning Outcomes. Dan serves as a Steering Committee member for the national Economic Inequality Initiative through the American Democracy Project and The Democracy Commitment. He completed his graduate education in Philosophy and Logic at SUNY Albany, and holds dual baccalaureate degrees in American History and Political Science from Westfield State University.

Christine Tieri -is the President of Idea Agency (formerly Smith & Jones) in Sturbridge. She is a Certified Brand Strategist. She served as a board member of Central Mass South Chamber of Commerce as well as the past president of TED- the Tantasqua Education Foundation-a community-sponsored, independent, non-profit organization dedicated to providing financial resources to support projects and programs that encourage students to develop their talents, become lifelong learners, and pursue excellence. Christine has a BA from Syracuse University.

Additional members/Parent Representative will be added once elected and approved by DESE.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

The School Year

The Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School has an extended school day in order to provide optimal instructional time. Due to construction in year one, the revised schedule and calendar for all students at the Academy is 190 days, with five built-in snow days. There are seven and a half hours of instruction each school day. Our school year starts on August, 22 2018 and ends on June 21, 2019, if there are no additional snow days.

Arrival

Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School day begins at 8:00 AM. Children who are driven to school are allowed to enter the school yard and/or building at 7:30 AM. We developed our arrival procedures to ensure the continuous supervision and safety of your child beginning at 7:30 AM.

Dismissal

Our school day ends at 3:30 PM. Students will be released to their bus, designated adult, or after school program. We developed our dismissal procedures to ensure the continuous supervision and safety of your child beginning at 3:30 PM.

Teachers only release students to adults designated by the student's parent or legal guardian. Please provide a list of people authorized to pick up your child if you have not already done so to the school's main office. We may ask for identification from this person; please inform your designated caregiver that it is for the security of the students that these precautions are taken. If you experience an emergency that prevents you from arriving at dismissal time, please call the school as soon as possible. Continuous late pick up will result in automatic enrollment in the after school program, which includes a fee.

Late Arrival and Early Dismissal

Children are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:10 AM. We require that parents/guardians who bring a child to school, arriving after 8:10 AM, accompany their child as they enter the building, and report to the office.

If your child needs to be released from school early, please send a note with your child or call the school office indicating what time he or she needs to leave. You will be required to dismiss your child from the main office and

fill out the early dismissal log. Meanwhile, your child will then be sent to meet you in the office. Consistent with our technology use policy, please do not call or text your child's personal phone during the school day. All messages to your child can be delivered through the main office.

Attendance Policy

Please note, this policy has been updated to meet our goal of 96% student attendance.

Effective Date: 2018-2019 school year

Attendance is the first step in ensuring mastery of knowledge and skills, character development, and high-quality work. In order for our students to reach their personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort at school each and every day. The goal of the student attendance policy is to promote consistent, daily school and class attendance. The expectation is that all students will have, at a minimum, at least a 96% attendance in school and in each class during each school day. To achieve this, students should be attending school 182 out of 190 days, which is a total of eight (8) absences. Massachusetts law requires compulsory attendance for all students. Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires all children between the ages of six and sixteen to attend school. The Academy must uphold state laws relative to student attendance. A student who is truant, frequently absent, or frequently tardy to school without adequate reason is in violation of this policy.

At the Academy, regular attendance is required. Our curriculum is ambitious, and every day attendance is essential for students to keep pace. Parents/guardians/families are expected to ensure that their children are in school.

Examples of an excusable absences may include the following:

- Serious illness, quarantine, or other serious medical event with an accompanying doctor's note
- Court attendance with documentation
- Death in the immediate family
- Observance or practice of a religious holiday

Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to:

- Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
- Truancy from school or individual classes
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations
- Oversleeping or otherwise being tardy to school

Notifying and Documenting Absences, Tardies, and Dismissals

If a student is not going to be in school, we would like to know about it as early as possible. If your child is absent, please call the school no later than 9:00 AM and speak to the Administrative Assistant or leave a message stating your child's name, teacher's name and reason for the absence. Please do not email or call teachers or administrators with absence, tardy, or dismissal information. Our attendance and dismissal system goes through the Administrative Assistant. If the school has not received notification of the absences from the parent or guardian within three (3) days of the absence, the school will notify the parent or guardian of a student absence.

Parents/guardians must provide written documentation from dentist, doctor, or other health care provider if a child

is seen during the school day and want it to be counted as excused. If the school nurse or designee dismisses a student due to health reasons, this will be considered an excused dismissal. The school shall notify that parent/guardian of a student who has at least five (5) days in which the student has missed two (2) or more classes unexcused in the school year or who has missed five (5) or more school days unexcused in the school year. School staff will make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. Communication concerning the attendance policy will follow the following process: notification from the Teacher, notification from the School Adjustment Counselor, and if improvement is not evident, the Principal. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school staff, the student and the student's parent/guardian, and with input from officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, as appropriate. It shall be the duty of the school to report ten (10) unexcused absences to the OSACPS Board of Trustees.

Students who are tardy more than twenty-five (25) times or absent (excused or unexcused) for more than thirteen (13) days over the course of the year may be required to attend summer school and are at risk of being retained the following year. Days served on suspension are included in a student's total absences.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) will be notified after fifteen (15) unexcused absences. The school reserves the right to file criminal charges in "An Adult Failure to Cause" (ADF) through Juvenile Court against the parent/guardian if unexcused absences exceed twenty (20). No credit will be given to students who miss school work due to truancy, tardiness or class -cutting, unless the student makes up the missed work as directed by his teacher. Teachers should afford students a reasonable amount of time upon their return to class to make up missed homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects, and other assignments. No adverse, prejudicial, or discriminatory effect shall result to any student because she/he is absent to observe a religious holiday. Teachers should, to the extent feasible, refrain from scheduling any important tests, culminating activities, and/or major papers/reports during religious holidays.

Tardies

School begins promptly at 8:00 AM. Students are marked tardy if they arrive after 8:10 AM. We require that parent/guardian who brings a child to school, arriving after 8:10 AM, accompany their child as they enter the building to sign them in and report to the office. Unexcused arrival after 10:30 AM is considered to be an absence. Three (3) tardies will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence.

Dismissals

Unexcused dismissal prior to 12:00 PM is considered to be an absence if the student does not return to finish the school day. We require that parent/guardian who dismisses a child from school, report to the main office to sign them out for the day.

School Personnel 2018-2019

Amy Herman	Kindergarten Lead Teacher	aherman@osacharter.org
Melissa Schwartz	Kinder Instructional Support	mschwartz@osacharter.org
Brianna Pike	Kindergarten Lead Teacher	bpike@osacharter.org

Elyse Ayers	Kinder Instructional Support	eayers@osacharter.org
Cassie Duca	First Grade Lead Teacher	cduca@osacharter.org
Kara Childs	Associate Teacher	kchilds@osacharter.org
Kate Szumita	First Grade Lead Teacher	kszumita@osacharter.org
Seana Moran	Second Grade Lead Teacher	smoran@osacharter.org
Kate Thompson	Behavioral Specialist	kthompson@osacharter.org
Liv Berger	Second Grade Lead Teacher	oberger@osacharter.org
Meg Cunningham	Third Grade Lead Teacher	mcunningham@osacharter.org
Sam McGuire	Third Grade Lead Teacher	smcguire@osacharter.org
Holidae Filkins	Fourth Grade Lead Teacher	hfilkins@osacharter.org
Steven Lee-Davis	Fourth Grade Lead Teacher, LTE Coordinator, Expedition Lead	sleedavis@osacharter.org
Sophia Romeri	Wellness Teacher and Associate Teacher	sromeri@osacharter.org
Kristina Provenzano	ESL teacher and Spanish teacher	kprovenzano@osacharter.org
Leah Prouty-Muller	Art Teacher	lproutymuller@osacharter.org
Tracy Burlingame	Special Education Coordinator/Special Education Teacher	tburlingame@osacharter.org
Rebekah Andino	Special Education Teacher	randino@osacharter.org
Brooke Servant	Occupational Therapist	bservant@osacharter.org
Dani Napolitano	School Adjustment Counselor	dnapolitano@osacharter.org
Nita Brunell	Administrative Assistant	nbrunell@osacharter.org
Karen Proulx	School Nurse	kproulx@osacharter.org
Sean Mero	Custodian	smero@osacharter.org

Jim Donahue	Executive Director at OSA President and CEO of OSV	jdonahue@osv.org
Lisa DeTora	Principal	ldetora@osacharter.org
Tina Krasnecky	OSA Business Manager/OSV VP Finance and Human Resources	tkrasnecky@osv.org

Academic Program

EL Education

The Academy's partnership with EL Education grants children an opportunity to connect what they are learning in classrooms to real-world applications through high-quality learning experiences. This helps all students become reflective inquirers, articulate communicators, critical thinkers, and skilled problem solvers. EL Education is a comprehensive school design, recognized as an exemplary model by the US Department of Education. EL Education is practiced in 152 schools nationwide and 20 in New England.

EL Education is based on student excellence in three dimensions of achievement:

- **Mastery of Knowledge and Skills**
 - Demonstrate proficiency and deeper understanding: show mastery in a body of knowledge and skills within each discipline.
 - Apply their learning: transfer knowledge and skills to novel, meaningful tasks.
 - Think critically: analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complex ideas and consider multiple perspectives.
 - Communicate clearly: write, speak, and present ideas effectively in a variety of media within and across disciplines.
- **Character**
 - Work to become effective learners: develop the mindsets and skills for success in college, career, and life (e.g., initiative, responsibility, perseverance, collaboration).
 - Work to become ethical people: treat others well and stand up for what is right (e.g., empathy, integrity, respect, compassion).
 - Contribute to a better world: put their learning to use to improve communities (e.g., citizenship, service).
- **High Quality Student Work**
 - Create complex work: demonstrate higher-order thinking, multiple perspectives, and transfer of understanding.
 - Demonstrate craftsmanship: create work that is accurate and beautiful in conception and execution.
 - Create authentic work: demonstrate original thinking and voice, connect to real-world issues and formats, and when possible, create work that is meaningful to the community beyond the school.

EL Education's focus on field studies, an integrated curriculum, and authentic assessment match the philosophy of the founders of the Academy, and help us foster both academic and character development. As an EL Education school, our students spend most of each day embarking on purposeful, rigorous learning expeditions that involve

intellectual, service, and kinesthetic dimensions. Learning expeditions are in-depth studies of a single theme or topic, generally lasting eight to ten weeks, and are the core of the curriculum. Each expedition revolves around curriculum-related projects and performances, which often take students outside the classroom to conduct fieldwork.

Our emphasis on educational achievement, community building, teamwork and service, combined with our curriculum framework and content, create a context for students to acquire the knowledge and character traits they need to succeed in high school as well as in life. They become connected, caring, and contributing members of their community.

Old Sturbridge Village

As one of the nation's leading living history museums, OSV has been providing educational programs to students, teachers and families for 70 years. With OSV serving as both a program partner and the charter management organization, the Academy is uniquely positioned to provide enhanced and expanded educational opportunities to our students in grades K-8 through standard-based self-guided experiences, Learning Expeditions, and Learning Through Experiences (LTE).

Self-guided experiences: will be an option for teachers to connect curriculum by using the Village as an extension of their classroom.

Learning Expeditions: are in-depth studies of a single theme or topic, generally lasting eight to ten weeks, and are the core of the curriculum. Each expedition revolves around curriculum-related projects and performances, which often take students outside the classroom to conduct fieldwork.

Learning Through Experiences (LTE)- are thematic units that take place throughout the Village campus. While lead teachers participate in professional development sessions, classes are accompanied by Associate Teachers and other school staff who work directly with Museum Educators and content experts such as costumed historians, master carpenters, and musicians to deepen the curricular connections and participate in real-world learning experiences.

Diverse Learners Supporting Structure

The Academy believes that **all** students can learn, regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, family background, race, disability, or state of health. The Academy will provide an inclusive, relevant, and rigorous program to all students including special education services to all eligible students in compliance with state and federal regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Academy's Parent Advisory Council (PAC), as required by M.G.L 603 CMR 28.07 (4), ensures that all parents are well-informed of their and their child's rights and are collaborative decision-makers in their child's educational services.

English Language Learners

The Academy is committed to serving culturally and linguistically diverse children who may speak an additional home language, or may need support in learning English. We are dedicated to providing English language support services for these students to acquire English language skills in a hands-on environment. This will be achieved, in part, through our partnership with EL and the unique location at OSV, as we create rigorous, real world learning experiences.

Students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) will be identified upon enrollment by a Home Language Survey (HLS) that will be given to each family. If a language other than English is identified in the home, the students will be assessed for English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening using the MODEL test, which is the initial assessment in the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. A WIDA classification will be given to the student on a scale from 1 to 6 and an instructional program will be planned and carried out accordingly. Depending on the level of the student's classification, one or more of the following methods will occur:

Structured English Immersion (SEI): Staff will instruct students with WIDA classifications of Entering-Developing/Expanding English language learners using the SEI approach. This includes a combination of placement in a regular education classroom using sheltered content instructional strategies, as well as ELL services by a licensed ESL teacher. All ELL services will take place with either a pull-out or inclusion model. All classroom teachers will be trained in evidence-based, best instructional practices for ELLs and be SEI endorsed by the end of their first year teaching at The Academy.

Sheltered Content Instruction: Best practices for all English language learners will be evident in the classrooms. These best practices will include scaffolding the instruction, using visuals and hands-on activities, modifying assignments, preferential seating, differentiated learning centers, and the reinforcement of language through a welcoming and safe environment. Each classroom will be rich in literature and informational texts for all reading levels and all teachers will be trained in SEI strategies to ensure that the best instructional practices are taking place throughout the curriculum. A licensed ESL teacher will be an important part of the school and support for students, staff, and families.

Pull out program: Students who are entering the Academy with a WIDA classification of Entering/Emerging English learners will benefit from additional, intensive English language development and early literacy instruction by following the WIDA standards and Common Core for 2 to 2.5 hours daily. This will be taught by a certified ESL teacher trained in WIDA as well as reading, writing, and the EL's curriculum. WIDA "Can Do" descriptors will be utilized for each student so that the lesson can be differentiated as needed for each child depending on their language classification.

Inclusion/Co-teaching program: Students who are English language learners in the Bridging and Reaching categories should stay in the regular education classroom with the benefit of a certified ESL teacher who will co-teach with the SEI endorsed classroom teacher during the service time. Both teachers will be trained in the co-teaching model and in the strategies for ELL students and WIDA instruction. During this time, the ESL teacher may group the ELL students to guide them through a reading or writing lesson using leveled readers as well as making sure they have the academic language and vocabulary needed to understand the classroom lesson (See the sample schedule later in this section for identified inclusion opportunities). The WIDA "Can Do" descriptors will be used so the lesson can be differentiated as needed.

Students with Special Needs

If a student arrives at the Academy with an existing Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan from his or her sending district, the special education coordinator, special education teachers, and the classroom teacher will review the documents for implementation. A parent conference will be arranged to discuss the present IEP or 504 and services that it requires until it is revised or a re-evaluation takes place.

The Special Education Coordinator is responsible for all students with IEPs and 504 plans. OSA will contract with providers for counseling and psychological services; speech, language, occupational, and physical therapy; behavioral; and any other services deemed necessary to meet the needs of the students. Regular education classrooms are responsive to all students' needs using an inclusive model where there is the capacity to group students to provide individual support and instruction for students in need. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with the special education staff as part of this inclusion model.

A Student/Teacher Assistance Team (hereinafter “STAT”) will be established for students who do not have an existing IEP but who may demonstrate potential support needs. The STAT will typically consist of classroom teachers from various grade levels, the school nurse, special education teacher, and led by the special education coordinator. Classroom teachers who suspect a need in a student’s level of performance will submit the student’s name to the STAT leader. A meeting will be scheduled with all staff that interacts with the student to discuss their perceptions of the child and the teacher’s concerns. Information from the different perspectives will be shared and will result in new ideas for the teacher to implement in the classroom and/or a coordinated plan for intervention. This may involve such steps as having the special education teacher observe the student, adjusting the level or type of scaffolded support for the student, increasing small group skill-based lessons, developing a behavior modification plan, or moving toward a special education referral.

During the period of intervention, with parental permission, additional academic support will be provided by the classroom teacher, the special education teacher, or other needed professionals for 6 to 8 weeks. The student’s progress will then be assessed to determine if he/she has responded successfully to the intervention. If, after the allotted intervention period, the child has not demonstrated growth, then the student will be referred for special education testing.

If the student is found eligible for an IEP based on a disability at his or her team meeting, the IEP Team will collaborate to construct an IEP with appropriate goals and objectives to meet the student’s needs. The IEP will be modified annually to reflect the student’s progress and continued need for services. Reevaluation, with parental consent, will be done every three years. If a student does not qualify for an IEP, then a 504 Plan may be an appropriate course of action. The Academy will meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws.

Economically Disadvantaged

The Academy will provide the supports needed for economically disadvantaged students to close the achievement gap. Federal funding through the Title I program is available for districts with high levels of economically disadvantaged students and for students with academic needs that are not served by special education programs. We will seek Title I funding to support these students who qualify for the program and will implement a number of activities and services to meet students’ needs. OSV is providing access to the museum through free family memberships for Academy students. Our school has a commitment to closing the achievement gap and provide social and academic skills through community, high-quality work, real-world applications of learning, and imagination, exploration, and immersion.

Communication

Phone, email, and written communication

Open communication between teachers and parents/caretakers is essential to every students’ success in the school. Teachers will seek opportunities to communicate with parents/caretakers about their child’s progress at the Academy. Parents/caretakers can expect this to include written notes, telephone calls, and emails.

Old Sturbridge Academy also utilizes communication systems to distribute important information to parents/caretakers. Parents/caretakers may receive automated calls, text messages, and emails regarding upcoming events, professional days, and other matters. In addition, all families will receive automated phone calls and text messages

in the case of school closure due to weather, early dismissal due to weather, or another emergency situation. If parents/caretakers are not receiving these communications, please contact the Administrative Assistant.

All parents/caretakers will be provided with contact information for their child's teacher and for other staff members, such as the school leaders. Students and parents/caretakers should feel free to call or email when they have a question, concern, or suggestion. Teachers during the school day are expected to be fully engaged and will typically not be available to return call until after school. If you have a non urgent concern or desire to speak to an Academy teacher, please send them an email to arrange a convenient time to speak or meet. If you have an urgent need to speak to a teacher please call them Monday-Friday between the hours of 7:30-8:00 AM or 3:30-4:00 PM. If you need to reach someone throughout the school day, please call our Administrative Assistant. Old Sturbridge Academy staff members will typically respond during the week within 24 hours or 1 business day.

Please remember, if you need to communicate absences or information to your child, please call the Administrative Assistant to relay this information to your child.

Updates from the Academy

Each month, the school leaders, Administrative Assistant, teachers, and specialists will each write about what is happening at the Academy. The Administrative Assistant will provide a calendar update and general announcements. Our plan is to highlight student work in this newsletter as well. We encourage you to sit with your child and use this as a reading tool.

Home Visits

For entering kindergarteners each year before the start of school, your child's teacher will contact you to schedule a visit at home. This could be in your home, a local park, or a library-anywhere that is most comfortable for you. This is a chance for us to start to build our community as we learn about you and your child. In turn, your child will have a familiar face to look for on the first day of school-their teacher. In early August, your child's teacher will contact you to schedule a visit. These can be in the morning, afternoon, or early evening. Expect visits to last approximately 50 minutes.

Student-Led Conferences

The Old Sturbridge Academy academic year is divided into four quarters. There will be two Student-Led Conferences (SLCs) in the winter and spring. Expect each child's SLC to last around 30 minutes.

During these meetings, the student will take an active role in directing conversation, reflect on their progress, and set academic and character goals for the coming months. SLCs will take place in the afternoons and evenings outside of the school day.

Family Engagement

Yearly Orientation

Before the first day of school each year, we will hold an orientation for parents to welcome new families to the school and update any new changes that have been adopted as we update our policies and procedures. This orientation will clearly outline the Academy's academic and behavioral expectations for all students. The date will be listed on the yearly school calendar as well as the Academy's website. As a new school grows and develops, policies and programs may evolve.

Old Sturbridge Village Family Membership

Families of every student at the Academy will receive a complimentary yearly family membership to Old Sturbridge Village so that the family can share the learning environment that the student experiences every day. Membership allows you to access the museum during the day at no charge, and access special events at a discounted price. Additionally, you get regular updates at the museum and the Visitor Magazine. We encourage you to come to the museum on weekends, vacations, and holidays.

Town Meeting:

Every Friday, our entire school community comes together for a weekly gathering. Activities may include celebrations of student achievement, guest speakers, sharing of student work, community problem solving, and student performance. Parents and caretakers are welcome to attend this community gathering and sit in a designated seating area.

Expedition Nights and Celebrations of Learning

Old Sturbridge Academy will host Expedition Nights and Celebrations of Learning. These events will offer students the opportunity to showcase their high-quality work and to teach parents and community members about what they have learned. Student participation in these evenings is required, and family members are strongly encouraged to attend.

Family Events

The Academy will offer regular family nights which will take place in partnership with OSV. Examples could include a back to school get together. A Family Engagement committee will be formed to help the Academy in its efforts to bring the school together.

School Visits

We recognize there may be a reason that a parent/caretaker would want to observe their child's classroom. These observations need to be scheduled with the principal who will greet and accompany you on your visit. To protect the privacy of all of our students and protect the smooth operation of a planful classroom, unscheduled visits are not permitted.

After your visit is scheduled, we ask that you turn off your cell phone prior to entering the school. Please check into the main office when you arrive. You will receive a nametag, to be worn during the duration of your visit. This opportunity is for observation only. If you wish to speak with the teacher, please make an appointment. We ask that parents/guardians refrain from observing during the first few weeks of the school year in order to establish our school routines.

Parent Advisory Councils

The Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School Parent Councils will engage parents in shaping the Academy and developing programming that will advance the mission of the school. The Academy will operate two Parent Advisory Councils:

- The School Wide Parent Advisory Council will provide opportunities for parents to give feedback to the Executive Director, principal, and board of trustees. The Parent Advisory Council will elect a member who will sit on the Board of Trustees. The Parent Advisory Council will be responsible for giving input on school policy, recruiting new students, for developing quarterly Family Night programming and conducting other activities as determined by members. During the second meeting of the year, the bylaws will be finalized, and officers will be elected. All parents are encouraged to participate.
- The Special Education Parent Council promotes parent engagement in the development and modification of programs serving students with special needs. In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, duties of the Special Education Advisory Council will include, but not be limited to, advising the Academy on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with special needs and meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the Academy's special education programs. The Special Education Parent Advisory Council will also offer workshops and

educational programming of interest to parents of children with special needs and will play an active role in recruiting students with special needs to enter the lottery. The Special Education Parent Council will meet one evening every other month. During the first meeting of the year, the bylaws will be finalized, and officers will be elected. All parents are encouraged to participate. Please see the OSA website for information on the next scheduled meeting.

Volunteer Opportunities

Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School encourages all parents and caretakers to volunteer and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/caretaker has the opportunity to do so in a way that accommodates his or her schedule. Volunteer opportunities include being a regularly scheduled volunteer (in a classroom or main office) or a special purpose volunteer. When volunteers are visiting the classroom, they are operating in the best interests of all the children in the classroom. Volunteers will need to be CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checked. After the first six weeks of school, there will be a volunteer training for parents/caretakers who want to volunteer at the Academy.

Homework Policy

Homework serves multiple purposes, including the opportunity to practice skills that have already been introduced and taught throughout the day, helping teachers to determine whether a child has mastered the concepts, keeping parents connected to the school, and showing families what their student is learning. Homework also teaches students responsibility and accountability.

- The most important homework is for all students to read every day.
- Homework should be able to be completed by almost every child with minimal adult support. If you find that this is not the case, please speak to your child's teacher.

There will be consistent, grade-level expectations for homework that will be communicated to you during the first six weeks of school.

Uniform Policy



Dress Code

At the Academy we have adopted a school uniform dress code in order to create a sense of community among their peers as we embody the EL saying, "We are crew, not passengers." Uniforms will help identify our students when they are in the Village doing fieldwork. It is the parent/caretaker's responsibility to be sure that the student is following the official school uniform dress code. This dress code is in place to contribute to a positive and structured school environment.

If your child is having a difficult time adhering to the dress code, please reach out to the school administrators. We do not want families to have a conflict at home around the uniform policy. We are happy to help your child understand the importance of wearing their uniform and problem solve with your child.

K – 8th Grade School Day Uniform Dress Code:

- Khaki pants or shorts that hit the mid-thigh or longer (no jeans, dungarees, yoga pants, or sweatpants).
- Skirts with navy, white, or black tights/leggings, or skorts.
- Navy Polo shirt.
- Navy sweater, vest, fleece, or sweatshirt.
- Sneakers or boots (no flip flops, Crocs or clogs, sandals).

Jackets: Students may wear a navy blue fleece with the school logo in the building. All other jackets must be removed once the students are indoors.

Financial Assistance

The Academy is committed to ensuring that the cost of uniforms is not a prohibitive barrier for any student. If families feel that the cost of uniforms would pose a significant financial hardship, they may contact the adjustment counselor to request a “starter kit” containing uniform items that a student needs to begin school.

Donation of Used Uniforms

At the end of the year, families are encouraged to donate uniform items in good condition that no longer fit their students. These items will be made available to families at no cost.

Lost and Found

At the end of every quarter, we will go through lost and found items and bring them to Town Meeting. If the items remain unclaimed, we will donate the items to local charities or collect uniforms for redistribution. If your child has lost an item, please contact the Administrative Assistant.

Technology Policy

The Academy will adopt an acceptable use policy for technology. In year one, teachers will guide students on how to use technology appropriately in the classroom.

Celebrations at School

In the classroom and during Town Meetings, we will establish birthday traditions. Please let us know if you do not want us to celebrate your child’s birthday. Because we are aware of a variety of dietary needs of our students, we do not allow outside food to celebrations during the school day. Invitations to birthday parties may not be distributed on school property unless all children in the class are invited. Otherwise, please consult the parent/caretaker contact guide for individual information.

We understand that children and families observe a variety of holidays and family celebrations. In order to devote more time to our learning expeditions and our own school traditions and celebrations, we do not have holiday-themed parties in our classrooms or celebrate one-day commemorative events.

Our Campus

Visitor Protocols

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff, the front door will remain locked at all times. When a visitor arrives, he or she should ring the bell at the main entrance and then proceed immediately to the Main Office. Visitors are required to wear an Academy nametag at all times. The Academy reserves the right to request that any visitor leave the building at any time or deny entry.

Emergency Drills

As part of our first six weeks of school, and throughout the school year, students and staff will participate in emergency drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate responses in the event of an emergency.

Should the school day end early due to an emergency, all parents and guardians will be contacted and provided the option to pick up their student. No student will be dismissed without permission from an administrator. Parents / guardians will be required to sign the student out. Students will also have the option to remain at a safe location until normal dismissal time and to take the bus home from the holding location.

Structured/Unstructured Play

Time outdoors improves focus, academic achievement, classroom engagement, and lowers stress in students. The Academy's students will have an outdoor skillful play period for at least 20 minutes daily. We have structured/unstructured play outside, unless there are extreme temperatures or weather that makes it unsafe to be outdoors. Please provide your child with climate appropriate apparel, including snow pants, boots, gloves, hats, and scarves to be kept at school during the winter months.

Cell Phones and Electronics

We recognize the importance of technology in the 21st century and how it can be beneficial for sending and receiving important information. At this time, tablets, handheld gaming devices, and e-readers are required to be left at home during the school day. In year one of our school, it is up to the parents/guardians discretion to allow their child to bring a cell phone to school. However, during the school day, cell phones need to be turned off and stored in students' backpacks, which are located inside the classroom. Cell phones can only be used during the school day with permission of the administrators or a teacher. Repeated violation of the policy could result in the confiscation of the device, to be later returned to a parent or guardian. If you need to contact your child during the school day, please go through the main office.

When students in the school are in communication with each other outside of school, we expect that communication reflects the values of the Academy and remains consistent with how they communicate with each other in school. This includes *messenger* and other applications, social media, and in person. We reserve the right to have conversations with students about conduct if they are engaging in inappropriate conversations with other Academy students.

Food and Drink in School

Eating and drinking at school, outside of lunch, will be managed by the classroom teacher. The teacher will determine when it is appropriate for eating in the classroom. Students are allowed to bring their own water bottles to school and will have access to them throughout the day. In the Village, at recess, during Wellness, there is no eating in those settings without the approval of the principal. Students may not, at any time, be in possession of caffeinated beverages while at school or at school-sponsored events. Old Sturbridge Academy is a nut-free campus, as such our policy is that *all* students refrain from bringing products featuring peanuts and tree nuts to school, or

school related activities for breakfast, lunch, or snack. Foods containing peanuts and tree nuts will not be served at the Academy.

Tobacco Products

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, the use of tobacco products is prohibited within school buildings or school facilities, on school grounds, and on school buses. OSV is a smoke-free campus.

Health

School Nurse

Our nurse will be located in Old Sturbridge Academy no less than 26 hours per week. Administrators will be DPH medication delegated to assist children who receive medication in school but are not yet self-directed.

When to Keep Your Child Home

Each day many parents are faced with a decision: should they keep their sick children at home or send them off to school? Often the way a child looks and acts can make the decision. an obvious one. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows the child opportunity to rest and recover. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep your child home:

Fever. The child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100°. The child can return to school after he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (without fever- reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin).

Diarrhea/Vomiting. A child with diarrhea and /or vomiting should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom-free for 24 hours, unless otherwise specified by the school nurse or licensed health care provider.

Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye. Following a diagnosis of conjunctivitis, the child may return to school 24 hours after the first dose of prescribed medication.

Rashes/Hives. Common infectious diseases with rashes are the most contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash should return to school only after a healthcare provider has made a diagnosis and authorized the child's return to school.

Colds. Consider keeping your child at home if he/she is experiencing discomfort from cold symptoms, such as nasal congestion and severe cough. A continuous green discharge from the nose may be a sign of infection. Consider having the child seen by your healthcare provider.

Lice. Once the hair is treated with the appropriate solution, all live lice must be removed. The school nurse must check the child before returning to the classroom.

Chickenpox. All lesions that are the result of chickenpox have dried and scabbed, usually 5-6 days after the rash appears.

Impetigo. As determined by the physician or school nurse, usually 24 hours after treatment has started.

Strep Throat. Once the condition has been treated for 24 hours after being diagnosed and the child is feeling better.

Early Dismissal Due to Illness

The determination to send a child home is made by the school nurse or, in his/her absence, the principal, using the "Keep Home" criteria. Parents or caregivers will be notified by telephone of the nature of the illness and will be asked to pick the child up. Please provide the school with emergency contact information so that you, or your designee, may be reached at all times. We expect that ill children will be picked up within one hour of notification.

If your child becomes injured at school, you will be contacted and we will administer emergency first aid and complete an accident report for you to share with your child's physician. In the event of serious injury requiring

immediate emergency care, 911 will be called. The school administrators or other staff personnel will accompany the child to the hospital in the event the parent or caregiver cannot be reached.

Medication

All medications, prescription and over-the-counter, should be clearly labeled with the student's name and presented with written directions for administration from a physician consistent with the labeled directions. We also require written permission from the parent or guardian to administer medication in school. Students requiring over-the-counter medication for temporary conditions (colds, allergies, etc.) will also receive it from the school nurse, if documentation is provided by the parent. With the exception of prescribed epinephrine, inhalers, and other lifesaving emergency medications, students may not transport medication via the school bus, and may not keep any medication in their personal effects or in the classrooms.

A licensed nurse or medication delegation certified staff member will give medications to all children, unless your child is determined to be self-directed by the nurse. The nurse works with all children to be self-directed. Designated staff in the school setting, following assignment and in conjunction with approval by school nursing personnel may assist self-directed students with the taking of their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication. School personnel as well as the school administration assure that the staff person receives the training and supervision needed to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner for each specific child.

Health Records

Students' health records are maintained separately and confidentially from other school records, as required by law. Please be sure that all immunizations are up to date. Be prepared to provide documentation of all immunizations.

Allergies

Please alert the Academy to any allergies your child may have and provide medication (if necessary) to prevent a serious allergic reaction. This includes allergies to plants, animals, foods, medicines, and other substances.

Department of Public Health Regulations

Physical Examinations: Students must have a physical examination in the six months preceding their entry into the school or during their first year of attendance and every three to four years thereafter.

Immunizations: All Massachusetts public school students must be immunized for Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, and Varicella (102 CMR 7.07 and 105 CMR 220). Students lacking proper documentation of required immunizations shall be excluded until proof of such immunization is provided. If a parent/guardian refuses to have a child immunized because of religious or medical reasons, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and M.G. L. c. 111S.3,6,7,109,110,111,112 and 105 C.M.R. 300, the non-immunized student will be excluded from school during outbreaks of diseases for which the student is not immunized.

Lead Screening: Children must present documented evidence of lead poisoning screening prior to entrance into kindergarten (105 CMR 460)

Physical Examinations: Students are required to have physical exams for entrance into K, 4, and 7. It is recommended that this be done by the primary care physician or a healthcare facility.

Screening Programs: Vision, hearing, and postural screening will be conducted in accordance with state mandates.

Inspection: All students will be inspected as necessary for pediculosis. If this condition is found, the student will be excluded until all lice are removed. Students must be cleared through the school nurse before riding a schoolbus or returning to class.

Medications at School

The MA Department Public Health regulates the administration of prescription medications and has promulgated detailed "Regulations Governing the Administration of Prescriptive Medications in Public and Private Schools" (105 CMR 210.000). Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician. When the school nurse is not present, a student who needs medication during the school day may be called to the office at the scheduled hour and reminded by the secretary to take the medicine. This provision only applies when the correct dosage of the medication has been placed in an individual container clearly marked with the student's name, the dosage to be administered, and the time and/or conditions under which the medicine is to be taken. In addition, the student must be able to recognize the medicine that he/she or she is taking. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of Epi-pens.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

- Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
- Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
- Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucoses monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.

When it is necessary that a child take medication (including Tylenol) during school hours, the following procedures must be followed:

Long Term Medications: Those given daily during the school year or medication given on an as needed basis (such as Epi-pens, Tylenol, and inhalers)

- Doctor's medication order including the name of the medication, the dosage, time to be given and any special considerations with an MD address and first initial of doctor.
- Written consent from a parent/guardian.
- Medication must be in a pharmacy-labeled container. Over the counter medications must be in the original bottle.

Short Term Medications: Those given for ten days or less such as antibiotics

- Medication in a PHARMACY LABELED CONTAINER (The pharmacy will provide a separate bottle for the school if you ask.)
- For short-term medications we are not required to have a written order from the doctor; the written script on the bottle is sufficient.
- Written consent from a parent/guardian including the time the medication is to be given.

School Breakfast and Lunch

Our Lunchtime Philosophy

As part of our caring community commitment, students and teachers eat lunch together. We view this as a time for modeling and practicing social skills as we learn about nutrition. We hope to provide an enjoyable, community-building time that provides opportunities for sharing in small groups.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Here at the Academy, we do not see them as breaks but, rather, as community and educational opportunities for this reason we will offer breakfast and lunch to all students each day at no cost.

Enrollment

During the application procedures, all families receive the application materials for Income Eligibility Guidelines for the Child Nutrition Program to determine if students qualify for a free or reduced lunch. This information will allow us to qualify for the FDA school lunch program.

Meals from Home

Academy students may bring breakfast and/or lunch from home if they follow our tree nut/peanut-free policy. Sharing food from home between students is not permitted. Refrigeration and heating will not be available, so families should send foods that can be stored and consumed at room temperature.

Transportation Guidelines

It is the intent of Old Sturbridge Academy to comply with the laws of the Commonwealth, including the regulations of the Registry of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Education relative to transportation of pupils. Those laws and regulations govern any areas not covered by specific declarations of policy, and they shall supersede this Policy in the event of any conflict.

Authorized bus stops will be located at designated areas, accessible to students from surrounding neighborhoods. Centralized bus stop locations will be utilized to reduce bus route mileage and time. All bus routes will be designed to minimize the amount of time a child will be on the bus. Students will be required to board at “common” bus stops. Door to door bus service is **not** provided. Bus stops may only change as deemed necessary and authorized by the School Administration. **For safety and liability purposes students are to ride only buses that they are assigned to unless they bring a note from home indicating they are going home with a friend on a different bus.**

Once a child boards the bus, and *only* at that time, does he/she become the responsibility of Old Sturbridge Academy. Such responsibility ceases when the child is delivered to their parent/caregiver at the regular bus stop at the end of the school day. The parent/caregiver is responsible for the safety of the student between the residence and the designated bus stop, while waiting at the bus stop, and at the afternoon drop off.

Please arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up and drop off times. The bus driver will do his or her best to be on time. The bus will never leave a bus stop location before the scheduled pick up or drop off time.

It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to meet the bus on time to pick up your children. If you are unable to meet the bus on time to pick up your children, please make the necessary arrangements to have someone pick them up in your place so they are safe and supervised at all times. Children who do not have a parent/caregiver at the bus stop at the time of drop off will be brought back to the school. A parent/caregiver will need to pick up the child at the afterschool program at the school.

Please remind your child to observe safety rules while waiting for the bus:

- Students shall stand on the sidewalk or another designated place while waiting for the school bus.
- Be respectful of private property.
- Be mindful of other people trying to pass on the sidewalk.
- Do not play in the roads.
- Use crosswalks whenever possible if you must cross a street.

Students shall be picked up and discharged only at their designated stops. The legal residence of the student shall be used to establish designated bus stops.

It is the responsibility of the family to inform the school of any change in dismissal. Bus students are presumed to be taking the bus each afternoon unless otherwise directed. If you are having a change in dismissal for an extended period of time, but not permanently, please submit a note to the school office detailing the changes, and indicating the dates the changes begin and end. We understand unexpected last minute changes to pick up may occur. Should this happen, please call the main office and let us know what the change in dismissal may be.

Bus Safety Rules

- Please wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and the door is open before approaching.
- Walk as you enter the bus and notice others in front of you.
- All students are welcome in any seat, please do not save seats. Make sure to welcome other students to sit with you.
- Food and drink must be kept in your bag. Eating and drinking on the bus is not allowed.
- Please remain seated at all times.
- Please keep all body parts and items inside the bus (and not out the window) until you are exiting the bus.
- The emergency exit door is only for use in an emergency.
- If crossing the roadway, cross only in front of the bus when the blinking lights are on and the stop sign is extended.
- Pass at least 10 feet in front of the bus, and look for traffic in both directions before crossing the roadway.
- Parents and students should not drive/run beside a bus, chase after a bus, or pick up anything that has fallen near the wheels of a bus.
- Bus drivers must be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. He/She has a very important task to perform and needs your help to stay focused on driving.
- Please remember to stay seated calmly and use indoor voices on the bus.
- Please work to keep the bus looking its best! Students should not draw on or make holes in the seats, walls or windows.

If safety rules are not followed, students will be reminded of the rules. Failure to follow safety rules may lead to a meeting with the student, a parent/caregiver, and the administration. If a child is repeatedly putting themselves or others at risk on the bus, administration holds the right to suspend a child from riding the bus. Parents/Caregivers will need to arrange alternative transportation for the student to and from school. If a student intentionally causes damage to the school bus, parents/caregivers are responsible for the repair of the damage.

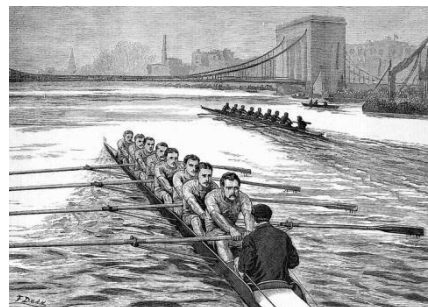
It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide health information to school bus drivers. If your child has a life-threatening medical condition that the bus driver should be aware of, please contact the school nurse.

A list of bus stop locations, pick up and drop off times will be sent out to families annually.

Code of Conduct

Learning Environment:

As a school that practices Responsive Classroom, the Academy actively establishes and maintains both a respectful and caring learning environment. The Academy believes in the Responsive Classroom philosophy: that the social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. The development of becoming an active and contributing member of the school community is a teaching process that has a positive effect.



School wide expectations for our Code of Conduct have been established to create a strong school culture that is practiced by all during lunch, in the hall, before and after school, in the Village, and whenever students represent the Academy in the community. All school members-students and staff-are held accountable for upholding the Code of Conduct.

Based on the practices of Responsive Classroom, our staff sets expectations, models expected behavior, and reinforces positive social behavior. Additionally, through our partnership with EL Education, students will use restorative questioning, the Habits of Character, and the Crew structure to build a continuously supportive culture for all. These behavioral expectations preemptively and proactively address potential issues. School culture will be framed around self-discipline and self-directed learning, and misbehavior will be treated as a learning opportunity for both students and faculty. Consequences will be logical, consistent, and clearly communicated.

Crew and Habits of Character:

Students and adults alike begin their day in Crew. This is a fundamental part of EL Education's model for developing strong culture and character. Our students are known well and supported by their faculty Crew leaders. Crew allows students and teachers to forge productive relationships over time to support their achievement. In elementary school, Crew involves the whole class and is known as Morning Meeting. Crew teams meet daily to discuss academic issues, share accomplishments, and problem-solve individual or school dilemmas.

The founding Academy staff will work together to create the Habits of Character which will be introduced to the students in the first 6 weeks of school. These Habits of Character will play an integral role in the daily life of the Academy. Each member (students, faculty, parents/caretakers, and OSV staff) of the Academy are expected to adhere to the Habits of Character.

Additionally, faculty and staff of the Academy are responsible for:

- Modeling the behavior expected of students.
- Using reinforcing, reminding, and redirecting language to remind students to live by the rules.
- Upholding EL Core practices and the mission of the Academy.

- Understanding and promoting the school's Code of Conduct and Habits of Character in order to prevent disciplinary issues.

Parents/Guardians of the Academy are responsible for:

- Participate with school staff in collaborating and supporting expected behavior.
- Cooperate with school staff to resolve disciplinary issues.
- Understanding and promoting the school's Code of Conduct and Habits of Character.

Consequences for Failure to Adhere to Behavioral Expectations

The Academy's goal is to create a school culture in which students want to follow the school's behavioral expectations. Behaviors that interfere with the safety and well-being of the school population or interfere with the teaching or learning processes will not be tolerated. Such behaviors will lead to logical consequences aimed at rectifying the inappropriate behaviors and investing students in changing their behavior. Logical consequences are relevant, realistic, and respectful.

There are three types of logical consequences: "you break it, you fix it," loss of privilege, and take a break. "You break it, you fix it" means if a child makes a mess, he/she is responsible for cleaning up that mess. Loss of privilege is if a child is not using school privileges responsibly, then a logical consequence would be to *temporarily* take it away. Take a break, is a strategy that is used to regain self-control. Students are either asked by the teacher or choose themselves to leave the group for a certain amount of time to regain composure.

Consequences will be administered with fairness and consistency. These logical consequences will promote the individual needs of the students and the values of the Academy. Generally, discipline starts with a discussion about what occurred, what could be done differently next time, and what to do about what has occurred and how to make it right. In the case of a more serious violation, additional disciplinary actions may be taken.

Classroom Rules and Consequences

With their teacher's guidance, students create their own classroom-based rules using their hopes and dreams for the year as well as the Habits of Character. When a student breaks a rule, there will be logical consequences as described above.

Academy teachers use low-level interventions to diffuse situations and prevent behaviors from escalating. These low level interventions are logical and minimize the time students are out of the classroom. Some examples of these interventions include verbal and visual cues, changing a student's seat in the classroom, one-on-one conversations, and requesting the student to write a reflection or apology.

Teachers and staff will:

- Anticipate behavior before it happens and address it proactively.
- Accentuate positive student behavior.
- Respect the dignity of individual students and never intentionally shame them.
- Issue logical consequences and deliver them with empathy and compassion.
- Behavior will be addressed in a methodical and logical way while emotionally supporting the child who is having a difficult time.

Community Rules and Consequences

Like the students in their individual classrooms, the entire Academy community adheres to school-wide rules and procedures. School-wide rules apply to common areas such as the playground, hallways, restrooms, multipurpose rooms, lunch room, and the campus of Old Sturbridge Village. If a student breaks a school-wide rule, then logical consequences will be applied.

Students are expected to follow the same school-wide rules and procedures outside of the physical school building. These include areas that we see as extensions of the classroom: the Village, school buses, field trips to other locations, athletic events, and other school-sponsored events. Students are representatives of the Academy at all times. Because students represent the Academy in the community, community rule violations often carry a more severe consequence. In cases involving safety and disruption, school leaders reserve the right to administer consequences.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Pursuant to M.G.L. 71, § 37H and 37O, bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action by the school administration. Please see Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.

Suspension and Expulsion

There are occasions when a student must be removed from their classroom and/or community. In-school suspension is a possible consequence for student misconduct. However, administration retains the ability to issue out of school suspensions. Please refer to "Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School Expulsion Policy" which is available in the main office or on the school's website.

Discipline and Students with Disabilities

Protections in the IDEA apply to students who have been found eligible for special education and to students for whom the school is deemed to have knowledge that the child might have a disability (i.e., students who have not yet been found eligible but the school had a basis of knowledge of a disability, including students who have been referred for initial evaluation). 34 CFR § 300.354

1. Beginning on the 11th school day of a student's disciplinary removal during the school year, and if removal is a change in placement, the student must be provided free appropriate public education (FAPE) services during the period of removal to allow him/her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards IEP goals, even if in a different setting. 34 CFR § 300.530(b) & (d).
2. If the conduct that the student is being disciplined for involves the "special circumstances" of weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or serious bodily injury, school personnel may remove the student to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES)
3. If disciplinary removal for current misconduct is for less than 10 consecutive school days and removals total less than 10 cumulative school days in the school year 34 CFR § 300.530(b) Old Sturbridge Academy may exclude student from the current placement without obligation to provide FAPE unless Old Sturbridge Academy provides services for students without disabilities who are similarly removed. 34 CFR § 300.530(d)(3). Types of exclusion may be suspension,

removal and assignment to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES). An “in-house” suspension may be considered a change in placement.

4. If disciplinary removal for current misconduct is for less than 10 consecutive school days but removals total more than 10 school days in the school year 34 CFR § 300.530(b)(2) and the removal one in a series that is a pattern of removal constituting a change of placement 34 CFR § 300.536 Old Sturbridge Academy will:
 - a. Notify parents immediately of decision to change placement for disciplinary reasons, and of procedural safeguards under IDEA. 34 CFR § 300.530(h). Student is entitled to FAPE services as determined by the Team. 34 CFR § 300.530(d)(5)
 - b. Within 10 school days of decision to remove student for disciplinary reasons the district, the parent and relevant members of the IEP Team must review relevant information and make a manifestation determination. 34 CFR § 300.530(e)
 - c. Manifestation Determination: If the conduct is a direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP 34 CFR § 300.530(e) or if the conduct has a direct and substantial relationship to the disability then the student’s conduct is a manifestation of his/her disability. 34 CFR § 300.530(f)
 - i. If conduct was a direct result of failure to implement the IEP, the district must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies and review. 34 CFR § 300.530(e)(3)
 - ii. Old Sturbridge Academy will conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral implementation plan, or review and modify an existing plan as needed. 34 CFR § 300.530(f)(1)(i)-(ii) **and** return student to placement unless (1) parent and district agree to a different placement, (2) hearing officer orders new placement, or (3) removal is for “special circumstances” under 34 CFR § 300.530(g). 34 CFR § 300.530(f)(2)
 - d. If it is determined that the student’s conduct is not a manifestation of his/her disability. 34 CFR § 300.530(c)
 - i. Old Sturbridge Academy may apply relevant disciplinary procedures in the same manner and for the same duration as to students without disabilities. 34 CFR § 300.530(c)
 - ii. IEP Team determines extent to which FAPE services are needed to enable the student to continue to participate in the general ed curriculum and progress toward meeting IEP goals. 34 CFR § 300.530(d)(5)
 - iii. Old Sturbridge Academy will provide, as appropriate, functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications. 34 CFR § 300.530(f)(1)
 - iv. The student will return to placement when the disciplinary period expires unless parent and school agree otherwise or student is lawfully expelled.

Searches

Searches by school officials of students and their belongings will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Students and their personal belongings, including but not limited to purses, backpacks, computers, and clothing on school property or at school events, are subject to search by school personnel to the extent that the search is reasonable under all circumstances. In the event of a search of a student or their belongings, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified. To the extent

possible, searches will be conducted by a school official in the presence of another adult. In the event a student is found to be in the possession of an object or substance that may give rise to a crime, the police may be notified. When the school refers a student to the police, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified. Objects, substances, or other items that are prohibited by the school rules may be held by a school official and returned to the parent(s) or guardian(s). Students have no expectation of privacy in their lockers or desks. The school retains joint custody of all lockers and desks, lockers and desks are subject to search by school officials at any time.

Physical Restraint Policy

The Massachusetts Department of Education established regulations governing the use of physical restraints on students. Old Sturbridge Academy is required to follow these regulations, which govern the use of physical restraint on students in Massachusetts' public school districts, charter schools, educational collaboratives and special education schools.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students enrolled at the Academy are free from unreasonable use of physical restraint. An intervention is used only in emergency situations after other less intensive alternatives have failed or have been deemed inappropriate. Physical restraint should be administered only when needed to protect a student or other students and staff from imminent, serious physical harm. Physical restraint should be administered in the least intrusive manner possible and should be used to prevent or minimize harm to the student. Academy personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

(a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and

(b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

At the beginning of each school year, the administrators are required to identify program staff to be responsible for administering proper physical restraint procedures. These individuals will participate in in-depth training in crisis prevention and the use of physical restraint and appropriate de-escalation methods.

Restraint administered to a student with a disability pursuant to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or other written plan developed in accordance with state and federal law to which the school system and the parent/ guardian have agreed shall be deemed to meet the requirements of 603 CMR 46.00 except that the reporting requirements noted herein shall apply. All restraints shall be documented and followed according to the law.

Grievance Procedure for Harassment and/or Discrimination

Where to File a Grievance

Any student or employee who believe that Old Sturbridge Academy has discriminated against or

harassed her/him because of her/his race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities may file a complaint with the Executive Director, Jim Donahue (508-347-0341) or jdonahue@osv.org or Principal, Lisa DeTora (774-922-1840) or ldetora@osacharter.org who serve as “Grievance Administrators.”

Complaints of Harassment by Peers

In the event the complaint consists of a student’s allegation that another student is harassing him/her based upon the above-referenced classifications, the student may, in the alternative, file the complaint with the complaint manager (herein referred to as “Building Complaint Manager”). The name of the Building Complaint Manager(s) is kept at the school and may be obtained from the Main Office.

Complaints of Discrimination Based on Disability

A person who alleges discrimination on the basis of disability relative to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a person, who because of a handicap needs or is believed to need special instruction or related services, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 766, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, may also use the procedure outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Education’s *Parents’ Rights Brochure* rather than this Grievance Procedure. A copy of the brochure is available in the Main Office.

Contents of Complaints

Complaints under this Grievance Procedure should be filed within thirty (30) school days of the alleged discrimination/harassment. The complaint should be in writing. The Grievance Administrator or any person of the grievant's choosing may assist the grievant with filing the complaint. The written complaint should include the following information:

1. The name and school (or address and telephone number if not a student or employee) of the grievant.
2. The name (and address and telephone number if not a student or employee) of the grievant's representative, if any.
3. The name of the person(s) alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment (respondent).
4. A description, in as much detail as possible, of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
5. The date(s) of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
6. The name of all persons who have knowledge about the alleged discrimination or harassment (witnesses), as can be reasonably determined.
7. A description, in as much detail as possible, of how the grievant wants the complaint to be resolved.

Investigation and Resolution of the Complaint

Respondents will be informed of the charges as soon as the Grievance Administrator deems appropriate based upon the nature of the allegations, the investigation required, and the action contemplated.

The Grievance Administrator will interview witnesses whom s/he deems necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint, and will gather other relevant information. Such interviews and gathering of information will be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint, the Grievance Administrator will meet with the grievant and/or her/his representative to review the information gathered and, if applicable, to propose a resolution designed to stop the discrimination or harassment and to correct its effect. Within ten (10) school days of the meeting with the grievant and/or representative, the Grievance Administrator will provide written disposition of the complaint to the grievant and/or representative and to the respondent(s).

Notwithstanding the above, it is understood that in the event a resolution contemplated by the Old Sturbridge Public Charter School involves disciplinary action against an employee or a student, the complainant will not be informed of such disciplinary action, unless it directly involves the complainant (i.e., a directive to "stay away" from the complainant, as might occur as a result of a complaint of harassment).

Any disciplinary action imposed upon an employee or student is subject to applicable procedural requirements.

All the time lines specified above will be implemented as specified, unless the nature of the investigation or exigent circumstances prevent such implementation, in which case, the matter will be completed as quickly as practicable. If the timelines specified above are not met, the reason(s) for not meeting them must be clearly documented.

Confidentiality of grievants/respondents and witnesses will be maintained, to the extent consistent with Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School's obligations relating to investigation of complaints and the due process rights of individuals affected.

Retaliation against someone because he/she has filed a complaint under this Grievance Procedure is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion/termination.

Appeals

If the grievant is not satisfied with a disposition by a Grievance Administrator, the grievant may appeal the disposition to the Board of Trustees by writing to: Reed Hillman, Board Chair, 2 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA, 01566.

The Board of Trustees will issue a written response on the appeal to the grievant within thirty (30) school days of receiving the appeal.

Generally, a grievant may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, JW McCormack POCH, Boston, Massachusetts 02109-4557, telephone (617) 223-9662, TTY (617) 223-9695 as follows:

1. Within 180 calendar days of alleged discrimination or harassment.
2. Within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of Old Sturbridge Academy's final disposition on a complaint filed through Springfield Preparatory Charter School.
3. Within 60 calendar days of receiving a final decision by the Massachusetts Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals.
4. Instead of filing a complaint with Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School.

Mandated Reporting

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Ch. 119-51A, School employees are a mandated reporter. This means that staff must report all instances of suspected child abuse and neglect, as outlined below, to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. All professionals charged with the care of children share this responsibility. In addition to the potentially harmful impact of failing to report suspected abuse or neglect on the well-being of the child in question, any mandated reporter who fails to fulfill his or her duties and obligations pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 119-51A may be subject to a substantial monetary fine. A report of child abuse and/or neglect is generally referred to as a '51A' report. The standard for filing a 51A alleging child abuse and/or neglect is as follows:

"[Any mandated reporter who has] reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition . . . shall immediately report such condition to the department [of Social Services] by oral communication and by making a written report within forty-eight hours after such oral communication . . ."

A 51A report must contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and his parents or other person responsible for his care.
- If known; the child's age.
- Gender.
- The nature and extent of injuries, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect.
- The circumstances under which the person required to report first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect.
- Any actions taken to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the child.
- The name of the person or persons making such report.
- Any other information that the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the person or persons responsible therefore.

Consistent with the law surrounding 51A, reports made by any person who is a school staff person, it is the Academy's policy that any teacher or other school employee who suspects that a child's safety may be compromised shall report the matter to an administrator or school nurse. A 51A report will then be

made to the Department of Social Services.

Complaint Procedures

As stated in the Academy's bylaws, individuals or groups may complain in writing to the Board of Trustees concerning any claimed violations by the Academy. The Board of Trustees will respond in writing to any such complaint to the complaining party within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint. If, after presenting their complaint to the Board of Trustees, the individuals or groups believe that their complaint has not been adequately addressed, they may submit their complaint in writing to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education who shall investigate such complaint and make a formal response, pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 89. The Parent Advisory Council will provide opportunities for parents to give feedback to the administration and board of trustees. In addition to an area to provide feedback on the Academy website, parent surveys will be conducted on an annual basis. They will also be encouraged to develop and plan events to deepen family engagement in the life of the school. A Parent Advisory Council will elect a member who will sit on the school board.

1.09: Complaint Procedure

A parent, guardian, or other individuals or groups who believe that Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School has violated or is violating any provision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00 may file a complaint with Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School's board of trustees.

The Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School board of trustees shall respond in writing to the complaining party no later than 45 days from receipt of the complaint.

The Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School board of trustees shall, pursuant to a complaint received under 603 CMR 1.09, or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to ensure compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, and 603 CMR 1.00. Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School and the specific individuals involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.

A complaining party who believes a complaint pursuant to 603 CMR 1.09(1) has not been adequately addressed by Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School board of trustees may submit the complaint in writing to the Commissioner, who shall investigate such complaint and make a written response.

In the event Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School is found in violation of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00, the Commissioner or Board may take such action deemed appropriate including, but not limited to, suspension or revocation of the charter, or referral of the matter to the District Attorney, the Office of the Attorney General, or other appropriate agencies for action.

A parent, guardian, or other individuals or groups who believe that Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School has violated or is violating any state or federal law or regulation regarding special education may file a complaint directly with the Department.

Regulatory Authority:

M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B; c. 69, §§ 1J and 1K, as amended by St. 2010, c. 12, § 3; c. 71, § 38G.

Student Records

Student Records

Each student's Student Record is protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and is kept in strict confidence by the Academy staff. The Student Record consists of both the transcript and the temporary record.

All information and data contained in or added to the student record shall be limited to information relevant to the educational needs of the student. Information and data added to the temporary record shall include the name, signature, and position of the person who is the source of the information, and the date of entry into the record. Standardized group test results that are added to the temporary record need only include the name of the test and/or publisher, and date of testing.

The Academy also maintains a temporary record for each student, which contains information not included in the transcript record, such as evaluations by teachers and standardized test results. This temporary record will be destroyed no more than seven (7) years after the graduation, transfer, or withdrawal of the student.

The Academy maintains each student's transcript for 60 years following the graduation, transfer, or withdrawal of the student. This transcript contains a student's name, address, telephone number, date of birth, parent/caretaker contact information, course titles, grade level completed, and the year completed.

Access to Student Records for Parents/Caretakers and Eligible Students

A parent/caretaker or eligible student has a right to access a student's entire Student Record. Upon written request to the principal, the Student Record will be made available to the parent/caretaker or eligible student within two working days following the request.

Eligible Students

Any student who is 14 years of age or older, or who has entered grade nine, is an eligible student for rights of access to their Student Record.

Non-Custodial Parent

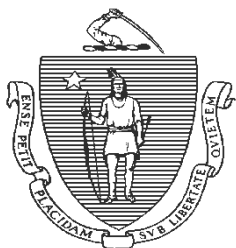
A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to a Student Record unless the non-custodial parent's access is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a). In order to obtain access to the Student Record, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for access to the Student Record to the principal. Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent in writing that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the Student Record within 21 days. If a non-custodial parent's access to a student record is limited or restricted by a court order, the school will require a copy of any written court order.

A non-custodial parent will not be provided with progress reports, report cards, or other information about a student without submitting a written request for access to the Student Record; access to the Student Record may take up to 21 days.

Third Party Access to Student Records

Personal information about a student will not be shared with anyone other than the faculty and staff members whose access is necessary in the performance of their responsibilities at Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School. Student Records will not be shared with any third party without written consent of the parent/caretaker or eligible student; however, FERPA allows schools to disclose information from a Student Record under the following provisions:

- To comply with a court order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To comply with a request from state and local authorities within the juvenile justice system.
- To communicate with appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- To comply with requests from federal, state, and local officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- To communicate with staff members of another school to which a student intends to transfer.



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3700
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

OFFICE OF CHARTER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL REDESIGN CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLAINT FORM

In order to address your current concerns as promptly as possible, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requests that you provide the following information.

Name of School: _____

School Location: _____ School Phone#: () _____

Your Name (printed): _____

Your Address: _____ City or Town: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone #: (____) _____ Work # (____) _____ Cell # (____) _____ E-Mail: _____

Your Role: ____ 1=Parent; 2=Advocate; 3=ESE Assigned Education Surrogate-Parent;
4=Student;
5=School Employee; 6=Other (Specify)

Accommodations you will need in communicating with the Department:

If your complaint involves a particular student, please identify:

Student or Group Name: _____ Grade/Level: ____ Age: _____ Male/
Female/Transgender: _____

Your language if not English:

The local school person to whom a copy of this complaint has been forwarded:

The last local school person(s) you have contacted in an effort to resolve this problem:

Address

Telephone #:(____)

Please describe your concern on the attached page, stating the specific facts on which the concern is based. Please attach any documents that you believe would be helpful to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in understanding your concern.

Please be certain to include a description of your attempts to resolve your current concern(s) prior to contacting the Department, and describe specific actions you believe would resolve your concern(s).

[Received in ESE: _____]	
BRIEF STATEMENT OF CURRENT CONCERN(S)	

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Student 18 or over:

Date: _____

**Sign and return this Charter School Complaint Form
By mail at 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906**

OR

By Fax at 781-338-3220

OR

**By email at Charterschools@doe.mass.edu by saving the completed form and
attaching it to your email.**

Appendix A

Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

I. Introduction

Developing priority statements

Old Sturbridge Academy expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

Old Sturbridge Academy understands that members of certain student groups, may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying, harassment or teasing based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. Old Sturbridge Academy has taken, and will continue to take, specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. These steps include annual professional development training for staff regarding recognizing bullying and discriminatory harassment and providing ongoing instruction to student's regarding appropriate behavior, respect for the unique qualities of all individuals, and strategies to avoid bullying, teasing or harassment.

Old Sturbridge Academy is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment and will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior including bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, the campus of Old Sturbridge Village, or in school-related activities. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive effort to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can hinder the learning process.

We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and Old Sturbridge Academy is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of

violence.

II. Leadership

Leadership of Old Sturbridge Academy, including the Executive Director, Director of Student Support, and Director of Teaching and Learning, played a critical role in developing and implementing the Plan in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate.

Public involvement in developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, Old Sturbridge Academy will invite teachers, school staff, support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement personnel, students, parents, and guardians to attend a meeting where our school will gather ideas and work together to update our Plan.

Assessing needs and resources

As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, will assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This process will assist Old Sturbridge Academy in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, Old Sturbridge Academy will revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set priorities. We have contracted with a consultant to have multiple outside counselors coming in on a regular basis to meet with some of our students with mental health issues. At least once every four (4) years beginning with 2017-2018 school year, Old Sturbridge Academy will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our school. Additionally, Old Sturbridge Academy will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

Planning and oversight

Old Sturbridge Academy has outlined the school leaders who will be responsible for the following tasks under our Plan:

- 1) Receiving reports on bullying (Director of Student Support or Director of Teaching and Learning);

- 2) Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes (Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 3) Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors (Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 4) Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law (Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 5) Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors (Director of Student Support and Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 6) Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use (Director of Student Support and Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 7) Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them (Director of Student Support and Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 8) Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct (Director of Student Support and Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 9) Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials (Director of Student Support and Director of Teaching and Learning);
- 10) Reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently (Director of Teaching and Learning)

III. Training and Professional Development

Annual staff training on the Plan

At the beginning of each school year, all staff, including support staff, will participate in professional development regarding bullying and Old Sturbridge Academy's Bully Prevention and Intervention Plan. This training will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that school leadership will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school. Staff members hired after the start of the year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired.

Ongoing professional development

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills and knowledge-base of staff to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the content of schoolwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;
- (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witness to the bullying;
- (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skill development.

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- teach students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students

Written notice to staff

The school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school employee handbook and the code of conduct.

IV. Access to Resources and Services

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. Old Sturbridge Academy's staff will access all available resources.

Identifying resources

Some available resources include:

- School Staff and Administrators
- School Nurse
- Consulting Psychologists
- Peer groups
- Mentoring programs
- After school activities
- Local police departments
- Worcester County District Attorney's Office
- Massachusetts Attorney General's Office
- Department of Children and Families
- Crisis hotlines
- Medical Facilities

Counseling and other services

We are contracting with outside counselors who will come in to meet with several of our students. We have social skills groups which will meet to practice different skills that involved students can use in school and in their everyday lives, such as starting conversations, listen, etc.

Students with disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Referral to outside services

Students who are in need of referral for outside services such as counseling or family assistance will be referred by the Director of Student Support who will contact an available counselor that comes to our school.

IV. Academic and Non-Academic Activities

Specific bullying prevention approaches

Here at Old Sturbridge Academy, bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

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

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Plan will be reviewed in detail with students by teachers within the first six weeks of school. Teachers will review the plan individually with students who enroll during the course of the school year.

General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- We set clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- We strive to create a safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- We use appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- We use positive behavioral supports;
- We encourage adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- We model, teach, and reward pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- We use positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- We use the Internet safely; and
- We support students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

Reporting bullying or retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the Director of

Teaching and Learning or Director of Student Support (the “directors”) or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school’s main office, the counseling office, the school nurse’s office, and other locations determined by the directors or designee; and 3) post it on the school’s website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the directors or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the directors or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the directors or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the directors or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the directors or designee.

Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

1. Safety

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

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the directors or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the directors or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

b. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the directors or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the directors or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the directors will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the directors or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the directors will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable

school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the directors or designee deems appropriate.

Investigation

The directors or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the directors or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The directors or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews may be conducted by the directors or designee, other staff members as determined by the directors or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the directors or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The directors or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the director or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations

The directors or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the directors or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The directors or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the directors or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The directors or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal

requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the directors or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the directors or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the directors or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and;
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the directors or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the directors or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's code of conduct.

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

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

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The directors or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the directors or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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

VI. Collaboration with Families

Parent education and resources

The school will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Parent Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

Notification requirements

Each year the school will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

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

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, associate teachers, or Old Sturbridge Village staff.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

IX. Relationship to other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.