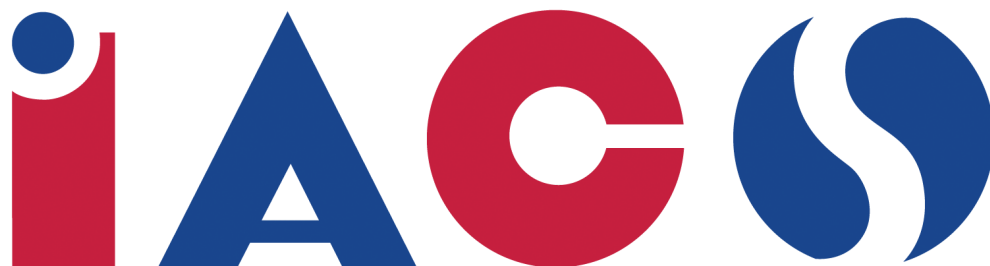


I N N O V A T I O N



ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

High School
Student and Family Handbook
2021-2022

**72 Tyng Road
Tyngsboro, MA 01879**

Phone: (978) 649-0432

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www.innovationcharter.org

Approved:

August 15, 2021

Dear Students and Families,

This handbook provides the blueprint on how to be successful at Innovation Academy. There are many important rules, policies, and guidelines in this handbook that students and families should be familiar with.

Please take the time to read through this handbook with your child. It is our hope that if all community members abide by these rules and expectations it will improve the overall educational experience for everyone.

Thank you for your time and I want to convey my best wishes to all for a great school year.

Sincerely,

Erik Arnold, Ed.D.
Principal

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I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

2020-2021 High School Calendar

Please refer to our all school google calendar at <http://www.innovationcharter.org> for up-to-date information about school events.

Contacting School

To initiate contact with staff please use one of the following methods:

- 1) Email, use the first initial and full last name followed by “@innovationcharter.org”. Ex: John Smith would be jsmith@innovationcharter.org.
- 2) Phone messages can be left at our main desk and will be relayed to the appropriate staff member.

In order to ensure that issues or concerns are dealt with in a direct and expeditious fashion, parents and students should adhere to the following guidelines when expressing questions/concerns.

Student Academic Questions, Comments or Concerns

- 1st Contact: Teacher of the subject of concern
- 2nd Contact: Student’s Advisor
- 3rd Contact: Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal

Student Services/Special Education Questions, Comments or Concerns

- 1st Contact: Student Services Liaison
- 2nd Contact: Aimee Voleti, Director of Student Services

504 Questions, Comments or Concerns

- 1st Contact: Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal

Student Social/Emotional Questions, Comments or Concerns

- 1st Contact: Student’s Advisor
- 2nd Contact: Anthony Volis, High School Adjustment Counselor
- 3rd Contact: Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal

General Questions, Comments or Concerns Regarding School Policy

- 1st Contact: Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal
- 2nd Contact: Erik Arnold, Principal

Questions, Comments or Concerns Regarding School Mission or Philosophy

- 1st Contact: Student’s Advisor

2nd Contact: Erik Arnold, Principal

Questions Regarding School Governance (Board of Trustees)

Contact: Greg Orpen, Head of School, who will share questions, comments or concerns with the current Board Chair. Please see the Access to the Board section below for further information.

Mission Statement

To provide students with a challenging, interdisciplinary education that will prepare them for the 21st century through an emphasis on holistic learning, higher order and critical thinking skills, and practical application and integration of curriculum areas.

Core Values

- ☐ Students should be challenged to approach their maximum potential as social and intellectual individuals.
- ☐ Comprehensive learning is best achieved through hands-on participatory instruction.
- ☐ Education must constantly adapt to an ever-changing world.
- ☐ Education should produce enthusiastic, life-long learners.
- ☐ Effective administration of education must include continual reassessment of curriculum, teaching methods and student and teacher performance.
- ☐ Critical thinking, problem solving and examination of problems through systems analysis are the basic foundations of learning that will carry students into the future.
- ☐ Community and parental involvement are essential to student success.
- ☐ Anything worth doing is worth doing well.
- ☐ Social and emotional development in school is as important as academic development.

The Motto

Think. Connect. Apply. *Innovate.*

Our students are challenged to think critically and creatively through a project based, interdisciplinary curriculum. Students learn how to effectively approach their work both individually and in teams. We ask students to actively engage in ideas and examine topics through multiple perspectives.

Our students learn to recognize the connections between academic disciplines and applications to the outside world. Skills and concepts are not taught in isolation; students and staff collaborate to form a highly connected community of learners. We hold a belief that increased connection and collaboration in our school fosters a richer learning experience.

Our students are required to put their knowledge and skills into context through authentic project assignments. Additionally, they are expected to create and present their work publicly via oral presentations as well as online digital portfolios. Finally, high school students extend their learning outside the classroom through off campus experiences.

An innovator is someone who sees ideas, connections, possibilities and solutions when others do not. Innovation Academy Charter School works to foster a climate where students develop the skills and passion for life-long learning needed to make a difference in our world.

Social Outcomes

All students at Innovation Academy will develop specific social outcomes that are based on our mission and charter. These outcomes focus on developing the kind of adult that IACS wants to graduate.

Self-directed Learning

- Student is able to take initiative, develop a plan and determine a logical order of steps to solving a problem.
- Student is able to accept challenges and mistakes as opportunities for growth, not roadblocks to success
- Student expects work to be rigorous, interesting, and engaging
- Student completes all assignments on time and without the reminder of adults

Problem Solving

- Student explores multiple options before tackling a problem or challenge
- Student is able to revise plans, as new information comes to light
- Student develops and tests ideas based on data rather than assumptions
- Student thinks of creative and innovative ways to solve problems
- Student strives to see the relevancy when tackling problems
- Student strives to understand why problems came to be and persist by asking deeper questions
- Student maintains a focus on the larger and broader goals, “big picture,” while ensuring that the details are accurate and receive adequate attention

Effective Communication

- Student presents their work using multiple media and technologies
- Student considers basic principles of design when developing presentations of their work
- Student presents information with consideration for their audience
- Student supported their ideas with evidence and demonstrates a clear understanding of issues and concepts
- Student writes with proper structure and form
- Student speaks in a clear and direct manner

Community Membership

- Student works collaboratively in groups and works from a “we” not “me” perspective
- Student helps others to be successful and make good decisions
- Student manages conflicts through discussion
- Student applies their learning to benefit the IACS community and beyond

2021-2022 *Bell Schedule*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:25	A	B	A	C	D
9:25-9:40	Long Pass	Long Pass	Long Pass	Long Pass	Long Pass
9:40-11:00	B	F	E	B	F
11:05-12:25	C	E	F	D	E
12:30-1:00	9/10 Lunch 11/12 Advisory	9/10 Lunch 11/12 Advisory	9/10 Lunch 11/12 Advisory	9/10 Lunch 11/12 Advisory	9/10 Lunch 11/12 Advisory
1:05-1:35	11/12 Lunch 9/10 Advisory	11/12 Lunch 9/10 Advisory	11/12 Lunch 9/10 Advisory	11/12 Lunch 9/10 Advisory	11/12 Lunch 9/10 Advisory
1:40-3:00	D	C	Advisory & Internship	A	Choice Block

Credit Summary Chart and Accumulation

Department	Semesters Required	Total Credits Required
English (ENG)	8 semesters (includes 2 semesters of writing workshops)	24 Credits
Social Studies (HST)	6 semesters (includes 2 semesters of American Studies and 2 semesters of Global Studies)	18 Credits
Mathematics (MAT)	8 Semesters	24 Credits
Science & Technology (SCI)	6 semesters of Lab Sciences [Engineering or Environmental Science (gr 9) & Biology (gr 10) are required lab sciences, student choice for 3rd lab science] 2 semesters of a 4th lab science <u>or</u> science electives	24 Credits
Foreign Language (LAN)	4 semesters	12 Credits
Arts (ART)	2 semesters (Art or Music, must take at least 1 semester in grade 9)	6 Credits
Physical Education/Health (WEL)	4 semesters (grade 10 consists of an integrated Health/PE curriculum)	12 Credits
Senior Project (IDS)	1 Semester	3 Credits
Electives	7 semesters (electives can be classes from any department)	21 Credits
Total Required		138 Credits out of 144 Possible

Credits are accumulated each semester when a student earns a satisfactory *Term Grade* of **C- or better**. Therefore a student will only earn 3 credits in a Full Year course if they pass one semester but not the other. (Please refer to “Summer School” for further explanation about this situation)

- ☐ Students must take 6 credits of English, Math, & Science each year

Add/Drop Period

- ☐ After classes begin each semester, there are 5 school days when students can request to add or drop classes. After this 5 school day period no changes will be made.
- ☐ If a student wants to add/drop a full-year course, it must be done during the 5 day period during semester 1 only.

Summary of Graduation Requirements

- ☐ Meet all department credit requirements.
- ☐ Earn the minimum number of total credits (138 credits)
- ☐ Successfully complete Senior Project.
- ☐ Successfully complete any high school state assessments (currently Science/Technology/Engineering, ELA, & Math MCAS exams).

- ☐ Have a satisfactory attendance record at school according to our attendance policy, which includes completing all community service hours.
- ☐ **In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, students cannot be more than 6 credits short of the required credits.**
- ☐ *Note: The school reserves the right to waive, adjust or modify this policy based on the individual needs of students.*

Promotion Policy

A strong academic record is the first indication that a student is ready for promotion to the next grade level. Since the mission and focus of IACS is to prepare students for the real world of college and work, the promotion policy encompasses a number of other areas where students must meet a high standard in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

Specifically, students who are promoted:

1. Meet the minimum number of credits earned to be promoted:

To move to grade 10	27 out of a possible 36
To move to grade 11	60 out of a possible 72
To move to grade 12	96 out of a possible 108

- ★ **Minimum Credit Disclaimer:** if a student only had the minimum # of credits to move to grade 12 and passed everything senior year, they would still be 6 credits short. These two classes would have to be taken online or at night at a community college (at their own expense), or they would have to return to complete the classes during the fall semester
2. Complete a satisfactory Presentation of Learning or Senior Project.
 3. Have an updated and comprehensive Digital Portfolio.
 4. Have a satisfactory attendance record at school according to our attendance policy.

If a student has not met the above standards during the school year, the following options are available for each standard:

1. Below a C-: For any class that you receive a D average or below in, you will be required to attend summer school at your own cost for each of those classes and achieve a grade of C- or better in the summer school class (see Summer School policy in the Student Handbook).
2. Unsatisfactory POL or Senior Project: You will have to repeat your POL or Senior Project by setting up a new date and time with your advisor or Senior Project teacher. This time must meet at a time convenient to your advisor.
3. Unsatisfactory Digital Portfolio: Students who fail to complete a digital portfolio will not be promoted.

4. Unsatisfactory Attendance: Students who lose credit (ANC) for poor attendance may, at their own cost, attend summer school.

Note: The school reserves the right to waive, adjust or modify this policy based on the individual needs of students.

Summer School Policy and Purpose

The primary purpose of the IACS summer school is to give students an opportunity to earn credit for courses they did not pass during the school year. (see previous sections on “Credit Summary Chart and Accumulation” and “Promotion Policy”) Because of the abbreviated length of summer school, students must earn a 50% or higher to be eligible for summer school. Students that earned below a 50% must repeat the class or take an Original Credit online class. Original credit classes are the full versions of the course and not the abbreviated summer school version. IACS has contracted with an online provider for courses, but students may also take courses from another provider as long as they are equally comprehensive from an accredited school and have been approved by the Principal.

Students may not enroll in a summer school course if they earned passing grades for both semesters in an attempt to improve their grade. Successful completion of a summer school course provides students with enough credit to earn a C- (lowest passing grade) in the course they did not previously pass. Students who do not successfully complete summer school classes will not be given credit for courses previously not passed. IACS is not responsible for any financial refunds for summer school in the event that a student does not pass a summer school class(es).

Grades

Students receive letter grades for each completed class (see below). These letters correspond with a four-point scale to determine a grade point average. All classes may be taken for honors credit and will require work of additional depth and/or complexity that must be completed at a high level of quality. Students must sign up for honors at the beginning of the semester.

Grade	Range	GPA	Honors GPA
A	93-100	4.0	4.5
A-	90-92	3.7	4.2
B+	87-89	3.3	3.8
B	83-86	3.0	3.5
B-	80-82	2.7	3.2
C+	77-79	2.3	2.8
C	73-76	2.0	2.5
C-	70-72	1.7	2.2
D+	67-69	1.3	
D	63-66	1.0	
D-	60-62	.7	
F	0-59	0	

Grades are reported twice during a semester. *Interim Grades* are sent out twice during the semester and are intended to show progress. While these grades are not reported on an official transcript, interim

reports can be used to evaluate student progress for placement on (or removal from) academic probation. (See below) *Term grades* are the final marks for a semester and are part of a student's official transcript.

Honor Roll Recognition and Academic Probation

Students who earn a term grade of at least 3.5 in every class earn high honor roll recognition; students who receive a term grade of at least 3.0 in every class earn honor roll recognition. Any student who receives an interim or term grade of D or F in any class is placed on Academic Probation until they earn passing grades on the next report, Interim or Term.

Dual Enrollment - Early College Program

The Massachusetts Dual Enrollment Program was established by the Education Reform Act of 1993. The program provides qualified high school students the opportunity to take courses at public colleges and universities and thus earn both high school and [college credit](#). Those IACS students that have participated in Dual Enrollment in the past have gone to Middlesex Community College. UMASS Lowell is another possibility, but the cost per class is about 4-5 times more expensive. **Beginning in 2016, IACS was able to gain approval from MCC to offer several Dual Enrollment classes at our campus. These courses are taught by our own teachers that have been granted adjunct faculty status by Middlesex Community College. This is extremely convenient for students since they do not have to travel to one of MCC's campuses.**

Approved Courses

- ★ ENG 422 DE - Shakespeare (ENG 119)
- ★ ENG 423 DE- Literature of Protest & Hope (ENG 125)
- ★ ENG 424 DE - Modern Drama (ENG 118)
- ★ ENG 419WW DE - College Writing (ENG 101 - English Composition 101 - Gr 11-12 only)
- ★ ENG 425WW DE - Research & Composition at the College Level (ENG 102 - English Composition 102 - Gr 12 only)
- ★ HST 439DE - American Government and Politics (GOV 120)
- ★ HST 437DE - Introduction to Psychology (PSY 101)
- ★ SCI 335DE - Anatomy and Physiology (BIO 105 - Basic Anatomy & Physiology)
- ★ LAN 434DE - Ritmo, color, y sabor DE (LAN 251 - Spanish 3 & Culture)
- ★ LAN 436DE - Como se rompe las reglas (LAN 252 - Spanish 4 & Culture)

Requirements:

- ☐ Open to Juniors and Seniors (most English classes open to grade 10, Spanish classes are open to grades 9-12)
- ☐ GPA of 2.0 or better
- ☐ Approval of the principal (excellent attendance and behavior are primary considerations)
- ☐ Courses must meet high school graduation requirements and be approved by the principal

MCC Requirements:

- ☐ (1) Complete application & registration, (2) minimum score on the PSAT in grade 10 (480 on Reading & Writing), (3) teacher recommendation

Other Information:

- Students must still take PE as well as Senior Project.
- Students are financially responsible for all Dual Enrollment Courses. **However, MCC usually has a limited number of scholarships that are available. The availability of scholarships is dependent on funding from the state. When available, students are able to request a scholarship for a maximum of one class per year.**
- Example of cost: Most classes are 3 credits, so taking one class for the Fall Semester would cost a high school student around \$276 (compared to \$621 for other MCC students). Families should research the exact costs because there may be other fees involved as well.
- Massachusetts state colleges and universities give additional GPA weight for Dual Enrollment courses (*Grades received in dual enrollment courses will receive additional weight in the calculation of applicants' weighted GPAs. The additional weight will be the same as that given for grades earned in Advanced Placement courses*)
- Students must provide their own transportation (not applicable if taking on IACS campus)
- Students may have a reduced IACS schedule if they are taking the classes off campus.
- Timeline:
 - Fall Semester: students typically register for classes April-June
 - Spring Semester: students typically register for classes November-December
 - Summer Sessions: dates vary - contact college

Class Rank and Grade Point Average

Innovation Academy Charter High School does not rank our students with the belief that it runs counter to Community Membership. A student's grade point average can be made available upon request by students or outside agencies. (See "Grades" for GPA calculation chart) At the discretion of IACS, we may calculate class rank for an individual if required by an institute of higher education or scholarship.

IACS High School Grading Policy

Philosophy

- The strands represent skills within each discipline, and should reflect students' proficiency with each skill as faithfully as possible. The Work Habits strand represents timeliness, work completion, and effective class participation.
- We value both the product and the process. We believe revision is an integral part of the learning process.
- Students can expect feedback on most assignments within two weeks of when it is submitted (if submitted on time). Teachers may need more time to fully assess and provide feedback on larger assignments. Late work will be assessed within four weeks of when it is submitted.
- Extra-credit assignments are rarely offered since these assignments could artificially inflate grades and lead to an inaccurate assessment of what a student has mastered.

Late Work

- Late work will be accepted up until **14 calendar days beyond the due date**.
- The grade for the Work Habits strand will be lowered for work that is late. Other strands will be assessed without penalty.
- Assignments where the answers have already been shared with the class, may not be handed in late for credit.

Extensions

- In the rare case that a student is unable to meet a deadline, the student must request an extension from their teacher **at least one day before the assignment is due**.
- Extensions are granted at the discretion of the teacher.

Revisions

- Students are encouraged to revise assignments and assessments to further their learning.
- The terms of revision are at the teachers' discretion.
- Students **must complete revisions within seven school days** of receiving the graded work from their teacher.
- Students may not revise work if they skip class on the day the work is due or the test is given.

Department Specific Information

Department	Revisions/Retakes will be graded...	Quizzes, Tests, and Projects
Science	Courses that are assessed through portfolio demonstration will operate on separate deadlines	When students retake exams, they will receive full credit.
Social Studies	When students revise projects, they may earn up to full credit in all strands except Work Habits.	When students revise a quiz/test, they may earn half credit for revisions.
Spanish	Video Diaries cannot be revised.	

Special Codes for Aspen Gradebook

In order to communicate effectively with students and families through our open gradebooks, here are some gradebook codes that should help with your understanding.

Code	Behavior	Description & Example
ABS	Absent Calculates as zero	This means a student was absent the day the assignment was due. The grade reflects the impact the missing assignment will have on strand and overall grade. Example: The grade for a student who was absent on the day of an assessment or a project was due. This can be replaced by actual grade when assignment is made up.
EX	Exempt Exempt from Calculations	This means a student is exempt from this assignment. Has no impact on their grade. Example: Grade given for an honors assignment for students that aren't taking the class for honors credit.
M	Missing Calculates as zero	This means a student did not turn in the assignment. Example: Grade entered when an assignment was not turned in when it was expected.
R	Received Exempt from Calculations	This means the assignment was turned in but has not yet been assessed. Example: Grade for a project that will take some time to assess. It communicates to students and families the assignments has been turned in and will be replaced by an actual grade at a future date
EXTN	Extension Exempt from Calculations	This means the student required additional time to complete the assignment. Add due date to comment. Example: A student started but did not complete an assessment.
0 (zero)	No Credit Calculates as zero	This means the assignment will no longer be accepted for credit. Typically occurs when a missing (M) assignment will no longer be accepted.

Code of Academic Integrity¹

The students of IACS agree to maintain and to assist one another in maintaining and promoting personal integrity, and to follow the principles and procedures in this Code of Academic Integrity.

¹ http://www.hightechhigh.org/handbook/index.php#Code_of_h

Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity may take several forms. Any of the following, without full acknowledgement of the debt to the original source counts as plagiarism (whether intentional or unintentional); ²

- direct duplication, by copying (or allowing to be copied) another's work, whether from a book, article, web site, another student's assignment, etc.;
- duplication in any manner of another's work during an exam; paraphrasing of another's work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained;
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole;
- submitting one's own work which has already been submitted for assessment purposes in another subject;
- producing assignments in conjunction with other people (e.g. another student, a tutor) which should be your own independent work

Note: Students are responsible for clarifying expectations and following the code with all assignments and in all disciplines.

Examples:

A very good guide from Rutgers University regarding plagiarism may be found by clicking [HERE](#).

Consequences for violation of the Code of Academic Integrity will result in the following progression:

1st Offense: Student receives a zero for the assignment, detention, and parents/guardians will be notified. Teacher reserves the right to have the student recreate the assignment as intended.

2nd Offense: Student receives a zero for the assignment, 1-day In-School Suspension, and parents/guardians will be notified. Student will not be allowed to recreate the assignment as intended.

3rd & Subsequent Offenses: Student receives a zero for the assignment, 1-day Out of School Suspension, and parents/guardians will be notified. Student will not be allowed to recreate the assignment as intended. Out of School suspension also can lead to the loss of social activities and off-campus trips (including Endersession).

Intellectual Property Statement

All intellectual property which is generated at the school, or related to the school, including, without limitation, all equipment, documents, books, art work, digital files, and copies thereof, created on any medium and furnished to, obtained by, or created by any student in the course of or incidental to student matriculation at IACS, belong to IACS.

² http://www.hightechhigh.org/handbook/index.php#Code_of_h

Academic Program Descriptions

Presentations of Learning

Each spring, all students in grades 9, 10, and 11 create their own Presentation of Learning. These presentations serve many functions that are integral to the mission of our school: to reflect upon one's learning, to improve one's public speaking skills, and to revise one's work so that it is worthy of public presentation. POLs are scheduled for 30-minute sessions and families are asked to attend.

Senior Project

In order to graduate all seniors must complete a Senior Project. Over the course of the year, seniors develop an original "Essential Question" (EQ), then conduct and document independent research to reach a conclusion or deeper understanding of their EQ. Students must also create and present an "Applied Piece" which demonstrates a synthesis of their learning. Senior Projects are presented in the spring and represent a "capstone" of their learning at Innovation Academy.

Exhibition Night

Exhibition Night is held at least once each school year. Student work is celebrated to an audience of high school students, their families, as well as the general public. All students are expected to contribute at least one piece of academic work of their choosing for this event. The goal of this event is to transform our hallways and classrooms into a "museum" feel where people can explore students' work at their leisure.

Endersession

Endersession is an intensive weeklong module led by IACS staff occurring near the end of the academic year. Instructors design and implement the goals of the course. Endersession courses may include traveling to other regions of New England (or beyond), participating in a service project, creating original musical or artistic work, or learning a new skill. By collaborating with peers and adults in new settings, students expand their learning towards both academic and social outcomes.

II. STUDENT LIFE

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Innovation Academy Charter School has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are they are guaranteed under the federal and state constitutions and laws. In connection with rights there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students. Innovation Academy Charter School recognizes the following, among these rights and responsibilities:

- Civil right—including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
- The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules.
- The right to due process of law with respect to investigations, interrogations, searches, and disciplinary determinations that the student believes injures or curtails his or her rights.
- The right to free inquiry and expression and the responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
- The right to privacy, which includes privacy in respect to the student's school records.

A student has the responsibility to:

- Respect fellow students, teachers and school personnel;
- Take full advantage of their educational opportunity by regular, punctual attendance to all classes;
- Uphold the school rules and maintain a positive classroom environment;
- Participate in school government activities;
- Refrain from violating personal and property rights of others;
- To provide reasonable notice of intent to inspect records;
- To be orderly, fair and accurate when exercising rights of free expression.

It is Innovation Academy Charter School's belief that as part of the educational process, students should be made aware of their legal rights and of the legal authority of Innovation Academy Charter School to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the school.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior. The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available on an annual basis to students and their parents/guardians through Innovation Academy Charter School Student & Family Handbook.

Advisory Program

The advisory program exists to develop trusting and supportive relationships between adults and students to improve on the overall experience of students while at IACS. Through advisory, students will have a small community at IACS in which to develop and enhance their social and emotional skills, build positive organizational and work habits, reflect on their academic and personal growth, and practice local and global citizenship. Advisory will help students practice and improve skills in the four IACS outcomes of Self-Direction, Problem Solving, Community Membership, and Effective Communication.

All students are part of an advisory group. Advisory groups meet throughout the week during regularly scheduled times. The advisor is the chief advocate in the school for their advisees; while they may not always be the one to directly mentor or solve problems for their advisee, they ensure that their advisees get the support they need. The advisor serves as a point of contact to families for social and emotional issues and, after directly contacting teachers, for academic issues.

The advisor's primary role is to know each of their students well. Advisors ensure that their students are working toward success by supporting reflection on academic and personal growth. This offers all students an adult who can coach them through the ups and downs of the academic year. The specific purposes of advising are:

Advisory Functions

Academic Advising

Goal: Help students take ownership of their schoolwork and become more effective learners.

Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Track class grades on a biweekly basis
- Develop and track meaningful and measurable ILP goals using a Systems Thinking Tool.
- Manage schoolwork deadlines
- Journal reflections on successes and areas of improvement (weekly personal reflections and progress report/report card reflections)
- Build ability to manage independent, complex projects
- Reflect on academic challenges and breakthroughs. Focus on deeper learning and critical thinking
- Communicate effectively about academic work with teachers, parents and peers

Community and Group Activities

Goal: Help students positively engage with their school and larger community.

Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Function as part of a team in diverse groups
- Support peers and work constructively with their peers and their advisor (Group Activities & Reflection Resources)
- Contribute to their school and broader community
- Think and act critically about their role in the various communities they belong to
- Appropriately engage with their communities digitally

Problem Solving & Reflective Practices

Goal: Help students learn to solve academic and social problems productively.

Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Identify behaviors that can help them achieve their goals
- Make behavioral changes to help them solve problems; evaluate their results and revise their approach based on feedback.
- Use challenges and problems that arise throughout the school year as opportunities for learning, both individually and as a community.

Invigorate & Social Emotional Skills

Goal: Help students connect with peers and teachers in a positive, relaxed manner. Build positive energy for the advisory and the school.

Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Participate in games with peers positively.
- Laugh with peers.
- Work on long-term projects/tasks that are fun, creative and connected to advisory experiences, and practice designing a project and following through. (Ideas for long term projects)

Individual Learning Plan

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a document that articulates goals for the student and strategies that can be used to attain those goals. The document takes a whole child perspective, also describing the student's strengths, interests, personal attributes and accomplishments. Every student has an ILP which is used by students, parents/guardians, teachers and advisors. Each person should do regular check-ins on the plan. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to keep a copy visible at home, students should monitor their progress and revisit their goals frequently, teachers should focus attention on these goals during classes and advisors should set up regular times to check in with students about their goals.

ILPs are developed in the fall during Parent/Guardian-Student-Teacher ILP conferences. (Please see the school year calendar to find out when these will be scheduled.) At the conference, Parents/Guardians, student and advisor (along with advice from teachers) discuss and come to consensus on attainable and measurable goals for the student. Along with goals, strategies for achieving those goals are discussed.

Community Service

Community service is a part of the academic program here at IACS. It provides opportunities outside the classroom for students to practice collaboration, problem solving and to participate in project-based and hands on learning. Each advisory will complete one community service activity over the course of the school year. In addition, students and advisors are encouraged to explore additional community service with their advisory groups.

Health and Wellness

Mission

The Wellness Department at IACS is a comprehensive program involving health classes and a physical activity/athletic program. The Wellness Department's goal is to assist students in taking responsibility for their own activity, fitness and health and to prepare them to be physically active, and healthy

throughout their adult life. Athletics and physical activities at IACS enhance the academic experience by fostering respectful relationships between students and amongst the school community at large. Athletics at IACS enhance the physical as well as emotional well being of an individual and teach the value of discipline, hard work and sportsmanship. Students are encouraged to compete and participate at the highest level of their ability.

Requirements

Every student will be required to participate in one semester of physical activity/Wellness classes each year. Health education is part of the 10th grade curriculum.

Sexual Health Education; Parental Notification

In accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 32A, sometimes referred to as the Parental Notification Law, parents or guardians may exempt their child from any portion of the Sexual Health Curriculum through written notification. No child so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption.

Building Hours

Our building is open for students at 7:45 am. Students are expected to report to their first period class upon entering the building.

If a student is not involved in any after school activities they should be picked up by 3:15. Students that are involved in extracurricular activities should be picked up at the time communicated by the staff member. Leaders of extracurricular activities cannot be expected to supervise students after their activity has concluded.

A Homework Center will be available on most Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays. Students that are not being supervised must either leave the building by 3:15 PM or report to the Homework Center which will be open from 3:15-4:30.

Arrival/Dismissal Policy

IACS is a closed campus. IACS school hours are from 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, during which time all students must remain on the school campus and/or under the supervision of the IACS school staff. **All** arrivals or dismissals from campus that occur inside of school hours must be coordinated through either the health office or the main office.

Written Permission

Once a student arrives on campus they are not allowed to leave without communication (written note or phone call) from their parents or guardians to the main office. Communication with the main office is needed for students to be dismissed from school before the end of the day. The only exceptions to this closed campus rule are:

- Academic internship programs which require students to complete distinct approval forms for liability purposes
- Seniors who qualify for “Senior Privileges” which requires separate approval forms

Any dismissals that occur during the school day must be coordinated with the main office. In cases when the dismissal is planned (i.e. doctor’s appointments), a signed note from the parent/guardian should be given to the main office directly. Please note that for safety reasons parents or authorized

adults must come into the building for a student to be dismissed.* Students must check in at the main office when they return from a midday appointment or when arriving late for school.

Important Note: To reduce confusion and possible miscommunication, all communication involving health-related dismissals must go through the Health Office. If a student is not feeling well and is contacting their family for dismissal, please remind them that they need to visit the health office for an evaluation. Once evaluated, a nurse will contact the family if deemed necessary. Please do not come to pick up your child unless you have been contacted by the Health Office. If this protocol is not followed, any dismissal may be deemed an unexcused dismissal. This policy applies to students of all ages.

(*Students who are 18 years old may be dismissed from the school building without parents coming inside to the main desk. Students must still adhere to attendance expectations. For example missing class 7 times will result in a student not receiving credit for that course.)

Late Arrival

To ensure that proper daily attendance can be taken, students who arrive to school after 8:00 am must sign in at the main office. Failure to do so may result in a student being marked absent. Additionally, students who enter the classroom late disrupt the learning environment, miss important information, and impact the learning of others. Tardies to school will be checked at the end of each month. Students who arrive late to school more than 5 times in a month will be required to complete community service. Students will be expected to complete a minimum of two hours of community service for their 6th tardy to school and 1 additional hour of community service for each tardy over 6. Students must coordinate their own off-campus community service with the approval of either the High School Assistant Principal or Principal, and they must submit a [Community Service Form](#). Failure to complete community service hours before the end of the next month will lead to a suspension of all extra-curricular activities (drama, sports, dances, spectator at sporting events, etc...) until all community service hours have been completed. Failure to complete community service hours by the end of the school year will prevent a student from being promoted to the next grade or receiving their diploma.

When students arrive late to class, the time they enter the classroom is recorded. Students can be given teacher detentions for any tardy to class. Students who arrive after the first 30 minutes of school day will be marked absent unexcused from their first period class, unless it is approved by administration or a doctor's note is provided. In addition, students who miss more than 30 minutes (cumulative) of any class will be marked absent unexcused from that class, unless a note from a teacher or the health office is provided.

Students are given adequate time to transition from one class to another. Students should be seated in their classrooms at the start of class. Students who arrive late to class will be assigned a Teacher Detention. If a student fails to serve a Teacher Detention, the teacher will notify the administration and the students will be issued a 1 hour Office Detention. This consequence is in addition to the above mentioned impact on class attendance.

Hall Passes from Class

Consistent class attendance is critical to the learning process and a student's academic success. To support this, a computer-based hallpass system, known as **e-hallpass**, will be used to hold students

accountable for time spent outside of the classroom. The system is digital and works across all platforms and operating systems that students can use to request a pass from class. The system also allows students and staff to manage appointments. Additionally, the system will provide the school with important safety information during occurrences of fire drills and lockdowns.

Expectations

All students must use the e-hallpass system to leave their class any time

- The process for using a hall pass:
 - Student requests a pass electronically
 - Teacher approves electronically to check a student out of class
 - Student leaves device/cell phone in classroom
 - Student uses pass and checks in on their device when they return
 - If the student is requesting a pass to see another adult in the building, both adults must electronically approve the pass before the student can leave
 - If a student is requesting to return to the building when their class is meeting outside, they must either have a pass or check in at the Main Office to have a pass issued.
- This list of places a student may request includes, but is not limited to: Restroom, Locker, Printer, Library, Vending Machine, Water Fountain, Main Office, Health Office, Dr. Arnold's Office, Ms. Kelly's Office, Mr. Volis's Office, Ms. Deknatel's Office, Ms. Morocco's Office, Ms. Laich's Office, Ms. Castle's office.
- All students are expected to use the e-hallpass system to attend scheduled appointments. This includes, but is not limited to, appointments with: Dr. Arnold, Ms. Kelly, Ms. Ringwall, Ms. Deknatel, Ms. Morocco, Mr. Volis, Ms. Laich, Ms. Castle, Ms. Knight, Ms. Trincia, Ms. Bisso, Mr. Graber.

Consequences for Ehall pass violations

If a student fails to sign out of class using the e-hallpass system as expected, the following sequence will be followed:

- 1st Offense = Verbal warning and a conduct referral will be logged.
- 2nd Offense = Student will serve a lunch detention. Family will be notified.
- 3rd Offense = Student will serve a 1 hour after-school detention
- 4th Offense = 2 hours of community service. Must be completed within 7 calendar days or the student will be assigned 1 day of In-School Suspension
- 5th Offense and subsequent offenses will result in in-school suspensions and the implementation of a movement plan

Boundaries of High School Activities

Inside the School Building: With the exception of a few shared areas (cafeteria, auditorium, etc.), high school students are expected to stay only in areas designated as high school areas and not enter hallways or classrooms designated as middle school areas. This expectation applies during school hours and during after school activities. Unless a staff member gives specific direction, high school students should not enter middle school locations of the building.

Outside the School Building: IACS is located on a 200 acre campus and is privately owned. For safety considerations, IACS students are prohibited from leaving the maintained locations of campus unless they are under the supervision of staff or have express permission to do so. “Maintained Locations” are defined as parking lots or grass areas that are regularly maintained by our facilities staff. Wooded areas and trails are not considered “Maintained Locations”.

Lunch Expectations

- For the 2021-2022 school year, the following expectations are in place for long pass and lunch:
Long Pass Expectations: Students have two options during Long Pass this year
Option 1: Mask break or eat breakfast during long pass. Students should head outside to the Cafe Patio. Breakfast will be available for pick up in the cafe.
Option 2: Report to second period classroom

Lunch Expectations: Students will need to use an assigned seat for lunch.

First Lunch Grade 9 and 10 (Grade 11 and 12 in Advisory)

Lunch service will be available at the Cafe and outside the auditorium

Grade 9 to Cafe, Grade 10 to Audi

Students will pick a seat. This seat will be used to create the seating chart.

Student may also use the patios, but should still have an assigned seat

Second Lunch Grade 11 and 12 (Grade 9 and 10 in Advisory)

Lunch service will be available at the Cafe and outside the auditorium

Grade 11 to Cafe, Grade 12 to Audi

Students will pick a seat. This seat will be used to create the seating chart.

Student may also use the patios, but should still have an assigned seat

- Students are allowed to eat lunch in the following areas: cafeteria, cafeteria patio, auditorium, high school patio.
- Students are not allowed to eat in any other part of the building. Other than the patios, students are not allowed to eat at any other areas outside. Students are able to play basketball outside, but are not allowed to bring food to the basketball hoops. Students who opt to play basketball at lunch are responsible for returning to the building on time for class.
- Students can go to the library, but they are not allowed to bring food to the library.
- Under no circumstances are students allowed to order delivery of food from local restaurants during the school day.
- Students should always clean up after themselves. If there is a large accidental spill, students should notify a facility member.
- High school students are not allowed to go to the cafeteria during middle school lunches, or to any lunch that they are not assigned to.

Student Attendance

The project-based nature of the IACS program makes attendance extremely important. Significant absences due to illnesses, repeated unexcused absences or tardiness will lead to consequences, most

significantly in terms of non-promotion. **Students with more than 7 unexcused absences in any class for a semester will not receive any academic credit for the semester.** (See Promotion Policy)

IACS expects that families schedule vacations or special programs so as not to conflict with school. In particular, the final two weeks of any semester are critical, as they culminate in the student exhibitions and presentations upon which faculty base their final assessments.

In the event of an absence, please provide us with the following information:

- When calling in to report an absence due to illness, please let the health office know your child's symptoms such as fever, vomiting, strep throats, etc. This information is helpful to the health office staff.
- We encourage you to schedule appointments before or after school. However we understand that sometimes missing school can't be helped. If your child needs to be excused early due to a doctor or dental appointment, let the office know before the appointment, either by a call or a note. Parents: Please come in to the main office and sign your child out of school at the front desk, and provide us with a doctor's excuse, which may be brought in the following day.
- Please provide the Main Office with a doctor's note in order to have an absent marked as "Excused" in attendance records.

Observance of a Religious Holiday

Observance of a religious holiday shall be viewed as valid justification for student absence, late homework/project submission and delayed testing, only when the teacher has been notified of the observance date in advance. It is the responsibility of the student and the student's parent/guardian to notify the teacher of these dates in advance and to make arrangements for completing any late/missed assignments or assessments. Teachers will make reasonable efforts to avoid giving assessments on religious holidays.

Student Visitation Policy

The IACS building and property are private and intended for the use of enrolled students and their families. Students may not invite guests to campus (grounds or building) unless they receive permission from the High School Assistant Principal or Principal. Guests who come to campus without permission will be considered trespassing and will be asked to leave campus immediately. Exceptions to this policy would include after school events that are open to the public such as Drama Performances, Art Shows, Exhibition Nights, and Athletic Games. All guests are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct and will be asked to leave if they do not.

Student Driving

Students who drive their own vehicles to and from school must comply with the following rules:

Junior Operator License

Students who drive to and from school must abide by the Massachusetts Junior Operator License Laws
--- Hours of Operation: No driving between 12:30AM AND 5:00AM unless accompanied by a parent.

Passenger Restrictions: No passengers during first 6 months of license, other than a family member, unless accompanied by a person at least 21 years old. Person has at least 1 year driving experience, holds a valid driver's license and is in the front passenger seat.

Parking on IACS Campus

Students will be issued parking permits on a space available basis. Parking is also a privilege that can be revoked if a student is driving recklessly on campus, going to their car without permission, or are carrying illegal items in their car (i.e., drugs, alcohol, vaporizers, weapons). Forms for parking permits may be obtained from the High School Assistant Principal. Information required for a parking permit includes: name of student and signature, a photocopy of the student's license, parent and/or guardian name and signature, car make and model and license plate number of each vehicle the student may be driving, automobile insurance policy number and expiration date. Vehicles without a permit may be removed from campus.

Media Release Agreement

As a charter high school, we anticipate that our school will be approached by print and broadcast media outlets to report on student activities and academics. IACS reserves the right to make, produce, reproduce, exhibit, distribute, publish, and transmit by means of live broadcast, videotape, photograph and print student's names, grade, voice, picture, likeness and actions as an individual in connection with school activities.

Freedom of Expression Policy

Students shall enjoy certain constitutional rights as defined by the courts for a school setting. Students shall have the right to express themselves by speaking, writing, wearing or displaying symbols such as buttons, badges, emblems and armbands, or through any medium or form of expression. The Head of School or designee may regulate expression if there is a substantial, factual basis for believing that a specific form of expression will cause or is causing imminent and substantial disruption of school activities (e.g., is obscene, libelous or defamatory; supports racism, is pornographic, willfully incites others to break valid school rules, etc.).

Students shall have the right to distribute and possess any form of literature on school grounds and in school buildings, including but not limited to newspapers, magazines, leaflets and pamphlets; except that the Head of School or designee may prohibit the distribution in school buildings of a specific issue of a specific publication if there is a substantial factual basis for believing its possession or distribution will cause or is causing a substantial disruption of school activities (e.g., supports racism, supports illegal activities, promotes substance abuse, etc.).

The Head of School or any teacher, school official, or school employee shall require that literature, including school sponsored publications, be submitted for approval or consent prior to distribution. Any expression in any form undertaken by students in the exercise of such rights of expression shall not be construed as a statement of official school policy. The Principal/High School Assistant Principal shall require that no literature be distributed unless a copy is submitted to the Principal/High School Assistant Principal for approval, prior to distribution.

The time, place and manner of student distribution of literature may be reasonably regulated by the Principal/High School Assistant Principal, provided that such regulations:

- are uniformly applied to all students;

- are uniformly applied to all forms of literature;
- do not prohibit distributions at times or places, either inside or outside school buildings, for which no factual basis exists to conclude that any disruption would occur;
- are specific as to places and times where distribution is prohibited; and
- do not inhibit any person's right to accept or reject any literature distributed in accordance with the rules.

Innovation Academy Charter School will encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views.

All student publications will be expected to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements; unfounded charges and accusations; obscenity; defamation of persons, false statements; material advocating prejudice, harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status or marital status; hatred; violence; the breaking of laws and school regulations; or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

The Principal/High School Assistant Principal will establish guidelines that are in keeping with the above and provide for the review of the content of all student publications prior to their distribution. Review of content prior to publication is not censorship, but part of the educational process as this concerns student publications. It can be pointed out to students, as it frequently is to journalists, that a publisher (in this case, the school system) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish.

II. STUDENT CONDUCT

Student Discipline Philosophy

Discipline is the dual responsibility of the home and Innovation Academy Charter School. It shall be the policy of Innovation Academy Charter School and of all school personnel to help students solve conduct problems without resorting to extreme disciplinary measures. Student misconduct may be indicative of more complex underlying problems that a student may have with school and society, and every effort should be made by the school to help the student remain in school and deal effectively with these problems. Suspension action, whether in-school or out-of-school, is recommended only as a last resort. Permanent expulsion from school is appropriate only in extremely limited circumstances as permitted by law. To that end, school personnel are encouraged to pursue and exhaust all other available and appropriate disciplinary actions to foster the education and good conduct of a student before resorting to suspension and/or expulsion.

It is the policy of the Innovation Academy Charter School that every effort should be made to help students solve conduct problems without resorting to extreme disciplinary measures. Examples of interventions that may be employed before resorting to suspension of a student include, but are not limited to, the following: apology, restitution, community referral/services, conflict mediation, restorative justice, correction assignment, counseling, exclusion from school activities, lunch detention, office discipline referral, out of class time out, parent/guardian contact, parent/guardian meeting, privilege loss, student contract, referral to guidance counselor, referral to grade level or building administrator, referral for intervention, student behavior agreement, behavior support plan, teacher conference with parents/guardians, teacher conference with parents/guardians and student, teacher conference with student, warning.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

The Head of School shall create, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, general rules of conduct for the orderly and safe operation of Innovation Academy Charter School. These rules of conduct shall be provided to each student and parent/guardian on an annual basis, and shall be reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis. These rules of conduct shall also include rules not inconsistent with Massachusetts law that address the appropriate punishment and discipline that a student may receive for a violation of the rules of conduct. These rules shall be an extension of Innovation Academy Charter School's policies.

Students violating any of the rules concerning student conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

Behavioral Expectations

All IACS students, staff and community members are expected to respect others and conduct themselves in a manner that supports teaching and learning. The school facilities, property, and equipment provided for the use of students must also be treated with respect. Student efforts in meeting these reasonable expectations will reduce the need for school-directed discipline. Students will be afforded appropriate due process regarding disciplinary matters.

While the Student and Family Handbook lists examples of prohibited conduct and potential consequences for engaging in such conduct, it is not possible to anticipate every circumstance that could result in discipline. Students should realize that if they engage in any behavior that is inconsistent with an appropriate educational environment, whether or not specifically listed here, they could be subjecting themselves to disciplinary action.

Social Activities / Removal from Privileges and Extracurricular Activities

The Principal/High School Assistant Principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct, failure to complete community service, or poor academic performance. All IACS students in good standing (as determined by grades, attendance, and conduct) are invited to participate in school sponsored social activities. Students on academic probation, with poor grades, poor attendance, or with unsatisfactory conduct records may be prohibited from Social Activities. Suspensions, detentions or repeated office referrals are all considered when making determinations about student participation in social activities.

Guest Policy for Social Activities

Guests are the responsibility of their host or hostess and are required to follow all Innovation Academy rules and regulations while in attendance at the IACS event or on IACS property. Any guest(s) found to be out of compliance with IACS rules and regulations will be asked to leave the event immediately and the family of their host/hostess will be contacted. Consequences for behaviors that are not in line with the IACS rules and regulations will be given to the IACS student serving as the host/hostess.

All guests must be current high school students.* All guests must have this letter of permission signed by their school's administration, verifying that they are in good academic standing and behavioral standing; the latter defined as having no suspensions within the current school year. The letter must be received two weeks in advance of the event and an Innovation Academy official will contact the school's administration to verify the letter. Once verification is received, the hosting student will be notified.

*Non-High School Guests attending IACS dances/formals/prom who are less than 21 years old may attend pending an approved Prom Guest Application by the Principal/High School Assistant Principal.

Detention Procedures

There are two types of detentions: (1) Teacher Detentions and (2) Office Detentions. At the discretion of the administration, students may be issued detentions in the morning before school begins, during passing times, during long pass, lunch, or after school.

Teacher Detentions

Teachers may issue a detention to a student for inappropriate classroom behavior. Detentions will not be issued for failure to complete academic work. The length of the detention will be determined by the teacher (not to exceed 1 hour). This will be communicated to the student and the student will have 3 days (day 1 is the day of the behavior incident) to serve the detention. The detention will be served with the teacher in their classroom and it will be recorded in Aspen. If a student fails to serve a Teacher Detention, the teacher will notify the administration and the student will be issued a 1 hour Office Detention.

Office Detentions

While not a complete list, the following types of student actions will likely result in an office detention, however, the severity of the incident or the number of previous incidents by a student may result in a suspension:

- Abusing the hall pass privilege (including being excessively out of class)
- Being in an unauthorized area of the building, or in an area where the student does not have permission to be at that time
- Bullying (detention and/or suspension)
- Cheating (see Code of Academic Integrity)
- Class cut
- Class removals
- Class disruption
- Disrespect towards community members (see section of Suspension for special cases)
- Dress code violation
- Behavior or dress that indicates gang affiliation
- Electronic device violation
- Elevator use violation (a pass issued from the Health Office is required to use the elevators)
- Failure to follow emergency response procedures
- Failure to use the pass system for leaving class or advisory
- Failure to report for teacher detention
- Hallway disruption
- Ordering the delivery of food without permission
- Lying to or deceiving a staff member
- Tardiness to school/class (per attendance guidelines)
- Use of profanity/inappropriate language between students
- Violating the User Agreement for Acceptable Use Policy regarding technology (Loss of technology use and/or detention, and/or suspension)

Damage to School Property Policy

Every student who shall accidentally or otherwise damage any school property, whether fences, gates, trees or shrubs or any building, or any part thereof, or break any window glass or injure or destroy books, computer equipment, instruments, apparatus or furniture belonging to Innovation Academy Charter School shall be liable to pay in full for all damages, including replacement costs, if necessary.

For the purposes of this policy, “school property” includes anything owned, leased, rented, or distributed by Innovation Academy Charter School to its students.

Suspensions (In-School and Out of School)

It is important that students are in school whenever possible. Therefore, suspension is a disciplinary measure that may be used in the case of serious infractions or as a consequence after other disciplinary options have been exhausted.

Suspended students are expected to stay up-to-date with their academic program.

If possible and appropriate, suspensions may be served in school. Classroom space may be difficult to obtain, and some infractions might not be suitable for in-school discipline (for instance, if it involves one or more other students). In these cases, to be determined by IACS administration, IACS will issue out-of-school suspensions.

The suspended student's day will involve supervision and schoolwork. They will not interact with other students and will work and eat lunch independently.

Although we will firmly attempt to resolve all disciplinary situations within the school, for the most extreme or potentially felonious actions IACS may contact local authorities.

When a student is suspended they may not come onto any property under the control of Innovation Academy Charter School or attend any school functions or school-sponsored activities. If a suspension or detention should occur on a day where school has been unexpectedly cancelled due to weather or other unforeseen circumstance, the suspension or detention will carry to the next school day. In limited cases, IACS also has a provision for a student to perform community service as an alternative to being suspended (see details below).

While not a complete list, the following types of student actions may result in disciplinary action, potentially up to and including a student being suspended (In or Out of School) for up to 10 days:

- Acts of Hazing
- Being in possession of, or causing the explosion of firecrackers, stink bombs, or other devices
- Bullying where physical and/or emotional safety of another student(s) is compromised
- Skipping a planned office detention
- Destruction of property (the owner must also be reimbursed for the damage)
- Repeated and/or flagrant disrespect to faculty/staff
- Consumption**, possession, and/or distribution of alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, prescriptions or drug paraphernalia
- Falsification of parent/guardian note that involves student safety & supervision concerns
- Fighting (self-defense is permitted as long as it does not exceed grasping an aggressor to restrain them).
- Harassment of another student or staff member
- Online identity theft, violating the Acceptable Use Policy
- Insubordination (refusal of reasonable requests from staff members)
- Leaving the school building without permission
- Theft (may include reasonable suspicion) of money, books, electronics, lunches, clothing, etc., from anywhere/anyone on school property. Students who witness, have specific knowledge, or act as accomplices in any student theft and do not report it to the school may face disciplinary consequences
- Threats towards staff or student
- Tobacco product use or possession** (see Drug Free School Policy)
- Truancy
- Vandalism (defacing any school property – restitution in the form of monetary payment or community service to make amends for the damage will be required)
- Writing, exhibition, or distribution of vulgar or obscene notes or pictures

Expulsion

The following types of student actions may result in the student being expelled from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H and §37H½:

- Possession of a weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event.
- Possession of a controlled substance on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event.
- Assault of a faculty or staff member.
- Conviction of a felony.
- Serious vandalism.
- Violation of a student's civil rights.

For a description of IACS's complete expulsion policy, please refer to Section IV, Legal Notices and Policies.

Additional Suspension Information

IN ACCORDANCE WITH M.G.L. CH. 71 SECTIONS 37, 37H ½, 37H ¾, CH 222, AND DESE REGULATIONS 603 CMR 53.01-53.14.

Suspensions will be invoked in accordance with our handbook, or for other serious infractions that in the judgment of an administrator warrants such action. Administration shall require that parents/guardians take responsibility by supporting an improvement/behavior plan when developed for the student. Oppositional, non-compliant, repetitive school offenders, who are disruptive to teachers, fellow students and to the school community, will be subjected to higher level discipline, while parents and guardians will be required to work more closely with the school in supporting student improvement plans.

The student may be required to do the following:

- Return to school after the 3rd suspension with a parent or guardian to attend a contingency hearing with the High School Assistant Principal and counselor.
- The student will be placed on an improvement plan designed by the IACS Administration and will include specific behavioral expectations as well as requirements for parental/guardian cooperation in supporting the plan in the best interest of the student.
- Improvement plans, may include parental/guardian responsibility to monitor student attendance by calling the school daily, attending meetings with teachers, drug testing their children, arranging for private counseling or evaluation outside of school, etc.

Any student, *failing to fulfill* the expectations of their personal improvement plan or violating school policy to involve a fourth suspension, may be suspended for the remainder of the subsequent marking period and required to attend an exclusion hearing with the Head of School, Principal, High School Assistant Principal, school counselor and parent or guardian. At this meeting, various options may be considered including, GED program, Job Corp, work, etc.

Any student who is suspended by the administration is not permitted to be on school grounds nor are they allowed to participate in or attend any school-sponsored activity either at the school or away from the school during the period of suspension. Students who return to school grounds while still suspended may receive additional disciplinary consequences.

A suspended student must complete all assignments and tests missed during the suspension for full credit. The student, upon returning from suspension, is responsible for requesting make-up assignments, which must be completed in a time period equal to the days suspended.

Any length of out-of-school suspension could result in the loss of *some* or *all* student privileges (to be determined by the Principal/High School Assistant Principal) for the remainder of the school year, including but not limited to: attendance at dances, co-curricular activities, exclusion from athletic teams or other school organizations, loss of parking privileges, and all school trips/activities. This also includes the privilege of being a spectator at any school-sponsored event (both home and away). A senior may be suspended from senior activities including graduation exercises for any offense that results in an out-of-school suspension, or suspension from school sponsored activities up through the student's last day of academics and school-sponsored activities. **Out-of-school suspension due to insubordination, disrespect to faculty, or alcohol/drug use would likely result in the loss of any off-campus school trip. Chaperones must feel confident that a student will follow instructions and be respectful when they are under their supervision off-campus.**

- Students have the right to appeal their loss of privileges to the Principal/High School Assistant Principal. All appeals must be made in writing to the Principal/High School Assistant Principal within 5 days upon returning from suspension. The Principal will consider the appeal in consultation with chaperones, advisors, and/or coaches.
- If a student loses school privileges due to their behavior, the school is not responsible for any loss of money a student may have paid for a student activity or trip.

Community Service To Avoid Suspension

At the discretion of the Principal/High School Assistant Principal, a student may be given the opportunity to serve 7 hours of community service instead of serving a one day in or out-of-school suspension. The following conditions must be met:

- The student must recognize that their behavior was inappropriate and that it warranted a suspension based on the code of conduct.
- The student has no prior record of conducting community service to remove a suspension.
- The student must submit a proposal for the actual community service work, not less than seven hours total, at a local community organization and it must be approved by the Principal.
- If the community service is not completed within 2 weeks of the incident then the student will be suspended.
- A student can not participate in any athletic games (practice is allowed) or other school extracurricular and social events until the community service hours are completed.
- Please note that the head of the organization must "sign off" on the work by completing the [Community Service Form](#).
- Completing community service on the premises of the Innovation Academy is not an option and it is the responsibility of the family and the student to arrange for the community service project.
- The Principal/High School Assistant Principal reserves the right to deny any request.
- Community service to avoid suspension is not an option for offenses that jeopardize student or school safety. This includes offenses involving violence, weapons, drugs, or alcohol.

Sample Letter From Student Requesting Community Service

Dr. Erik Arnold

Principal
Innovation Academy Charter High School

Date

Dear Dr. Arnold:

I am writing to request community service as an alternative to being suspended for (insert reason for suspension). I recognize that my actions were inappropriate and in the future I will make sure that I do not repeat the behavior and/or other inappropriate behaviors.

I would like to complete my community service at (insert name of organization). I have arranged with the head of the organization, (insert name of organization head/designee), to (explain the work you will be doing). The work will take no less than (insert the # of hours here, remember it must be at least 7). (Insert the name of the organization head or designee here) has agreed to sign off by writing a note on my behalf once I have completed the work. You may contact them at the following phone #: (insert phone # here).

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for community service. I would sincerely appreciate the opportunity to make up for my mistake.

Sincerely,

Your signature here
Your name here

Parent or Guardian Signature of acknowledgement:

Appeal of Suspension to the Head of School

Appeal of Suspension – In a case where the family believes a suspension was given unfairly and not in line with school policy, an appeal to overturn the suspension may be made to the Head of School within five (5) calendar days of the starting date of the suspension. The parent or guardian of the student must submit a written appeal to the Head of School. Please refer to section IV, *Legal Notices and Policies*, for specific information regarding the appeal process.

Re-Entry Meetings

Students who are referred to the Principal, High School Assistant Principal, the High School Adjustment Counselor or the Principal designee for written or spoken threats of violence or harm to themselves or others in any form will be required to seek a mental health evaluation prior to being readmitted to school. Medical documentation of the evaluation is required for reentry. Also the school must be given the ability to report a school based incident report to the medical provider.

When a student returns from a suspension when there is a concern for the safety of the student or others, the parent/guardian must accompany the suspended student to school and meet with the Principal/High

School Assistant Principal unless a meeting was held upon the issuance of a suspension. During this meeting, expectations of acceptable school behavior will be explained to the student and family before the student is able to return to class. Under certain circumstances, this required meeting can be waived by the Principal/High School Assistant Principal.

Necessary Student Restraint Policy

As outlined in 603 CMR 46.00, physical restraint may be used at the Innovation Academy Charter School under certain emergency conditions:

1. When other non-physical interventions have been tried and failed or are judged to be inadequate to the circumstances.

-and-

2. A student's behavior poses a threat of IMMINENT, SERIOUS, PHYSICAL HARM to self and/or others.

All procedures surrounding Innovation Academy Charter School's implementation of restraint follow the guidelines outlined in regulation 603 CMR 46.00. For further information, visit:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html>

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements are included in the school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. The complete text of the IACS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is located on our school website and in section IV of this handbook, *Legal Notices and Policies*.

School Locker Policy

Lockers are available by request. High school students may request a locker that is to be used for the purpose of storing school supplies, outer garments, and other school related materials. Innovation Academy expects that lockers are kept in good condition. As lockers are school property, Innovation Academy holds the right to inspect any student locker for any reason and without notice. Students who choose to secure their locker must give the High School Assistant Principal either the combination or extra key. The administration or facilities staff may remove any locks when a combination/key is not given or if the lock is placed on a locker without approval.

As stated in our policy on alcohol, drugs, and weapons, any contraband found in student lockers may be grounds for expulsion and referral to the police.

Dress Code

Our school dress code builds off our policy on personal property which reads: Personal property brought into school must follow the principles of safety and respect. Students should dress in a way that fosters a professional, safe and respectful environment while at school. The dress code is in effect while a student is on school grounds as well as during field trips, Endersession, and other school-related activities. When a school administrator determines that a student's clothing has violated the dress code or is disruptive to the school environment, the student must immediately correct the violation or the student may be sent home to dress appropriately. Repeated violations (first occurrence must be corrected but is considered a warning) of the dress code will result in disciplinary consequences. Students are expected to adhere to the dress code as described below:

- No undergarments should show at any time (underwear, boxers, bras).
- No clothing that is revealing
- Shoes should be worn at all times.
- No sunglasses or costume masks can be worn indoors
- Articles of clothing that make reference to drugs, alcohol, sexual innuendo, pornography, gang affiliation, and language or symbols that are considered graphic or offensive by staff are not allowed on school grounds.
- Clothing that a reasonable person would consider a "costume" will only be allowed to be worn on designated days. Costumes must be appropriate for the theme of the day and should be culturally sensitive.

Special Dress

Students should always consider whether they will be presenting work or engaging with the public when they choose their dress for the day.

Some occasions will require that students attend school wearing "dressier" attire, such as shirts/ties, slacks, skirts, dressy shoes. Such occasions include, but are not limited to Presentations of Learning, Exhibitions and visits from guest speakers/ college representatives.

Return of School Property

Students who are issued school property (books, athletic uniforms, chromebooks, kindles, etc.) are expected to return those items at a time stated by the respective staff member. Library books must be returned *one week* before the end of school. If a book is being used for an academic project occurring at the end of the school year, staff members may authorize an extension of this timeline. All school property should be returned in reasonable condition as deemed by staff member. Students who lose or damage school property, intentionally or not, are required to pay a replacement fee for the item. Students who do not return borrowed property on time or do not pay a replacement fee will have grades withheld until the property is returned or replacement fee is paid.

Suspicion of Impairment

If any staff member suspects that a student might be impaired while they are in school, on school grounds, or participating in any school function, they will refer that student to the Principal/High School

Assistant Principal or designee. The student will then be escorted to the health office and screened by a member of the health staff. If screening results indicate that the student is impaired, parents will be contacted immediately and students will be subjected to disciplinary consequences. Any student that smells of drugs or alcohol, regardless of whether it can be determined if they are currently under the influence or not, shall be sent home.

Electronic Devices/Cell Phone Policy

IACS recognizes the exponentially increasing prevalence of electronic devices in daily life and it is our belief that students need to learn how to use them appropriately within a community. To this end, while we do not prohibit students from texting or listening to music on headphones during lunch and passing times, we value a school culture where students, faculty, and staff interact socially during appropriate times, and we hope to avoid a culture where students are engaged with their screens rather than the people around them. We also recognize there is growing evidence that supports that the use of social media on cell phones can negatively impact student academic progress and their social-emotional well being.

- During the school day (8am-3pm), students will be able to use devices during the transition between classes, long pass and lunch. **Note:** Class transition time is roughly 5 minutes. Students are expected to arrive promptly to each class.
- Cell phones should be silenced and put away or placed in the pocket system in the classroom.
- Electronic devices and cell phones must remain in the classroom when a student leaves class for any reason other than a dismissal (including but not limited to using the restroom, getting a drink, visiting the Main Office or Health Office or for a scheduled appointment).
- With teacher approval, students are permitted to use their devices, either in class or in the hall (must be listed on e-hallpass), for academic purposes.
- Photos and videos are not allowed to be taken during class time unless there is explicit permission to do so. Photos and videos that are taken primarily to embarrass or humiliate another individual will result in suspensions for the students that take or distribute the photos or videos. Pictures and videos should never be taken in restrooms or locker rooms.
- Headphones may only be worn in the halls during class time with the explicit permission from their teacher (must be listed on e-hallpass).
- The school does reserve the right to confiscate the phone in the case of a disciplinary situation.
- IACS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken devices.
- Appropriate use of devices related to digital citizenship, staying safe online, and use of social media will be discussed both in health classes and advisory in order to support students in learning to appropriately and respectfully use their devices.

Consequences for Violation of Cell Phone Policy

- Progression of consequences:

- 1st Offense = Student will be given a verbal warning and a conduct referral will be logged. Student must give phone to either the Principal or the High School Assistant Principal for the remainder of the day.
- 2nd Offense = Student must give phone to either the Principal or the High School Assistant Principal for the remainder of the day and the student will be given a lunch detention and the family will be notified.
- 3rd Offense = Student must give phone to either the Principal or the High School Assistant Principal for the remainder of the day and the student will serve a 1 hour after-school detention.
- 4th Offense and after. Student will have their device confiscated for the remainder of the day. The student will be required to turn in their cell phone at the start of each school day for a minimum of two weeks.
- Refusal to turn in a cell phone will result in in-school suspension

Contacts for Addressing Discrimination

Title I: Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment.

Coordinator: Greg Orpen, Head of School

Title II: Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in areas of education, programming and activities.

Coordinator: Aimee Voleti, Director of Student Services

Title VI: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits based on race, color and/or national origin.

Coordinator: Greg Orpen, Head of School

Section 504: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits based on disability.

Coordinator: Aimee Voleti, Director of Student Services

MGL Ch. 76, Section 5: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5

Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and/or sexual orientation. This state law encompasses all aspects of the federal laws listed above and adds sexual orientation.

Coordinator: Greg Orpen, Head of School

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA: Amended 2004)

Federal special education law mandating that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related

services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living.

Coordinator: Aimee Voleti, Director of Student Services

Chapter 766 Special Education Regulations: Revised September 1, 2000

State special education regulations; Revision ensure that the state regulations reflect the Federal Law, IDEA-2004

Coordinator: Aimee Voleti, Director of Student Services

Title I of the Improving America's School Act of 1994; Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (replaced Chapter I)

Federal aid program that provides money for education resources to schools that have a high percentage of students from low-income families.

Coordinator: Greg Orpen, Head of School

Title IX: Title IX of the 1972 Education Act

Prohibits gender discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal assistance.

“No person in the U.S. shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid.”

Investigator: Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal

Coordinator: Ann Cottle, Business Office Manager

Decider: Gregory Orpen, Head of School

III. STUDENT LIFE AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

Parent/Guardian-School Compact

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), each Title I school jointly develops with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents/guardians, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the ways in which the school and families will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

School Responsibilities

Innovation Academy Charter School will:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the State's student academic achievement standards.
- Model appropriate ethical behavior and will exemplify integrity, inclusion, compassion and respect for all.
- Work to support the mission of Innovation Academy Charter School by encouraging inclusion, embracing diversity, and ensuring respectful interactions between all stakeholders (i.e. staff, families, students, etc.).
- Partner with families by holding student-led conferences twice/year and an annual Back to School Night for families to meet teachers.
- Provide families with frequent reports on their children's progress by maintaining an open gradebook on Aspen with student and family log-ins and publishing 2 progress reports each semester and end of semester report cards.
- Provide families reasonable access to staff by returning calls and emails within 2 school days. Communication will be open, direct, prompt, and constructive.
- Provide families opportunities to volunteer and participate in school events throughout the course of the year.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Families will support our children's learning in the following ways:

- Model appropriate ethical behavior for their children and others and will exemplify integrity, inclusion, compassion and respect for all.
- Ensuring their child has proper rest and nutrition.
- Ensuring their child attends school on time and on a regular basis.
- Help set a positive tone for learning with their child.
- Work to support the mission of Innovation Academy Charter School by encouraging inclusion, embracing diversity, and ensuring respectful interactions between all stakeholders (i.e. staff, families, students, etc.).
- Actively communicate with other members of the school community openly, directly, promptly and constructively.

- Participate in decisions relating to the education of their child.
- Provide a time for homework completion .
- Support their child’s class/school (i.e. participating in ILP conferences, communicating with their child’s teachers, attending school events when possible, etc.)

Email Communication

IACS values open communication among students, teachers, and students’ parents and guardians. To that end, high school teachers post their syllabi and course materials online and all members of the staff and student body have email accounts to facilitate communication. While email may be a fast and convenient way to send messages to teachers, it is important to remember that teachers may not be able to respond as quickly or as easily to the emails they receive. Email can become all-consuming, and we encourage teachers to limit their time on email so they are better able to focus on the important work of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Please see the email communication guidelines below so you will know what is *expected* of teachers and students, and *what we ask* of our teachers, students, and families/guardians.

TEACHERS: What We Expect

Teachers are expected to acknowledge receipt of an email within 24 school hours of receiving it.

- Email sent after school hours or over the weekend will be acknowledged within 24 hours of the next school day.

If an email requires a response, teachers are expected to respond within 72 school hours of its receipt, whether by email or telephone.

- Email sent after school hours or over the weekend will be acknowledged within 72 hours of the next school day.

Teachers are expected to include students in email communications with families/guardians. As we help our students develop as self-directed learners and effective communicators, it is important that students have an opportunity to be part of any communications about them.

Teachers are expected to be professional and courteous. Mindful of how easily tone can be misinterpreted via email, teachers are encouraged to pause before sending email. Using the “snooze” function in gmail is one way to set a reminder to revisit an email that is waiting in a draft folder.

Teachers are expected to honor confidentiality when using email. Emails should not be forwarded to audiences other than the intended recipients without the senders' knowledge; thus, teachers should avoid sending blind copies.

Teachers are expected to make course materials available online and to communicate to students and families/guardians how those materials can be accessed.

STUDENTS: What We Expect

Students are expected to check their email on a regular basis. Email is used to disseminate important and timely information, and students are responsible for any information that is communicated via email.

When composing emails, students are expected to demonstrate the skills of effective communication and community membership.

For example, students should:

- Address the recipient by name in a polite salutation (*Dear Mr. Cortez*, or *Hello Mr. Cortez*)
- Use the subject line to alert the recipient to the email's content (Subject: *Help Needed for Revision* or *Extra help request*)
- Proofread email before sending. Remember that tone can easily be misinterpreted. When in doubt, pause before sending and ask someone to read your draft for feedback.
- Sign off respectfully

Don't be surprised if your teachers don't respond to you during the evening or weekend; we discourage teachers from being on work email outside of school hours. Please see above for what you can expect from your teachers.

PARENTS & GUARDIANS: What We Ask

Teachers value hearing from you. Please don't hesitate to use email to communicate with your students' teachers. You can reach any staff member by using the first letter of the staff member's first name with their last name @*innovationcharter.org*. For example, Mike Cortez would be *mcortez@innovationcharter.org*.)

While we encourage your emails, we also ask that you remember that teachers' time is limited; they are not able to respond to emails when they are in class, meeting with students, or meeting with colleagues. During prep time, they are typically developing lessons, preparing materials, or assessing student work. Additionally, teachers are not expected to be on email after school hours or during weekends.

Please see above for what you *can* expect from teachers when you email them.

As we seek to help our students become self-directed and effective communicators, please help us by copying your student in any email you send unless there is a pressing reason why they should not be included.

Please avoid using email to ask about assignments or materials that are available online. Instead, ask your child how you can access those materials. If your child can't help you, please email the teacher to ask for access.

Please help us model effective communication for our students by being mindful of tone. When possible, please pause before sending an email that may be read as angry or accusatory.

Emergency School Closing and Delays

The Head of School, in consultation with administration, staff, and appropriate state and local officials and departments, shall be responsible for making all decisions related to school cancellation and/or delayed start times. Cancellations and delays would most commonly occur for the following reasons:

Weather: The Head of School will monitor weather conditions and forecasts, as well as regional school cancellations, to determine if IACS should be canceled or have a delayed opening. Weather cancellations will be communicated via the following methods:

- Text messages using our School Messenger System
- Email using our school information system (Aspen/X2)
- Notice on the IACS website
- Notices to WCVB (the Boston Channel) and WBZ

Safety: In the event that there is a safety concern (ex: gas leak, power outage, threatening message), the Head of School will consult appropriate state and local officials to evaluate the seriousness of the concern. The Head of School will provide accurate information to the community as soon as reasonably possible so staff and families can plan accordingly.

Please note: IACS reserves the right to adjust the schedule in the case of a delay to meet the needs of the school day.

Parent/Guardian Volunteering

Parents interested in volunteering should contact the school. Please keep in mind that adults who volunteer at our school or off site events must fill out CORI forms which are available through our business office and website. Innovation Academy welcomes the support of parent/guardian volunteers in the following areas:

Volunteering During School Hours

- General Office Help
- Collate/Copy Announcements to Families
- Student tutoring
- Classroom Assistant (no experience needed)

Volunteering for Special Events and/or Short Term Needs

- Chaperone (field trips, dances, community service, etc.)
- Locate and schedule resources (materials, presentations, speakers or performers) to supplement curriculum at faculty request
- Substitute teacher
- Sharing career experience
- Teach a Choice Block Class

Volunteering on the Innovation Academy Community Association

- See website for more information

Field Trip Driver Insurance Verification

Parents volunteering to drive for a school field trip will be asked to provide the following information (forms are available at the main office):

- parent name
- address
- telephone #
- Driver's license #
- Make of Vehicle, Model and number of seatbelts in car
- Insurance Company, Policy Number and Expiration Date

While we appreciate your offer to drive, we need to point out that the legal responsibility while the vehicle is being used to transport students rests entirely upon the registered owner of the vehicle. The parent or guardian understands that the school's liability insurance does not cover their vehicle, but only students on a school sponsored field trips and students participating in approved after-school activities. The parent or guardian understands that any other children of drivers are not covered by the school's insurance. They may be covered by the driver's insurance.

By law the number of people in the vehicle should total no more than the number of seats and seatbelts with a maximum of eight passengers, including the driver.

When driving for a school related event, everyone in the vehicle must use seat belts. No exceptions.

Information Dissemination Policy for Families with Limited English Proficiency and Policy on Translation

It is essential that information be disseminated to all families associated with Innovation Academy Charter School. In order to ensure this, we need to be made aware of families who speak a language other than English as their primary language and require translated notifications/documents from school. When families whose primary language is not English are identified, Innovation Academy Charter School will have all documents including general announcements, counseling materials, notices of extracurricular activities, and information regarding school recruitment and promotion translated into the native language of the parents.

Access to the Board

Per board policy, the Board of Trustees welcomes the feedback and opinions of all community members. While the Board of Trustees designates the running of the school to the Head of School and expects that all comments, questions or concerns regarding the IACS school program be channeled through the Head of School, the board welcomes community members who want to speak directly to the board to contact the board chair to discuss this as a possibility. The Board of Trustees can be reached via email at: bot@innovationcharter.org

IV. LEGAL NOTICES AND POLICIES

Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination

As an educational institution, the Innovation Academy Charter School is committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that prevents discrimination of all types, while at the same time ensuring the health and safety of all that learn at IACS. To ensure your full understanding of the policies we have implemented as a school to ensure that students attend a school that is safe and free of discrimination please go to the Massachusetts Department of Education website at www.doe.mass.edu for further information.

It is the role of IACS to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all its students without distinction based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. Innovation Academy Charter School policies reflect a growing need for schools to make explicit the ways in which our policies adhere to state and federal laws concerning non-discrimination and civil rights. **Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated.** Any student who feels they are the victim of harassment or discrimination should report it to an administrator immediately.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The IACS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities in compliance with Title VI, Title IX, section 504/ADA and G.L. c151b and 157c.

Non-Tolerance of Hate Crimes Policy

The Innovation Academy Charter School and its Board of Trustees will not stand for hate crimes. Innovation Academy Charter School recognizes that a hate crime occurs when a student is targeted for physical assault, threat of bodily harm, or intimidation, at least in part because of their race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin,

gender, gender identity, disability, and/or sexual orientation.

Innovation Academy Charter School shall consider any incident at school or a school-sponsored event to be a hate crime, where the incident involved at least in part:

- Use of racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, or LGBTQ+ slurs;
- Use of symbols of hate (e.g., swastika, burning cross);
- Similar behavior by the wrongdoer towards other students from the same racial, ethnic, or religious group or against students of the same sexual orientation, gender identity or gender; or
- The victim was participating in an activity supporting a particular racial, religious, ethnic/national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation.
- Denouncing, mocking, or an overt act negatively targeting an individual's religion

Innovation Academy Charter School shall report all instances of suspected hate crimes to the local law enforcement agency as soon as practicable upon learning of such a hate crime.

Title IX Policy

A. Purpose

This Policy is established by Innovation Academy Charter School in adherence with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") and all applicable Massachusetts statutes and regulations. Title IX prohibits Innovation Academy Charter School from discriminating on the basis of sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence) in all facets of its educational programs and activities.

This Policy applies equally to all of Innovation Academy Charter School's students, employees, authorized volunteers, parents, and other members of the Innovation Academy Charter School community. This Policy applies to conduct at school, at school events, and away from school in all other instances when Innovation Academy Charter School has a duty to investigate.

B. Notice of Non-Discrimination

Innovation Academy Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran, genetic information, or marital status in the delivery of its education programs and activities, and indeed, Innovation Academy Charter School is required pursuant to Title IX not to discriminate in such a manner. If any member of the Innovation Academy Charter School community has any questions or concerns with respect to this Policy and/or Title IX, they may contact Innovation Academy Charter School's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. Innovation Academy Charter School's Title IX Coordinator is identified within this Policy and shall be available to answer all questions concerning this Policy.

Innovation Academy Charter School policy of non-discrimination in its educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission considerations.

C. Definitions

At School: In a classroom, all school common areas, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on school property, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at a school bus stop, or at any

school-sponsored or school-related activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.

Authorized Volunteer:	Any person who 1) is not employed by the school, 2) does not receive any compensation from the school, 3) has undergone school-required criminal background checks, and 4) is permitted to provide services approved by Innovation Academy Charter School to the community, including students, employees, and other partners.
Away from School:	Any location not defined above as “at school.”
Bystander:	Someone who is aware of behavior or conduct “at school” in violation of or reasonably believed to be in violation of this Policy, including sexual violence and/or sexual harassment
Perpetrator:	Person who uses either bullying, as defined Massachusetts Anti-Bullying Law, or sexual violence to establish and maintain power and control over the target of their behavior
Sexual Assault:	Includes behaviors that are attempted or perpetrated against a victim’s will or when a victim cannot consent because of age, intellectual disability, or any other disability precluding the victim from forming consent. Sexual assault may involve, but is not limited to, actual or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion, intimidation or pressure, intentional touching of someone in ways that are unwanted, voyeurism, exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, and/or public displays of images that were taken in a private context or when the victim was unaware.
Sexual Harassment:	Includes, but is not limited to, degrading remarks, gestures, jokes, notes, graffiti, and spreading rumors to indecent exposure, being touched, grabbed, pinched, or brushed against in a sexual way.

Sexual Harassment of a Student by a Innovation Academy Charter School Employee

Sexual harassment of a student by a Innovation Academy Charter School employee includes, but is not limited to, both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually-motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

The conduct is severe, persistent, or pervasive such that it affects the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities; or; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Sexual Harassment of a Student (Including Harassment by Another Student)

Includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is severe, persistent, or pervasive.

Sexual Harassment of a Innovation Academy Charter School Employee or Authorized Volunteer

Innovation Academy Charter School adopts the definitions and conditions set forth in Innovation Academy Charter School's employee sexual harassment policy as defined under governing MA law.

**Sexual
Violence:**

Includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and/or rape. In cases of sexual violence, the perpetrator may be a stranger, acquaintance, friend, family member, or partner.

Sexual Violence Perpetrated Against a Student

Sexual violence perpetrated against a Innovation Academy Charter School student, regardless of the perpetrator, includes, but is not limited to, both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually-motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

The student is caused to reasonably believe that they must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that a perpetrator will make an educational and/or school-related decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct.

Conduct constituting "sexual violence" need not be repetitive, persistent, or pervasive such that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Sexual Violence Perpetrated Against a Innovation Academy Charter School Employee or Authorized Volunteer

Innovation Academy Charter School adopts the definitions and conditions as defined under governing MA law.

Victim: The target of the perpetrator's sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

Witness: Someone whose awareness of sexual violence compels them to intervene and/or seek help on behalf of the victim.

D. Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinating Innovation Academy Charter School's compliance with Title IX, including Innovation Academy Charter School's grievance procedures for resolving Title IX Complaints;
- Drafting and publicizing procedures for reporting possible Title IX violations;

- Overseeing Innovation Academy Charter School's prevention of and response to Title IX reports and complaints;
- Overseeing all investigations related to and/or arising from this Policy and ensuring fair, equitable, and prompt resolution of complaints;
- Identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems revealed by such reports and complaints;
- Providing confidential (to the extent possible) written reports to the Head of School and the Board of Trustees as requested, but at least once every 4 months. Reports shall be kept in a separate and secure Title IX file;
- Providing training to Innovation Academy Charter School's employees, authorized volunteers, and other members of the Innovation Academy Charter School community with respect to Title IX and Innovation Academy Charter School's implementation of this Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator shall understand and have knowledge of the Title IX requirements and Innovation Academy Charter School's own policies and procedures on sex discrimination, anti-bullying, anti-retaliation, school place violence, and sexual harassment.

Each and every report or complaint filed with Innovation Academy Charter School pursuant to Title IX or reasonably related to Title IX must be provided to the Title IX Coordinator to achieve his/her mission.

Effective upon adoption of this Policy by the Board of Trustees, the Title IX Coordinator shall be Ann Cottle, Business Office Manager, the investigator shall be Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal, the decider shall be Gregory Orpen, Head of School.

E. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Innovation Academy Charter School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence at school of or by a student to another student; a student of or by a member of the staff; and/or of or by any other adult who is any way associated with Innovation Academy Charter School. This Policy also prohibits sexual harassment and/or sexual violence by and among Innovation Academy Charter School employees and authorized volunteers. To this end, Innovation Academy Charter School commits its staff to the implementation of a comprehensive and preventive approach that addresses the underlying reasons for this behavior and helps to create a better school community that supports learning and teaching for students and adults.

F. Grievance Procedure

To facilitate the prompt and equitable resolution of any and all Title IX complaints, Innovation Academy Charter School adopts the following grievance process. For the purpose of Title IX complaints and investigations, Innovation Academy Charter School will apply a preponderance of the evidence standard of review. Complainants may choose to submit a written grievance to Innovation Academy Charter School's Title IX Coordinator using the Title IX grievance form included as Appendix A of this Policy.

- A formal grievance process is initiated when a Complainant:
 - o Submits a written statement alleging discrimination prohibited by Title IX to the Title IX

Coordinator or

- o When the Title IX Coordinator receives a report of a suspected Title IX violation from another Innovation Academy Charter School student, employee, volunteer, or other community member.
- Upon the receipt of a grievance or other complaint pursuant to this policy, the Title IX Coordinator shall commence and conduct an investigation pursuant to the procedures set forth within this Policy.
- The Title IX Coordinator shall determine whether the complainant was excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex with respect to any Innovation Academy Charter School program or activity.
- The Title IX Coordinator shall consult with other members of the Innovation Academy Charter School administration and/or Board of Trustees as necessary in reaching a decision regarding the written grievance.
- The Title IX Coordinator shall prepare a written report setting forth his/her findings, conclusions, and actions to be taken, if any, and will determine with whom to share the report.
- Following his/her review, the Title IX Coordinator shall, as necessary, take appropriate action(s) to ensure that Innovation Academy Charter School complies with Title IX in a manner that is prompt and equitable to the Complainant.
- If any of the parties wish to appeal the decisions of the Title IX Coordinator, that party must make a written appeal to Innovation Academy Charter School's Board of Trustees within 10 business days.
- The Board of Trustees shall then hold a hearing in which the parties may present witnesses and evidence, engage in direct and cross examination, be represented by counsel (at the party's expense), present testimony of a mental health provider or other specially trained advocate (at the party's expense), submit expert testimony (at the expense) and/or record the proceedings (at the party's expense).
- The Board of Trustees shall issue a written report within 10 business days of the hearing. The Board of Trustees' written report shall include a notice to the parties of their further appellate rights.

To the extent possible, Innovation Academy Charter School strives to complete all Title IX investigations, from date of report to final hearing and notice of outcome, within 60 days.

F. Reporting Responsibilities

The Title IX Coordinator shall establish—and prominently publicize to students, employees, volunteers, and parents—procedures concerning how to report conduct believed to violate this Policy and how such reports will be acted on. The victim of conduct in violation of this Policy or reasonably believed to be in violation of this Policy, witnesses/bystanders to such actions, and/or anyone who has information that these actions have occurred may file a report.

Reports must be acted upon by those persons receiving the report and the Title IX Coordinator (upon receipt of a report), whether made orally or in writing. Knowingly filing false reports shall result in the taking of disciplinary

measures.

All Innovation Academy Charter School employees, other than Innovation Academy Charter School counselors and psychologists who are required to maintain the confidentiality of the information shared with them, shall report incidents of alleged violations of this Policy to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as they learn of or should reasonably know of any conduct allegedly in violation of this Policy. Employees shall report all relevant details that the victim shared or that the employee observed, including, but not limited to, the names of the perpetrator and victim, the date, time, and location of the alleged conduct, and the circumstances surrounding the alleged conduct. **A Innovation Academy Charter School employee's failure to report a violation of this Policy of which they have knowledge or reasonably should have knowledge shall result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.**

Students who witness alleged violations of this Policy, or parents whose children inform them of alleged violations of this Policy, shall report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. The victim shall not be disciplined for failing to report an alleged violation of this Policy. All reports from students or parents will be maintained in confidence to every extent possible.

Although Innovation Academy Charter School cannot discipline or sanction parents or guardians who elect not to report violations of this Policy, particularly sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, when they learn of any such conduct, Innovation Academy Charter School **strongly encourages** parents or guardians to contact the Title IX Coordinator as soon as practicable with any and all relevant information that they receive. All reports will remain confidential, to every extent possible.

No student, employee, volunteer, or parent who makes a report shall be subject to retaliation for making such report, subject to the report being made in good faith. By filing a Title IX complaint, no student, employee, volunteer or parent making such a report shall extinguish his or her right to file criminal or civil complaints concerning the same conduct.

Upon receiving a credible report of an alleged violation of this Policy, Innovation Academy Charter School will take all necessary measures to ensure the safety all parties (e.g., separate the student-victim from alleged perpetrators; provide alternative schedules to one or both parties; provide necessary support services to the student-victim, etc.) and will provide the student-victim and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) with regular updates as to the status of the investigation. Innovation Academy Charter School shall implement appropriate interim measures on a case by case bases and shall not rely upon any fixed rules related to any such measures. Innovation Academy Charter School will provide student-victims with the contact information for available resources outside of Innovation Academy Charter School, including but not limited to, victim assistance organizations, law enforcement, mental health services, legal assistance, and or counseling services.

If the perpetrator is a Innovation Academy Charter School employee and the victim is a Innovation Academy Charter School student, Innovation Academy Charter School will report the alleged misconduct to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

G. Investigation

The Title IX Coordinator shall, in consultation with the Head of School and Board of Trustees, lead all Title IX investigations. Depending on the nature of the alleged violation of this Policy, an investigation may include, but is not limited to conducting interviews with the victim and the alleged perpetrator; conducting interviews with witnesses; conducting interviews with the parent(s) or guardian(s) as necessary; reviewing law enforcement investigation documents, as applicable; reviewing student and personnel files; and gathering information from all other available outside sources.

All investigations shall commence once the Title IX Coordinator receives notice of the alleged violation of this Policy. Therefore, it is essential that Innovation Academy Charter School employees, students, parents, guardians, and/or authorized volunteers immediately report suspected misconduct as soon as practicable once they have actual notice or reasonably should have known about such misconduct.

When commencing an investigation that may lead to disciplinary action against the responding party, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide written notice to the responding party (and/or his/her parents/guardians) of the allegations constituting a potential violation of this Policy, including sufficient details with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview.

All investigations shall be conducted impartially and in an adequate, reliable, and impartial manner. The Title IX Coordinator shall analyze and document the available evidence to support reliable decisions, objectively evaluate the credibility of parties and witnesses, synthesize all available evidence—including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence—and take into account the unique and complex circumstances of each case. The investigation shall result in a written report summarizing the relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence, this report must include the identification of the allegations constituting a violation, a description of the procedural steps taken during the investigation from the receipt of a formal complaint through the investigation determination, any notifications to both parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather evidence, hearings held, and any findings of fact that support the determination. All of this information must be contained in a single document.

Information gathered during the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent possible. The Title IX Coordinator may reveal the findings of his or her investigation to the Head of School and/or the Board of Trustees as requested.

To the extent possible, IACS strives to complete all Title IX investigations, from date of report to final hearing, if necessary, within 60 days. Victims and alleged perpetrators will receive regular updates with respect to the status of a pending investigation.

If allegations are found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary sanctions, subject to Innovation Academy Charter School's due process procedures, shall be imposed. Whenever conduct determined to meet the definitions of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment in this Policy also may have involved conduct that may violate state or federal criminal law, the police or other necessary agency(ies) shall be notified.

Throughout the investigation, the perpetrator and the victim shall be permitted to:

- Receive written notice in advance of any interview or hearing with sufficient time to prepare for meaningful participation;
- Have equal and timely access to all witness statements and other documents/reports gathered by Innovation Academy Charter School during the investigation.
- Present relevant witnesses and evidence;
- Request a hearing wherein Innovation Academy Charter School will make any determination using a “more likely than not” standard;
 - **Note:** Under Title IX, parties are not required to attend the hearing (they can be represented by counsel or other authorized representative). However, parties are entitled to appear as they wish,

and Innovation Academy Charter School will take all necessary steps to ensure a fair and equitable hearing, including separating the parties as necessary and practicable throughout the course of the hearing.

- Cross-examine witnesses during the hearing, as necessary
- Retain counsel, at the parties own expense;
- Retain a mental health provider or other specially trained advocate, at the parties own expense;
- Submit expert testimony, at the parties own expense; and
- Receive written notice of the outcome (regardless of the outcome) of the investigation and/or hearing. Innovation Academy Charter School shall specifically inform the reporting party (and/or his/her parents/guardians) whether it found that the alleged conduct occurred, any individual remedies offered to the reporting party or any sanctions imposed on the responding party that directly relate to the reporting party, and other steps the school has taken to eliminate the hostile environment, if one was found to exist, and to prevent its recurrence, as appropriate;
- Notification of the parties right to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees

H. Disciplinary Sanctions

- Students:** Disciplinary sanctions any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics and school social events; loss of school bus transportation; assignment of additional school work or community service; and—depending on the extent of involvement in the prohibited activity—suspension or removal from school.
- Employees:** Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, suspension, termination, or filing of criminal charges as warranted.
- Volunteers/
Parent:** Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, denial of access to school premises, school-related events, or school-sponsored events; suspension or termination of volunteer activities; or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

I. Prevention

The Title IX Coordinator shall ensure that students and staff are instructed on how to identify, prevent, and report violations of this Policy. The Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with the Head of School and Board of Trustees, shall also ensure that the Innovation Academy Charter School's health program and counseling services include the appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and help them interact in a healthy manner. School staff shall model correct and courteous behavior to each other, to students, parents and to visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor shall not be accepted.

J. Enforcement Agencies

Nothing in this Policy is intended to prohibit or discourage individuals from contacting the applicable state and/or federal enforcement agencies with complaints or concerns, including but not limited to:

Office for Civil Rights
Boston Office U.S. Department of Education
5 Post Office Square
8th Floor Boston, MA 02109-3921
Tel: 617-289-0111 E-mail: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203-0506
Tel: 800-669-4000 TTY: 800-669-6820

APPENDIX A

Innovation Academy Charter School Title IX Grievance Form

Today's Date _____

Complainant's Name(s) _____
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Home address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____ Email Address _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Contact information _____
Home Address _____

Phone Number Email Address

Circle One: Student Parent on Behalf of Student Employee Volunteer

1. Alleged Perpetrator(s) (if more than one perpetrator include information below on back).

Name: _____

Address (if known): _____

Contact Information: _____

2. **Specifics of Complaint.** Describe below, including any dates of alleged discrimination, identities of alleged perpetrators, and specific circumstances of alleged discrimination. Attach extra pages if necessary.

3. **Witnesses.** Include names, any known contact information, and brief description of each witnesses' knowledge of events. Attach extra pages if necessary.

4. **Corrective Action.** If you wish, please describe any corrective action you would like to see taken with regard to the alleged misconduct. Attach an extra page if necessary.

Signature of Complaint or
Parent/Guardian on Behalf of Complainant

Policy Prohibiting Harassment

Definition of Harassment

In general harassment includes communications such as gestures, jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, communicated in any form, including orally, in writing, or electronically via the Internet, cell phones, text messaging or in any other way, that shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how

their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education.
2. The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
3. Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education, or participation in extracurricular activities.
4. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school-related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the IACS.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

Investigation

Any individual who believes they have been harassed, or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Head of School, Principal or High School Assistant Principal as soon as possible. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with the Head of School, Principal or High School Assistant Principal or if the Head of School, Principal or High School Assistant Principal does not address the problem in an effective manner, the individual should inform the Board of Trustees.

IACS will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under state law. The IACS will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

Closure of a Complaint

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and file a report if required by law.

The IACS urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can resolve the issue. The state agency responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment is the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA (781-388-3300) or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA (617- 727-3990).

The agency responsible for enforcing federal law prohibiting harassment in the employment context is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which is located at the John F. Kennedy Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203 (617-565-3200).

The agency responsible for enforcing federal law prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex in relation to education is the Office for Civil Rights within the U.S. Department of Education, which is located at 33 Arch Street, Boston, MA 02110, (617-289-0111); OCR.Boston@ed.gov.

Suspensions & Student Discipline

Due Process

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in removal from the classroom (i.e., suspensions and expulsions) are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide information about these rights. Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform Innovation Academy Charter School immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and Innovation Academy's attorney is not present, then Innovation Academy will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. Innovation Academy Charter School hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H

A. NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves weapons, drugs, assault on Innovation Academy staff.

Specifically, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. Any student who is found

on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal.

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the principal. At the hearing, the student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to GL c. 71 §37H shall have the right to appeal to the Head of School. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Head of School of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel, at his or her own expense, at a hearing before the Head of School. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section D. If the student withdraws from IACS and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½

B. NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H½

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.

Suspension Following Criminal or Felony Delinquency Complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal or felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if it is determined that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student is entitled to receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Head of School.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Head of School. The student shall notify the Head of School in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Head of School shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the

student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Head of School's decision shall be the final decision of Innovation Academy with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion Following Felony Adjudication or Admission

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

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Head of School. The student shall notify the Head of School, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Head of School shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Head of School's decision shall be the final decision of Innovation Academy with regard to the expulsion.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H½ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section D. If the student withdraws from IACS and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H¾

C. NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H¾

This section governs all student offenses that may be subject to short- or long-term suspensions that *do not* involve dangerous weapons, controlled substances, assault on school staff, felony or felony delinquency charges, and/or felony delinquency findings or admissions, all of which are governed by G.L. C.71 §§37H and 37H½, as detailed above.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the principal is required to exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. The following document outlines student and parent rights when the principal/High School

Assistant Principal is considering and/or decides to implement a removal from school as a consequence for student misconduct.

Students who are suspended under §37H³/₄ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section D. If the student withdraws from IACS and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

Notice of Suspension and Hearing under §37H³/₄

Unless the principal/High School Assistant Principal determines that an emergency removal is required (*see* Emergency Removals section below) or decides to implement an in-school suspension of ten or fewer consecutive days (and no more than 10 cumulative days per school year) (*see* In-School Suspension section below), the principal/High School Assistant Principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent with verbal and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. At IACS, this notice and hearing will typically take place on the same day of the student infraction that led to the suspension.

The principal/High School Assistant Principal is required to provide this verbal and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice must set forth the following information:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;
3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal/High School Assistant Principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
7. if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal/High School Assistant Principal the student's short and long term suspension hearing rights and the right to appeal the principal's/High School Assistant Principal decision to the Head of School (see Hearing Rights section below).
8. The principal/High School Assistant Principal is required to make and document reasonable efforts to notify the parent verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The principal/High School Assistant Principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts, and therefore may conduct a hearing without the parent present, if the principal/High School Assistant Principal has sent written notice (by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent) and has documented at least two attempts to

contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification. **The parent/guardian may decline to attend the hearing, or the parent/guardian may participate in the hearing electronically (speaker phone, video chat) upon mutual agreement of IACS administration.**

Emergency Removal

A principal/High School Assistant Principal has the authority to remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the principal/High School Assistant Principal determines that the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal/High School Assistant Principal judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal/High School Assistant Principal is required to notify the Head of School immediately in writing of an emergency removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal is required to:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the Hearing Rights outlined below;
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent;
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with the rights outlined below in the Hearing Rights section, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal/High School Assistant Principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

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

Hearing Rights

Principal's Hearing under §37H³/₄: Short-term Suspension

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

The purpose of the hearing with the principal/High School Assistant Principal is for the principal/High School Assistant Principal to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident; provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances of the alleged incident; and determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal is required to discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student and parent both shall have an opportunity to present and offer information, including mitigating facts, that the principal/High School Assistant Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal/High School Assistant Principal is required to provide written notification to the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

Principal's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}: Long-term Suspension

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights during a long-term suspension hearing:

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

The principal/High School Assistant Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal/High School Assistant Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student. Based on the evidence, the principal/High School Assistant Principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal/High School Assistant Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal/High School Assistant Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination will:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal/High School Assistant Principal decision to the Head of School or designee (only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension). Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

- a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Head of School within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Head of School an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
- b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Head of School decides to reverse the principal/High School Assistant Principal determination on appeal.

Head of School's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal/High School Assistant Principal has the right to appeal the principal/High School Assistant Principal decision to the Head of School.

In order to appeal the principal/High School Assistant Principal decision to impose a long-term suspension, the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the Head of School within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension (in the alternative, within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension the parent may request and receive from the Head of School an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Head of School may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Head of School shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the Head of School shall grant the extension.

The Head of School must make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing, and will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have attempted to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Head of School to participate. The Head of School shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Head of School will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. An audio recording of the hearing will be made, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.

The student and parent shall have all the rights afforded them at the principal/High School Assistant Principal hearing for long-term suspension, as detailed above in the sections entitled Principal's Hearing under §37H³/₄: Short-term Suspension and Principal's Hearing under §37H³/₄: Long-term Suspension. The Head of School shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing. If the Head of School determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Head of School may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal/High School Assistant Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal/High School Assistant Principal decision. The decision of the Head of School shall be the final decision of the school.

In-School Suspension under §37H³/₄

The principal/High School Assistant Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The principal/High School Assistant Principal is required to inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal/High School Assistant Principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal/High School Assistant Principal must inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day that the principal/High School Assistant Principal decides to impose an in-school suspension, the principal/High School Assistant Principal must make reasonable efforts to verbally notify the parent of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The principal/High School Assistant Principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal/High School Assistant Principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of verbally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal/High School Assistant Principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension (and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal, if such meeting has not already occurred). The principal/High School Assistant Principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal/High School Assistant Principal and the parent. IACS will provide written notice to the parent/guardian when the parent arrives to pick-up the child (following oral notification), or via email.

Education Services and Academic Progress under §37H³/₄

Students serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school

work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

Students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan.

D. SERVICES DURING REMOVALS AND SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

Students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension; make up assignments; and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

Innovation Academy has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring and online or distance learning.

If Innovation Academy expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days, Innovation Academy is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

IACS School-Wide Education Service Plan

- This plan will be shared with the parent and student at the suspension hearing or via email. It is also available in the student/parent handbook.
- For students that are suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days the following education services will be available to our students so that they may continue to make academic progress:
 1. Students should communicate with their teachers via email for the following purposes: (1) request reading assignments, (2) request written assignments, (3) request any class notes, presentations, or documents that may be available electronically, and (4) develop a schedule for making-up work after school upon completion of their suspension
 2. Students will have a time period equal to the number of days suspended to complete all assignments and assessments (for full credit) that were missed during the suspension.
 3. Even though students are not allowed on school property while they are suspended, if meeting with a teacher is necessary for the student to continue making academic progress, the administration will arrange for a student to meet with a teacher after school dismissal. The suspended student will be escorted to the teacher's room, must remain under supervision at all times, and must leave school property immediately after. Any presence of the suspended student on school property must be approved by IACS administration and the teacher prior to their arrival.

4. If in the principal/High School Assistant Principal judgment, the presence of the student on school property poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, arrangements will be made for the student to meet with a teacher or tutor off school grounds (such as at the police station or the public library).
5. When available and appropriate, online coursework will be made available to the student that is suspended or on extended medical leave so that the student may continue to make academic progress.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

The Code of Conduct as it relates to students with Special Needs (which includes those who are identified under and IEP or a Section 504 plan) follows MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5 of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5 which prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.

The disciplining of special needs students is governed by federal and state special education laws and regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 91400, et seq.; 34C.F.R. §300.519529 et seq., and Massachusetts General Laws c. 718.

Special needs students who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability. Additionally, in certain circumstances, special needs students may be removed for additional periods of up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct. Any suspension (consecutive or non-consecutive) that extends beyond ten days will require a manifestation determination meeting with the IEP team to determine causes of the misbehavior.

School personnel may also order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days if a student: (1) carries a weapon to school or to a school function; (2) knowingly possesses, uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function or (3) assaults a member of the IACS staff.

Additionally, a Massachusetts Department of Education hearing officer, under certain circumstances, may order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days.

Under the circumstances described in this paragraph, or if the removal of a student will constitute a change in the student's placement, as defined by federal special education law, a student's IEP TEAM may convene to review the student's educational program and the misconduct. For more details on these procedures, you may contact the special education department.

Expulsion Policy

Due Process

Student disciplinary offenses that could result in expulsion are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. Students will be notified in writing before the expulsion takes effect of the date/time/location of the expulsion hearing, as well as

of the charges and of the reasons and evidence for expulsion. The following sections provide information about these rights. Please note that students have the right to be represented counsel or a layperson of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. A parent or guardian has the right to attend any disciplinary hearing. Students and/or their representatives also have the right to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform Innovation Academy Charter School immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and Innovation Academy's attorney is not present, then Innovation Academy will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. Innovation Academy Charter School hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H - NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H & M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves weapons, drugs, or assault on Innovation Academy staff. Specifically, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. A student may also be expelled for serious cases that involve vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Additionally, upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the principal. At the hearing, the student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present oral and written evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. Students and/or their representatives also have the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. After said hearing, the principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.

Pursuant to GL c. 71 §37H and M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½, a student who has been expelled will be given written notification of his/her right to appeal the expulsion at the hearing, the process for appealing the expulsion and of the opportunity to continue to receive alternate educational services. An expelled student shall have the right to appeal to the Head of School. The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The expelled student or parent of the student shall have ten days (five days for offenses covered under M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½) from the date of the expulsion in which to notify in writing the Head of School of his/her appeal. The Head of School will hold the hearing within 3 days of

receipt of request with the student and the student's parent or guardian. The student has the right to counsel, at his or her own expense, at a hearing before the Head of School. The student and/or representatives will also be able to present evidence (through the student's own testimony or witnesses and through written evidence) and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. Students who are expelled under §37H and M.G.L. c. 71 §37H½ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of expulsion under Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan, which is described below. If the student withdraws from IACS and/or moves to another school district during the period of expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Head of School's decision shall be the final decision of Innovation Academy with regard to the expulsion.

SERVICES DURING REMOVALS AND SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

Innovation Academy has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan for all students who are expelled from school. Written notice of this plan shall be provided to expelled students and parents in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, at the time the student is expelled. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a specific school district staff member to arrange services. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the expulsion. Innovation Academy's Education Service Plan is subject to change, but it consists of online classes and tutoring as needed. If Innovation Academy expels a student, Innovation Academy is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

Drug Free School Policy

Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, or any illegal substances by students will not be tolerated. Drinking or being under the influence of drugs on school grounds or at any school function will result in suspension for some period of time. Second offenses may result in further suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion.

Sale of, or distribution of drugs/alcohol will result in immediate notification of parent/guardian and the police will be notified. The student will face suspension and could be expelled from school.

According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, there is to be no use of any tobacco product by any student in school or on school grounds (this includes school property, school buses and on school trips). **Tobacco products include items such as: lighters, matches, rolling papers, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, pipes, smokeless tobacco, etc...** In addition, IACS prohibits possession of tobacco products on school grounds. Tobacco products visibly displayed by any student will be surrendered to any faculty, staff or administrator. Violations of this law will result in disciplinary action and may require the involvement of the local police.

Search and Seizure

When there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a search of a student's locker, person, or personal belongings will result in evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school, such a search can be conducted. Students and families should be aware that the law allows the Head of School, Principal, High School Assistant Principal or designee to search a student's locker, person, backpack or other personal belongings. Students who refuse to subject themselves or their property to reasonable search will be suspended from school for a minimum of one to three days. Students and families should be aware that the administration may exercise at any time, the option of obtaining the services of trained dogs in searches.

Listed below are some resources where one may seek further knowledge about student rights:

American Civil Liberties Union: <http://www.aclu-mass.org>

Center for Law and Education: <http://www.cleweb.org>

Office of MA Attorney General, Martha Coakley: <http://www.ago.state.ma.us>

Student Press Law Center <http://www.splc.org>

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

I. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student or member of the school staff 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 or by a member of the school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Bystander, is a witness to bullying.

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, Internet postings and assuming the identity of another person as author of posted content. 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, or paraprofessionals.

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

II. LEADERSHIP

A. Public involvement in developing the Plan. The Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation included: notice and a public comment period before the Plan was adopted by the board. Various constituencies both in the school community and in the larger community were asked for their input.

B. Assessing needs and resources. The Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, are assessing the adequacy of current programs; reviewing current policies and procedures; reviewing available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessing available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This "mapping" process will assist IACS in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, IACS will revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set priorities.

On an annual basis, IACS will utilize surveys of students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues. Principals will collect and analyze building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services. At least once every four years beginning with 2016/16 school year, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our school. Additionally, the school will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

C. Planning and oversight. Principal/High School Assistant Principal will: 1) receive reports on bullying; 2) collect and analyze building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes; 3) create a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; 4) plan for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law; 5) plan supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors; 6) choose and implement the curricula that the school or district will use; 7) develop new or revise current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an internet safety policy, and designate key staff to be in charge of implementation of them; 8) amend student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; 9) lead the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and 10) review and update the Plan each year.

D. Developing priority statements. As a part of Innovation Academy's vision of a safe and inclusive school, we have drafted the following priorities.

IACS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other with kindness and with respect for differences.

IACS is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

IACS understands that members of certain student groups, based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. IACS is committed to creating a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and providing all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

IACS will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly 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. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and Innovation Academy Charter School is committed to working with

students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. School Principals are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

III. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Annual staff training on the Plan. IACS Faculty & Staff (including educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals) will be trained annually on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years. The training will include, but will not be limited to, the following topics:

- a. staff duties under the Plan
- b. an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation,
- c. an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school.

B. 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 of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school wide and district wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on the following six areas:

- (i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- (ii) developmentally (or age-) 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 witnesses 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 skills development.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- strategies for creating a safe and inclusive school community;
- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language to resolve conflicts;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making

C. Written notice to staff. The school or district 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 Employee Handbook. Additionally, the entire plan will be shared electronically with all staff on an annual basis.

IV. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources. The school has two High School Adjustment Counselors, a nurse and a psychologist to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. The leadership team reviews staffing support needs at least annually.

B. Counseling and other services. The school High School Adjustment Counselor, nurse, psychologist and administrators work together to provide counseling and other resources to students. The team works to identify services for individual students based on their needs as targets or aggressors.

C. 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.

D. Referral to outside services. IACS utilizes a list of local service providers that is updated annually by the school nurse, High School Adjustment Counselor and psychologist. IACS also recommends families use the behavioral health number on their insurance cards and/or use their primary care physicians for provider referrals. IACS has a protocol in place for emergency mental health screenings and most often refer families to HES Psychiatric Services in Lowell.

V. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- Our middle school (Grade 5-8) health curriculum implements the “Second Step” curriculum, which culminates with units focused on anti-bullying. Scripts and role plays are used to develop skills.
- Our high school has offered an elective classes/clubs specifically designed to raise awareness regarding bullying. In this group, students and faculty sponsors empower the school community to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies. Laws regarding bullying online or via phone/text messages have been addressed at community meetings at the high school by the Tyngsboro Police Department School resource officer;
- enhancing students’ skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference. Innovation Academy High School has a Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) group.

B. 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:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
- using positive behavioral supports
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students through the adoption of an Advisory format in both the Innovation Academy middle school and high school in which students meet in “Advisory” throughout the week.
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development
- using the Internet safely
- supporting students’ interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

VI. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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. You may report an incident in one of the following ways:

- Fill out an Incident Reporting Form and drop off or send via mail. The Incident Reporting Forms are available on our website at www.innovationcharter.org. They are also available from the health office, the High School Adjustment Counselor, and in the brochure rack by the main office.
- Email or call your child's Principal (Erik Arnold, ext. 4154, Federico Pereyra Middle School Assistant Principal, ext. 2233 for middle school students or Stephanie Kelly, High School Assistant Principal, ext. 2136 for high school students).
- Send a letter to the school with attention to either MS Prevention or HS Prevention.

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 3) post it on the school's website.

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 principal 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 Principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee when they witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the Principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 or district 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 principal/ High School

Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal/High School Assistant Principal 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. These responses may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements in the classroom, cafeteria, or bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person”; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the reporter.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal 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 principal or designee deems appropriate.

C. Investigation. The principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

D. Determinations. The principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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.

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

E. Responses to Bullying.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Some methods that staff members will utilize to teach appropriate behavior include:

- Anti-bullying messages are built into the general curriculum
- Lessons in homebase and health classes for middle school or advisory for high school centered around bullying and cyber-bullying issues, such as videos followed by discussion, games, activities, such as students acting out various situations and how to appropriately respond, etc.
- social skills coaching for individual students
- 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
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal 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 this 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal 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 principal 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 principal/High School Assistant Principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VII. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

A. Parent education and resources. Innovation Academy Charter 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 Innovation Academy Community Association.

B. Notification requirements. Each year the school or district 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 our 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 will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VIII. 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 district or 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 district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

IX. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

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

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, 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 or district 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 or district 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.

Food and Drink Guidelines—Wellness Policy

To prevent situations involving food allergy sensitivities, eating in the classroom is kept to a minimum. At times during the year, classes do have celebrations that involve food. The following excerpt from the

IACS Wellness Policy provides more information about food in classrooms and during school events. Please see the Director of Health and Wellness Health with questions regarding the use of food and beverages in school.

Classroom Celebrations:

- Classroom celebrations that involve food are discouraged due to nutritional as well as food allergy concerns.
- If a class celebration/activity is to involve food, fresh fruits and vegetables are welcome.
- Each classroom event may have one baked good which must be store bought and wrapped with the ingredient list available.
- Snack foods or drinks offered must be on the approved snack foods list for Massachusetts public schools or meet the requirements using the Massachusetts Nutrition Evaluation Tool for Schools, MassNETS. This comprehensive list as well as the nutritional evaluation tool, can be found at following link: <http://www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/index.htm>
- Administrators in collaboration with the Food Services Director and the school nurse (due to food allergy issues) may make exceptions in cases such as curriculum-based food activities or special occasions.

Medication Administration and Health Office Policies

For their own safety and for the safety of other students, students are not allowed to carry medications on their person during school hours or at school related events. All medication administration must be coordinated through the Health Office.

IACS requires that the following forms be on file in the student's health record before any medicine is administered:

- Signed consent on the [Student Medical Information Form](#) by the parent/guardian to give over the counter medications.
- Signed [Prescription Medication Order Form](#), completed and signed by both the prescribing physician and a parent/guardian for all long-term prescription medications. This form may also be downloaded off of the school website.

Both of the above forms must be renewed at the beginning of each academic year.

All medications must be hand-delivered to the school nurse by a parent or guardian and be in a labeled pharmacy container or in the original packaging. Medications will not be accepted otherwise.

Further information you may find helpful from the Health Office:

- [Excused Dismissals From the Health Office](#)
- [Health Office Information and Policies](#)

Food Allergy Program

Innovation Academy recognizes that an effective food allergy program is a cooperative effort among school staff, parents/guardians and school medical professionals. In order to facilitate the cooperative effort and nature of a food allergy program, the following will occur:

- IACS will take the necessary steps to ensure that: (a) food ingredient lists of served food will be available upon request (b) medications such as EpiPen's are available; and (c) all staff will be trained annually to recognize symptoms of allergic reaction and to understand their role as a responder in the event of an allergic reaction
- Parents/guardians will be encouraged to: (a) inform school medical professionals, the classroom teachers if their child has a food allergy; (b) work with school medical professionals, and classroom teachers to develop and implement a plan for ensuring that their child is safe from potential allergens; and provide physician ordered emergency medications and emergency care plans if indicated for their child's safety.
- IACS will ensure that: (a) there will be a designated "No Peanuts" table in each cafeteria, as needed; (b) cafeteria monitoring staff will be trained annually to recognize symptoms of allergic reaction and to understand their role as a responder in the event of an allergic reaction; (c) no cafeteria food will be prepared with peanuts, peanut butter or peanut oil.
- School medical professionals will: (a) provide annual training for school staff, food service that will include information on food allergies, how to recognize an allergic reaction and how to respond in the event of an allergic reaction, including the use of an EpiPen; (b) maintain a health care plan for each child with a documented food allergy, (c) maintain emergency medication as ordered by the physician of each child with a food allergy; and (d) work with parents and school staff to set guidelines for classroom concerns that relate to food allergy.

Pregnant Student Policy

Additionally, per civil rights afforded to all individuals, students who are pregnant at IACS are permitted to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non- pregnant students throughout their pregnancy. The school does not require any medical documentation stating that a student can continue attending school. After giving birth, students are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program they participated in before they left.

Technology

BYOD Program

IACS asks all high schoolers to bring a laptop to school, in a program commonly known as "Bring Your Own Device" or BYOD.

By asking *all high school students* to bring in devices, we believe we will be able to help students learn to work more effectively with their devices and to improve technology use in the classroom. In the classroom, giving all students access to devices will allow teachers and students to make more frequent and more efficient use of computing. This does not mean that students will spend all day in front of screens. On the contrary, we believe multi-modal learning is important, and it is important that students have opportunities in class for a wide variety of activities. In many cases, BYOD will enable teachers to make efficient uses of technology for a portion of a class, rather than for the whole class. In an English class, for example, it will now be possible for students to complete a quick journal prompt online or answer a quick survey in a google form, giving the teacher a gauge of reading comprehension before diving into class discussion. In a science class, students might use computers not just to record data, but

to collaborate on research notes, access maps and satellite imagery, or try out online simulations — all activities that rarely merit signing out computers for a whole class period, but that enhance learning nonetheless. In all classes, making sure all students have devices at school and at home means allowing teachers to rely on computers to communicate assignments and deadlines, give students avenues to ask for extra help, and, in many cases, complete, collaborate on, and hand in work without the use of a printer. Many of these practices are already in use at IACS; asking all students to bring a device will help them become the norm. In short, we believe that a computer is essential to the work of our school — researching questions, tracking and completing projects, collaborating with peers and teachers, and reflecting on and documenting work. Asking students to come in with this device is simply acknowledging that students will do better learning if they always have the tools they need at their disposal.

Access to Devices

We understand that not all families will be able to afford laptops. The school will loan a chromebook to students whose families cannot provide a device. We have specific plans to assist students that qualify for free or reduced lunch. Families will need to sign an agreement to be responsible for the care of the device in order for it to go home with students. If you do not choose to provide a device for your student (for whatever reason), the school will, at a minimum, provide one for them to use so they have full access to our curriculum during the school day. If families are willing to sign a waiver indicating they will be responsible for the care of the device when it goes home, then the school will allow the borrowed device to travel to and from school with the student.

More information about the BYOD program can be found under the “Families” top tab on our website. Mr. Tom Hinkle, Director of Instruction Technology, can be contacted if you have further questions at thinkle@innovationcharter.org

Computer Use Policy

Computers are important tools at IACS. We expect students will use computers in all of their classes and will become familiar, efficient computer users.

However, computers can also be distractions to students. Although we can impose controls on how you use the machines, our goal as a school is to prepare students to use computers appropriately *on their own*, as they will do in a professional setting. We expect students to use the computers appropriately and respectfully. Access to IACS computers and network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Violating the computer use policy will result in disciplinary actions, ranging from a verbal warning to loss of computer privileges to suspension. Consequences of violating the policy will depend on the severity and/ or history of violations. Students who choose to bring computers (or equivalents) to school must comply with these guidelines; failure to do so will result in a student not being allowed to use their own computer in school.

Work only on assigned tasks

Any time that a student is allowed to use a computer for class, it is expected that they will use the computer *only* for the task assigned and use only applications that have been specified by the teacher.

Any time a student is using school computers, they need to be doing schoolwork. Playing games on computers, searching websites that are not related to class, and browsing social networking sites, chatting with friends or checking personal email are not acceptable activities.

Students should assume that work on the computer is open to all teachers to see. Teachers may want to see what students are working on and what programs are open at any given moment. This includes both what students are currently doing and the history of what has been done in the past; computers keep a history of what users do and teachers may inspect that history if they suspect misuse. Attempting to erase the history of what has been done is not acceptable.

Do not change the configuration of computers

School computers are like workplace computers – they are here as a tool to help students work at school. School computers are not personal computers. They are shared, communal property and should be treated accordingly.

Students may not change the configuration on individual computers in any way. (This includes the background, the welcome menu, the password, the appearance of various applications or any other default settings on the computer.)

If a student has recommendations of how the configuration of school computers could be improved, please let a teacher know so we can consider making the improvement for all computers – a student should not make the change themselves.

Internet Usage

A web browser provides access to innumerable web sites and web applications, many of which are enormously useful to students in class work. Using the web is just like using any other program – students may only do so for school tasks and must limit themselves to school appropriate materials. Web activity can be tracked and accessing inappropriate sites will be recorded and treated with the utmost seriousness. Clearing the browser's history or cache is unacceptable and will be seen as evidence of misdoing.

School computers and internet access are available to students for academic purposes only. Students are not permitted to access social networks or game websites. Additionally, students **are not** permitted to use school computers to listen to or download music.

Email Usage

Email is provided to students as a way to communicate with teachers, peers, and community members about topics related to learning. Some students may also use email as a way to transfer documents between home and school, as a way to back work up, and, on occasion, as a way to complete assignments. When using email on school computers for academic purposes, students should use school assigned email accounts only. Students are not permitted to use personal email on school computers. We encourage all students to develop the habit of checking IACS accounts regularly and using these accounts as a way to communicate with teachers outside of the classroom.

We would like all students to be aware that IACS email accounts are for academic, not personal, use and may be accessed by IACS staff. While accessing student email is not the intention of the staff, student email accounts are considered to be property of IACS. Students will be notified if/ when a staff member has accessed email accounts.

Internet and Email violations: When using the internet or email, the following are not permitted:

- Browsing sites that are not related to class objectives
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another's password
- Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources (paper, bandwidth, server space, ink, etc.)
- Employing the network for commercial purposes

Responsible network users will not use Innovation Academy Charter School Computer Network and Electronic Devices, including without limitation Internet access and email:

- for commercial purposes of any kind;
- for political lobbying, although users may use the system to communicate with representatives and to express his/her opinion on political issues;
- for illegal or criminal activities;
- for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating personal contact information about themselves or other people, including name, address, telephone, school or work address, without the prior permission of a school administrator, and the prior written permission of the individual whose personal contact information is to be posted;
- for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating student record information without the prior permission of a school administrator, and the prior written permission of the student's parent/guardian unless such disclosure or dissemination is permitted by Massachusetts student record regulations;
- for posting or otherwise disseminating a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message. This provision does not prohibit a user from promptly disclosing to a teacher or school administrator any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel unsafe;
- to threaten, humiliate, bully, harass, intimidate or send offensive information to another person or about another person;
- for posting chain letters, engaging in spamming or engaging in any other inappropriate form of communication over the computer network;
- for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating personnel record information without prior permission

of a school administrator unless such disclosure or dissemination is permitted by federal or state law;

- for viewing, possessing, posting, disclosing, sending, sharing or otherwise disseminating sexually explicit digital pictures, text messages, emails or other material of a sexual nature on any computer, cell phone or other electronic device regardless of whether federal or state child pornography law is violated
- for activities which disrupt the educational environment;
- for unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests or engaging in plagiarism;
- for activities that invade the privacy of others for personal use; in other words, Innovation Academy Charter School's Computer Network and Electronic Devices should only be used for business and/or school purposes;
- to engage in any other conduct which violates any Innovation Academy Charter School policy and/or the provisions of Innovation Academy Charter School's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook or school-based rules in any way;
- to permit students to interact with any websites that require input of personal or student identifiable information (such as name, address, telephone number, email address, etc.) unless the use of such website has been approved by the Innovation Academy Charter School Information, Communication and Technology Services Department;
- to violate the provisions of M.G.L.c. 71, § 37O, including its provisions of regarding bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation.

Responsible network users will:

- never reveal personal information about any user, such as address, telephone number, credit card number, social security number, unless express written permission is granted; and student users will never agree to meet with someone they meet online without a parent/guardian's approval;
- notify a system administrator of any security problems they identify on the Computer Network and Electronic Devices;
- be responsible for the use of the Computer Network and Electronic Devices and account(s) at all times and never divulge his/her password(s) for any device or account to anyone;
- recognize that there is no privacy in the contents of email, data or personal files on the Computer Network and Electronic Devices or any part thereof, and that all electronic devices and the Computer Network and Electronic Devices are subject to archiving, routine maintenance, access and monitoring of messages and files may be accessed in appropriate circumstances;
- promptly disclose to a teacher or school administrator any website that they locate or receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel unsafe;
- not attempt to gain unauthorized access to Innovation Academy Charter School Computer Network and Electronic Devices or any other computer network or go beyond the user's authorized access, make deliberate or malicious attempts to disrupt the Computer Network and Electronic Devices or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, or otherwise vandalize, tamper with, destroy or

interfere with the Computer Network and Electronic Devices, with programs, data, files or any other electronic information or devices or attempt to vandalize, tamper with, destroy or interfere with the Computer Network or Electronic Devices, with programs, data, files or any other electronic information or devices;

- honor the legal rights of software producers, network providers, copyright and license agreements;
- not use the system to access material that is profane or obscene (i.e., pornography), that advocates illegal acts, that advocates violence or discrimination toward other people (i.e., hate literature), or that is illegal (i.e., gambling);
- comply with the policies of Innovation Academy Charter School, including without limitation, its NonDiscrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment, Non-Tolerance of Hate Crimes Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in connection with the use of the Computer Network and Electronic Devices, including without limitation, the computer system and email;
- use the same level of care, judgment and professionalism in communicating on the Computer Network and Electronic Devices, including without limitation, the computer system and email as they would for other written communications of the school department, including without limitation those on school department or individual school letterhead;
- report any incidents or receipt of threats, humiliation, bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, harassment, intimidation or offensive communications (whether via email, text message, social networking site or otherwise) in accordance with the provisions of the Innovation Academy Charter School's Non Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and Innovation Academy Charter School's Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan;
- ensure students are educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites, chat-rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response;
- follow all of Innovation Academy Charter School's guidelines as well as any additional guidelines established by classroom teachers when publishing work online; and
- not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the data, work, files, folders or any other electronic information of any other user of Innovation Academy Charter School Computer Network and Electronic Devices or any other computer network or make deliberate or malicious attempts to disrupt, destroy, vandalize, tamper with or interfere with the Computer Network and Electronic Devices, with data, work, files, folders or any other electronic information of any other user of Innovation Academy Charter School Computer Network and Electronic Devices or any other computer network.

Violations may result in the loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Electronic Communication Guidelines

IACS recognizes the rapid transformation that has taken place with regards to electronic forms of communication. When used appropriately, electronic forms of communication can be beneficial in enhancing communication between parents/guardians, students, faculty, coaches, and administrators. When used inappropriately, electronic communication can lead to negative consequences for those

individuals found to be at fault. In order to protect students, staff, and IACS from inappropriate use of electronic forms of communication, all members of the IACS community (faculty, staff, administrators, coaches, volunteers, students and parents/guardians) must adhere to the following expectations:

1. All electronic communication should be just, courteous, and professional. Nothing is more important than one's integrity and professional ethics and these principles apply to how members of the IACS community communicate with others. All members of the IACS community should be aware that word choice, tone, grammar and subject matter should model high standards and integrity.
2. All electronic communication between and among staff and students should be transparent. Whenever possible, IACS email or other school sponsored communication vehicle should be used.
3. All members of the IACS community should report any inappropriate contact via electronic means immediately to the building principal or other school administrator.
4. These guidelines are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the Acceptable Use Policy that governs the use of school technology resources.

Enrollment Policy and Requirements

The Innovation Academy Charter School (IACS) enrolls students who meet eligibility as outlined herein. IACS serves students in grades 5-12 and enrolls new students in grades 5-10. IACS does not accept applications for students for grades 11 and 12. When openings occur during the school year in grades 5-10, IACS will backfill openings with students listed on the waitlist for the corresponding grade. IACS will not admit students in excess of our approved maximum enrollment. The total number of students attending IACS in a given year cannot exceed the total number of students reported in our pre-enrollment submission to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the previous spring in accordance with 603 CMR 1.08 (5).

IACS is a regional school primarily serving the following towns: Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Groton-Dunstable, Littleton, Lowell, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough and Westford. Students who reside in Massachusetts but outside the IACS region are also eligible for enrollment. (See section IV for more details) While IACS makes every effort to communicate effectively with districts regarding all aspects of the enrollment process, we operate as our own district and our enrollment process is not integrated with those of other school districts 603 CMR 1.05(11).

IACS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, and proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. Admissions policies adhere to all state and federal regulations including public School Regulation 603CMR 26.00, 603CMR 1.05 and MGL c71/89. IACS does not charge an application fee for admission or use any financial incentives to recruit students (603 CMR 1.05 (3)(a)). All information requested in the application, such as language spoken at home or race/ethnicity, is not intended and will not be used to discriminate (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 89(m); 603CMR 1.05(2)).

Please see the Enrollment section of our school website for our full enrollment policy as well as updated information about our application and enrollment process.

Service Animal Policy

Innovation Academy Charter School recognizes that as a public school, it must comply with applicable federal and state laws concerning providing reasonable accommodations to employees, students, volunteers, and visitors to the school. In light of this obligation, Innovation Academy Charter School shall permit properly accredited “service animals” onto the school’s premises and at school-sponsored events.

For the purpose of this policy, the phrase “service animal” is defined as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, and/or other mental disability.

Innovation Academy Charter School requests, but cannot require, that service animals wear special collars and harnesses and that their medical/vaccination histories are reported to the school so that the school may ensure the safety of all other employees, students, and visitors to the premises.

All service animals must be housebroken and must be within the “control” of its handler, either by harness, leash, or tether, or some other means such as voice control. Innovation Academy Charter School shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the service animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the Head of School or designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or school-sponsored activity. The Head of School or designee shall also exclude the service animal if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the service animal will be notified by the Head of School or designee and will be required to remove the service animal from school premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the service animal, the person having custody and control of the service animal may be required to remove the service animal to a different location designated by Head of School or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the service animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school and transportation staff as well as parents/guardians of the student.

The Head of School or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a particular student’s use of a service animal on the school premises, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation vehicles.