



**Wissahickon**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Student and Family Handbook  
For Remote Learning  
September 2020 – June 2021**

**Awbury Campus**

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School Hours During Remote Learning:  
Tuesdays thru Thursdays  
9AM-3PM

It is the policy of the Wissahickon Charter School Board of Trustees to promote diversity and equal access to educational opportunity and all categories of employment without regard to age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status, parenthood, marital status, handicap or any other protected class.

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# I. Who We Are

## Mission

Wissahickon Charter School was planned around three essential elements:

1. An integrated **environmental focus**, recognizing the importance of service learning
2. **Peace, conflict resolution, and community building** as part of a prioritized social curriculum
3. An emphasis on **family involvement** at all levels of the school organization, with special emphasis on parents as partners in the learning experiences of their children.

Our founders wrote that Wissahickon will provide a community of learning with an environmental focus that stimulates the child's intellectual, social, and character development.

## **Board of Trustees**

Justin DiBerardinis, Chair  
Rachel Loeper, Vice Chair  
Charles Case, Treasurer  
Debbie Levin, Secretary  
Rekyiah Abdul-Zahir  
Bob Anderson  
Anthony Coughlin  
Shauna Mace  
Michael-Ann Matticoli  
Ebony Staton-Weidman  
Kristi Littell, *Ex-Officio*

## **Board Meetings**

August 13th, 2020 9-11am  
September 16th, 2020  
October 21st, 2020  
November 18th, 2020  
December 16th, 2020  
February 3rd, 2021  
March 10th, 2021  
April 14th, 2021  
May 19th, 2021  
June 16th, 2021

*All meetings will start at 6:30pm and will only be publicly accessible by Zoom Video Conference. For Zoom log-in and password, please contact Jane Walsh at [j.walsh@wissahickoncharter.org](mailto:j.walsh@wissahickoncharter.org)*

## **Administration**

Kristi Littell	CEO
Kate O'Shea	Lower School Principal, K-5
Lovelee Polite	Middle School Principal, 6-8
Tamara Lemmon	Dean of Culture
Will Shelton	Assistant Dean of Culture
Rebecca Chase	Director of Learning Supports
Niema Golphin	Director of Culture
Jess Pastore	Director of Development
Kimberly Krasnow	Director of Human Capital

Ishmell Bradley	Director of Technology
Tiffany Days-Harris	Director of School Operations
Jane Walsh	Executive Asst./Development Associate
Paul Vande Stouwe	Assessment and Accountability Manager
Shonda Robinson	Lead Administrative Assistant
Tonya Bailey	Clerical Assistant
Erica Hauswald	Reading Specialist
Sherraine Senior	Remote Learning Specialist
Melissa Greenwald	Math Coach
Abigail Beljean	School Counselor
Melissa Pendelton	Recess and Afterschool Program Director
Adriane Faulks	Food Service Manager
Michael van Hoy	Facilities Manager
Mike Purcell	IT Manager

### **Faculty and Staff**

Haley McCormack	Teacher	K11
Yashay Marsh	Assistant Teacher	K11
Alyssa Pinder	Teacher	K12
Latoya Edwards	Assistant Teacher	K12
Sarika Patel	Teacher	111
Carol Pringle	Assistant Teacher	111
Greg Hagenbuch	Teacher	112
Alexandria Oliver	Assistant Teacher	112
Alyza Ngbokoli	Teacher	211
Bree Green	Assistant Teacher	211
Aileen Haggerty	Teacher	212
Justine Linneman	Assistant Teacher	212
Jennifer Coppertino	Teacher	311
Sarah Walters	Teacher	312
Jack Haurin	Teacher	411
Mira David	Teacher	412
Jared Gilman	Teacher	511
Chenequa Jones	Teacher	512
Andrew Beck	Teacher	611/LA/Social Science
Michele Engelbert	Teacher	612/Math Science
Sarah Wilson	Teacher	711/ELA
Patrice Coleman	Teacher	712/Social Science
Bailey Langham	Teacher	811/Math

	Teacher	812/Science
David Byron	Apprentice Teacher	Literacy
Jada Mapp	Apprentice Teacher	Math
Bailey Fuentes	Apprentice Teacher	LA/SS
Efi Narliotis	Apprentice Teacher	Math/Science
Tamara Weiss	Teacher	Art
Liz Biagioli	Teacher	Discovery
Kate Bowman-Johnson	Teacher	Library
Jim Reggiani	Teacher	PE
Angela Barber	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Daniela Hayek	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Jessica Mahoney	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Anne McNichol	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Sheri Rogers	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Nancy Wetzel	Teacher	Learning Specialist
Jibree Hill	Team Member	Behavioral Support
Kareema Keel	Team Member	Behavioral Support
Ayat Salaam	Team Member	Behavioral Support/ASP
Zenith Slaughter	Team Member	Behavioral Support
Andrew Talbert	Team Member	Behavioral Support
Carla Reeves	Assistant Teacher	Special Ed
Mira Saxe-Smith	Assistant Teacher	Special Ed
Ryn McWhirter	Assistant Teacher	Special Ed
Vernon Gainer	Support Staff	Lunch/ASP
Vanessa Geathers	Support Staff	Lunch/ASP
Shawn Goslee	Support Staff	Lunch/ASP
LaShea Holt	Support Staff	Lunch/ASP
Romuel Diaz	Support Staff	Lunch
Dwayne Morton-Thompson	Support Staff	Lunch
Alexandria Oliver	Support Staff	ASP
Jurras Jackson	Support Staff	Recess
Jason Rhett	Support Staff	Recess
Joshua Wyatt	Support Staff	Recess
<b>TBH</b>	Support Staff	Recess
<b>TBH</b>	Support Staff	Recess

## II. Attendance

### Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance assures that our students will not miss valuable instructional time and opportunities that will enhance their success in school. Students are required to be at school everyday except for:

- Illness
- Approved religious holidays
- Funerals
- Medical and dental appointments
- Court appearances

If a child is absent, the parent must notify the office by 8:30 am the morning of the absence. For each absence, an automated phone call will be sent alerting the family. All absent students are expected to submit a parental note within three days of the student's return including the date of absence, the reason for the absence, and a parent/guardian signature with a contact number.

**If a student is absent 3 or more consecutive days due to an illness, parents must provide a doctor's note.** In a typical year, up to 10 total absences for sickness are permitted, with, all absences beyond the 10 day limit require a physician's excuse. However, this school year, we recognize that many students will be expected to stay home for what would typically be considered mild symptoms due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we are suspending the physician's excuse requirement for students with more than 10 absences due to illness. We must make every effort to record attendance accurately and if a student misses school, it must be for a valid reason. If no reason is provided or our office is unable to verify an absence as excused, it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

### Attendance policy for unexcused absences

When a student is absent the first time, an automated call and/or email will be sent to the family.

- **3 absences** - Certified warning letter sent home, generated by the front office
- **6 absences** - Student attendance improvement conference with the Dean of Culture to establish/create a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP). Please be advised that while the school will make every effort to hold a student attendance improvement conference at a time convenient for the student and caregiver will work to reschedule in the event of unforeseen circumstances, we are required to hold an attendance improvement



conference even in the event that the student or caregiver is unable to attend. **A student with six unexcused absences in a year must be reported as habitually truant.**

- **9 absences** - Student attendance improvement conferences with the site's administration (Fernhill- Principal or Assistant Principal; Awbury- Lower or Middle School Director) to review policy, provide support, and revisit the Truancy Elimination Plan, (TEP)
- **10 or more absences** - Attendance Review Committee (ARC) Meeting with the CEO or Director of Operations.

### **Potential next steps**

Please note that if your child is six (6) years of age or in grades 1-3 and has ten (10) or more unexcused absences, you, as the parent or guardian, may be referred to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for truancy. If your child is in grades 4-12 and is under the age of seventeen (17), you may be referred to Truancy Court. A DHS or Truancy Court referral can only occur after an attendance improvement conference has occurred. If your child is referred to DHS or to Truancy Court, a DHS agency provider will be assigned to your case and will begin home visits. If the attendance does not improve or you do not participate in the voluntary services offered by the DHS provider, your case may be referred to the District Attorney's office for prosecution. Please be advised that expulsion, suspension, or transfer will never serve as a consequence for truancy.

## Calendar

### Wissahickon Charter School 2020-2021 Calendar

NOTE: ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE. PLEASE BE SURE WE HAVE A VALID EMAIL ADDRESS FOR YOU ON FILE FOR ONGOING UPDATES.

August 17-21, 2020	Professional Development - New staff only
August 24-31, 2020	Professional Development - All staff
September 1-4, 2020	On Site Orientation Conferences (All grades)
September 7, 2020	Labor Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed
September 8, 2020	First Day of School- All Grades
<b>September 28, 2020</b>	<b>Yom Kippur - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
<b>October 2, 2020</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>
October 12, 2020	Columbus Day - SCHOOL IS OPEN
<b>November 3, 2020</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>
<b>November 11, 2020</b>	<b>Veterans Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
November 23, 2020	Last Day of First Trimester - SCHOOL IS OPEN
<b>November 24, 2020</b>	<b>Staff Only for Professional Development - Report Card Writing Day</b>
<b>November 25-27, 2020</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
November 30-December 2, 2020	Professional Development for K-1 staff transitioning into in-person instruction
December 3, 2020	First day of in-person classes for Kindergarten and First Grade (tentative based on local health guidance and Board approval)
December 9-11, 2020	Report Card Conferences, 12:45pm Dismissal
<b>December 23, 2020 - January 1, 2021</b>	<b>Winter Recess - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
<b>January 4, 2021</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>
January 5, 2021	Students Return from Winter Recess
<b>January 18, 2021</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
<b>February 5, 2021</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>
<b>February 15, 2021</b>	<b>President's Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
<b>February 16, 2021</b>	<b>Flex Day - School Closed (unless 2+ snow days before 2/12/21)</b>
March 4, 2021	Last Day of Second Trimester - SCHOOL IS OPEN
<b>March 5, 2021</b>	<b>Staff Only for Professional Development - Report Card Writing Day</b>
March 17-19, 2021	Report Card Conferences, 12:45pm Dismissal
<b>March 29-April 2, 2021</b>	<b>Spring Break - School Closed</b>
<b>April 9, 2021</b>	<b>School Closed for Professional Development</b>
April 20-22, 2021	12:45 Dismissal: English Language Arts PSSA, Grades 3-8
April 27-28, 2021	12:45 Dismissal: Mathematics PSSA, Grades 3-8
May 4-5, 2021	Science PSSA, Grades 4 and 8; Makeups (all grades)
May 7, 2021	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
<b>May 13, 2021</b>	<b>Eid Al-Fitr - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
<b>May 31, 2021</b>	<b>Memorial Day - Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>
June 4, 2021	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 10, 2021	12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 11, 2021	Last Day for Students, 12:45pm Dismissal for Professional Development
June 15, 2021	Last Day for Staff
June 18, 2021	<b>Juneteenth Holiday(Observed): Administrative Offices and School Closed</b>

Note: Our offices are normally open in the summer months but on a reduced 9:00 AM-3:00 PM schedule.

## Enrollment

State law mandates that charter school enrollment be governed by lottery. Children who are not selected can be placed on a waiting list. Children who live outside of Philadelphia can apply if every interested child in Philadelphia already has been accepted. **Preference is given to applicants who are siblings of current WCS students enrolled as of February 1, 2021 so long as proof of guardianship and residence is confirmed. Preference is also given to children of staff and board members who are in their positions as of February 1, 2021. Parents of students who fall in the categories above MUST STILL COMPLETE AN ENROLLMENT APPLICATION BY THE DEADLINE. The deadline for applications for grades K – 7 will be January 25, 2021. The sole way to apply is through Apply Philly Charter (<https://applyphillycharter.org/> or (800) 891-3999). Failure to submit the application by the correct deadline forfeits the preferences listed above. The lottery will be held on February 9th and February 10th, 2021.**

## Emergency School Closing

Most local radio, TV, and cable TV stations broadcast school closing information beginning very early in the morning. In the event of inclement weather, Wissahickon Charter School will be closed any time that the School District of Philadelphia is closed. Further, there may be times when Wissahickon Charter School chooses to close even though the School District of Philadelphia chooses to remain open. Parents should plan ahead with their children for what to do in the event that school is closed for the day.

If it becomes necessary to close school during the school day, information will be forwarded to local radio, TV and cable TV stations. We will also post info on our website, and have a message on school voicemail. We will also send out a call using our alert system. Please make sure we have the most up to date phone number so that you can be assured of receiving the call/email.

*Addition for Remote Learning: While a remote learning model makes it unlikely that school will be closed for inclement weather, Wissahickon may close in the event that there are widespread power outages in the city.*

## III. Academics & Extracurriculars

### Contacting Teachers

Teachers are eager to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have about class procedures. To request a meeting, please email the teacher. Please include your telephone number and the time of day when you can be reached, and the teacher will contact you within 48 hours.

## Grading

### Academic grades

**Kindergarten:** Kindergarten students are scored on a continuum from beginning to developing to secure in each foundational skill. Their reading level is also recorded on each report card. Kindergarten students all receive an interim in trimester 1 and an interim the last two trimesters if there are any concerns or major changes. They receive 3 report cards, the first two are conferences and the final one is mailed home. Students with IEPs receive modifications to their assessments and report cards if noted in their IEP.

**First and Second Grade:** Students in grades 1 and 2 are scored on a continuum with Below Basic, Basic, Proficient and Advanced skills in each foundational skill area. In reading, they are scored in fluency, decoding and comprehension. In Writing, they are scored in structure and organization, Content, Spelling and Grammar. In Math and Thematic Studies (a combination of Science and Social Studies) they are scored in achievement on assessments. Their reading level is also recorded on each report card. Students all receive an interim in trimester 1 and an interim the last two trimesters if there are any concerns or major changes. They receive 3 report cards, the first two are conferences and the final one is mailed home. Students with IEPs receive modifications to their assessments and report cards if noted in their IEP.

**Third- Eighth Grade:** Students in grades 3-8 receive letter grades (A-F) in each of the main content areas English Language Arts, Mathematics, Thematic Studies (3-5 only, a combination of Science and Social Studies) and in 6-8 in Science and Social Studies. Letter grades for students in 3rd-8th grades are comprised of a consistent combination of “mastery”, “practice” and “learning habits and skills”. For more information about the grading scales, contact the administration. WCS considers a score of “D” or “F” a failing grade. Students all receive an interim that is mailed home halfway through each trimester. They receive three report cards, the first two are conferences and the final one is mailed home. Students with IEPs receive modifications to their assessments and report cards if noted in their IEP.

### No Zero Policy

Research shows that a grade of “zero” does disproportionate damage to a student’s average when using traditional 100 point grading scales. In order to avoid that kind of irreparable damage, the lowest score a WCS student can be given will reflect 50% of the total possible points of the assignment.

**Addition for Remote Learning: More specific information about grading during remote learning will be shared via the Weekly Wissahickon and by teachers directly.**

## **Graduation**

8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation is a time to celebrate great accomplishments by our students and both families and staff are encouraged to attend. Wissahickon Charter School, however, reserves the right to exclude any student from participating in the graduation ceremony if the student's behavior doesn't meet or has not met school expectations. Parents will be notified in advance if such a decision is made. Further, Wissahickon reserves the right to require students with failing yearly averages (D or F) to complete a year-end assignment or make up work in the relevant courses in order to participate in graduation.

## **Make-up Work**

Upon request, we will make every effort to provide assignments for a child who is absent for **three days or more**. When an absence is anticipated, please let your child's teacher know ahead of time so that you and the teacher can work together to provide the necessary work assignments during the period of absence. Middle school students are required to check in with their teachers to ensure they complete all missed work assignments.

## **Parties & Celebrations**

- Celebrations that align with our mission or our curriculum are encouraged. These include celebrations of student work (eg. publishing parties), celebrations of family (eg. Grandparents' Day), and celebrations of nature/seasonal change (eg. harvest celebration, winter celebration).
- Secular (non-religious) holidays may be celebrated with the approval of Administrators. These include, but are not limited to: Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day, Valentine's Day.
- Religious observances are not permitted in deference to the varied religious beliefs of our students. Students may learn *about* religious holidays in an academic context or in the context of learning about the diversity of our student and family community.
- Halloween is not celebrated. Halloween costumes, parties, or candy are not permitted.
- Families who do not wish to have their children participate in such events should notify the teacher. Family wishes should be respected, and such children should be exempted from participation in a way that does not cause embarrassment or distress to the child.

## **Promotion & Retention**

Prior to the end of the school year, teams of teachers and administrators conduct an administrative review to determine if any child should be recommended for retention to increase the likelihood that a student will thrive academically, socially and emotionally in school, short and long term. For each child, these teams take into account reading level, standardized test scores (if available), achievement grades, effort grades, other assessments and social emotional development. Concerns regarding the possibility of retention will be

shared with parents at report card conferences, report card comments, or through personal outreach.

Literacy in the primary years is of great importance and provides the foundation upon which all future learning is built. If a kindergarten student is an Emergent Reader or is on Level A or level B at the end of the year, they will be considered for retention. If a first grade student is below Level G, they will be considered for retention.

The Academic Team will meet to make a final decision and will communicate this with the family. While the perspective of the family is one important part of the decision, the school has the final say in these retention decisions. Retention for students with IEPs will be discussed in an IEP meeting and the decision will be made jointly by the whole team.

Please note that once a child is formally recommended for retention, this recommendation becomes part of the child's permanent Wissahickon Charter School records. In the event that the child transfers to another school, the child will still be retained.

### **Special Education Services & Programs**

The Wissahickon Charter School is required by the IDEA '97 to provide a free, appropriate public school education to school age children with disabilities who need special education and related services. School age children with disabilities who need special education are identified as eligible for special education if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following disabilities:

- Autism/pervasive developmental disorder
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Neurological impairment
- Deafness/hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple handicap conditions
- Other health impairment
- Physical disability
- Speech and language impairment
- Blindness/visual impairment

In compliance with federal law, the WCS will provide each qualified student the related services or accommodations that are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in the school program, without discrimination to the student or family. For further information on evaluation

procedures and provision of services parents should contact the school's CEO or their designee.

Our Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities And Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is available here:

<http://wissahickoncharter.org/uploads/attachments/ciuy1f2ny00eu51fabphwlr5l-child-find-poster-090315.pdf>

## **Spiritual Expression**

At WCS, we respect the right of students to appropriately exercise their spiritual expression, and we also recognize the need to prevent material disruptions to the learning environment. Usually, when instruction is offered in person in our buildings, to honor these twin aims, WCS provides a private, peaceful location available to students during non-instructional time for spiritual expression, including prayer. For students to take advantage of this time and space, we require a note from a parent indicating that they wish their child to have access.

*Addition for Remote Learning: During remote instruction, families are invited to reach out to their child's teacher if the child needs to be offline to observe any religious rituals.*

## **Teacher Qualifications**

As a parent of a student at Wissahickon Charter School, you have the right to request the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

1. Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches;
2. Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances;
3. The teacher's college major, as well as any advanced degrees that he or she may have attained;
4. Whether any paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please deliver a request in writing to the school. In addition to specifying the information which you would like to receive, please be certain to include your name, address and a telephone number at which you can be contacted during the day.

## **Textbooks & Other Materials**

All textbooks, workbooks and other school materials should be protected. Small reading books may be protected by placing them in Ziploc bags when conditions necessitate such care.

**Parents may be held financially responsible for any damage, loss, or theft of school property, including technology if there is a repeat occurrence.**

*Addition for Remote Learning: We recognize that during remote learning, we are sending home many more materials than is typical. Please find a space to keep these materials safe and available so your child can access them for all learning. Please refer to our Acceptable User Policy in this handbook for more information about safeguarding your child's iPad or Chromebook.*

## **Tutoring**

Periodically, Wissahickon Charter School will offer tutoring as an educational institution. In those cases, school leadership will identify and invite students who qualify to participate for free in the program with a predetermined WCS employee.

Parents and guardians are welcome to pursue tutoring for their children (who are WCS students) by WCS employees. To aid in this process, the front office will hold a list of employees who are interested in tutoring. Aside from identifying interested parties through this list, WCS is not responsible for any aspect of tutoring (scheduling, compensation negotiations, etc.).

Employees are not permitted to tutor students during school hours. Employees are not permitted to tutor students enrolled in their own classes for compensation.

*Addition for Remote Learning: WCS facilities are not available for tutoring while we are offering a remote model of instruction. We encourage any families and tutors who are WCS personnel to practice social distancing and wearing masks during sessions.*

# **IV. Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedures**

## **Mission Statement**

### **Policy Statement**

Wissahickon Charter School ("Wissahickon") is committed to creating a safe, positive learning environment for all of our students, staff, parents, and community partners. Wissahickon will work to assure that all students and staff are well motivated, fully aware of their potential and dedicated to lifelong learning as competent and productive human beings. Wissahickon



believes that all children can learn in a safe environment.

With everyone's commitment to this Code, we can all create a proper learning environment at Wissahickon Charter School.

### **Purpose**

Wissahickon has adopted this Code to support the creation of a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The purpose of this Code is to clearly state our standards for acceptable conduct of students. This Code also explains the consequences of not meeting these standards. This Code is driven by our philosophy that restorative measures, paired with age-appropriate logical consequences, hold students accountable when necessary, while keeping all students safe. Wissahickon does not permit corporal punishment.

This Code also sets forth the discipline procedures for students who have committed violations of the Code. This Code is not meant to be a contract between Wissahickon and the students, and may be amended at any time. It is a place for Wissahickon to explain certain policies applicable to students.

### **Scope**

This Code of Conduct applies to conduct of Wissahickon Charter School students that occurs:

- During such times as they are under the supervision of the school, including the time they are in attendance at Wissahickon Charter School as well as when they are participating in virtual instruction.
- Off school grounds at any school-related activity, function or event;
- Off school grounds when the conduct may reasonably be expected to (i) endanger the safety of students, teachers, administrators, or any other member of the school community; or (ii) substantially and materially disrupt the school; and

### **Overview**

To foster a positive school culture at Wissahickon Charter School, priority will be placed on modeling and actively teaching positive behaviors such as cooperation, assertion, respect, empathy, challenges, kind and respectful communication, curiosity, self control and commitment to learning, cultivation of a feeling of connection and community, intellectual rigor, and compassionate responses to those who are upset or in need. Although the active teaching of positive behaviors will be of paramount importance at Wissahickon Charter School, the necessity of explicit prohibition of negative behaviors—with prescribed consequences when a prohibition is violated—is also recognized.

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

None of the consequences listed below will be applied in such a manner as to discriminate against any student based on race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. The Administration of Wissahickon Charter School will impose consequences for behavior that falls within the range of consequences for a particular violation of this Code. The severity and/or nature of the consequence imposed will be based on factors including, but not limited to, age of the student, number of prior offenses, disability, and/or severity of the violation.

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

Various means may be used by school personnel to discourage or extinguish undesirable behaviors. Some means will be “restorative” in the sense that they involve “making up for” damage that was done: for example, a student who mistreats another might be required to do something that restores the dignity of the victim (e.g., offer an apology in front of peers), or a student who damages property might be required to repair whatever damage was done. Other means might focus on encouraging greater self-awareness and compunction in the transgressor: for example, a transgressor might be required to write about the transgression, its consequences, and perhaps suggest what s/he would consider an appropriate punishment. Various other means will be used as well and may include counseling the student; conferencing with the parent(s); assigning extra responsibilities at school; assigning community service; or imposing make-up time, Saturday school, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, or referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing with a recommendation that the student be expelled for a period of more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Please note that students in grades K-2 will not be suspended for minor offenses.

## **Dress Code**

There appears to be a definite relationship between appropriate dress, good work habits, and proper school behavior. Recognizing the relationship between personal dress and personal

attitude, students are encouraged to dress in a manner that demonstrates pride both in themselves and in their school.

The following guidelines shall apply to attendance at school and all school activities and events:

- Students are expected to be neat and appropriately attired for school.
- Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.
- All skirts and shorts must be as long as the longest finger when hands are placed to the student's side, even if the student is wearing leggings.
- Jeans may have holes in them but only BELOW mid-thigh (see length above for skirts)

The following items are NOT permitted at school and any student not in compliance of the dress code violation will be subject to consequences:

- See-through, sheer, or fishnet fabrics.
- Clothing that is too tight or revealing may NOT be worn.
- Undergarments may not be visible (i.e. boys - underwear/boxers; girls - bras, undershirts or underwear)
- Facial piercings or piercings that pose a safety risk of any kind are not allowed.
- Dress, accessories and jewelry which contain obscene symbols, signs, or slogans, and/or which slur or degrade on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation, contain language or symbols supporting sex, drugs, alcohol or tobacco, and impose a threat of imminent violence or disruption to the orderly operation of the school shall not be worn.
- Hoods may not be worn indoors. Hats are not permitted for both boys and girls.
- Shirts that expose the stomach or are low cut in front, back, or sides; excessively tight or see-through shirts, spaghetti straps or strapless tops, tank tops or sleeveless shirts

### **Violation of the Dress Code**

When a student is deemed to be in violation of the dress code, the family will be called to bring the student a change of clothes. If dress code violations persist, a student will be given appropriate consequences, which include loss of privilege, loss of recess, after-school Make-up Time and/or Saturday Make-up Time.

*Addition for Remote Learning: Students who are not dressed appropriately for school will be asked to turn off their video for the remainder of the lesson and to change clothes by the next lesson.*

## **Behavior Intervention**

No matter how diligently we work with students to establish goals and commit to agreements about how we need to behave to support those goals; no matter how carefully we set up routines and model and practice them, no trimester will pass without rule-breaking. It's part of the business of all children to test limits, but adolescents especially, are figuring out how power works, and to what extent they can operate independent of the adults who have so much of it. It's part of healthy growth toward adulthood to try things out on their own, and it's part of the job of educators to guide that process so students are safe and respectful to others while they learn to be responsibly independent.

However, from time to time the general program of discipline and management will not work for a student. Research supports that despite consistent efforts, a school-wide behavior model may not always work for 100% of the student population. Therefore, when Responsive Classroom (LS) and Developmental Designs (MS) fails to meet all of the needs of any student other interventions need to be put into place. These interventions are meant to support the student by providing additional structure and a clear plan for improvement. These structures are also meant to communicate more consistently with the parent, to ensure that the home and school are in agreement of the additional supports given to aid in ensuring that said student adheres to policies & procedures set forth by WCS. The Student Accountability Plan (referenced in this document) speaks to the General Program and Behavioral Intervention (BI) as it relates to student discipline and management of student behavior at WCS. The two levels of BI are identified and outlined below:

**Prior** to placing a child on Behavioral Intervention Level 1, any combination of the following systems and supports may be provided to students:

- Daily 30 minute Morning Meetings to reinforce CARES values of Cooperation, Academic Excellence, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy, Self-Control & Stewardship
- Explicit teaching of responsive classroom and development designs as embedded in the curriculum and taught daily by all staff.
- Middle School Study Skills & Study Hall to support academic & social growth
- Creation of social guidelines with student input: Guidelines are created each year whereby students provide input to staff as a means to help hold students accountable and live out our daily agreements
- Social guidelines are reviewed consistently with students, posted in classrooms, common spaces and are mailed home to families.
- Assemblies to help reinforce CARES values
- Celebration of positive and consistent student behavior through CARES recognition

- Communication with families via email, telephone & in person meetings to discuss growth both academically and socially
- If a student is displaying disruptive behavior, a teacher may ask that student to TAB (Take A Break) 2-3 minute break away from the group in the designated spot marked. The goal is to provide the student with space and time to reflect and quickly repair behavior.
- A student who has not responded to in-class redirections **might** need some time away from his/her regular environment and the opportunity to debrief with another adult and/or make a written plan to get back on the right track. At an appropriate later time, the teacher may have a short social conference with the student. This can happen at the door or inside the classroom (off to the side, between teacher and student only).

### **Behavior Intervention Level 1**

- Students who consistently struggle to meet the behavioral expectations of WCS will be placed on Behavior Intervention (BI). This may include frequent breaks within and/or outside of the classroom, being sent to ReSet, calls home, meetings with families via phone & in person, make up time and suspension.
- The student, family and school staff meet at the onset of BI1 to go over the goal(s) for the student. Goals are set up to help students in areas where they struggle consistently. The student may have a managed behavior plan that must be signed by teachers and parent/guardian daily. The plan will have a points goal for the week for the student. Each student's plan will be tailored to fit them. While a specific percentage for every student isn't set in stone, each student is expected to show positive results on the behavior plan.
- Alternatives to the plan include regular texts and/or phone calls between school staff and parents/guardians.
- Family/School contact will occur at least **twice a month**, via an in-person meeting or phone call with the Dean of Culture (DoC) and or a designee. The Dean of Culture or the Assistant Dean of Culture monitors students on BI, so they are the main contact between the school and family.
- Check in meetings with DoC
- Other aspects of BI may include: Make-up Time after school, Saturday Make-up Time, community service, sessions with counselor, peer mediation, mentoring by an adult ally, and other possible interventions that are agreed upon by the school and family. This list is neither exhaustive, nor necessarily relevant for every student on BI, but presents the most common interventions.

## **Behavior Intervention Level 2**

- Students on BI2 have not met their goals on BI1, and continue to struggle with following the rules and expectations of the school. Even with the interventions on BI1 and a more focused and concentrated support given, the student doesn't progress.
- The formal contact with the parent is still twice a month, but one of these contacts must be in-person.
- Many of the same interventions/supports will be utilized for a student on BI2.
- Checks in with DoC will be more frequent.
- The team will take a look at the supports and interventions and make adjustments where needed; the goals on the behavior plan may be modified, and the points may be adjusted.
- **During BI2 family meetings, it is made clear that failure to show progress may result in a referral for an expulsion hearing, and if suspended while on BP2, the student can be brought up for expulsion.**

## **Rules & Regulations**

### **Level I Rules**

Various means may be used by school personnel on a case-by-case basis to discourage violations of Level I Rules (see means described above).

#### **Rule 1**

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

- Students shall act in a courteous manner at all times and toward all members of the school community, and shall not engage in conduct, which disrupts any school-sponsored or school-related educational program or activity.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  - Disobedience
  - Disrespect
  - Dishonesty
  - Failure to follow established school rules
  - Failure to comply with the established dress code
  - Failure to comply with the established attendance policy
  - Possession or use of beepers, pagers, cell phones, walkman, iPod, MP3 players, look-alike or toy weapons (those that are capable of inflicting serious bodily injury will be treated as a Level II offense), laser pointers, poppers, sparklers, mace, pepper spray, lighter, or any telephonic, stereophonic or digital device, not including a calculator or digital watch,

during school hours or programs

- Lying to school authority
- Failure to follow established classroom rules

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

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

**Rule 3 Students shall maintain good records of attendance. (Note: Please be advised that expulsion, suspension, or transfer will never serve as a consequence for truancy.)**

- The following, although not exhaustive, will be considered violations of this Rule:
  - Excessive unexcused absence (i.e. three or more)
  - Excessive unexcused lateness or tardiness (i.e. three or more)
  - Missing a class without a valid excuse
  - Truancy

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

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

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

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

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

- Students shall respect the computer privileges granted to them and shall comply with Wissahickon Charter School’s Acceptable Use Policy whenever they use Wissahickon Charter School’s computers, equipment, network system or any other technology owned by or licensed through Wissahickon Charter School.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  - Giving his/her password to another individual
  - Using another’s password
  - Illegally downloading copyrighted material from the internet
  - Purposely or recklessly visiting sites on the internet that contain sexually explicit or otherwise offensive materials
  - Harming, damaging or disrupting hardware and/or software
  - Harming or destroying the data of another person or student
  - Harming or destroying the internet or other school networks
  - Purposely or recklessly creating, downloading, or uploading a computer virus
  - Breaking into or hacking into other files or systems
  - Accessing and/or altering school records, information or files without express permission
  - Conducting any business enterprise
  - Material that is fraudulent, harassing, sexually explicit, pornographic, violent or advocating of violence, profane, obscene, intimidating, threatening, defamatory, discriminatory, or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate may not be sent by email or other forms of electronic communication (such as bulletin board systems, newsgroups, chat groups) or accessed, reviewed, displayed on or stored in Wissahickon Charter School’s Computer Resources.

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

- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she creates graffiti, carves, tears, cuts or otherwise marks, regardless of whether the marking is permanent, property owned or leased by, or licensed to



Wissahickon Charter School.

- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she steals or attempts to steal school property or any property leased or licensed to Wissahickon Charter School, or the personal property of another member of the school community while on school property or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she attempts to pass or solicit counterfeit money or to make counterfeit money.
- A student will be considered to have violated this Rule if he/she attempts to purchase stolen or illegally obtained property at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.

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

- Students will be held responsible for their purposeful, reckless and negligent actions and the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their actions.
- The following, although not exhaustive, shall be considered violations of this Rule:
  - Physical contact by pushing, punching, shoving, slapping or hitting
  - Physical contact by kicking
  - Throwing any object that may cause injury to another at any member of the school community
  - Biting
  - Spitting
  - Roughhousing or horseplay

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

- Students shall not act in any manner, which creates a substantial and unjustifiable risk of harm to others and indicates a conscious indifference to the consequences of the act.

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

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

and/or local law.

**Rule 12** Students may not possess, use, distribute or solicit the use or distribution of any tobacco product or related paraphernalia while on property owned by, leased or licensed to Wissahickon Charter School, or while at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event.

**Rule 13** Students shall not directly or indirectly communicate any threat to any member of the school community which places that person in fear or apprehension of injury, pain and/or ridicule.

- Continual threats, harassment, bullying and/or intimidation are considered and treated as Level II offenses.

### **Level II Rules**

Students who engage in activities that violate any federal, state and/or local law may be subject to criminal charges and punishment in addition to any disciplinary measures undertaken by Wissahickon Charter School. Violations of Level II rules can result in suspension from Wissahickon Charter School. Violations may result in a referral to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing with a recommendation that the student be expelled for a period of more than ten (10) consecutive school days (**except Rule 14**).

**Rule 14** No student shall engage in repeated violations of this Code.

- A student will not be considered to have engaged in repeated violations of this Code unless the student has previously been warned or disciplined for violations of this Code.

**Rule 15** Students may not possess, use, distribute or solicit the use or distribution of any unauthorized prescription or non-prescription medication, drug, narcotic, hallucinogen, steroid, growth hormone, amphetamine, barbiturate, opiates, marijuana, inhalants, alcohol or any other intoxicant or related paraphernalia while on property owned by, leased or licensed to Wissahickon Charter School, or while at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event. No violation of this rule will occur where the student is specifically allowed to possess such drug or inhaler by the student's physician, upon receipt of documentation from the student's physician and approval by the school nurse in accordance with Wissahickon Charter School's Medications Policy.

**Rule 16** Students shall not expose or attempt to expose their genitalia or any private body part to any member of the school community, nor shall they touch the

**genitalia or private body parts of another.**

**Rule 17**      **Students shall not engage in any activity, which can reasonably be expected to have the effect of harassing, threatening or damaging the safety or reputation of any member of the school community.**

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

**Rule 18**      **Students shall not engage in any consensual sexual acts.**

**Rule 19**      **Students shall not force or attempt to force any other member of the school community to engage in any sexual act.**

**Rule 20**      **Students shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or pain to any student, teacher, administrator, staff member or any other employee or agent of Wissahickon Charter School, or any member of the school community.**

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

**Rule 22**      **Students shall not possess on their person, in their clothing or belongings, in their vehicle, or in any storage space or container provided by Wissahickon Charter School any weapon.**

- For the purposes of this Rule, “weapon” shall include any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.
- The following steps shall be taken by appropriate personnel at Wissahickon

Charter School in the event a student violates this Rule:

- The student will be detained and, where possible, brought to the office of the CEO or designee;
  - The incident will be immediately be reported to Police or any other appropriate authority if deemed necessary by the school;
  - The parent/s or guardian/s of the student will be immediately notified;
  - Expulsion may be recommended in accordance with the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- A Serious Incident Report will be filed and should contain: Circumstances of possession and discovery of the weapon; Action taken by Police or other authority in response to the call for assistance; Action taken by Wissahickon Charter School, including details of contact with parent/s or guardian/s, filing of the report and notice to Police or other authority; An image of the weapon; A report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

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

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

### **Disciplinary Actions**

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Make-Up Time</b>      | <b>Retaining the student after school hours with the parent and/or student being responsible for transportation of the student at the end of the detention period.</b> |
| <b>Sat. Make-up Time</b> | <b>Students attends make-up time for 3 hours on Saturday morning. Parents/students are responsible for transportation to and from Saturday school.</b>                 |

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

1. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days.
  - a. Suspensions may be given by the Administration or person in charge of Wissahickon Charter School.
  - b. A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
  - c. The parents or guardians shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.
  - d. When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Code.
  - e. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.
  - f. Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the governing board.
  - g. Students in grades K-2 shall not be suspended for minor offenses.
2. Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from Wissahickon Charter School rolls. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing pursuant to the Pennsylvania Code.
  - a. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except as set forth below.
  - b. If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
  - c. Students who are under 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.
    - i. The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent.

- ii. Within 30 days of action by the board, the parents or guardians shall submit to Wissahickon Charter School written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, Wissahickon Charter School entity shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student’s education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.
  - iii. If the approved educational program is not complied with, Wissahickon Charter School may take action in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).
- 3. Exclusion from classes—in-school suspension
  - a. A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
  - b. Communication to the parents or guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by Wissahickon Charter School.
  - c. When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the head of school shall be offered to the student and the student’s parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in the Pennsylvania Code.
  - d. The student’s school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student’s education during the period of the in-school suspension.

**Hearings**

- 1. *General.* Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.
- 2. *Formal hearings.* A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the board or an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board. When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a majority vote of the entire board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
  - a. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student’s parents or guardians by certified mail.
  - b. At least 3 days notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request

- the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.
- c. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
  - d. The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
  - e. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
  - f. The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
  - g. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
  - h. A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
  - i. The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
    - i. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
    - ii. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act 2004 (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1482).
    - iii. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
  - j. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.
3. *Informal hearings.* The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.
- a. The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.
  - b. The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
    - i. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.
    - ii. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
    - iii. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.

- iv. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
- v. The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

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

### **Manifestation Determination**

A manifestation determination must be conducted when a disciplinary change of placement occurs. Disciplinary change of placement occurs when a student with a disability, because of a violation of the school code of conduct, is removed from his/her current educational setting for: more than 10 school days consecutively; more than 15 school days cumulatively in a school year; when school days 11-15 constitute a pattern of exclusion; or an exclusion of even one school day for a student with an intellectual disability.

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct (except for a removal that does not constitute a change in educational placement i.e., is for 10 consecutive school days or less and not a change of placement), Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and Charter School) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- A. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- B. If the conduct in question was the direct result of Charter School's failure to implement the child's IEP.

If Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either of those conditions were met, the conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. If the IEP team answers "yes" to either question, and therefore determines that the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the proposed disciplinary action is voided.



If Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was the direct result of Charter School's failure to implement the IEP, Charter School must take immediate action to remedy those deficiencies.

## **Anti-Bullying**

### **Statement of intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a staff member.

### **What is Bullying?**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the core elements of bullying include: unwanted aggressive behavior; observed or perceived power imbalance; and repetition of behaviors. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

### **Bullying can be:**

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
- Cyber and Mobile

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving and interacting with their peers. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Objectives of this policy**

- All administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All administrators, teaching, and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if a bullying issue arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously and our students and parents should be assured that they will be supported and protected when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### **Signs and symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to be truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has lunch or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Prevention**

We will use WCS methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Signing a behavior contract
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying which shows how bullying can hurt people
- Reading stories about bullying, having group, class, and all school meetings and presentations that talk about and deal with bullying
- Role plays that demonstrate bullying, and how to combat it, if one is the victim, or bystander
- Discussions about bullying and how it not only impacts the individual but the whole school community
- Working with students who display bullying tendencies, and helping them understand how they hurt people and why they must stop.

### **Outcomes**

- The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologize and to fix the situation. Other interventions may be used and/or consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even expulsion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### **Procedures**

- Students or staff should report bullying to correct person: Students to any staff members whom they feel comfortable talking to – staff members to administrators (Directors and CEO).
- All verified cases of bullying will be recorded by staff.
- The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated with appropriate interventions used to deal with bullying behaviors.
- In serious cases or cases where there seems to be a pattern, parents will be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behavior through peer mediation, meetings with the counselor, self reflection, parent meetings, and or/outside counseling, and if necessary school discipline, including suspension and as a last measure, expulsion.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

## **Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Administration of Wissahickon Charter School is committed to maintaining an academic and work environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, the WCS will not tolerate harassment of any of its employees and/or students by anyone, including any administrator, supervisor, co-worker, student, teacher, vendor, or visitor of WCS.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, gender identity, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap/disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, or other characteristic protected by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or other applicable federal and state laws and regulations. WCS will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, interferes unreasonably with a person's work performance or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment or academic environment.

Sexual harassment deserves special mention. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on sex constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or academic performance, (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment or academic decision, or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment or academic environment. Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing," "practical jokes," jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.

All WCS employees and students are responsible to help assure that harassment is avoided. If you feel that you have experienced, witnessed or have information regarding possible harassment, you should notify the CEO. Wissahickon Charter School prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports possible harassment, makes a harassment complaint, cooperates in a harassment complaint investigation or any related proceeding.

WCS's policy is to investigate all harassment complaints promptly and thoroughly. Interviews will be conducted, and all information gathered will be used to make an informed decision about whether harassment has taken place. All Code of Conduct rules along with local, state,

and federal laws apply. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the CEO will take corrective action, including, but not limited to, appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include disciplinary proceedings and/or termination of employment. When the harassment is student to student, the school will use its Code of Conduct as a guide for punitive measures. This holds true for student to adult community member harassment as well. To the fullest extent practicable, WCS will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential. Law enforcement will be contacted in there is an allegation of criminal misconduct.

For cases that specifically focus solely on issues of sex, gender, sexual preference, or gender identity, please refer below to our Title IX Policy.

## **TITLE IX POLICY**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, protects students from discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that:

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other education program or activity operated by a recipient, which receives Federal financial assistance.

This policy reaffirms the commitment of the Charter School (“Charter School”) to comply with Title IX. This policy covers student on student as well as employee on student sexual harassment.

The Charter School shall not retaliate against any person for opposing an unlawful educational practice or policy, or making charges, testifying or participating in any complaint or action under Title IX.

In providing any aid, benefit, or service to a student, the Charter School shall not, on the basis of sex:

1. Treat one person differently from another in determining whether such person satisfies any requirement or condition for the provision of such aid, benefit, or service;

2. Provide different aid, benefits, or services or provide aid, benefits, or services In a different manner;
3. Deny any person any such aid, benefit, or service;
4. Subject any person to separate or different rules of behavior, sanctions, or other treatment;
5. Aid or perpetuate discrimination against any person by providing significant assistance to any agency, organization, or person which discriminates on the basis of sex in providing any aid, benefit or service to students or employees;
6. Otherwise limit any person in the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity.

### **Title IX Coordinator**

The Charter School has appointed a Title IX Coordinator to ensure its compliance with Title IX. The core responsibilities of the Title IX Coordinator will be:

- Coordinate Title IX efforts including the development, implementation, and monitoring of appropriate disclosures, policies, procedures and practices designed to comply with federal and state legislation, regulation, and case law requiring the prompt and equitable resolution of all complaints pursuant to Title IX;
- Provide leadership, direction and supervision for all activities and personnel of the Title IX program including consulting with relevant policy-making bodies and senior personnel for the purpose of advising, clarifying and identifying necessary action to eliminate sex and/or gender-based discrimination in all educational programs and activities, to ensure that access to facilities, opportunities, and resources is gender equitable throughout the district or campus;
- Provide ongoing training, consultation, and technical assistance on Title IX for all students and employees, with specialized training content for hearing officers/boards, investigators, campus law enforcement and appeals officers;

- Develop, implement and coordinate campus and/or school-based strategic efforts aimed at the prevention of sexual violence and other forms of sex and/or gender-based discrimination;
- Develop and disseminate educational materials, including brochures, posters, and web-based materials that inform members of the school or campus community (students, faculty, administrators, staff, and parents) of Title IX rights, responsibilities and resources both within and external to school/campus premises;
- Oversee prompt, effective, and equitable intake, investigation, processing, issuing of findings of fact, and timely resolution of all instances of sex/gender discrimination made known to responsible employees and/or reported or filed by students, faculty, employees, third parties, or by members of the broader community;
- Oversee Title IX compliance efforts of other campus/school delegates, departments and offices (e.g., investigators, student conduct/discipline, victim services, public safety, nurse/health services, counseling services, student affairs, human resources, faculty/academic affairs, athletics, etc.);
- Provide appropriate notice of an investigation; determine the extent of an investigation; ensure provision of initial remedial actions; assure compliance with timelines; deliver appropriate notice of charges, notice of hearing, notice of outcome, and remedies, and provide a repository for and source of institutional record-keeping (may also be delegated);
- Provide guidance and assistance to alleged victims of sexual violence and sex/gender discrimination including referral to support resources, notice of right to file internal grievances, notice of the right to grieve to the US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, and notice of the right to report incidents to law enforcement;
- Monitor institutional compliance with and provide ongoing consultation on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and related federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment against all protected classes;
- Organize and maintain grievance files, disposition reports, and other records regarding Title IX compliance, including annual reports of the number and nature of filed complaints and the disposition of said complaints, data collection, climate assessment, pattern

monitoring; and

- Serve as the main contact for government inquiries pursuant to Title IX.

**Sexual Harassment** Title IX prohibits sex-based harassment by peers, employees, or third parties that is sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient’s education programs and activities (*i.e.*, creates a hostile environment). In accordance with U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (“OCR”) Guidance, a variety of related factors must be considered in order to determine if a hostile environment has been created. It directs the conduct in question to be viewed from both a subjective and an objective perspective. Specifically, OCR’s standards require that the conduct be evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable person in the alleged victim’s position, considering all the circumstances. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment, particularly if the conduct is physical. A single or isolated incident of sexual violence may create a hostile environment. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical acts of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's success in school;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for school decisions affecting such student; or Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

### **Gender-Based Harassment**

Title IX’s sex discrimination prohibition extends to claims of discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity and OCR accepts such complaints for investigation. Gender-based harassment is another form of sex-based harassment and refers to unwelcome conduct based on an individual’s actual or perceived sex, including harassment based on gender identity or nonconformity with sex stereotypes, and not necessarily involving conduct of a sexual nature. Similarly, the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of the parties does not change a charter school’s obligations. Recent court cases have recognized acts of harassment directed at a person because of gender to be sexual harassment, regardless of the intent behind the act. The Charter School adopts this interpretation as part of its policy

### **Allegations of Sexual Harassment Occurring Off School Grounds**



Title IX applies with equal force to conduct off Charter School grounds so long as it occurs in the context of an educational program or activity of the Charter School. Such programs and activities include but are not limited to activities that take place during Charter School sponsored field trips, athletic team or school band travel and other events for Charter School clubs that occur off campus. Once the Charter School is put on notice of out of school sexual violence against a student, it must investigate and determine whether the conduct may have continuing effects that create a hostile environment as if the conduct had occurred at school. If a student files a complaint with the school, regardless of where the conduct occurred, the school must process the complaint in accordance with its established procedures. Because students often experience the continuing effects of off-school grounds sexual harassment in the educational setting, the Charter School should consider the effects of the off-school grounds conduct when evaluating whether there is a hostile environment at the Charter School. For example, if a student alleges that he or she was sexually assaulted by another student off school grounds, and that upon returning to the Charter School he or she was taunted and harassed by other students who are the alleged perpetrator's friends, the Charter School should take the earlier sexual assault into account in determining whether there is a sexually hostile environment. The Charter School also should take steps to protect a student who was assaulted off school grounds from further sexual harassment or retaliation from the perpetrator and his or her associates.

Sexual harassment is a violation of federal and state laws and may expose not only the Charter School as a school entity, but individuals employed by the Charter School, to significant liability under the law.

When the Charter School knows or reasonably should know of possible sex-based harassment, it will take immediate and appropriate steps to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred. If an investigation reveals that the harassment created a hostile environment, the Charter School will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate the hostile environment, prevent the harassment from recurring, and, as appropriate, remedy its effects.

### **Examples of Prohibited Conduct**

The following are examples of acts that violate Title IX. These examples are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under the policy:

A. Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:

1. Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit those offenses, or committing an act with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death; and
2. Intentional physical contact which is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against or poking a student's body, or touching of the clothing covering the immediate area of the complainant's intimate body parts.

B. Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments such as:

1. Sexually-oriented gestures, sounds, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience directed at or made in the presence of any student;
2. Preferential treatment or promise of preferential treatment for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any student to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward; and
3. Subjecting or threatening to subject a student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct, or intentionally making success in school more difficult because of the student's gender.

C. Display of publications anywhere within the Charter School's control such as:

1. Displaying pictures, posters, cartoons, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional materials, reading materials, music, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic.

Exceptions will be considered in situations where nudity or sexually explicit language is necessary to convey a message important to public health or safety or are otherwise pedagogically appropriate. Subject to the foregoing exceptions, visual material will be presumed to be sexually suggestive if it depicts a person of either sex who is nude or seminude or who is posed for the obvious purpose of displaying or drawing attention to private portions of his or her body;

2. Displaying or publicizing, in any virtual classroom environment,

materials that are sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic;

3. Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate a student by gender on the Charter School computer network system; or
4. Possession of such material in a manner that it is reasonably foreseeable that they might be seen by others.

#### D. Sexual Favoritism:

The granting or withholding of Charter School opportunities and benefits including, but not limited to, assignments, discipline, and progress marking and reporting constitute Title IX violations when based on sexual favoritism, and is prohibited.

#### E. Other Forms of Title IX Violations:

Other conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's work performance or learning conditions on the basis of gender may also constitute violations, and therefore, is prohibited. Examples of conduct which, when based upon gender, violate Title IX, include:

1. Assigning disagreeable or unsafe assignments; or not making comparable assignments that would tend to disadvantage a student's development;
2. Withholding information, materials, equipment or supplies which are necessary for the efficient performance of an assignment;
3. Unreasonably failing to cooperate or assist students with school-related matters;
4. Interfering with a student's efforts to satisfactorily complete an assignment;
5. Maintaining unequal standards of performance;

6. Ostracizing students, or otherwise making it known to students that they are not welcome because of their gender; or
7. Referring to students by sexually denigrating or insulting names because of their gender.

F. Retaliation for Title IX complaints. A non-exhaustive list of examples of retaliation may include:

1. Arbitrary discipline, threats, unwarranted change of assignments, providing inaccurate information, or failing to cooperate or discuss school-related matters with any student because that student has complained about, been a witness to or resisted Title IX prohibited harassment, discrimination or retaliation; and
2. Intentionally pressuring, falsely denying, lying about, or covering up or attempting to cover up conduct such as that described in any item above.

### **Making a Complaint**

The Charter School will:

1. Publish a Notice of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in its education programs and activities, including that Title IX requires it not to discriminate in such a manner. The notice must state that inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the Charter School's Title IX Coordinator or to OCR. It will include the name or title, office address, telephone number, and e-mail address for the Charter School's Title IX Coordinator. The notice will be prominently posted on the Charter School's website and at various locations throughout the Charter School and published in electronic and printed publications of general distribution that provide information to students and employees about the Charter School's services and policies;
2. Designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX that include overseeing all Title IX complaints and identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems that arise during the review of such complaints. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will be available to meet with students as needed; and

3. Prominently post this policy (including the compliance procedures contained in this policy) on the school website; send it electronically to all members of the school community; make it available at various locations throughout the Charter School; and summarize it or attach it to the school's handbooks, codes of conduct, and catalogs for students, parents of elementary and secondary students, faculty, and staff.

Should the Title IX Coordinator be the person accused of the sexual harassment or should the complainant feel that the Title IX Coordinator is in some way responsible for the Title IX violation, the complainant may bring his or her concerns directly to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO"), who will follow the procedures outlined below.

### **Complaint Procedures**

The student may seek either an informal or formal resolution of his or her complaint:

#### **A. Informal**

The student or his or her parent may request the Title IX Coordinator to intervene by notifying the alleged offender that the specific offensive behavior(s) will not be tolerated. In such case, the Title IX Coordinator must meet with the alleged offender, take a statement with regard to the allegations, and, if warranted, require that the alleged offender participate in non-disciplinary counseling. The alleged offender, if he or she is a student, shall have the right to have his or her parent present during the meeting with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator shall document, in writing, all actions taken regarding investigation of the allegations, including statements of other student(s) and/or school administration/staff/contractor(s) or volunteer(s). The complainant must be notified of the right to end the informal process at any time and begin the formal stage of the complaint process. Moreover, in cases involving allegations of sexual assault, an informal resolution or mediation is not appropriate even on a voluntary basis.

#### **B. Formal**

A student who believes that his or her rights, including Title IX rights, have been violated or a parent, who believes that his or her child's right, including Title IX rights, have been violated, may file a complaint requesting a formal investigation into the allegations. Formal complaints shall be taken in writing by the Title IX Coordinator and signed by the complainant. A thorough and complete investigation shall be conducted by the Title IX Coordinator.

This investigation shall determine: (1) whether or not the conduct occurred; (2) whether the conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, and, (3) if the conduct was a violation, what actions the Charter School will take to end the violation, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent its recurrence, which may include imposing sanctions on the perpetrator and providing remedies for the complainant and broader student population.

To the extent possible and allowed by law, confidentiality shall be maintained within the confines of the investigation of the alleged prohibited behavior. All parties will be treated with dignity and due process.

### **C. Interim Measures**

During the pendency of an investigation, the Charter School will take reasonable interim measures in order to prevent further possible Title IX issues. These may include taking steps to avoid further contact between the complainant and the alleged perpetrator by removal of the alleged perpetrator from complainant's homeroom/classroom, transportation, lunch, extracurricular activities and other school day activities/programming in which contact is foreseeable. The Title IX Coordinator shall provide the complainant with periodic updates on the status of the investigation.

The Title IX Coordinator shall also ensure that the complainant is aware of his or her rights, including Title IX rights, and any available student assistance programs and resources, such as victim advocacy, academic support, counseling, disability services, health, and mental health services. The Title IX Coordinator shall also inform the complainant of his or her right to seek outside legal assistance and of his or her right to report a crime to local law enforcement.

Even when a Title IX Coordinator has determined that the Charter School can respect a complainant's request for confidentiality and therefore may not be able to respond fully to an allegation of sexual violence and initiate formal action against an alleged perpetrator, these interim measures may be taken to protect the complainant while keeping the identity of the complainant confidential.

### **D. Confidentiality**

Before a student reveals information that he or she may wish to keep confidential, the Charter School should make every effort to ensure that the student understands:

1. The Charter School employee's obligation to report the names of the alleged perpetrator and student involved in the alleged sexual violence, as well as relevant facts regarding the alleged incident (including the date, time, and location), to the Title IX Coordinator, other appropriate school officials, local law enforcement and Child Line pursuant to Mandatory Reporter duties;
2. The student's option to request that the Charter School maintain his or her confidentiality, which the Title IX Coordinator will consider; and
3. The student's ability to share the information confidentially with counseling, advocacy, health, mental health, or sexual-assault-related services. If the student requests confidentiality, the Title IX Coordinator should make every effort to respect this request and should evaluate the request in the context of the Charter School's responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students.

## **Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Complaints**

### **A. Title IX Coordinator**

The Title IX Coordinator shall be capable of conducting a thorough and complete investigation and shall seek advice and assistance from the Board of Trustees if the Title IX Coordinator believes that he or she lacks the capacity to conduct a thorough and complete investigation of the alleged misconduct. If the Title IX Coordinator or the CEO is the one accused of violating a Student's rights, including Title IX rights, the Board will appoint a qualified individual who is not employed by the Charter School to conduct the investigation.

### **B. Conducting Investigations/Holding Hearings**

The Title IX Coordinator receiving a complaint, including a Title IX complaint, shall take the details of the complaint in writing and have the complainant sign it. All Title IX complaints against a student shall be received, investigated and disposed of in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Policy,

- The Title IX Coordinator shall meet with every complainant to listen and understand the allegations. The complainant may have his or her Parent(s) present during any such meeting. The accused, if he or she is a student, shall also have the right to have his or her

parent(s) present at any meetings with the Title IX Coordinator as well.

- From these meetings, the Title IX Coordinator will conduct an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaint(s), which includes interviewing and obtaining statements from any witnesses of both the complainant and alleged perpetrator, and the review of all evidence presented. Parties will be provided updates until a determination is made in writing.
- The complaint will be decided using a preponderance of the evidence standard (*i.e.*, it is more likely than not that sexual harassment or violence occurred).
- Even though FERPA limits disclosure of certain information in disciplinary proceedings, the Title IX Coordinator will disclose information to the complainant about the sanction imposed on the perpetrator when the sanction directly relates to the complainant. This includes an order that the perpetrator stay away from the complainant, or that the perpetrator is prohibited from attending school for a period of time, or is transferred to other homeroom/classes in the Charter School building.
- If the Title IX Coordinator makes a decision finding that the complainant's allegations are substantiated by a preponderance of the evidence, the appropriate level of discipline consistent with the Charter School's strong policy against Title IX misconduct will be determined by the CEO, Title IX Coordinator and any other Administration as part of the Charter School's Board approved disciplinary process. If the Title IX Coordinator or the CEO believes that the imposition of in school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion against an accused student may be appropriate, then an informal or formal hearing shall be held. The formal disciplinary procedures contained in the Charter School's Code of Conduct shall be followed for such hearings to assure due process protection for the accused. Documents regarding substantiated charges of sexual harassment shall be placed in the accused student's file. Documents regarding unsubstantiated charges shall not be placed in student files, but shall be maintained by the Board of Trustees in a confidential file established expressly for retaining complaints of Title IX complaints against students.
- Notice of the right and how to appeal this decision will be included with the Decision to both students and Parents.

### **C. Other Reporting Requirements**

If the complaint involves sexual assault, rape or conduct of a criminal nature, the local Police



Department shall be contacted and a report of the incident made by the Charter School, in accordance with law enforcement. A report must also be made by any mandatory reporter to Child Line and the Department of Public Welfare in accordance with the Charter School's Board approved Mandatory Reporter Policy. If there is any question of whether the conduct complained of constituted criminal activity, the Charter School's Board Solicitor should be contacted immediately. Knowledge of a law enforcement investigation does not relieve the Charter School of its independent obligation to investigate the misconduct.

#### **D. Training**

Employees will be trained so that they know to report harassment to appropriate school officials, and so that employees with the authority to address such misconduct know how to respond properly. Training for employees will include practical information about how to identify types of conduct that constitute sexual harassment or violence, how to identify warning signals that may need attention and how to report sexual harassment and violence. This training will be provided to any employees likely to witness or receive reports of sexual harassment and violence, including teachers, school security, school administrators, school counselors, and health personnel. All persons involved in implementing a recipient's grievance procedures (*e.g.*, Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and adjudicators) must have training or experience in handling complaints of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and with the Charter School's grievance procedures. The training also will include applicable confidentiality requirements. In sexual violence cases, the fact-finder and decision-maker also will have adequate training or knowledge regarding sexual violence.

Additionally, the Charter School will ensure that staff members are capable of providing culturally competent counseling to all complainants. It will ensure that its counselors and other staff who are responsible for receiving and responding to complaints of sexual violence, including investigators and hearing board members, receive appropriate training about working with Lesbian/Gay/Bi-sexual/Transgender and gender-nonconforming students and same-sex sexual violence.

The Charter School will also ensure that any school reporting forms, information, or training about sexual violence be provided in a manner that is accessible to students and employees with disabilities, for example, by providing electronically-accessible versions of paper forms to individuals with print disabilities, or by providing a sign language interpreter to a deaf individual attending a training.

To ensure that students understand their rights under the laws cited herein, the Charter School will provide age-appropriate training to its students regarding Title IX and sexual violence.

Training may be provided separately or as part of the Charter School's broader training on sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

The Charter School may include these education programs in its orientation programs for new students, faculty, staff, and employees, training for student athletes and coaches, and school assemblies and "back to school nights." These programs will include a discussion of what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence, the Charter School's policies and disciplinary procedures, and the consequences of violating these policies.

The Charter School also will include such information in their employee handbook and any handbooks that student athletes and members of student activity groups receive. These materials will include where and to whom students should go if they are victims of sexual violence. These materials also will tell students and school employees what to do if they learn of an incident of sexual violence.

## **CONCLUSION**

If any section of this procedure is declared invalid, the remaining sections shall remain valid and unaffected.

## **Rights and Responsibilities: Parent & School Compact**

The school and community of Wissahickon Charter School believe that it is only through the cooperation of the parents and school that children develop their full potential. In light of this, the school and parents will work cooperatively to provide for the successful education of their children as follows:

### **The PARENT/GUARDIAN agrees to:**

- Become involved in developing, implementing, evaluating and revising the school/parent-involvement policy.
- Use or ask for assistance that Wissahickon provides on child development and teaching and learning methods as needed.
- Work with our child/children on their school assignments and to:
  - Ask them what they learned about that day
  - Encourage them to share their successes and their frustration
  - Provide assistance if necessary
  - Encourage them to read, write, and practice their work daily
- Monitor our child/children's:

- o Attendance at school, including in all remote learning sessions
- o Homework
- o Emotional and mental health during remote learning
- Share the responsibility for improved student achievement by:
  - o Documenting daily reading with their child
  - o Providing a quiet place for homework and schoolwork
  - o Setting aside a specific time for homework
  - o Assisting with homework as necessary
  - o Encouraging positive attitudes toward school
  - o Requiring regular school attendance
  - o Giving the child the necessary supplies to do school work
  - o Reaching out to school if you need materials for at home learning
- Communicate with our child/children's teachers about their educational needs.
- Ask parents and parent groups to provide information from the school on what type of training or assistance they would like and/or need to help them be more effective with their child/children in the educational process.
- Provide a healthy and safe environment.
- Volunteer in school and to attend school meetings.
- Encourage students to find activities that promote citizenship, work ethic and healthy lifestyles.
- Respect cultural, racial and ethnic differences.

**The STUDENT agrees to:**

- Encourage parents to become a part of the student's educational experience.
- Question, in the appropriate way and at the appropriate time, those parts of learning that are not understood.
- Take home materials and information needed to complete all assignments.
- Show responsibility in caring for all learning materials, including technological devices.
- Complete homework in a thorough, legible and timely manner.
- Return homework on time.
- Respect the personal rights and property of others.
- Respect cultural, racial and ethnic differences.
- Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
- Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
- Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial

disruption to the educational processes.

- Assist Wissahickon Charter School staff in operating a safe school for the students enrolled therein.
- Comply with federal, state and local laws.
- Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
- Attend school daily and be on time at all classes and other school functions.
- Make up work when absent from school.
- Report accurately in student media.
- Not use obscene language in student media or on school premises.

## **Parent Rights & Responsibilities**

### **1. Enrollment**

#### **a. Right**

Parents have the right to enroll their children in Wissahickon Charter School, regardless of their district of residence, within the enrollment guidelines established by the Board of Trustees. Enrollment may not be denied on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap or marital status.

#### **b. Responsibility**

Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children who are enrolled in Wissahickon Charter School attend school regularly, on time, and for the entire school day in accordance with state law and the policies set forth by the Board of Trustees.

### **2. Progress**

#### **a. Right**

Parents have the right to receive regular official reports of their children's academic progress, through both written and oral communication.

#### **b. Responsibility**

Parents have the responsibility to assist Wissahickon Charter School and their children in achieving their academic potential, including planning a time and place for completing homework, ensuring the completion of assignments that are missed, and providing the necessary supervision while their children complete assignments. In addition, parents have the responsibility to attend and participate in all parent-teacher conferences.

### **3. Language Preference**

**a. Right**

Parents have the right to receive any oral and written communication Wissahickon Charter School in the language used by the family in the home. This right includes the right to have a translator present at any disciplinary proceedings commenced against their child.

**b. Responsibility**

Parents have the responsibility to inform Wissahickon Charter School when they need to receive oral and written communication in a language other than English. This responsibility includes the responsibility to notify Wissahickon Charter School if a translator will be necessary at any disciplinary proceedings commenced against their child.

**4. Enforcement**

**a. Right**

Parents have the right to ensure that the provisions of this Code of Conduct are applied reasonably and fairly with respect to their children.

**b. Responsibility**

Parents have a responsibility to understand the rules set forth in this Code of Conduct and to discuss expected behavior with their children, as well as to inform the Administration and/or Board of Trustees of their concerns regarding the application of this Code of Conduct to their children in a calm and reasoned manner.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities**

**1. Education**

**a. Right**

Students have the right to a public education, unimpaired on account of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap or marital status.

**b. Responsibility**

Students have the responsibility to avoid actions or activities that interfere with other students' rights to an unimpaired public education.

**2. Learning Environment**

**a. Right**

Students have the right to an orderly school and classroom environment that will promote learning for all students.

**b. Responsibility**

Students have the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not disrupt the school or classroom environment or school activities.

### **3. Expression**

#### ***a. Right***

Students have the right to express themselves in speech, writing and/or expression within the boundaries defined by federal and state law, and the policies established by Wissahickon Charter School. The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Students have the right to express themselves unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens serious harm to the school or community, encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another individual's rights.

#### ***b. Responsibility***

Students have the responsibility to ensure that their expression does not disrupt the educational process, present health or safety hazards, damage public property, infringe on the rights of others, or violate federal or state law, or the policies established by Wissahickon Charter School.

### **4. Possession and Distribution of Literature**

#### ***a. Right***

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

#### ***b. Responsibility***

Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views. Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression. Students have the responsibility to ensure that the literature they possess or distribute does not infringe upon the rights of others, and does not contain offensive language of a religious, racial or ethnic nature, or language that may be construed as harassing or obscene. Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group is required on posted or distributed materials. Students must submit to the Administration for prior approval a copy of materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property. School officials may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property.

##### **i. Bulletin boards must conform to the following:**

1. The Administration may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.
2. Designated bulletin board space will be provided for the use of

- students or student organizations.
3. The Administration requires that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that the materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.
- ii. School newspapers and publications must conform to the following:
    1. Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).
    2. School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.
    3. School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.
    4. Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers must identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and establish a limitation on the time required to make a decision. If the prescribed time for approval lapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.
    5. Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.
  - iii. The wearing of buttons, badges or armbands shall be permitted as another form of expression within the restrictions of federal and state laws.
  - iv. School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.
  - v. A proper time and place set for distribution is one that would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students. The place of the activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and exterior doors.

## **5. Religion**

### ***a. Right***

Students have the right to their own beliefs and the exercise of those beliefs to the

extent that the exercise of those beliefs is consistent with state and federal laws.

**b. Responsibility**

Students have the responsibility to ensure that the exercise of religious freedom does not infringe upon the Constitutional rights and freedom of religious expression of others.

**6. Search and Seizure**

**a. Right**

Students have the right to be free from unlawful searches and seizures of their personal property and possessions.

- i. The Administration will adopt reasonable procedures regarding student searches. The School shall notify students and their parents/guardians of the procedures regarding student searches.
- ii. Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding.
- iii. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains material that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.
- iv. When school authorities have reasonable suspicion that materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of students or the school community are in the possession of a student or contained within a student's belongings, school authorities may search the student's person and/or belongings to the extent that such a search is permitted by applicable state and federal laws.

**b. Responsibility**

Students have the responsibility to not possess materials, objects, implements and/or instruments that are prohibited by federal, state and/or local law or that may be disruptive or otherwise in violation of Wissahickon Charter School's Rules.

**7. Peaceful Assembly**

**a. Right**

Students have the right to peaceful assembly.

**b. Responsibility**

Students have the responsibility to secure approval for use of school facilities for assembly; to discuss with an administrator the appropriateness of the facility for the function; and to ensure that assembly does not disrupt the educational process. Lack of adequate supervision shall be grounds for disapproval of the assembly.



## 8. Transportation

### a. *Right*

Students who live outside of 1.5 miles of each campus and are in first through sixth grades have a right to safe and orderly transportation to and from school on a school bus. Seventh and eighth graders have the right to receive passes for public transportation to travel to and from school.

### b. *Responsibility*

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

## Grievance Policy

At WCS we are proud of the positive relationships that we have with families and caregivers. Throughout the year there may be times where parents feel like they have concerns that need to be addressed. When the issue is academic in nature, the parent **must** speak with the teacher first (school leadership will always direct families back to the teacher), if there is no success between the teacher and parent:

- *If there is a concern over behavior* the Dean at FH handles, if AW, Principal will manage.
- *If the concern is academic*, the AP at FH will manage, at AW the Principal will manage as well.
- *If the concern is not handled* at FH, the principal will be involved and CEO at AW

If the concern is a student matter that isn't academic, the parent should request, **in writing**, a meeting with the DOC. They will have one week's time to address the concerns presented by the parent. The parent has the right to ask to meet with the other **CEO** if the parent still feels like the concerns weren't addressed. CEO must **receive** the concern in writing, and will respond within **10 school days** to the parent, and determine next steps.

Parents also have the right to address the Board of Trustees about concerns that they have, if they have exhausted other options. Concerns **must** be submitted in writing, addressed to the Board Chair, and dropped off at the front office of the school. The Board Chair will respond to the concerns in writing after having time to review the issue. Please allow at least **1 week** for the Chair to respond. In order to speak at Board meetings a request must be submitted in writing at the front desk at least one week prior to Board Meetings. Please note that Board Meeting dates are highlighted at the front of this document. Parents may also email the

concern to [BoardChair@wissahickoncharter.org](mailto:BoardChair@wissahickoncharter.org) The response time from the Board Chair will be the same as noted earlier.

## V. Health & Wellness

### Crisis Intervention

Any suggestion, demonstration or communication of an intention to commit suicide or to kill someone must be taken seriously. The school recognizes that self-destructive behavior and suicide occur among children and adolescents. Students that experience depression, and other mental health issues associated with depression, pose a serious threat to themselves and others. If a student threatens to harm, kill, maim himself/herself, or to inflict similar harm on others, we will suggest that the child be taken to a crisis center. If there is immediate danger, Wissahickon reserves the right to call a crisis center to come to the school to intervene or as a last resort to call local law enforcement for support if there is immediate danger and the student is not responding to approved de-escalation measures used by trained and trusted staff members

*Addition for Remote Learning: In this time of remote learning, we know that students could be experiencing anxiety and loneliness as they are physically separate from school and friends. Wissahickon wants to be a resource to families around issues of emotional and mental health. If you have any reason to suspect that your child may be experiencing depression or that there is a threat that they could harm themselves, it is important that you get help. If your child is in imminent danger, contact your child's health care provider, a local crisis center, or go to the emergency room of your nearest hospital. This is a 24 Hour Mental Health Delegate Line 215-685-6440 and website <https://dbhids.org/about/organization/office-of-mental-health/behavioral-health-crisis-intervention-services/24-hour-mental-health-delegate-line-215-685-6440/>. If you are wondering about the symptoms of depression or if there is cause for concern, feel free to reach out to our Guidance Counselors to help you determine next steps. Awbury's Guidance Counselor is Ms. Abby Beljean, [a.beljean@wissahickoncharter.org](mailto:a.beljean@wissahickoncharter.org). Fernhill's Guidance Counselor is Ms. Aitiya Hobson, [a.hobson@wissahickoncharter.org](mailto:a.hobson@wissahickoncharter.org).*

### Illness

It is the responsibility of the parent and/or guardian to ensure that a child attends school in good health and is prepared to learn. Lingering illnesses should be treated by a doctor.

### Immunizations

All pupils must be completely immunized or exempted before admission to any public, parochial, or private school in Pennsylvania. This is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Philadelphia County Board of Health, and the Wissahickon Charter School.

The purpose of requiring immunization is to protect pupils from preventable communicable diseases and their medical and educational complications.

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
DIVISION OF DISEASE CONTROL  
SUMMARY: PHILADELPHIA IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS  
FOR SCHOOL ENTRY 2020-2021**

Grade	Vaccines	Requirements
<b>All</b>	Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Acellular Pertussis** .... Polio.....  Measles, Mumps, Rubella..... Hepatitis B..... Varicella*** .....	4 Doses: at least 1 on/after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday (DTaP/DTP/DT/Td) 4 Doses: (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given) 2 Doses: usually given as MMR 3 Doses 2 Doses: on/after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday (Varicella or MMRV) <b>or</b> documentation of chickenpox immunity proven by laboratory testing <b>or</b> a written statement of prior chickenpox disease from a healthcare provider
<b>7****</b>	Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Acellular. Pertussis..... Meningococcal conjugate...	1 dose of TDAP on the first day of 7 <sup>th</sup> grade  1 dose of MCV on the first day of 7 <sup>th</sup> grade

**References**

Requirements from The Pennsylvania Code- Subchapter C. IMMUNIZATION 23.81, amended May 28, 2010, effective August 1, 2011, and from the Philadelphia Board of Health Regulations Governing the Health of Newborns, Children and Adolescents, published 2009.

\*Or documentation of a history of chickenpox immunity proven by laboratory testing or a written statement of history of chickenpox disease from a parent, guardian or physician.

\*On the first day of school, unless the child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, a child must have had at least one dose of the above vaccinations or risk exclusion. If a child does not have all of the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive the dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the next dose is not the final dose of the series, the child must provide a medical plan (red and white card) within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.

If a child does not have all of the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is not medically appropriate, the parent/guardian must provide a medical plan (red and white card) within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.

\*\*Only 3 doses of Td-containing vaccine are necessary if series is started on/after 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, if at least one dose is given as Tdap.

\*\*\*Or documentation of a history of chickenpox immunity proven by laboratory testing or a written statement of history of chickenpox disease from a parent, guardian or physician.

\*\*\*\*On the first day of 7<sup>th</sup> grade, unless the child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, a child must have had the above vaccines or risk exclusion.

Please note that Pennsylvania has suspended immunization requirements for a two-month period at the beginning of the school year due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. However, all families are encouraged to work with their children's health providers to obtain all needed vaccines as soon as possible.

**There are two exemptions:**

1. Religious Exemption – Pupils need not be immunized if the parent or guardian objects in writing to the immunization on religious/ethical grounds.
2. Medical Exemption – Pupils need not be immunized if a physician or his designee provides a written statement that immunization may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the physician determines that immunization is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the medical exemption ceases to be valid and the child must be immunized.

In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child is exempt from the requirement to be immunized, that child will be excluded from school until a competent medical authority determines that the child may return, or until the child is appropriately immunized.

**Disposition of Immunization Records**

When transferring from one school to another, parents should request the Certificate of Immunization from the current school and take it to the new school. No pupil will be admitted to a new school without the certificate. The Certificate of Immunization shall follow the pupil when he/she transfers, graduates, withdraws, or otherwise leaves WCS.

## Meals

WCS is pleased to announce that we will be providing Breakfast and Lunch for Curbside Pickup at our schools while we are in our fully remote learning phase. These meals will be available to all WCS students.

1. Director of School Operations and Food Service Vendor (Lintons) has designated (2) days for meal pickup.
  - a. Mondays and Thursdays
  - b. Due to the holiday, the first meal distribution date is **Thursday, September 10th**
2. The timeframe will be **11AM-2PM**.
3. Using safe distancing practices – Meals will be available for pick-up outside of the school building, using a curbside pick up process.
  - a. Monday Pickups: Families will receive breakfast and lunch for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
  - b. Thursday Pickups: Families will receive breakfast and lunch for Friday and Monday

### **Directions for picking up meals:**

1. Upon arrival at the school, the family will call the Food Service Coordinator (FSC), and provide the first and last name of all students who receive meals on that day.
  - a. **Awbury families will call 215-983-0604**
  - b. **Fernhill families will call 267-273-3304**
2. A staff member will then go to the cafeteria, retrieve the set amount of pre-bagged breakfasts & lunches while the parent pulls up to the gym doors. The bags will be loaded into the car by the staff member. The parent will exit through the rear parking lot of the school.
3. Students/Guardians/Parents may not exit their vehicles. This will deter the natural inclination for students who may wish to interact with any staff persons.

**Special Note: Families will be allowed to drop off used library books. The library books should be placed in a bag, and given to the staff member once the food has been placed in the car.**

## VI. Safety

### Mandated Reporting

It is the policy of the Wissahickon Charter School that all of its employees are to be aware of, and comply with, the Child Protective Services Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This law makes it mandatory for WCS school employees to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect and must file a report with the Department of Human Services. Compliance with the laws of Pennsylvania and the policies of WCS will serve to protect everyone concerned.

## VII. Student Information

### Contact & Custody Information

Parent location forms were collected at registration before the beginning of the school year. These forms are our primary source of emergency information. For the well being of the students, it is important that the forms have been completed and returned to the school. Please notify the school office if you have changed your address, home or work telephone numbers, emergency contact persons, or any other pertinent information. It is important to have current information should an emergency arise. Please be sure to inform the person(s) you have selected as your emergency contact(s).

In addition, **a copy of any Court order or agreement affecting the custodial rights of a parent should be filed with the school.**

Failure to keep your child's school informed about your current address and telephone number may result in your not receiving notices of important academic, disciplinary and/or health information, and can result in the loss of your right to participate in important decisions.

*Addition for Remote Learning: It is important that students have internet access in order to be able to participate in school. Please let the school know if your child is spending their day in a home that does not have internet access so we can help to address this issue. All students are being provided with either an iPad or Chromebook, as well as hands on materials needed for completing school work. Please be sure that these materials go with your child if they move between locations during the course of the week.*

### Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

#### Access To and Release of Pupil Records

The WCS will provide parent access to the educational records of their child. The access rights of parents consist of:

- The right to inspect and review the contents of education records.
- The right to obtain one copy of the education records at no charge and additional copies, if requested, at a charge.
- The right to receive from school personnel an explanation and interpretation of the education records.
- The right to a hearing to challenge the contents of the education records.
- The right to bring an attorney or parent advocate to the review of education records.

A parent seeking access to education records may make a request by telephone, in writing or in person to the CEO or designee. However, prior to reviewing and inspecting education records, a parent must sign an official request form. Every attempt will be made to expedite delivery of records to parents as soon as possible, but in every case access to education records will be granted within forty-five days of the receipt of the written request as required by law.

After examining their child's educational record, parents may request a hearing to challenge the contents of the record. The purpose of the hearing is to establish the accuracy of the record. At an informal meeting between the parents and the CEO or designee, an attempt will be made to answer any questions raised by the parents. If the questions are not resolved, a formal meeting is conducted in the office of the CEO.

No education record may be released to a third party without the consent of the parents. However, education records may be released, without the consent of the parent, to other school personnel in the school, or to another school system to which a student transfers. Also, in compliance with a judicial order or subpoena, education records may be released without the consent of parents, provided the parents are notified in advance.

Pupil directory information, which includes: the pupil's name; address; telephone number; date; and place of birth; grade level; photographic likeness; major field of study; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; the most recent school attended by the student; and the weight and height of members of the athletic teams, may be released without the consent of parents unless the school is notified annually by the parents not to release the information without their prior consent.

State law provides that the following additional conditions will apply regarding the educational records of special needs students:



- If you ask to see your child’s records you must be allowed to do so prior to a conference regarding an individualized education program and prior to a hearing regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- You may name another person to look at your child’s records if you wish to have their advice.
- You may ask for a list of the types and locations of the records kept about your child.
- The school will keep Special Education records for five years. You will be sent a notice by mail shortly before the records would be destroyed and advised of your right to obtain them for your own or the student’s use. It is your responsibility to provide the school with your current address so that you will receive this notification.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act**

The McKinney–Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth. “Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking a fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.” B.E.C. 42 U.S.C. 11431 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining responsibility. Federal and state laws make our responsibility clear. With the huge number of homeless children currently attending Philadelphia public schools, we must provide proper educational support and services.

#### **What situations fit this definition?**

- Staying in the home of other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances – examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or campgrounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Unaccompanied (not living in direct care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth
- Refugee and migrant youth

#### **How does McKinney-Vento help these students?**

The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities.

This includes:

- Immediate enrollment
- Free and Reduced School Lunch
- Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
- Help from school with getting basic uniform clothing
- Help from school with basic school supplies

- Help from school with any basic clothing needs
- Help from school with basic high school graduation needs and expenses

### **Where can I find more information?**

You can visit the [PA Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) site.

You can contact our school-based liaisons:

- Aitiya Hobson, School Counselor, Fernhill
- Abigail Beljean, School Counselor, Awbury

### **Press Release**

Throughout the school year, students will be involved in activities or projects that may be newsworthy. We enjoy publicizing the good things that happen at our school. In these cases, the children's work and/or pictures and names may be published in one of the local papers. In addition, children's work and/or pictures may also appear on the Internet along with their first names. If you would not like your child seen in WCS publications or on WCS social media, please make your child's teacher and the main office aware.

## **VIII. Technology**

### **Cell Phone & Smart Watch Policy**

*Updated June 2019*

Cell phones have become a way of life, a technological convenience that has impacted all of our lives in one way or another. However, in the school environment, cell phones have become a distraction, interruption, and a method of illegal exchange of information. The ringing of cell phones during class and constant text-messaging takes away from the valuable time needed for instruction and most importantly, student learning.

**No student** will be allowed to use a cell phone during school hours, on school grounds or school-sponsored activities.

*Addition for Remote Learning: Students should not be on phones, playing video games or engaged in any other activity during synchronous learning.*

## **WCS Computer Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Wissahickon Charter School (WCS) is providing its employees and students with access to computing equipment, systems and local network functions such as WCS e-mail and the Internet. This access has a limited educational purpose for students and is to facilitate employees' work productivity.

### **Access rights and privileges.**

Wissahickon Charter has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the use of equipment, resources and material students and employees access or post through the system. Students and employees are also expected to follow the rules set forth in the WCS rules and regulations governing conduct, disciplinary code, and the law in their use of WCS's equipment and network. This access has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. All access and rights are privileges granted by WCS, and users should expect no privacy rights.

All WCS employees and students will have access to the Internet through the WCS private network. Parents may specifically request that their children not be provided such access by notifying WCS in writing.

Students in third grade or higher will be given a WCS email address. WCS reserves the right to read the contents of the email account if there is cause for concern around the contents of an email communication. WCS reserves the right to revoke the email account if a student is not using this tool responsibly.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

Users may not use WCS's private network to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography of any kind), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature).

Users may not post personal information on the Internet about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, work address, pictures or video bites, clips, etc. Students may not agree to meet with someone they have met on the Internet without their parent's approval and participation.

Users may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any other computer system. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing", "snooping", or "electronic discovery".

Users may not deliberately disrupt or harm hardware or systems, interfere with computer or network performance, interfere with another's ability to use equipment and systems, or destroy data.

Users may not use the WCS private network to engage in illegal acts, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of person, accessing or sharing unauthorized copyrighted music, movies, and other intellectual property, etc.

Users may not utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or execute programs to facilitate the downloading or exchange of copyrighted or unauthorized music, movies, and other materials.

Users may not use the WCS private network to solicit information with the intent of using such information to cause personal harm or bodily injury to another or others.

Users may not post information that could endanger an individual, cause personal damage or a danger of service disruption.

Users may not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

Users may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

Users may not indirectly or directly make connections that create “backdoors” to WCS, other organizations, community groups, etc. that allow unauthorized access to the WCS network.

Users may not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, hateful, threatening, or disrespectful language.

Users may not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

Users may not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person.

Users may not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.

Users may not forward or post chain letters or engage in "spamming". Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.

Users will not install or reproduce unauthorized or unlicensed software on WCS resources.

Users may not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet or other resources.

Users may not use technology resources and Internet for private business activities or unreasonable personal use.

Users may not use the WCS private network for political lobbying. Students will not download files unless approved by their teacher.

### **System Security Obligations**

Users are responsible for the use of their individual access account(s) and should take all

reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account(s), including coworkers, friends, or family. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person.

Attempts to log on to the WCS private network or any other network as a system administrator is prohibited. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of violating this or any other Acceptable Use Policy may be denied access to the WCS private network.

Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the WCS virus protection procedures if they download software or share common file directory.

Users should immediately notify a teacher or system administrator of any possible security problem. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other appropriate school employee any message received that is inappropriate.

### **Filtering**

As required by law and in recognition of the need to establish a safe and appropriate computing environment, WCS will use filtering technology to prohibit access, to the degree possible, to objectionable or unsuitable content that might otherwise be accessible via the Internet.

### **Due Process**

Wissahickon Charter School will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through WCS's private network.

In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated WCS's Acceptable Use Policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the Student Hearing Process Policy. Disciplinary actions may be taken.

### **Administration**

The Director of Technology has the responsibility and authority for the development, publication, implementation and ongoing administration and enforcement of the processes and techniques required to protect Wissahickon Charter Schools technology systems and services from unauthorized access, loss or misuse.

The Information Technology Manager and school administrators have the responsibility to establish a plan to ensure adequate supervision of students. They are also responsible for interpreting and enforcing this policy at the local level.

Local management has the responsibility to interpret and enforce this policy.

### **Student Equipment Agreement**

Subject to the terms of this Agreement, Wissahickon Charter School (hereinafter referred to as WCS) will

allow its students to use a WCS-owned Chromebook (grades 3-8), iPad (grades k-2), or laptop computer (which, together with installed software, peripherals and attachments make up the “Equipment”) at the student’s home for purposes of participating in remote classes through the WCS’s learning management system as required by the WCS’s Emergency School Closing Education Plan.

1. WCS owns the Equipment and through this Agreement shall permit its use by all of the students listed below.
2. Student agrees to read, comply, and accept the terms and conditions of the WCS’s Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources (AUP), and the AUP’s Administrative Regulations.
3. The Student agrees to participate in all assigned remote classes through WCS’s Learning Management System as directed by the WCS’s Emergency School Closing Educational Plan and agrees that this is the sole purpose for which the WCS gives Student the use of this Equipment.
4. Students and Student’s parents/guardians (collectively “Student’s family”) agree that they shall each and together be responsible for the security, care, custody, and control of the Equipment at all times. Lost/stolen or damaged Equipment must be reported to directly to the Technology Department immediately via email at [helpis@wissahickoncharter.org](mailto:helpis@wissahickoncharter.org)
  - A. Where Student claims theft of Equipment, Student shall also report the theft to the police or if the theft took place on school property, to the appropriate Principal who will report to the police. Student shall cooperate with the police in any subsequent investigation.
  - B. The cost of Equipment stolen, damaged or lost through Student’s misuse, neglect or negligence may be paid by Student and Student’s family, up to replacement cost for the stolen, damaged or lost Equipment. Where appropriate, Student or Student’s family may choose to file a claim with the family’s homeowner’s/renter’s insurance and pay only the applicable deductibles.
5. Any Student who violates this Agreement or utilizes the Equipment for a purpose that violates the AUP or any other WCS policy will be subject to discipline, where applicable.
6. Users shall have no expectation of privacy when using WCS’s resources and devices such as the Equipment, and the Equipment is subject to search upon a reasonable belief that evidence of a crime or violation of any WCS policy may be found there. Further, the Technology Department will monitor and enforce the AUP regarding the following:
  - A. Applications and other software (“Apps”) installed on WCS owned devices are subject to review, and the Technology Department will remove any unauthorized Apps.
  - B. Internet access on the Equipment will utilize WCS’s filtering software. Any attempt by Student to circumvent the WCS’s internet filters will be a violation of this Agreement and the WCS AUP.
  - C. Authorized Apps on the Equipment are the property of or licensed to WCS and shall not be transferred to personally owned devices under any circumstances.
  - D. The WCS’s Technology Department shall be solely responsible for the installation of permitted Apps and the repair of damaged or malfunctioning Equipment. Student shall not install or permit the installation of unauthorized Apps on WCS owned devices or attempt to repair any damaged or malfunctioning Equipment.

E. The WCS assumes no liability for the preservation of unauthorized Apps installed or data stored on the Equipment. If a device is lost or stolen, or if the WCS's Technology Department finds unauthorized or modified Apps on the Equipment, WCS may wipe/erase all data, Apps, and settings on the Equipment without regard for the loss of data.

7. Upon WCS's demand for the return of the Equipment or at the point that Student is no longer enrolled in WCS, whichever is earlier, Student shall surrender the Equipment together with all peripherals and attachments to WCS technology department. If the Student fails to return all the Equipment, peripherals and attachments as required, the Student's family agrees to pay the fair market value of the unreturned items. Upon surrender of the Equipment for re-issue to another user, the Technology Department will fully erase the Equipment and restore it to all factory settings which will destroy all data on the Equipment.

8. Disclaimer: WCS makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions of the Equipment, Apps, or other programs provided will be error-free or without defect; WCS will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service; WCS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information or data stored on the Equipment; and WCS will not be responsible for any financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the device or resource.

**By signing below, I/we understand and agree to the terms and conditions as listed above. Please list all WCS's Students in your residence:**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name (PRINT):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## IX. Parent & Student Signatures

To verify that you have received and reviewed the Wissahickon Charter School Student Code of Conduct and this Student Family Handbook, **please sign the following statements:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT: *I have reviewed the Student Code of Conduct and Student Family Handbook with my parent or guardian and understand my responsibilities and agree to abide by school rules.***

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/GUARDIAN: *I have reviewed the Student Code of Conduct and Student Family Handbook, including the Student Code of Conduct, with my child and understand my child's responsibilities.***

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/GUARDIAN: *I understand that my responsibilities to the school and my positive participation are vital to my child's success at school.***

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_