

# Washington Montessori, Inc. Parent and School Handbook 2023-2024



Current as of  
February 15, 2024

This handbook contains information about the policies and practices of Washington Montessori, Inc. (also referred to as Washington Montessori Public Charter School or WMPCS). We expect each family to read this manual carefully as it is a valuable reference for understanding our school and its policies, protocols, and procedures. All previously issued handbooks and any inconsistent statements, oral or written, are superseded.

The WMPCS Parent Handbook is revised on an ongoing basis to include all changes to policies and procedures affecting our parents and students. Every year we ask that parents review the policies located in this book which is located on the website at [www.wmpcs.org](http://www.wmpcs.org). Periodically this handbook may be updated or changed during the school year. The official and most up-to-date version of the handbook is located on our website. Paper copies can be obtained at the office upon request.

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# About Washington Montessori Public Charter School

Vision, Mission, Pillars, and Tenants of WMPCS

## Vision Statement

Dedicated to pursuing our greatest potential to fulfill our responsibility to the world.

## Mission

Washington Montessori is committed to the development of the whole child, enabling him to draw upon all his gifts and reach his greatest potential. We encourage personal responsibility both socially and academically. Each child is allowed freedom of choice and is offered guidance in setting individual goals. **Our mission is to inspire academic excellence; to nurture curiosity, creativity, and imagination, and to do so within an environment rich with warmth, kindness, and respect.**

## Four Pillars of Our Program

- The cultivation within our students of a passion for excellence in everything they do, both in and outside of school
- The development of a strongly held set of universal values, which includes self-respect, respect for others, honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, compassion, kindness, peacefulness, a sense of concern for others, warmth and a love of community
- The development of a global perspective and sense of international understanding
- The development of a lifelong commitment to give something back through service to others who are in need

## The Three Basic Foundations of Washington Montessori

Respect all living things.  
Respect all non-living things.  
Use grace and courtesy.

## Classroom Structure of Washington Montessori

WMPCS is structured into five levels based on the children's age and academic abilities. These levels are often named according to the student's age, but are also known as the following: 3-6 age group: Children's House (CH); 6-9 age group: Lower Elementary (LE); 9-12 age group: Upper Elementary (UE); 12-15 age group: Secondary I (middle school or Sec I) and, 15-18 age group: Secondary II (high school or Sec II).

## About Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was an Italian physician, educator, and innovator, acclaimed for her educational method that builds on the way children naturally learn.

She opened the first Montessori school “the Casa dei Bambini, or Children’s House” in Rome on January 6, 1907. Subsequently, she traveled the world and wrote extensively about her approach to education, attracting many devotees. There are now more than 20,000 Montessori schools in at least 110 countries worldwide.

Maria Montessori was born on August 31, 1870, in the provincial town of Chiaravalle, Italy. Her father was a financial manager for a state-run industry. Her mother was raised in a family that prized education. She was well-schooled and an avid reader, unusual for Italian women of that time. The same thirst for knowledge took root in young Maria, and she immersed herself in many fields of study before creating the educational method that bears her name.

Beginning in her early childhood years, Maria grew up in Rome, a paradise of libraries, museums, and fine schools.

### Breaking Barriers

Maria was a sterling student, confident, ambitious, and unwilling to be limited by traditional expectations for women. At age 13, she entered an all-boys technical institute to prepare for a career in engineering.

In time, however, she changed her mind, deciding to become a doctor instead. She applied to the University of Rome’s medical program but was rejected. Maria took additional courses to better prepare her for entrance to medical school and persevered. With great effort she gained admittance, opening the door a bit wider for future women in the field.

When she graduated from medical school in 1896, she was among Italy’s first female physicians.

### Birth of a Movement

Maria’s early medical practice focused on psychiatry. She also developed an interest in education, attending classes on pedagogy and immersing herself in educational theory. Her studies led her to observe, and call into question, the prevailing methods of teaching children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The opportunity to improve on these methods came in 1900 when she was appointed co-director of a new training institute for special education teachers. Maria approached the task scientifically, carefully observing and experimenting to learn which teaching methods worked best. Many of the children made unexpected gains, and the program was proclaimed a success.

In 1907 Maria accepted a new challenge to open a childcare center in a poor inner-city district. This became the first Casa dei Bambini, a quality learning environment for young children. The youngsters were unruly at first, but soon showed great interest in working with puzzles, learning to prepare meals and manipulating materials that demonstrated lessons in math. She observed how they absorbed knowledge from their surroundings, essentially teaching themselves.

Utilizing scientific observation and experience gained from her earlier work with young children, Maria designed learning materials and a classroom environment that fostered the children’s natural desire to learn. News of the school’s success soon spread through Italy and by 1910, Montessori schools were acclaimed worldwide.

### Innovator, Feminist, Idealist

In the years following, and for the rest of her life, Maria dedicated herself to advancing her child-centered approach to education. She lectured widely, wrote articles and books, and developed a program to prepare teachers in the Montessori Method. Through her efforts and the work of her followers, Montessori education was adopted worldwide.

As a public figure, Maria also campaigned vigorously on behalf of women’s rights. She wrote and spoke frequently on the

need for greater opportunities for women and was recognized in Italy and beyond as a leading feminist voice.

Maria Montessori pursued her ideals in turbulent times. Living through war and political upheaval inspired her to add peace education to the Montessori curriculum. However, she could do little to avoid being ensnared in world events. Traveling in India in 1940 when hostilities between Italy and Great Britain broke out, she was forced to live in exile for the remainder of the war. There she took the opportunity to train teachers in her method.

At the war's end, she returned to Europe, spending her final years in Amsterdam. She died peacefully, in a friend's garden, on May 6, 1952.

Dr. Montessori's principles focus on the development of the whole child: intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual. Our school provides children with:

- a learning environment that is prepared, child-centered, and responsive, learning activity that is spontaneous, dynamic, and self-directed,
- hands-on experience with materials,
- freedom within limits and promotion of intrinsic motivation, and
- multi-age grouping that stresses cooperation and collaboration in a community setting.

WMPCS has a parent education library that contains books about the Montessori method, pedagogy, theory, history, and philosophy. Please check with the Administration to sign out a book.

Excerpts from: American Montessori Society

## Contact Information

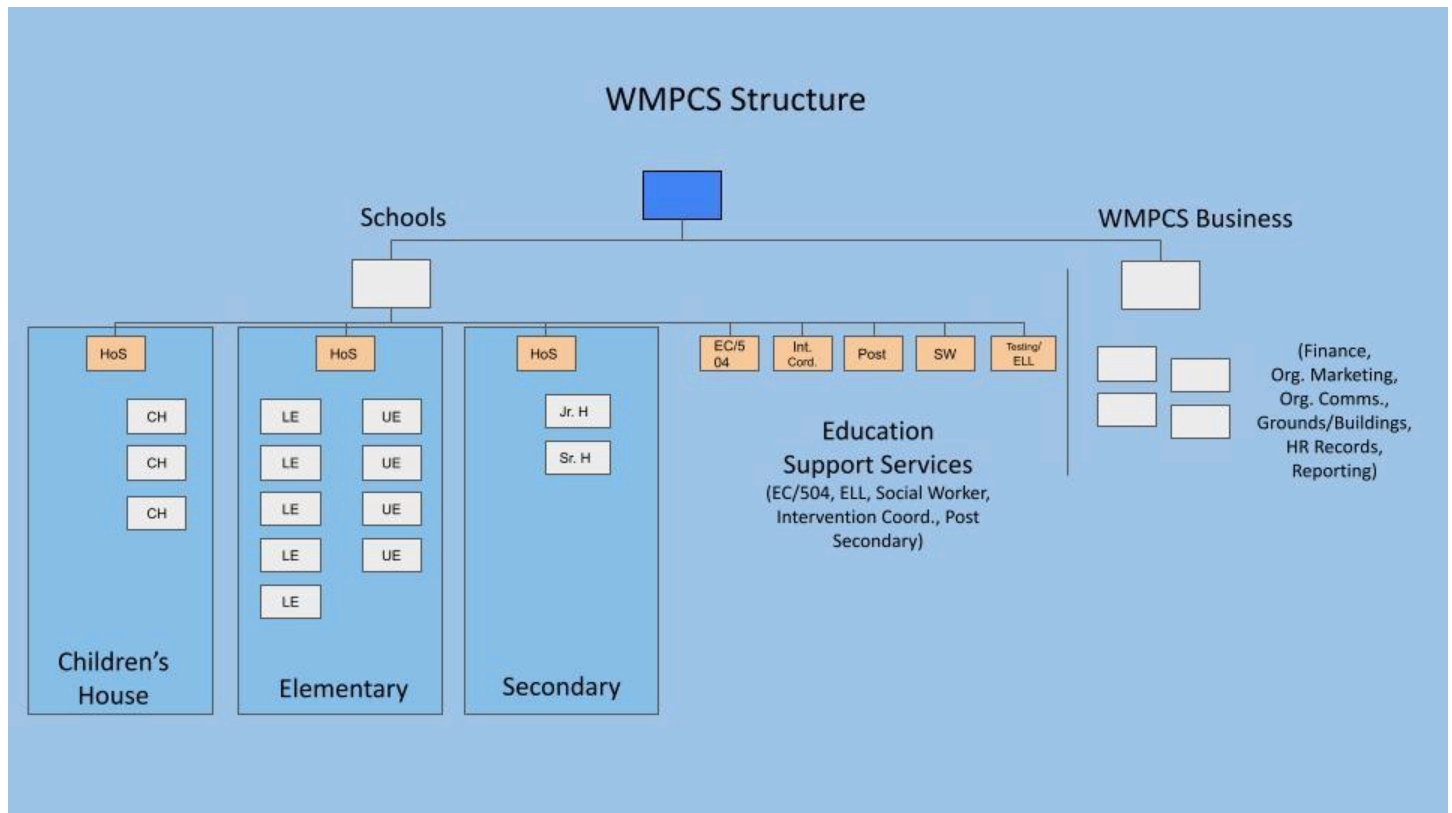
Position	Name	Phone/e-mail (add extensions)
Acting School Director	Austin Andrews	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1120 <b>austin.andrews@wmpcs.org</b>
Director, Administration and Resources	Rick Yakubowski	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1121 <b>rick.yakubowski@wmpcs.org</b>
EC Coordinator	Amanda Holton	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1602 <b>amanda.holton@wmpcs.org</b>
Children's House Head of School	JoDee Anderson	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1301 <b>jodee.anderson@wmpcs.org</b>
Acting Elementary Head of School	Kathy Carico	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1206 <b>kathy.carico@wmpcs.org</b>
Acting Secondary Head of School	Amanda Holton	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1602 <b>amanda.holton@wmpcs.org</b>
Post-Secondary Coordinator	Jennifer Cornelius	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1502 <b>jennifer.cornelius@wmpcs.org</b>
Administrative Associate	Erica Gurganus	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1100 <b>erica.gurganus@wmpcs.org</b>
Administrative Coordinator	Carol Collier	P: (252) 946-1977 x 1110 <b>carol.collier@wmpcs.org</b>
Board Chair	Jamie Midgette	<b>jamie.midgette@wmpcs.org</b>

## NC Standards and Testing

Washington Montessori has correlated the Montessori curriculum with the United States Department of Education (US DOE) Standard Course of Study, The Montessori Foundation, the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Association Montessori International (AMI) suggested lessons, sequences, and content. Washington Montessori participates in the state-mandated End of Grade and End of Course Tests as a NC Public Charter School. WMPCS also participates in the NWEA MAP Growth Assessments three times a year for all grades.



# School Organization



## Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees (BoT) sets policies for the school and manages the non-profit corporation, Washington Montessori, Inc. which is the parent organization of Washington Montessori Public Charter School (WMPCS). The Chair heads the Board of Trustees and generally supervises the business of the school. The Chair may be referred to as the Chairperson, Chairman, or Chairwoman.

The Board meets on the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. All meetings of the BoT are subject to the Open Meetings Law NC § 143-318.10. Members of the school community are welcome and are encouraged to attend the meetings. The agenda includes a "Privilege of the Floor" at the beginning of each meeting and an opportunity for public comments at the end of the meeting.

## 2023-24 Board of Trustees

Jamie Midgette, Chairperson [jamie.midgette@wmpcs.org](mailto:jamie.midgette@wmpcs.org)

Jeremy Hewitt, [jeremy.hewitt@wmpcs.org](mailto:jeremy.hewitt@wmpcs.org)

Joseph Knox, [joseph.knox@wmpcs.org](mailto:joseph.knox@wmpcs.org)

Lisa Lawless, Secretary, [lisa.lawless@wmpcs.org](mailto:lisa.lawless@wmpcs.org)

Robin Ventura, [robin.ventura@wmpcs.org](mailto:robin.ventura@wmpcs.org)

Sara Watson, [sara.watson@wmpcs.org](mailto:sara.watson@wmpcs.org)

## **Ex Officio, Non-voting Members**

**Austin Andrews, Acting Director**  
austin.andrews@wmpcs.org

**Rick Yakubowski, Director Administration and Resources**  
rick.yakubowski@wmpcs.org

**Faculty Representative** - Amber Miller  
**President of Student Government** - TBD  
**Parent Teacher Organization Representative** - TBD

## **Board Membership**

Washington Montessori values the people who agree to serve on the Board of Trustees. In order to avoid potential "conflicts of interest," employees, as well as their immediate family members, will not be considered for Board membership. Applications are accepted throughout the year (an application can be obtained from the school office). The Board assigns two self-perpetuating members along with the School Director to act as the selection committee to interview and recommend to the BoT a candidate to fill any of these five self-perpetuating seats that are open. The selection committee informs the applicants of the expectations of Board membership, confirms continued interest in serving, interviews applicants, and brings recommendations to the Board. The Board then votes to elect the new trustee by consensus. Two seats are filled by a Community Election process.

All Board members serve the greater good of the school and any member can be approached with a concern but cannot make decisions individually. Community Elected members are full voting members and are not expected to hold the same views as the school community at large. Any new trustee is encouraged to participate in the remaining meetings as an ex officio, or non-voting member prior to taking office. Children of board members will not be shown any favoritism in placement, discipline, or any other decisions. See the school's By-Laws for further information.

Washington Montessori Public Charter School follows the grievance policy defined below. When there are issues that require the involvement of the Board of Trustees, the decision of the Board will be final.

After following the procedures outlined in the Grievance Policy, if the BoT still needs to be addressed, please use the following process. Parents may bring issues to the Board of Trustees at any time, but the BoT does not guarantee to have a formal or informal hearing if the grievance policy has not been followed.

## **Submitting A Grievance or Concern to the BoT**

**Purpose:** To provide the procedures parents/students will follow when they have an issue at the School that constitute a grievance.

This policy is in place to respond to parent/student grievances. Grievances may only come from current students or parents of current students. It is expected that any guardian/parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is their student's Teacher. If the student/parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the grade-level Principal. At that meeting, the teacher, student, grade-level Principal and parent must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed. If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Director. Similarly, if a guardian/parent/student disagree

or have an issue with a policy or procedure at the School, the guardian/parent/student should set a meeting with the Director. If the guardian/parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Director and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the guardian/parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a guardian/parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or School will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or grade-level Principal.

1. Definition of a grievance: a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a guardian/parent/student stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, or law/regulation. Complaints under other policies including those under Title VI, Title IX, IDEA, Section 504, the School's Non-Title IX Bullying policy and those pertaining to student discipline are not grievances and this policy does not apply to such complaints. Please refer to the School's policies and procedures for those matters.

2. Time Limits: A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen calendar days of the meeting with the Director. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Director.

3. The grievance process is as follows:

Step 1: If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Director, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the guardian/parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The guardian/parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Director of the School and to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. If the Director of the School is implicated in the grievance,

the grievance should only be submitted to the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Step 2: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with the School's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting the Board of Directors will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email accepted) if further action is necessary. If the board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance, gather information and/or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the meeting where the board makes a decision on the grievance, the board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal notice and the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the board reaches a decision on the grievance, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five School days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final and there is no appeal rights to the Board. Notwithstanding any other provision, the Board may conduct an investigation and/or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, at any time.

## **Washington Montessori PTO (WMPTO)**

When a parent or guardian enrolls a child at Washington Montessori, or a staff member is hired, they become a member of the Washington Montessori Parent-Teacher Organization (WMPTO). All parents, teachers, and community members are welcome to attend. The "Bylaws of the Parent-Teacher Organization of Washington Montessori, Inc., A Public Charter School" are available from the WMPTO or the school office. The WMPTO is divided into two groups: the Elementary Level (Children's House, Lower Elementary, and Upper Elementary) and the Secondary Level (Middle School and High School). Each of the two sections works independently toward the greater good of the levels they serve.

The working relationship between the Washington Montessori Public Charter School WMPTO, the School Director, and the Board of Trustees is an important component of the overall learning experience of our students. School events and programs sponsored by the MPTO on or off campus require the approval of the School Director or designee.

**Room Parent Liaison:**

- Assists room parents and teachers with classroom efforts and reports needs and issues to MPTO if assistance is needed
- Works with Volunteer Coordinator and other committees to obtain the assistance of room parents and other volunteers for school-wide events

**Faculty Liaison:**

- Facilitates communication between the faculty and the WMPTO
- Reports on WMPTO activities at faculty meetings, coordinates faculty efforts with respect to WMPTO activities
- Provides feedback from faculty to WMPTO at monthly meetings

**Administrative Liaison:**

- Provides WMPTO with information regarding school policy and other factors that may affect decisions made by the WMPTO Executive Board
- Assists the WMPTO in ensuring events are included on the school-wide calendar

**WMPTO Committees**

Because parent involvement is essential to the school's success, each family is asked to work on at least one WMPTO committee and to support its special projects. Much of the coordination with WMPTO committees occurs through dedicated Room Parents who can keep parents/guardians informed of volunteering opportunities based on their interests and availability.

**Cookout**

- Coordinates the school-wide cookout/community gathering.

**Clothes Closet:**

- Coordinates clothing donations

**Program Income:**

- Organizes, researches and promotes funding opportunities from corporate and retail membership programs

**Hospitality:**

- Organizes food and other items for school/WMPTO events
- Works with Room Parents and other committees to obtain volunteers for school-wide events

**Kidsfest:**

- Organizes annual Kidsfest event
- Coordinates with School Administration, teachers, room parents, school office, parents, and other volunteers
- Coordinates entertainment, amusements, traffic control, food, and beverages
- Coordinates entertainment schedule with music teacher

**School Pictures:**

- Assists in organizing school picture event(s)

**Community Involvement Activities**

WMPCS holds Community Involvement Activities throughout the year. Please review the school calendar for dates and times. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings, events, and opportunities (community meetings, parent education, parent conferences, family events, etc.).

The community meetings provide parents with an opportunity to meet with other parents and discuss issues facing our

school, share ideas for new projects, receive information regarding activities, and ask questions about school topics. Parents who attend the meetings have the opportunity to add items to the agenda and determine the order in which the items are discussed. Volunteers facilitate each meeting. Free childcare is provided.

Family events include the Holiday Concert, Pastries for Parents, KidsFest, and offering enrichment opportunities for community members.

## **Volunteer Hours and Financial Support**

### **Volunteer Hours**

Every WMPCS family commits to contributing **20 volunteer hours per academic year**.

These volunteer hours can be easily met by any of the following:

- Holiday concert and/or other WMPCS festivities
- Any of the WMPTO committees
- Coaching an athletic team
- Driving or chaperoning for field trips
- The classrooms (i.e. - making materials/works, assisting in the classroom at the teacher's direction, etc.)
- Landscaping or gardening
- Sharing a special talent with a class
- Other activities at the administration or teachers' request

### **Volunteering to help with...**

- WMPTO Board
- WMPCS Committee
- WMPCS Board of Trustees

### **Serving on the following...**

- Board and Board Committees
- Parent education sessions
- Family events
- Ice cream social/cookout
- Pastries for Parents

### **Attending...**

- Board and Board Committee meetings
- Community meetings
- PTO meetings

## **Financial Support**

Every WMPCS family helps support the school financially in a variety of ways according to their talents and resources.

- Understand that regular parent volunteer hours are essential to the operation of the school
- Understand that public charter schools do not survive on government funding alone but are dependent upon donations by parents and outside organizations to meet educational and facilities' goals
- Understand that WMPCS is a growing school and is therefore especially dependent upon the generosity of parents, in particular,
- Contribute, according to financial ability, to fundraising each year to support current school needs
- Consider the needs of WMPCS and its long-range goals for funding buildings and endowment through major gifts
- Ensure that all extracurricular activities and Before and After School activities are paid for in full

## **Financial Obligations**

The School provides many different extracurricular and ancillary activities for its students to participate in that are fee-based. In order to ensure we can continue to offer these services, payment for these activities must be timely, complete, and paid in full. Invoices will be sent for all fee-based activities and payment is required upon receipt. All activity notices will include a schedule of payments or the fee to participate in the activity. Failure to pay for activities will result in the student/family not being able to participate in other activities that are fee-based. If payments are not made within 30 days, a collection agency may be contacted to collect the debt. Student report cards and or test results will not be mailed if there is a balance due from fees, fines, or any activity in which the parent owes the school money. School mailings will be suspended for any parties that have a past due account over 30 days.

## **Collections Procedure**

Payments are due on the first of the month for BASC and Day School. A written notice will be mailed when accounts are past due. A second notice will be sent one week after the past due date. If payment is not received within three weeks of the past due date, verbal or email contact will be made. If \$100 or more is past due, services for BASC will be suspended after 30 days. After 30 days of the due date, the debt may be sent to a collections agency if a payment plan has not been set up with the office.

## **General Policies**

### **Equal Education Opportunities**

The School provides equal educational opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, gender identity, disability, nationality, religious affiliation, or other legally protected categories. The school adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education.

### **Equal Employment Opportunities**

The School provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, gender identity or expression, genetics, or other legally protected categories. In addition to federal law requirements, Washington Montessori Public Charter School complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

WMPCS expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of WMPCS employees to perform their job duties may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

### **Compliance with Other Laws**

The school shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including but not limited to such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The school shall comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, whether federal, state, or local. Neither the State Board of Education nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of the School except as may otherwise be required to monitor the charter school for compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The School is required to notify parents, students, and staff of the provisions of this paragraph.

### **Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act**

State and federal law give parents and guardians (and students over 18 years of age) certain rights concerning the student's school records. These rights are listed below:

- To access these records, parents and guardians should give the School Director a written request listing the

records that they want to see. The School Director must allow parents and guardians to see the records within 45 days of receiving parents' or guardians' requests.

- Parents and guardians have a right to request changes in their child's school records if they believe the records are inaccurate, misleading, or that they violate their child's privacy rights. If a parent or guardian wants to change these records, they should tell the School Director in writing what they want to be changed and why they think it ought to be changed. If the School Director agrees with the request, the records will be changed. If the School Director disagrees with the changes, the parent or guardian may request a hearing.
- Parents and guardians have the right to let other people see their school records; however, the law allows some people to see these records without consent. For example, a school official that has a legitimate educational interest may review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- Parents and guardians have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the school has violated any of their rights with respect to school records. To file a complaint, send it in writing to Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20202- 4605

## **Directory Information**

Some of the information in school records is not confidential and may be released without parental or guardian consent. This information is known as "directory information." Directory information includes the following:

- Full legal name
- The image or likeness in pictures, videotape, film, or other media
- Dates of attendance
- Major field of study
- Participation in officially recognized sports and activities
- Height and weight of athletic team members
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational institution attended
- Subsequent educational institution attended
- Academic work intended for publication or display
- Age
- Date and place of birth

If a parent(s) or guardian does not want information released, they must notify the School Director in writing what types of directory information they do not want to be released. This notice must be received annually at the beginning of each year. The written notice to the School Director must be received within 30 days of the first day of school or the entrance of the student into the school.

Both parents or legal guardians have a right to see the school records of their child unless there is a certified copy of a court order on file at the school that specifically denies one or both parents the right of access to school records. Copies of school records are available for a minimal copying charge.

If there are any questions about these rights, please contact the Director.

## **McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Policy**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (also referred to as the McKinney-Vento Act) acknowledges that disputes may arise between Public School Units (PSUs) students and their parents, or unaccompanied youth, regarding eligibility, school selection or enrollment decisions. The McKinney-Vento Act includes dispute resolution among the required duties

of the (PSU) homeless liaison. Below is the McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Policy and Process for The School.

PSUs should bear in mind that disputes related to eligibility, school selection or enrollment should be initiated at the request of the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth and not at the request or convenience of the PSU. Additionally, issues related to the definition of homelessness, the responsibilities of the PSU to serve homeless children and youth, and/or the explicit rights of homeless children and youth are addressed in the McKinney-Vento Act. Disputes related to eligibility, school selection, or enrollment shall be resolved within the parameters of the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

The following procedures are specified in the McKinney-Vento Act:

**Enrollment:** If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, the child shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

**Written Explanation:** The PSU must provide a written explanation of the eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision to the parent, legal guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to the unaccompanied youth. (The written explanation must include a description of the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's right to appeal the decision.)

**Homeless Liaison:** The designated PSU homeless liaison is assigned to carry out the dispute resolution process in an expeditious manner, such that the local process is completed in **no more than 15 school business days or 30 calendar days, whichever is less.**

**Responsibility:** The PSU homeless liaison, is responsible to inform the parent, legal guardian, or the unaccompanied youth of the dispute resolution process.

## OVERVIEW

When a dispute occurs regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment the following process must be used:

- **Level I:** The initial dispute request is made with the PSU's homeless liaison.
- **Level II:** If unresolved, the dispute moves to the PSU head administrator (Level II),
- **Level III:** If unresolved the dispute moves to the local governing Board (Level III) for review and final decision on behalf of the charter school.
- **Level IV:** If the dispute continues to be unresolved, the final appeal (Level IV) is to the NC State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY). Every effort must be made to resolve the dispute at the local level before it is brought to the NC State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

## INITIATION OF THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

When a dispute occurs regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be informed in writing of the PSU's decision including reasons for the decision within one (1) school business day in a language and format understandable to the parent, legal guardian or unaccompanied youth of their right to appeal the decision made by the charter school and be provided the following:

1. Written contact information for the PSU homeless liaison and State Coordinator, with a brief description of their roles.
2. A simple form that parents, legal guardians, or unaccompanied youth can complete and turn in to the school to



initiate the dispute process (the school should copy the form and return the copy to the parent, legal guardian, or youth for their records when it is submitted.)

3. A written step-by-step description of how to dispute the PSU's decision.
4. Written notice of the right to enroll immediately in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute.
5. Written notice of the right to appeal to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth if the district-level resolution is not satisfactory.
6. Written timelines for resolving district- and state-level appeals.
7. A copy of the NC Dispute Resolution Policy (hard copy or [online link](#)).

#### **Level I: PSU Homeless Liaison Communication**

**If a parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the PSU's decision related to eligibility, school selection, or enrollment:**

1. The parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth must file a request for dispute resolution with the PSU's homeless liaison (or to his/her office) either verbally or by submitting a form that initiates the dispute resolution process. The request for dispute resolution must be submitted by the parent, legal guardian or the unaccompanied youth to the homeless liaison within **two (2) school business days** of receiving the initial homeless liaison decision on enrollment, school selection, or enrollment. The parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth may initiate the request directly with the homeless liaison or they may initiate the request to the school where the dispute is taking place. If the request is submitted to the school where the dispute is taking place, the school shall immediately forward the request to the PSU's homeless liaison. In the event that the PSU's homeless liaison is unavailable, an PSU designee may receive the parent's, legal guardian's or unaccompanied youth's request to initiate the dispute resolution process.
2. The homeless liaison must log their receipt of the dispute, including the date and time, with a written description of the situation and the reason for the dispute, and a copy of the dispute, must be forwarded to the homeless liaison's immediate supervisor and the charter school's head administrator.
3. Within **one (1) school business day** of their receipt of the complaint, the homeless liaison must make a decision on the dispute and inform the parent, legal guardian or unaccompanied youth in writing of the result. It is the responsibility of the PSU to verify the parent's, legal guardian's or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the homeless liaison's Level I decision.
4. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level I and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level II, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall notify the PSU's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level II **within one (1) school business day** of receipt of notification of the Level I decision.
5. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the homeless liaison's Level I decision, the PSU's homeless liaison shall provide the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth with an appeals package containing:
  1. A copy of the parent's, legal guardian's or unaccompanied youth's dispute which was filed with the PSU's homeless liaison at Level I,
  2. The decision rendered at Level I by the PSU homeless liaison, and
  3. Any additional information from the parent, legal guardian, unaccompanied youth, and/or the homeless liaison.

#### **Level II: PSU Superintendent Communication**

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level I appeal)

1. If there is a disagreement with the decision rendered by the LEA's/PSU's homeless liaison at Level I, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the charter school's head administrator, or the head administrator designee, (the designee shall be someone other than the PSU's homeless liaison) using the appeals package provided at Level I.
2. The charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee, shall meet (verbally, virtually or face-to-face) with the

parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The meeting shall be **held within two (2) school business days** of the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's notification to the PSU of their intent to proceed to Level II of the dispute resolution process.

3. The charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee, shall provide a decision in writing to the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons, **within two (2) school business days** of the charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee's, meeting with the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth. It is the responsibility of the PSU to verify the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the charter school's head administrator, Level II decision.
4. A copy of the dispute package, along with the written decision made at Level II is to be shared with the PSU's homeless liaison.
5. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level II and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level III, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall notify the PSU's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level III **within two (2) school business days** of receipt of notification of the Level II decision.
6. If the dispute remains unresolved, the process then moves to Level III.

### **Level III: Local Governing Board Review**

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level II appeal)

1. The charter school's head administrator, with assistance from the homeless liaison, shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the local governing Board for review within **two (2) school business days** of notifying the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth of the decision rendered at Level II.
2. The entire dispute package including all documentation and related paperwork is to be submitted to the governing Board in one consolidated and complete package. It is the responsibility of the PSU to ensure that the dispute package is complete and ready for review at the time of submission to the governing Board.
3. The local governing Board, or a panel of at least two Board members, shall schedule a conference with the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth to render a final decision on behalf of the Board. The Board or Board panel shall provide a written decision **within two (2) school business days**. The Board's or Board panel's decision shall be considered the final decision of the charter school for the purpose of appealing to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. The written notification shall be provided to the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth as well as to the head administrator and the homeless liaison. Also, the notification shall contain the name and contact information for the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth along with details on appeal rights of the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
4. The parent, legal guardian or unaccompanied youth have the option of filing an oral or written dispute with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth **within three school (3) business days** of receiving the Board's or Board panel's decision. The local homeless liaison shall provide the complete dispute record within three school business days following the request of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. The State Coordinator shall issue a final written decision to the parent, legal guardian or unaccompanied youth and the PSU within ten school business days following receipt of a complete dispute package. Additional details on the NC Dispute Resolution policy and the process used by the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth is located [here](#).

### **Dispute Resolution Terms**

1. The terms "homeless," "homeless child," and "homeless student" shall mean the same as the term "homeless children and youth" as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2). These terms shall also be deemed to include the term

“unaccompanied youth.

2. ”The term “unaccompanied youth” shall mean the same as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(6)
3. The term public school unit (PSU) includes local school administrative units, charter schools, lab schools, regional schools, Innovative School District schools, and Innovations Zone schools, and was formerly known as local educational agency (LEA).
4. The term “PSU dispute resolution process” shall refer to the PSU’s policy on resolving complaints brought by parents, legal guardians, or unaccompanied youth regarding students experiencing homelessness. The term shall refer to appeals processes within the PSU, prior to any appeal by the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth appeals to the State Coordinator.
5. The term “local homeless liaison” shall refer to the official at each PSU, who ensures the PSU dispute resolution process for homeless children and youth is mediated in accordance with local, state, and federal policy as required by 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(vii).
6. The term “school business day” means days on which students are scheduled to be in attendance at school, according to the academic calendar adopted by the PSU.
7. The term “State Coordinator” shall refer to the staff person who carries out federally mandated duties regarding students experiencing homelessness as required by 42 U.S.C. § 11432(d)(3).

The term “State appeal process” shall refer to the policies the State Coordinator, PSUs, parents, legal guardians, and unaccompanied youth must follow when a parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth seeks to appeal a dispute to the State Coordinator.

## **Admissions, Lottery, Enrollment**

### **Applications/Lottery/Enrollment**

Students are enrolled in a North Carolina Public Charter School by way of a lottery. Washington Montessori Public Charter School accepts applications for all grades for both the current school year and the upcoming academic year. Applications for the upcoming school years are accepted until noon on the day of the lottery. If there are openings in grade level, they will be filled based on the lottery and waiting list procedures. The lottery is held at the BoT meeting in January. Any additional applications for the upcoming school year received after the lottery will be added to the waiting list in the order in which they are received.

Attendance at the private preschool is NOT a condition for acceptance into the charter school grades K-12. All kindergarteners are enrolled through the lottery and waiting list. All kindergarteners must be at least 5 years old by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year to enroll in compliance with the state-mandated deadline for enrollment.

### **Lottery**

During the public lottery process held in January each year, applications are selected by grade. WMPCS will require proof of residency for entrance into the lottery. WMPCS will not accept applications for lottery or waiting lists without proof of NC residency. Students who are moving into the state are welcome to apply at the time residency has been established but not before. Applications are not complete until all components required for the application have been submitted to the office.

WMPCS is governed by North Carolina General Statute 115C-238.29F(g) Admission Requirements. First, children of the school’s directors, teachers, teacher assistants, and siblings of currently enrolled students who were admitted to the charter school in a previous year are given enrollment priority in the appropriate grade. If a slot in the appropriate grade is not available for a sibling, that child is put at the top of the waiting list for that grade. Each new student application is then randomly drawn. Once all available slots for a grade are filled, the remaining applications are drawn to determine their order on the waiting list for that grade.

Enrolled students are not required to reapply or to participate in the lottery. Each school year, prior to the lottery, parents of enrolled students are required to complete an "Intent to Re-Enroll" form to hold their child’s slot for the upcoming school

year.

In the event that a student is drawn for the wrong grade level at the time of the lottery, that student will be moved to the correct grade and receive the same placement that was drawn.

If a student is accepted into the school and it is later found that they are not in the most appropriate grade level, the Director has the right to move that student to another grade.

If a student is accepted into the school during the lottery and it is later found that they are not residents of North Carolina or the correct age to enter Kindergarten, they will be unenrolled.

### **After-Deadline Lottery Procedure**

Applications for the current and/or upcoming school years received after the annual lottery deadline are added to the waiting list for the appropriate grade at the time they are received.

### **Enrollment of Students after Lottery**

Slots becoming available after the lottery will be filled using the waiting list. Enrollment after the first 20 days shall be determined by the School Director with BoT notification. If a slot opens and an offer to fill that slot is made, the parents or guardians of the prospective student have 3 business days from the time the offer is received to accept or reject the offer to fill that open slot. If a response or decision is not made within three business days, the Director has the right to move on to the next student on the waiting list.

### **Policy for Holding a Slot Open**

WMPCS reserves the right to hold a slot open for a currently enrolled student who may be leaving the school for longer than 10 days but has the intention of returning. After 10 days, the state's attendance tracking system removes the student from our Average Daily Membership (ADM) according to State law. If the parent has expressed in writing to the School Director the extenuating circumstances of this absence and his/her desire for his/her child to return to school on a specified date, the School Director may approve or deny the request. The parent may appeal the decision of the School Director to the Board of Trustees. The Board's decision is final.

### **Policy for Returning Students**

WMPCS reserves the right to accept a student that has withdrawn if they withdrew to take advantage of an educational opportunity out of state for a year or if their parents or guardian relocated out of state for a year. Applying for re-entrance into the school is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the Director.

### **Policy for Placing Students and Siblings**

WMPCS is committed to placing students with the teacher(s) and in the class environment best suited to meeting each child's needs. The Faculty and School Director spend a great deal of time each spring and summer considering each child's needs, the strengths of each teacher, and each classroom's dynamics that often can only be determined by knowledge of daily interactions within the classroom structure. If, however, a parent or guardian would still like for any special strengths and/or needs of their child to be considered during these discussions, please submit these needs to the School Director in writing by June 1st. Please do not request a specific teacher but rather list qualities-strengths and needs- that relate to the special needs of your child. WMPCS will place siblings in separate classrooms unless specifically requested by the parents and then only if the Faculty and the School Director agree with that placement. Parental and guardian input is always welcome; however, this is ultimately the decision of the School Director.

### **Policy for Placement Requests**

If a parent requests for a child to be changed from one existing class to another within a level, the parent must first meet

with the child's current teacher(s) to discuss the request. If both parties agree, the child's name is then placed on a Request to Move list. If both parties do not agree, the School Director will make the final decision regarding the placement request. When an opening is determined to be available in another class that could match this child and still maintain a balance of the various populations we serve, as defined by the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) subgroups as defined by the State, the parent(s) will be contacted and offered the opportunity to move. If the parent(s) declines, the child's name is then removed from the list and the child will remain in the original class.

The definition of AYP Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is defined as a series of performance targets that states, school districts, and specific subgroups within their schools must achieve each year to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB Act). In each public school and Local Education Agency (LEA) in North Carolina, the ten student subgroups are 1. School as a whole (all students); 2. American Indian; 3. Asian; 4. Black; 5. Hispanic; 6. Two or More Races; 7. White; 8. Economically Disadvantaged Students (Based on Child Nutrition data files submitted in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement); 9. Limited English Proficient (LEP); and, 10. Students with Disabilities (SWD) (based on the April 1 Headcount of Exceptional Children collected via CECAS).

### **Equity Plan for Washington Montessori**

WMPCS is committed to placing students equitably in the classes available at each level. When placing students, the child's current classroom teacher submits characteristics of students' strengths and needs in order to be placed with an appropriate teacher-student match. Classes are balanced to be sure an equal number of students from the various populations we serve, as defined by the AYP subgroups, are represented in each classroom.

### **Transferring Student Placement**

Transferring students will be placed in the grade level recommended by the previous school. In the event a parent/guardian requests a grade placement other than the recommended level, the request must be accompanied by supporting documentation. After consideration of the request and documentation, the School Director will make a grade placement. The School Director reserves the right to assess any child(ren) entering the school to determine their appropriate grade level. Should the student be placed in the grade level recommended by the previous school, the parent/guardian has the option of appealing this decision to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final. Should the School Director make the requested change in grade placement, this placement will be conditional upon a progress review performed at scheduled intervals within the first three months of the academic year.

### **Policy for Retaining/Advancing Students**

The decision to retain/advance a student is one that requires much consideration. We believe that only in extreme circumstances should retention be considered. When the question is raised, the child's teacher, Exceptional Children's teacher (when applicable), and School Director will follow these guidelines:

- Determine if retaining/advancing will help this child
- Consider the physical size, chronological age, and family support of the child
- Consult the child's Individualized Education Plan when applicable to see if current interventions are satisfactory
- Counsel parents regarding the disadvantages to retaining/advancing students
- Determine what changes would be made in the child's educational program and goals should the child be retained/advanced

The decision to retain/advance ultimately lies with the School Director. The parent has the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

### **Policy for Advanced Placement Classes Secondary I and II (Jr. High and High School)**

The decision to place a student into an honors class is up to the discretion of the Director or designee. Assessments may be required.

## **Policy for Adding or Dropping Classes Secondary II (High School)**

Classes cannot be added or dropped after 10 days of the start of the semester schedule or 20 days for year-long classes.

## **Policy for Dual Enrollment**

WMPCS does not permit partnerships with private independent schools to provide instruction during the school day. As a small Montessori Charter School, partnering with private schools to provide educational services off campus that do not align with Montessori Curriculum is not allowed. In addition to monitoring instruction off our campus could require us to restructure the regular education program and schedules to accommodate a student.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance**

### **Special Education Services**

The school provides a continuum of special education and related services to meet the individual needs of students.

In Public Schools of North Carolina, the Exceptional Children's (EC) Division provides local units with detailed procedures for the delivery of special education services. These rules and regulations are detailed and found on the NC Department of Public Instruction website for its Exceptional Children's Division (<http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov>). Children who meet all of the specified criteria outlined in the Policies may be entitled to special education services.

If you are new to WMPCS or have a child who has been receiving special education services at another school, contact the school's EC Coordinator.

The board does not permit private professional service providers (such as ABA therapists, mental health providers, or tutors) to accompany students on campus during the school day. Students should meet with private medical, mental health, or other service providers off campus and outside of school hours. WMPCS is responsible for providing all students with special needs the supplemental aides and services they need to access their educational services. Any concerns about the level of support needed during the school day by a student with special needs should be discussed with the student's IEP or 504 team, which has the responsibility to ensure that the student is receiving a free, appropriate public education.

Private providers working with students with special needs are permitted to collaborate with school staff. For example, parents may invite their private providers to participate in IEP or 504 team meetings or to provide written recommendations to the school. Parents are also encouraged to provide consent for any private providers to exchange information and records with school staff so that both will be better informed about the child's needs.

This policy does not apply to contract service providers retained by the school system or evaluators completing Independent Educational Evaluations through contracts with the school system.

### **Child Find**

The Exceptional Children's Department of WMPCS, in compliance with Project Child Find, conducts evaluations or referrals, if warranted, for those children and/or adult students who may have learning problems in the areas of cognition, communication, social and emotional and motor functioning. Evaluations are available to preschool children aged 3-5, through the Beaufort County School System.

Children or adult students who are found eligible for special education and related services are entitled to a free and appropriate special education program.

For more information on Project Child Find, contact the Exceptional Children's Coordinator at 252-947-1977 or visit the WMPCS Exceptional Children's program website.

## 504 Procedural Safeguards

In the event that WMPCS becomes aware that a student may have a disability that does not require specialized instruction with a Special Education Teacher, notice will be mailed to the parents requesting that they attend a 504 Meeting. Parents may also request an eligibility meeting for a 504 plan by submitting a request to the EC Coordinator who also serves as the 504 Coordinator. A meeting will be scheduled to determine if the student is eligible for assistance through a 504 Plan.

The participants who will be invited to the meeting will be comprised of the 504 team which includes the 504 Coordinator, the student's regular education teacher, the student's parent(s), and if applicable, the student. The Team will meet to review the existing information connected to the child's disability to determine if any additional information is needed to determine 504 eligibility. If the 504 Team determines that it has adequate information, eligibility will be determined, and a 504 Plan will be developed. If a parent disagrees with the outcome of the 504 Plan, the following steps should be taken:

- 1.) Send written notice to the Director outlining your concerns regarding the 504 Plan or eligibility determinations. The Director, the 504 Coordinator, and the parents will schedule a meeting to discuss the concerns.
- 2.) If after taking the steps to meet with the Director and the 504 Coordinator, the parents are still concerned that their child's needs are not being met with the 504 Plan, the parents may provide written notice to the Chair of the Board of Trustees outlining the concerns and requesting that the issue be heard by the Chair of the BoT as well as two other Board Members.

## Policy for Use of Seclusion or Restraint

WMPCS has established guidelines for the use of restraint and provisions for training the staff in the management of student behavior in accordance with North Carolina General Statute, 115C-391.1, also known as House Bill 1032 – Deborah Greenblatt Act.

## Policy for Use of Service Animals

Title II of the ADA and its associated regulations (28 CFR Part 35) requires government entities, including public schools, to make reasonable modifications to programs and services in order to allow access for persons with disabilities. Service animals are recognized as reasonable modifications or accommodations under Title II of the ADA.

# School Operating Hours/Daily Schedule and Attendance

## School Operating Hours/Daily Schedule

	Arrival Time	Class Start Time	Dismissal Time
Before & After School Care (BASC) *For cost and details see the BASC section of this Parent Handbook.	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.	n/a	6:00 p.m.
Children's House (Pre-K, Kindergarten) Lower Elementary (1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> grades) Upper Elementary (4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grades)	8:00 a.m. - 8:15 am	8:15 a.m.	3:00 p.m.

Secondary I & II (7th-12th grades)	8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
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**For grades K to High School, students will be counted as tardy if they arrive after the class start time. Five tardy arrivals are considered one full day of absence for state recording purposes.**

## Attendance

When a student is unable to attend school, a phone call to the school informing the front office of the student's absence is requested. A written excuse is required of each student following an absence to be presented to the child's teacher upon his/her return. The student's local Department of Social Services will be notified if a student is absent, excused, or unexcused, for 10 consecutive days.

Excused absences include illnesses or injury (extended illness should be verified by a doctor's note), quarantine, medical or dental appointments, court appearances, death in the immediate family, religious holidays/observances, and absence related to deployment activities. For all students enrolled at WMPCS, unexcused or unlawful absence is defined as any reason other than those listed as "excused or lawful absences." Excused absences are not taken into consideration for class attendance requirements in Secondary II.

For convenience, a school calendar is available in the administrative office and on the school website and can be used in planning vacations with little or no disruption to each student's education.

The parent, guardian, or custodian of the student is legally and primarily responsible for ensuring that the student meets his or her obligation to attend 100% of the classroom instructional sessions provided for the class in which he or she is enrolled.

In order to be counted present, a student must be in attendance for ½ of the academic day (11:45 for K students through 6th grade; 12:00 for students in 7th -12th).

Number of Unexcused Absences	Consequence
3	According to G.S. 115C-378 when a student has accumulated three unexcused absences during the school year, the School Director, or his/her designee, shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the excessive absences.
6	After more than six unexcused absences, the School Director or his/her designee may notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he or she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State.



10	After ten accumulated unexcused absences during the school year, the School Director or his/her designee shall review any report of investigation prepared under G.S. 15C-381 and shall confer with the student and his or her parent, guardian, or custodian if possible to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification pursuant to this section and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If not, the School Director or his/her designee shall notify the district attorney or file a complaint with a juvenile intake counselor. If the School Director or his/her designee determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, he may file a petition in accordance with G.S. 7A-561 that the student is habitually absent from school.
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20 Total Excused or Unexcused Absences	The maximum number of absences permitted during a single school year is twenty (20). When a student has more than twenty absences, he/she may be retained in the same grade for the upcoming year. Parents have the right to request a waiver of this policy to the Attendance Committee at the end of each school year. The Attendance Committee shall be composed of one teacher, one member of the administrative staff, and one parent. Parents may submit their waiver request in writing to the Committee. The student must be performing at grade level and the parent must furnish proper documentation showing unavoidable mitigating circumstances (such as chronic health conditions) in order to be eligible for a waiver. If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the Committee, he/she may appeal the Committee's decision to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.
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## Attendance Secondary II (High School)

The WMPCS Board of Trustees is committed to the success of every student. No student is allowed to miss any school days indiscriminately. Regular and consistent attendance for all students in grades 9-12 is required in addition to a minimum academic grade of 60 in order to receive credit for a course. A student who misses more than 8 days per semester, (excused or unexcused) in grades 9-12 will not be granted credit for the course unless given a waiver from the Director. All requests for waivers must be in writing and be submitted prior to the 9th absence. After 4 absences, the teacher will contact the parent in writing to explain the consequences of additional absences.

Recommend removal of these sentences. Participation in the classes/lessons is mandatory and it is up to the discretion of the guide to determine if lack of attendance constitutes failing the course. Notice will be given to the student if the guide deems the absences are affecting their course performance.

Students are responsible for any and all course information and work missed or assigned while absent.

### Excused Absences Defined:

The Director or designee shall excuse the temporary absence of a student upon showing of satisfactory evidence of one of the following;

1. Illness or Injury - When the absence results from illness or injury, which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. Death in the Immediate Family - When the absence results from the death of a member of the immediate family of the student. The immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to, grandparents, parents, and siblings.
3. Medical or Dental Appointments - When the absence results from a medical or dental appointment of a student.
4. Please see Beaufort County Schools policy regarding Excused absences.

### **Unexcused Absences Defined:**

1. A student's willful absence from the school/class with or without the knowledge of the parent; or
2. A student's absences from school for any reason other than those listed as Excused.
3. A student who fails to provide a parent/guardian note within 3 days of absence.

### **School Related Activities for which a Student will not be counted Absent.**

1. Field trips sponsored by the school.
2. School initiated and scheduled activities.
3. Athletic events requiring early dismissal from school.

### **Tardiness to school**

School attendance is mandatory by North Carolina State Law. When a child is tardy to school, instructional time is lost and academic performance is compromised.

Our mutual goal is to maximize each student's educational progress and to provide an uninterrupted work cycle for the class. Parents/guardians should make every effort to ensure that students arrive at school on time. In the event of arriving late to school, parents/guardians are asked to escort the student into the administrative office and sign in. This will assure that accurate attendance records are kept.

### **Tardies Secondary II (High School)**

If a student misses 15 minutes of a class/lesson they are considered absent for that class or lesson; in addition, the regular school tardy policy is in effect for the high school.

If a student arrives at school past 9:00 a.m., or 30 minutes late with a medical note or approved excuse, they are considered absent for the school day.

### **Checking Out Early**

WMPCS is aware of the need for students to be picked up early for various appointments (i.e. doctor, dental, etc.) However, when a child leaves early, instructional time is lost and academic growth is compromised.

Parents/guardians of students who are habitually signed out early may be contacted by the school Director. If a student needs to leave school early, please send a written note to the teacher indicating this intent. The student must be signed out with the administrative office before leaving; a call will be made to the classroom to inform the teacher; the student will be released only to persons designated on the Emergency Contact Information Form.

The instructional day ends at 3:00 p.m. for Kindergarten through Upper Elementary students; the instructional day ends at 3:15 p.m. for Secondary I and II (middle and high school) students. Early dismissal compromises the learning environment for all students in the classroom. To request early dismissal for a child, please arrive **prior to 2:00 p.m.** Students will be picked up from the front office.

### **Inclement Weather**

WMPCS will follow the Beaufort County School System in regards to inclement weather. We reserve the right to close or

amend operations if Beaufort County Schools choose otherwise or if Beaufort County Schools is not in session. Please tune in to WITN or WNCT television stations and check the school's website for school closing or delay information. If you have provided the school with a contact phone number, you will also receive notification via text and/or message.

## **School Policies**

### **Electronic Devices**

In order to provide the students with a learning environment free from distractions, no electronic devices will be allowed in the classroom or on campus for students in K-6th grade during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, handheld video games, etc. Electronics found on campus will be held in the administrative office until a parent/guardian can pick the items up. If a student participates in the private Greenville Bus ride share program or other carpool programs, they are responsible for depositing their device with the bus or owner of the transportation service prior to entering campus.

Phones are permitted in the school's Secondary program but are not allowed to be out or used during class unless permitted by the Guide. This includes study halls, solo time, lunch, work cycles, and any other activity during the school day. Phones are to be kept in the student's backpack or locker and on "silent mode".

Recommend removal of this statement...cell phone is either in the student's locker or backpack (or another secure area as directed by the students' guides) and are to be turned silent to ensure it is not distracting the student or other students.

Parents that need to contact their students are encouraged to call the school directly rather than texting or calling the student.

### **Jewelry, Toys, and Personal Items**

No toys will be permitted in the classroom or the before-school program. This policy covers, but is not limited to the following items: jewelry, toys, pacifiers, blankets, stuffed animals, or other personal items excluding water bottles or lunch boxes. Please only allow students to bring in items of educational value. Washington Montessori is not responsible for items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

### **Lost and Found**

Washington Montessori Public Charter School is not responsible for any lost or found items. If a student loses an item while at school, contact the administrative office for assistance.

### **Transportation**

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is unable to provide transportation, the school will attempt to arrange a carpool. If a student is in an existing carpool, please send a schedule of drivers, children, and days involved to the classroom teacher so that the student may be released to ride in that carpool. Any student who will depart from the normal routine in his or her method of leaving school should have a written note from the parent/guardian stating this fact. Unless a note is received, the student will be sent home by his or her usual mode of transportation.

Students in the Children's House to Upper Elementary who participate in one of the numerous private transportation programs/groups stay in their classrooms or an assigned classroom until 15 minutes prior to the van/bus leaving at 3:30 p.m. For more information about private transportation programs or groups please contact the administrative office.

High school students may not carpool or rideshare for field trips or other school events. If the parents of the riding student have a signed release that allows his/her student to ride with the driving student, the student will be allowed to ride with the student driver.

Because the entrance of the school consists of a long driveway without a sidewalk and is the only roadway into the

campus, students are not allowed to walk up or down that drive (or to ride a bicycle, scooter, etc.) unless accompanied by an adult.

### **Car Line /Carpool**

At arrival and dismissal times, teachers are responsible for the children; as a result, teachers are not available to engage in conversations with parents during car line. If a parent/guardian needs to deliver a message or consult with a teacher, please either send a note with the student or call the office to make a telephone or personal appointment.

Students should continue to wear seatbelts and remain seated until their cars come to a complete stop in the carpool line or when arriving on campus.

### **Student Parking**

Students who are of driving age, 16, and have received a NC State Driving License are able to park on campus in the designated student parking spaces in the high school parking lot. Parking permits must be purchased for each student and vehicle. Permits cost \$10.00 per year. Student vehicles are subject to search at any time.

### **Dismissal Car Line**

Students or parents will not be allowed to cross at their discretion through the traffic lines during pick-up. Students or parents will be escorted through the crosswalks in 5-minute increments by the teacher who is monitoring traffic through that crosswalk. By restricting the flow of pedestrians during a pick-up, the school is maintaining a safe environment for its students and parents as well as ensuring an uninterrupted flow of traffic.

### **Students Visiting from Other Schools**

Prospective students who are not currently enrolled in our school may be invited to spend a specified amount of time at Washington Montessori during the academic day to shadow a currently enrolled student. Parents must contact the School Director in advance to schedule a visit.

Other students who are not currently enrolled in our school may request the opportunity to visit our school. Parents must contact the School Director and classroom teacher in advance to schedule a visit. During any such visit, the parents of these students may be asked to remain on campus unless other arrangements are made in advance with the administration. This applies to alumni and friends of current students.

### **Field Trips**

Field Trips are an integral part of the Montessori curriculum which encourages students to explore and experience the world both close to and far from home. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of upcoming field trips. A permission slip detailing the date, location, and cost will be sent home approximately two (2) weeks prior to the trips. On some field trips, it may be requested that the students wear a WMPCS spirit shirt. All field trip fees should be paid in cash or by credit card prior to the trip. Parents/guardians will receive a receipt for cash received.

Field trips must have a stated educational purpose and must be directly related to information that is being studied by the students in the class.

Overnight field trips must have a complete itinerary that is available to the School Director one month prior to the scheduled departure. The itinerary should include adequate activities and planning to clearly account for the time the students are away from school. Any changes to the approved itinerary must be approved by the School Director. The itinerary must be made available to the parents as soon as it is approved by the School Director.

Students who have not yet developed the ability to meet the behavior expectations outlined in the No Violence Policy and/or Student Behavior Policy on campus may be excluded from attending field trips off campus without his/her parent/guardian.

Additionally, students that are struggling academically as a result of incomplete work may be excluded from field trips by the Director. Consequently, the student will attend school during the field trip allowing him/her the opportunity to work on incomplete assignments, projects, research, etc.

When classes plan field trips, the packages are all-inclusive unless otherwise stated. If the price of the trip includes the cost of the bus, the student is expected to pay the entire cost whether or not he or she rides the bus. If a parent chooses to drive his/her child separately and does not pay the total field trip cost, the student and parent must make separate arrangements to attend the rest of the field trip. If any tours are scheduled for the group or discounts are given for the group, the student and parent will be excluded from participating.

On an occasional field trip, siblings from different levels are invited to attend the excursion and parents may apply for an excused educational absence; however, many field trips are specifically designed for students of a particular grade level. Parents are encouraged to check this his/her child's teacher prior to committing to attend the trip with a sibling.

Chaperones must be at least 21 years of age and are required to have a background check completed by the school when a field trip requires an overnight stay. Parents are welcome to attend any of the field trips for students pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade as a volunteer, chaperone, or parent if the classroom teacher has not stated otherwise. High school field trips are chaperoned by staff only; parents are welcome to attend by invitation of the teacher(s) only.

Secondary I and II (middle and high school) field trips are dependent on the completion of academics. If a student has or is failing to complete assignments, or work required for his or her classes, is unable to maintain behaviors that are required for the trip, or is unable to ensure they are not a safety risk to themselves or others, they may be excluded from the trip by the Director or their designee.

## **Field Trip Guidelines**

Field trips are an important aspect of the Montessori student's school experience. Parental support through chaperoning and driving are vital aspects of the "going out" program.

Guidelines have been developed to help ensure the safety of all field trip participants:

- All drivers must be at least 21 years of age or have a parent/guardian in order to drive or transport students on a field trip. All drivers must supply the insurance provider information form at least one day prior to the field trip. Submit this form to your child's room parent or classroom teacher.
- All drivers must supply a cellular phone number to the teacher or room parent, if available, and keep the phone with you and powered on throughout the field trip unless otherwise required by field trip location (ie. theaters).
- All drivers must arrive by the time specified in order for an unhurried and orderly departure.
- All drivers must review the guidelines and ask questions if uncertain of the details.
- All students must be in seat belts; drivers will only be assigned as many students as can be accommodated in belts. No student may sit in the front seat if there is an airbag on the passenger side of the vehicle or if the child is under 12 years of age. Students under 8 years of age must be seated in an approved car seat or booster seat.
- All drivers will be provided with a list of the students for whom you are responsible. Keep it with you. Do a headcount before departing the school and again before departing from the location of the field trip. Never assume that a child has gone with someone else (parent, etc.).
- Students should remain together on the way to and from the car. Special care must be taken in public parking lots. Be sure students stay in the car until you are ready to supervise them outside of the car.
- The teacher may ask you to oversee the group during the activity. Be aware of safety hazards and supervise the children accordingly.
- Be sure the teacher or assistant has arrived before letting the students out of the vehicle and into the field trip location or back at the campus.

- Follow the directions to your field trip destination. It is important that all drivers follow the same route. DO NOT detour from this route, take students to any other destination, or leave students unattended in a vehicle.
- Please remember that smoking is not allowed in vehicles that are transporting students. Also, no drinking alcohol or taking medications is allowed which may impair the driver's reactions, judgment, and/or cognitive abilities during the field trip at any time, nor are any actions, such as texting, allowed during driving which may jeopardize the safety of the vehicle and its passengers.
- For safety, no weapons or hazardous materials may be in a vehicle transporting students.

Please be sure to notify the teacher and teaching assistant of any inappropriate behavior.

## **Class Parties**

Washington Montessori is committed to recognizing major holidays and birthdays in a manner that has educational value. For students in K-3, a traditional "Walk around the Sun" may be held on his/her birthday. This ceremony is a celebration of the child's life which includes a photo of the child from each year of his/her life. Although this activity is not designed to replace the child's birthday, it is held in lieu of party favors or birthday cake at school. If parents would like to provide a healthy snack for their child's class to celebrate his birthday, arrangements can be made with the child's teacher.

Upon request, school personnel will distribute invitations to birthday parties held away from school in the event that all students in the class are included. Please do not send invitations to school with a child unless all students in the class are invited.

There may be occasions where a movie is shown in the classroom. If so, movies will have a G rating in classes from Kindergarten through Upper Elementary unless it is an unrated documentary. Secondary I and II Jr. High and High School classes may watch movies with a G or PG rating at the teacher's discretion. A segment from a PG-13 movie may be shown in high school in rare instances such as showing a scene for dramatic techniques/effect (drama), historical value (history or English), etc. Movies will only be shown in conjunction with the curriculum.

## **Communication from Washington Montessori**

The administrative staff of Washington Montessori periodically sends emails to keep the school community informed of school wide events. These are available in hard copy by request from the front office. Another source of information is the school calendar on our website which is updated as events occur. Additionally, each class will send home class updates as needed. These are usually sent home on Mondays.

## **Classroom Concerns**

If a student is experiencing difficulties or if a situation arises in the classroom which needs to be addressed, please contact the student's teacher first. If the parents'/guardians' concerns are not adequately addressed, they may then request a meeting with the School Director; the Director may suggest that the classroom teacher be included in the conference in order to keep all lines of communication open.

## **Telephone Calls during the School Day**

If parents need to contact a student or his/her teacher during school hours, they will be connected to the teacher's voice mailbox. In order to protect instructional time, the classroom will only be interrupted in case of emergency. Students will be allowed to call home for valid reasons such as sickness.

## **Classroom Messages and Interruptions**

The classroom is a learning environment that is protected from interruptions as much as possible. Parents/guardians are asked to refrain from visiting any classroom while class is in session unless there is a previously arranged appointment to volunteer or observe. This includes communicating about messages, forgotten lunches, projects, etc. Volunteers and observers must sign in at the school's office and receive a swipe card before leaving the office to visit any area of the school.

Parents are requested to refrain from texting their students during the school day. This is a disruption to them and the learning environment. Students are prohibited from having cell phones during the school day.

**Safety/Security Procedures**

- Parents/guardians and visitors must report to the school office directly upon entering the school. All non-staff personnel will be given a badge to wear while on school grounds or in the buildings. The badge designates the teacher’s name where you will visit.
- Keep your child’s Emergency Contact Information form on file in the office up-to-date with valid phone numbers, emergency contact persons, and persons designated to pick up your child from school.
- Notify the school immediately of any potentially hazardous situation involving friends or relatives that may try to make contact with a child at school. Our only interest in knowing this very private type of information is for the protection of our students and staff.
- Make appointments for conferring with your child’s teacher. If we know who is coming into the building, the time they are coming, and the nature of their business, we can do a much better job of preventing unauthorized persons from gaining access to your children or staff members.
- At events that require overnight accommodations:
- Whenever possible, there shall be two (2) adult chaperones in every suite.
- When staying in a hotel, adult chaperones shall sleep in separate rooms from students; if it’s necessary for students to share a room with an adult, adults shall sleep in separate beds from students. No adult shall ever be alone with any one student unless it is the adult’s own child.
- If, in certain cases, accommodations are restrictive, one chaperone is adequate per room, as long as anyone adult is NOT alone with any one student.
- In cases where there aren’t enough chaperones to ensure one adult per room in Upper Elementary and above, adults may be in an adjoining or nearby room. If this is not feasible, the trip may be canceled.

**School Searches**

A student’s person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority suspects that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law or a school rule. If a frisk or “pat down” search of a student’s person is conducted, it must be conducted in private by a school official of the same gender and with an adult witness present when feasible.

If the school official suspects that the student has on his or her person an item imminently dangerous to the student or to others, a more intrusive search of the student’s person may be conducted. Such a search may be conducted only in private by a school official of the same gender, with an adult witness of the same gender present, and only upon the prior approval of the School Director or designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay that might be caused by following these procedures. Student vehicles are subject to search at any time.

School personnel will not conduct strip searches. If a strip search is deemed necessary, the police will be called to conduct the search. Parents will be contacted in the event of a search involving their child.

**Secondary I and II (Middle School and High School) Grading Policy**

WMPCS follows a 10-point grading scale as required by the NC State Board of Education. This policy includes a local caveat that if a student misses 9 days for semester courses or 17 days for year-long classes they will receive an F in all of their courses for the semester or year. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Director. Late policies are decided by the levels. Grade and quality point associations will be as follows:

Numeric	Letter	Quality Points*
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90 - 100	A	4
80 - 89	B	3
70 - 79	C	2
60 - 69	D	1
≤ 59	F	0

\* An additional 0.5 quality point is awarded for each honors course on high school transcripts toward the student's weighted Grade Point Average (GPA).

If a student has a running average of less than 65 in any class, they may be required to participate in labs/work cycle task force lessons for the remainder of the quarter. During that time they may have to relinquish club membership if there is a conflict with the club time.

### **Athletic and Extracurricular Participation**

Participation in the school's sports teams or intramural activities is a privilege. If a student has any class that has a grade below a C at the end of the quarter, they will not be able to participate on the team or in the activity for the following grading period or until their average is above a C at the following grading period.

Any student that has had three or more suspensions will also be excluded from after-school extracurricular and sports teams.

### **Reporting Information and External Agency Partnerships**

It is the policy of the Board in serious matters relating to the safety and welfare of the students and employees that certain actions and information be reported to external agencies as required by law or regulation.

#### **School Director**

All school personnel, including substitute teachers, student teachers, and volunteers, must immediately report to the Director or designee any act of violence in school, on school property, or at school-sponsored events. Acts that should be reported are all those known or believed to be violent. This includes, but is not limited to, all acts reportable by the Director to law enforcement under this policy.

#### **WMPCS Staff**

Any WMPCS staff member who knows or has substantial reason to believe that a certified employee has engaged in illegal or immoral behavior amounting to physical or sexual abuse of a child shall report the information to the School Director. For purposes of this requirement, "physical abuse" means the infliction of serious physical injury other than by accidental means or other than self-defense. The term "sexual abuse" means the commission of any sexual act upon a student or causing a student to commit a sexual act regardless of the age of the student and regardless of the presence or absence of consent.

#### **Law Enforcement**

Any Director or HoS who has personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel that an act has occurred on school property involving assault resulting in serious personal injury, sexual assault, sexual offense, rape, kidnapping, indecent liberties with a minor, assault involving the use of a weapon, possession of a firearm or other weapon in violation of the law, possession of a controlled substance in violation of the law, death by other than natural causes, robbery with or without a dangerous weapon, or assault on a school official, employee or volunteer not resulting in serious injury, shall immediately report the act to the appropriate law enforcement agency. "Immediately" means without undue delay and as



soon as possible after the act has occurred.

As soon as practicable, the Director shall also notify the Board Chair.

For purposes of this requirement, “school property” shall include any school building, bus, public school campus, grounds, recreation area, or athletic field in the charge of Washington Montessori, Inc.’s Board of Trustees.

Designated crimes that occur on school property shall be reported without regard to whether they occur before, during, or after normal operating hours.

The report must be made without regard to the age of the victim or the perpetrator. Student offenders and victims should be identified by age, grade, sex, race, and educational status (i.e., regular or exceptional).

In the absence of the School Director, his/her designee shall report the acts to law enforcement and the Board Chair.

If the School Director reports a crime committed by a child with a disability, the Director must ensure that copies of the child’s special education and disciplinary records are transmitted to the appropriate authorities for consideration, to the extent that transmission is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Where necessary to comply with FERPA, the Director shall obtain the written consent of the parent or student (if the student is at least eighteen (18) years of age) before transmitting the records. If consent is refused, the records will not be transmitted unless pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or as otherwise authorized under FERPA and with proper notice to the parent as may be required by that law.

### **Mandatory Reporting Policy**

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 7B-301, all school personnel are required to report any suspected abuse of any child as per the School’s Child Abuse Reporting Policy. These reports should be made directly to the Department of Social Services in which the child resides. If a report is made, it must be reported to the Director immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern they should see the School Social Worker and Head of School.

In addition to cases of abuse, neglect, dependency, and maltreatment, under N.C.G.S. §14-318.6, any person 18 years of age or older who knows or should have reasonably known that a juvenile has been or is the victim of a violent offense, sexual offense, or misdemeanor child abuse under N.C.G.S. §14-318.2 shall immediately report the case of that juvenile to the appropriate local law enforcement agency in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. If a report is made, it must be reported to the Head of School immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern they should see the School Social Worker and Head of School.

### **Department of Health**

The Director shall report suspected cases of reportable communicable diseases or conditions to the Beaufort County Health Director or designee for investigation. Without releasing information that would identify the employee or student, the Director shall also report suspected cases of reportable communicable diseases or conditions to the Board Chair. Any employee who has reason to believe that a fellow employee or student has a reportable communicable disease and is not following safe practices shall report the situation to the Director or other administrator. Supervisory personnel shall report such unsafe conduct to the health director. In the absence of the Director, the employee must report the situation to the health director. Confidentiality of such reports is protected by law, and school officials cannot be liable for making such reports.

### **Fee Policy**

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute § 115C-218.50, WMPCS shall not charge tuition or fees except as

follows:

1. (1) Any fees that are charged by the local school administrative unit in which WMPCS is located.
2. (2) WMPCS, upon approval by the Board of Trustees of the charter school, may establish fees for extracurricular activities, except those fees shall not exceed the fees for the same extracurricular activities charged by a local school administrative unit in which forty percent (40%) or more of the students enrolled in the charter school reside.

## **Dress Code**

### **Grades K-12**

The following colors are approved for shirts, turtlenecks, sweaters, sweatshirts, vests, tights, pants, skirts, skorts, shorts, jumpers, and dresses: red, white, navy blue, light blue, and khaki (for a visual example of the acceptable colors please refer to the website: [www.wmpcs.org/uniforms.html](http://www.wmpcs.org/uniforms.html)). The approved colors may be worn in solids or with a contrasting collar/cuff of another approved color. Emblems, designs, stripes, or non-WMPCS logos of any kind are not permitted.

Shirts and dresses must have a collar, may not expose the midriff, or be visually distracting to others. Sweaters and sweatshirts must be worn with a collared shirt underneath. Sweatshirts cannot be worn inside out.

Hats, head coverings, or hoods cannot be worn in school buildings. Headcoverings may be exempted from this policy if the garment is worn for religious or cultural reasons.

Shorts, skorts, skirts, jumpers, and dresses should be below the fingertips around all of their body when the student's arms are flat against his/her body and should not be visually distracting. If wearing leggings, leotards, tights, or shorts: fingertip length shorts, dresses, skirts, or shirts must be worn over them. Undershirts must be uniform colors and free from designs. All students, especially those in high school, are expected to be appropriately attired as they are role models for younger students as well as a reflection of WMPCS.

Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished.

Sweatpants or athletic wear is not permitted during the school week. Sweatpants and athletic wear is defined as loose trousers and athletic leggings with an elasticized or drawstring waist, worn when exercising or as leisurewear.

Socks are defined as any garments that are on the feet but do not extend above the knees. There are no restrictions on socks. Tights, stockings, jumper pants, and leggings are not considered socks and must be uniform colors and free from design.

There are no shoe restrictions other than shoes must be closed-toed, a closed heel for Children's House and 6-9, free from electronics (i.e. lights), no heels in Children's House, Lower Elementary or Upper Elementary, heels no higher than ½ inch in Middle and High school and no wheels. Sandals, flip flops, bedroom slippers, or bedroom shoes are not permitted. Shoestrings can be any color and are considered an accessory. Students in Upper Elementary, and Secondary I and II (middle and high school) may wear clogs and shoes with open backs.

Coats and raincoats, that are worn outside only, may be any color. Please remember to write your child's name inside sweaters, jackets, coats, etc. Hats and head coverings are not to be worn in the buildings.

### **Grades 9-12**

The above guidelines apply to high school students except they may wear any color and shirts/blouses that may have a pocket emblem.

Students may wear flip-flops or sandals unless closed-toe shoes are required.

Students are expected to wear business casual clothing. Business casual is defined as a collared shirt, no tee shirts, slacks, dress, or linen shorts that are fingertip length. All shirts must be buttoned or zipped.

Students participating in school athletics programs may wear their uniforms on home or away game days. Sleeveless jerseys may only be worn with a shirt underneath.

On Spirit Fridays, blue jeans and WMPCS spirit shirts may be worn for a fee of up to \$1.00. The funds from the "Friday Fund" are to be used by a vote of the faculty for any community member in need. Spirit shirts may not be dyed, written on or otherwise altered. Torn jeans or colors other than blue will not be permitted. Students may wear sweatshirts or tee shirts with college or university names on them on Spirit Fridays.

Washington Montessori WMPTO organizes a clothes closet for any families needing uniforms or for students who may need to change during the day.

If a student violates the Dress Code Policy, a note will be sent home explaining the violation and they will be asked to change clothes. The parent may bring in a change of clothes or the student may wear clothing from the Clothes Closet. Repetitive refusal to obey policy may result in suspension.

Safe footwear must be worn during PE. If a student is not wearing safe footwear, the teacher will ask them to sit out of the activity and not participate. If they continue to refuse to wear safe footwear for multiple days during PE, the student may be suspended for failure to comply with teacher directives.

Athletic shoes can be kept in the student's locker or cubby.

## **After School Sports and Sports Attire**

Students that participate in afterschool sports programs are to ensure that their attire is not a distraction and follows the basic requirements:

- No clothing will be allowed that defames, degrades, or is offensive to gender, race, color, religious creed, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, a physical or mental impairment, or a culture.
- Clothing may not display any suggestive or objectionable material.
- Clothing must not advocate unhealthy behavior, dangerous practice, or create a safety problem (includes graphics/text containing sexual connotations, controlled substances or violence).
- Appropriate, safe footwear must be worn at all times.
- If wearing leggings, leotards or tights, or inappropriate length shorts: fingertip length shorts, dresses, skirts or dresses must be worn over them.
- Hem of shorts are at fingertip length when arms are resting at the sides. If volleyball shorts are to be worn, they must be of appropriate length.
- No tank tops are to be worn.

Some examples of inappropriate attire are:

- Exposed stomachs or backs; clothes that are revealing
- Exposed undergarments such as bras, camisoles, slips, and boxers, including see-through garments, spaghetti

straps, low-cut tops, strapless clothing, pajamas

- Pants or shorts sagging below hips
- Excessively tight clothing, including, spandex or spandex like material without shorts over them

## School Sports Uniforms

Team uniforms are the property of Washington Montessori and are given to the students for use at official sponsored athletic events. It is the student's responsibility to maintain and care for the uniform and return it in the condition it was received. Uniforms will be given at the start of the season and collected at the end of the season. If any part of the uniform (shorts, shirt, etc...) is damaged or it is not returned, the student will be billed a minimum of \$50.00 or the cost of replacement of the uniform.

## Before and After School Care (BASC) Program

Before and After School Care are services WMPCS provides to families of enrolled students in grades pre-K-12th grade. An application must be filled out for each family. The cost, times, and policies are listed below.

BASC offers two types of enrollment. A regular attendee is defined as a student who attends the program on a weekly basis (one or more days a week on a regular basis). Regular attendees pay the weekly rate but do not pay for the days that the school is not in session. A drop-in student is defined as a student who does not attend more than three days a month.

There is a one-time registration fee of \$25.00 per family due at the time that the application is received in the office; also, an annual supply fee of \$25.00 per child is required.

WMPCS Before and After School Fees	
Before School Care (7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.)	No Charge
After School Care (3:00 pm - 6:00 pm)	Drop-in: \$15/hour; \$12 per additional child
	Regular Attendance: \$80/week; \$60 per additional child
High School Student (9th - 12th grades)	\$50 annual fee
Supply Fees	\$25 per child
Registration Fee	\$25 per family

WMPCS BASC follows the same discipline and school policies the general classrooms follow during the school day. If a student is suspended during BASC, they will be suspended from the BASC program the following day. Students may be uninvited from participating in the program based on disciplinary issues at the discretion of the Director.

Students attending the Before School Care Program must be escorted into the building. Students who regularly attend After School Care and those with notes or calls indicating they should attend After School Care are dismissed from class directly to the After School Care Program at the end of the school day. If a student does not regularly attend After School and the parent/guardian intends for them to use the service on a particular day, they should call ahead to notify the classroom teacher of this need and provide the school with appropriate emergency contact information for the student (drop-in; per day charge will be incurred). Students not picked up from school 15 minutes after dismissal time will be sent to the After School Program (drop-in; per day charge will be incurred).

Students must be signed out prior to leaving campus if they were signed into the BASC program. Failure to be signed out by a parent or guardian may result in being uninvited from participation in the BASC program.

After School Care closes at 6:00 p.m. Any student picked up after 6:00 p.m. is subject to an additional fee of **\$5.00 added every five minutes for a maximum fine of \$60.00 per day.**

A snack time will be provided during After School Care. Students have the option to purchase a snack directly for a cost of \$1.00 per day. The snack will consist of a bag of Cheese Nips, Goldfish, or pretzels, or comparable option, and a bottle of water. This charge can be prepaid in the accounting office.

All students participating in the Before and After School Program (BASC) must have an up-to-date list of emergency contacts on file with the BASC Coordinator and the office in the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached or does not arrive on time to pick up a student. Parents/guardians must also provide the BASC Coordinator with a complete list of people allowed to pick up the students from the After School Program (back of application). Only people on the list will be permitted to pick up the student. If a person not on the list is being sent to pick up the student, the parent/guardian must call ahead to add this person to the list. Parents/guardians and other listed persons will be asked to sign to indicate that they have picked up the student each day.

All fees for the BASC Program are due the Thursday **prior** to care for regular attendees. Per day charges for drop-in participants (arranged and unarranged) are due at pick-up from After School Care (or drop-off for Before School Care). Late pickup fees are due at pick up from After School Care. Payments may be made by cash (receipt will be provided) or by check (payable to Washington Montessori or WMPCS). If a check is returned for insufficient funds, all future payments must be made in cash and a \$36.00 service fee from the bank will be added to the amount due.

If fees for regular attendees are not paid on time, the student will not be able to attend the program on the first day for which no payment has been received and no payment arrangement has been made (ie. Monday, if payment is not received the Thursday **prior**). If per day charges (arranged and unarranged drop-in participants) and/or late fees are not paid at pick-up from After School Care (or drop-off for Before School Care), the student will not be able to attend the program again until the fees are paid-in-full or payment arrangements are made. A written notice will be given to the person signing for the student at pick-up to notify the parents/guardians of the situation, and the student will need to be picked up no later than 15 minutes past regular school dismissal time each day until payment is received or payment arrangements are made.

The Before and After School space is available for use by high school students at \$50.00 per semester. High school students must follow all rules, policies, and protocols of the regular BASC program and may be uninvited at any time.

## Student Behavior Policies

*"To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control, is to betray the idea of freedom."*  
--Maria Montessori

At Washington Montessori, it is important that the child clearly understands the rules and possible consequences for violating rules. Behavior must be managed by leading the child toward self-discipline. The Montessori Method addresses the need to effect change towards positive behavior through lesson planning and teaching without spending unnecessary time responding and reacting to behavior problems. *"The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others; not by being told he is naughty."* (Maria Montessori) Discipline is, therefore, primarily a learning experience and less a punitive experience if dealt with appropriately.

In the Montessori classroom, the teacher must clearly define the rules and then invite the child to assume responsibility for his behavior. Assuming responsibility for behavior is to understand and accept the consequences of violating the rules.

The purpose of our Student Behavior Policy is to aid children in developing self-control and respect for the rights of others. Physical and verbal abuse will not be used. The Montessori Method supports helping children without rejecting them as

people in order for them to understand why the behavior is considered inappropriate.

Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects respect for people and property. They will be redirected with verbal reminders; when verbal reminders are not sufficient to elicit change in conduct, students will be dismissed from the general activity area to a quieter place in the room. They will return when good conduct and control are demonstrated. If in his actions, a child puts himself, others, or property in jeopardy, he will be removed from the classroom.

Children who do not show respect for all living and nonliving things at our school will be redirected or subject to the school's discipline policy. Parents will be asked for hands-on assistance, when necessary, in fostering this respect in their child(ren). As children are taught to take responsibility for their actions, appropriate consequences will be enforced.

## **The Classroom Teacher and Discipline**

Teachers will make every effort to handle discipline problems as they arise. Each teacher, together with the students in the class, will establish reasonable rules of behavior for the classroom. Interventions are related (logically connected to the misbehavior), reasonable (equal in proportion and intensity to the misbehavior), and respectful (carried out in a way that preserves a student's self-esteem and reinforces positive behavior and growth), rather than oriented toward punitive control. Together, students and teachers work to develop a set of classroom rules that emphasize desirable behaviors.

We encourage our students to:

- Be helpful and caring.
- Show responsibility for their work and behavior.
- Make healthy choices.
- Be their personal best.

## **Respectful Student Behaviors**

To encourage a positive atmosphere, the expectation is for students to treat one another with grace and courtesy. Students are to use careful movement as they respect all living things and all nonliving things. Each student is expected to:

- Respect people and all living things.
- Respect property and all nonliving things.
- Use grace and courtesy.
- Be honest. Admit to errors and mistakes.
- Use appropriate language.
- Think before you act.
- Use careful movement.
- Choose to do what is morally and ethically right.

North Carolina disciplinary law and charter school law provide for various kinds of punishment including, but not limited to, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, 365-day suspension, expulsion, and exclusion. Each of these tools is available to school staff in accordance with those relevant statutory provisions.

The following consequences shall be used for Kindergarten and Lower Elementary non-violent offenses and violations of Respectful Student Behaviors, but this does not restrict the discretion of school staff, including the School Director, from imposing/recommending different levels of consequences as they believe appropriate.

1 <sup>st</sup> offense	The teacher will model/redirect a more appropriate behavior. The redirection will be accompanied by a written behavior notice that is sent home to be signed and returned.
2nd offense	The teacher will model/redirect a more appropriate behavior. The redirection will be accompanied by a written behavior notice that is sent home to be signed and returned. The teacher will contact the parent to elicit support in addressing the inappropriate behavior.
3 <sup>rd</sup> offense	Depending on the severity of the offense, the classroom teacher or School Director may determine other consequences are appropriate, including but not limited to volunteer opportunities, additional assignments/projects, or suspension. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the Intolerable Student Behaviors/No Violence Policy may be implemented.

The following consequences shall be used for Upper Elementary, Secondary I and II non-violent offenses and violations of Respectful Student Behaviors, but this does not restrict the discretion of school staff, including the School Director, from imposing/recommending different levels of consequences as they believe appropriate.

1 <sup>st</sup> offense	Verbal warning.
2nd offense	The teacher will model/redirect a more appropriate behavior. The redirection will be accompanied by a written behavior notice that is sent home to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned. The teacher may also contact the parent to elicit support in addressing the inappropriate behavior.
3 <sup>rd</sup> offense	Depending on the severity of the offense, the classroom teacher or School Director may determine other consequences are appropriate, including but not limited to volunteer opportunities, additional assignments/projects, or suspension. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the Intolerable Student Behaviors/No Violence Policy may be implemented.

## Intolerable Student Behaviors Violations

The following behaviors will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or other removal from school. The School Director shall be responsible for making recommendations for long-term consequences to the BoT.

- Any action or threat of an action that could jeopardize the safety and well-being of oneself or others
- Refusal to obey policy when directed by the teacher
- Purposeful defiant behavior
- Inappropriate language which includes but is not limited to cursing, swearing, or other language that is offensive or derogatory that may be defined under the Harassment Policy
- Unacceptable physical contact
- Inappropriate public displays of affection
- Any offense outlined in the school's Harassment Policy
- Plagiarism, lying, or cheating
- Theft or vandalism of school or another student's belongings
- Taking any video or photograph of any student or staff member without their written consent
- Any student who is found to have used illegal drugs or alcohol on campus, prior to arriving on campus, or uses the substances off campus and then returns to campus.

Any illegal action including but not limited to:

- Possession of a weapon or items that look like weapons
- Possession of illegal drugs (including counterfeit), prescription drugs with an authorized prescription and medication form on file, drug paraphernalia, tobacco, nicotine products, and alcohol
- Any criminal behavior
- Possession of lighters or incendiary devices

Additionally, WMPCS defines violent behavior as any intentional behavior that may cause property damage or physical or psychological damage to others. Examples of violent behavior include but are not limited to: bullying, hitting, kicking, pushing, or using the body in any way out of anger, frustration, inappropriate language that is offensive or harmful, or imposing one's will on another.

When a child's behavior, words, and/or actions become a threat to himself, other children, instructors, or the physical environment, the child will be suspended from school for that day. As a result of the violation, the student is immediately separated from his peers and may be picked up by the parent at the Administrative Offices in Building 1. If the offense occurs late in the day or if the parent/guardian does not pick up the child after 1:00 p.m. for Kindergarten, 11:45 a.m. for 1st through 8th grade students, and 12:00 for 9th -12th grade students, the child will be suspended from school for the following school day. On the day of suspensions, a student may not attend school nor participate in school-related activities on or off campus. At the discretion of the Director, multiple day suspensions may be enforced

Students and families who are new to WMPCS may be unfamiliar with our definition of violent behavior and our consistent implementation of consequences outlined in our No Violence Policy. Therefore, during the student's first academic year at our school, a written warning will be given to the child for his first violation of the No Violence Policy. Our goal in this extension of grace is founded in our belief that the purpose of discipline is to teach.

The following consequences will be used for violation of the Intolerable Behavior Policy:

1st and 2nd Suspensions	A phone call will be made to notify the parent/guardian to pick up the child and appropriate remedial action will be taken to correct the behavior.
3rd Suspension	A parent or guardian (no siblings) <b>may</b> be requested to attend school with his child for a period of time to assist in effecting change toward positive behavior. Students in Secondary I and II (middle and high) school will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular sport activities or sport teams for the remainder of the year. Students in Children's House to Upper Elementary must have a parent or guardian accompany them on all field trips. Students in Secondary I and II (middle and high) will not be allowed to participate in any overnight trips.
4th Suspension	A mandatory meeting is to be held with the child, the child's teacher, administration, and parents/guardians to develop a Behavior Plan for the child. The child may not return to school until this meeting is held. If upon returning to school the child's behavior does not conform to acceptable standards, he/she may be suspended for an extended time.
5th Suspension	Upon recommendation of the Director, the BoT will review the student's disciplinary record and determine whether the student should be suspended or expelled from the charter school.
10th Suspension or 10th day of suspensions	Upon the 10 <sup>th</sup> suspension or the 10 <sup>th</sup> day of suspensions, the BoT will review the student's disciplinary record and determine whether the student should be suspended or expelled from the charter school as required by state policy.

## Harassment Policy



*Washington Montessori, Inc.* believes that everyone should be treated with grace and courtesy. Students and employees have the right to function in an environment free of harassment. Examples of harassment include but are not limited to:

- Acts of physical violence against students, employees, their families, and/or property
- Derogatory comments and/or discriminatory actions against students, employees, and/or their families. These acts may include but are not limited to: gossiping, swearing, name-calling, threats, and wrongful allegations.
- Any unwanted, unwelcome sexual advance or sexually-oriented behavior made by a person who knows, or who ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted
- Any other behavior/acts which intimidate or threaten a person in such a way as to deny the individual his/her dignity and respect and results in a feeling of powerlessness

## **Procedure for Reporting an Offense**

If a student is witness to or involved in any offense, they are to do one of the following: Immediately, tell a teacher or other staff member. Anonymously report the offense by writing or filling out a provided checklist and placing it in the Resolution Box located in each of the buildings (except CH). The School Director or designee will check boxes and promptly investigate all submissions.

## **Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person while passing it off as one's own work. Plagiarism involves either directly transcribing another person's work without quotation and citation or when paraphrasing without citation. Using the wording or ideas from books, newspapers, magazines, websites or other students' work is not permitted. Plagiarism policies apply to all subjects and assignments, not just in English class. Cheating on tests, quizzes, or copying homework are also forms of academic dishonesty. Any attempt to present another's work as one's own work is plagiarism.

Students who knowingly allow others to copy their work are also at fault. Those learners will be assigned consequences according to the academic dishonesty policy.

Consequences for acts of academic dishonesty are as follows:

- 1st violation: redo the assignment and a behavior notice
- 2nd violation: "0" on assignment, mandatory meeting with the learner, parent, and guide
- 3rd violation: "0" on assignment and will result in an Intolerable Behaviors violation. A meeting with the student, parent, and guide is required. If the 3rd offense occurs in the same class and school year, the learner will fail (receive an automatic 50) that class for the quarter.

Consideration will be given to the student's age and familiarity with plagiarism.

## **Weapons and Dangerous Instruments**

No student shall knowingly possess, handle, or transmit on school property any weapon or items that look like weapons as defined by North Carolina law. Violation of this rule results in an immediate suspension for at least the remainder of the school year.

## **Illegal Drug, Drug Paraphernalia, Tobacco and Alcohol Policy**

Parents will be notified if their child is found to have tobacco of any form on their person or in their possession. Repeat offenders will be suspended from school for up to three days. Any students found smoking on campus will be suspended from school for three days.

If a student is using or carrying drugs, drug paraphernalia, unauthorized prescription medicine, or alcohol, the student will be suspended for ten days. For a first offense, the suspension may be reduced to five days if the student and his/her parents bring a signed note from a mental health agency verifying their attendance at a counseling session on substance

abuse.

## **Inappropriate Language**

Washington Montessori defines inappropriate language as racial slurs, profanity, and any other language that is meant to degrade, taunt, bully, slander another individual, or create an environment which is inappropriate or unhealthy.

Should inappropriate language be used, the consequences outlined in the Student Behavior Policy will be followed. Depending on the severity of the offense, the School Director may determine that another consequence is appropriate that may include, but is not limited to, suspension from school.

## **Public Displays of Affection**

Inappropriate hugging, hand holding, kissing, and other similar physical contact is not permitted. The consequences outlined in the Student Behavior Policy will be followed should a student violate this policy.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

A student may be suspended or expelled from the school in accordance with GS 115C-391 if the rules continue to not be followed, disobeyed, or if the student's conduct, as established by his or her teacher(s), proves to be disruptive or dangerous to other students and/or staff, recognizing the requirements of state and federal law concerning special needs students. Until the length of the suspension has been completed and/or the suspension or expulsion is excused by the Board of Trustees (see Appeals), the student will not be permitted to return to campus or participate in any off-campus school activities.

Any student suspended for a period of ten days or less shall be provided an opportunity to take any examinations missed during the suspension period. Students are expected to complete work missed during the suspension. Parents are expected to make every possible effort to cooperate with the school in this effort to provide students with the instructional time needed for academic success.

### **Appeals**

Any student that is expelled from school or suspended from school in excess of ten days by the School Director may appeal the decision to the BoT. The appeal should be formally directed in writing to the BoT within three business days of the student's exclusion or long-term suspension from school. The decision will remain in place until the Board has an opportunity to meet and review the appeal. The decision of the BoT is final.

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

The discipline, suspension, or expulsion of students with disabilities is governed by both federal law (IDEA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and by state law N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-391 and §115C-238.29F(d)(5) and its implementing regulations.

## **Adult Code of Conduct**

As we partner with families to best support students, it is critical that we engage in a way that allows our partnership to flourish. We understand that situations can become stressful, and we want to maintain the best support possible.

**All adults entering the school or participating in school events shall adhere to the following rules of conduct:**

1. Always be respectful to the staff, students, and other members of the school community.
2. Model appropriate behavior and be good examples to our school community.

3. Do not display dangerous or unsafe behavior when on our campus.
4. Check-in and obtain clearance from the office upon entering the building.
5. Do not disrupt teaching and learning when visiting the school.
6. If you need to speak with a staff member, schedule a meeting.
7. Refrain from using threats, profanity, inappropriate or rude language/gestures, or an aggressive/loud voice.
8. Handle complaints by first seeking a resolution with the staff members involved in a positive and professional manner.
9. Ensure email communications to WMPCS staff, faculty, or students are respectful.
10. Do not harass, bully, or threaten WMPCS staff, faculty, or students on school grounds, at school events (whether or not on school grounds), or via email.

**When engaging in a conversation with another person who is becoming overly aggressive and/or disrespectful, staff members are to follow the steps below:**

1. Remind the individual that it is an expectation that all conversations remain respectful.
2. If the disrespectful behavior continues, end the conversation immediately.

*Possible script: "Unfortunately, we need to end this conversation here. I understand you are upset but we cannot continue until we can communicate with a calm tone and appropriate language."*

3. Staff members must inform their direct supervisor of the interaction so they can document the situation and follow up as needed.

**To the extent an adult's actions/behavior falls below the code of conduct the adult can be subjected to disciplinary action by the administration.**

- Upon the first occurrence, the direct supervisor will send a follow up email to the individual.
- Upon a second occurrence, individuals can be
  - removed from the premises;
  - restricted from re-entry for a period of 30 calendar days; and
  - limited to pick-up and drop-off of students outside the building
- Upon a third occurrence, individuals can be
  - Removed from the premises; and
  - Permanently restricted from re-entry.
- Violence/Threats: If the act or action of the individual falls within the category of acts of violence on school premises, threats of violence on school premises, bullying of teachers, students or other parents, the individual can be immediately removed from the premises and permanently restricted from re-entry.
- While a parent is restricted from re-entry to the school, their access to the school is restricted to external pick-up and drop-off of their student. Any interaction with WMPCS teachers or staff must be done so by electronic means.
- The school reserves the right to restrict any adult, including parents, from coming onto campus for any reason, including drop off or pick up, if the adult has engaged in Violence/Threats as set forth above or if WMPCS determines that the adult's behavior has created an unsafe or hostile environment.

## **Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

### **General Statement of Policy**

In making decisions regarding student and employee access to the school computer system and the Internet, including electronic communications, the school considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. As a Montessori school, *Washington Montessori, Inc.* encourages students to connect with people and books as resources prior to utilizing computers for the gathering of information. However, as a school in the twenty-first century, we acknowledge that electronic information skills are now fundamental to the preparation of students to be members of society. Limited and guided access to the school computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, websites, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages

with people around the world. There are also technology standards to which the school is held accountable and which must be addressed by teachers through work in the classrooms. For these reasons, *Washington Montessori, Inc.* expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school computer system and the Internet in limited ways, which support these needs and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

### **Limited Educational Purpose**

The school provides students and employees with access to the school computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school system has a limited educational purpose, which includes the use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the school system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

### **Use of System is a Privilege**

The use of the school system and access to the use of the Internet is a privilege. that can be lost if the rules regarding its use are violated. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages, and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

The following uses of the school system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

Users will not use the school system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit or distribute:

- pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
- obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
- materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
- information or materials that could cause damage or disrupt the educational process;
- materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination

Users will not use the school system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

Users will not use the school system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state, or federal statute, law, or regulation.

Users will not use the school system to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software, or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the school system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school's security system, and will not use the school system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.

Users will not use the school system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.

Users will not use the school system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.

Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated school official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school system or any other system through the school system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes, or network identification other than those assigned to the user. Messages and records on the school system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate school authorities.

Users will not use the school system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.

If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school official. In the case of a school employee, the immediate disclosure shall be to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the building administrator. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. In certain rare instances, a user also may access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher or, in the case of a school employee, the building administrator.

## **Filter**

With respect to any of its computers with Internet access, the school will monitor the online activities of both minors and adults and employ technology protection measures during any use of such computers by minors and adults. The technology protection measures utilized will block or filter Internet access to any visual depictions that are:

- Obscene;
- Pornography; or
- Harmful to minors. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that: Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or
- Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

An administrator, supervisor, or other person authorized by the School Director or designee may disable the technology protection measure, during use by an adult, to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes. The school will educate children about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and cyberbullying.

## **Limited Expectation of Privacy**

By authorizing the use of the school computer system, the school does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school

system.

Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school computer system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school policy, or the law.

An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and to request the termination of their child's internet access at any time.

School employees should be aware that the school retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and email files. In addition, school employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school computer system may be subject to review, disclosure, or discovery.

The school will cooperate fully with local, state, and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with school policies conducted through the school computer system.

### **Internet Use Agreement**

The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and employees of the school.

This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.

The Internet Use Agreement form for students must be read and signed by the user and/or the parent/guardian. The Internet Use Agreement form for employees must be signed by the employee. The form must then be filed at the school office.

### **Limitation on School Liability**

Use of the school system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage, or unavailability of data stored on school diskettes, tapes, hard drives, or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or misdeliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored in the school system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school system or the Internet.

### **User Notification**

All users shall be notified of the school policies relating to Internet use. This notification shall include the following:

Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school policies

Disclaimers limiting the school's liability relative to: a) information stored on school diskettes, hard drives, servers; b) information retrieved through school computers, networks or online resources; c) personal property used to access school computers, networks or online resources; d) unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet

A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet account Notification that, even though the school may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy

Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the

student and/or the student's parents

Notification that, should the user violate the school's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken

Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

### **Parent's Responsibility**

Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of the school system and of the Internet if the child is accessing the school system from home or a remote location.

Parents will be notified that their children will be using school resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:

- A copy of the user notification form provided to the child user
- A description of the parent/guardian's responsibilities
- A notification that the parents have the option to request alternative educational activities not requiring Internet access and the material to exercise this option
- A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher prior to use by the child
- A statement that the school's acceptable use policy is available for parental review

### **"Bring your Own Device" (BYOD) Acceptable Use Policy**

For the use of Computers, Mobile Devices, Internet Access, Google Apps for Education Suite, and Internet Applications: students in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade may not bring any electronic devices unless they are required by the student's IEP or through an exception made by the School Director or designee.

#### **Definition of "Device"**

For purposes of BYOD, "Device" means a privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic handheld equipment that includes, but is not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies, portable internet devices, computers, netbooks, laptops, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), handheld entertainment systems or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

#### **Definitions**

- *User* includes anyone, including employees, students, and guests, using WMPCS technology, including, but not limited to, computers, networks, Internet, email, chat rooms, and other forms of technology services and products.
- *Network* is wired and wireless technology networks including school and district networks, cellular networks, commercial, community, or home-based wireless networks accessible to students.
- *Equipment* is cellular phones, 'Blackberry' [smartphone] type devices, PDAs, MP3 players, iPod type devices, and portable computers such as laptops, iPads, desktops, tablets, and netbooks, as well as portable storage devices.

Technology provides students with unique and powerful ways to enhance their learning. WMPCS supports the use of technology for the purpose of enhancing and supporting learning and is pleased to offer Users access to computer networks so that they can access district-supplied technology to enhance learning at any time of day.

It is one of the technology goals of the district to ensure that each User's interactions with technology contribute positively to the learning environment both at school and in the community. Negative use of technology through WMPCS-owned devices inside or outside of our schools that degrades or defames other Users or members of our community is unacceptable. WMPCS also recognizes that Users have widespread access to both technology and the Internet; therefore, the use of personal devices and connectivity is considered to be included in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

### **Access to WMPCS's network is a privilege**

The use of technology whether owned by WMPCS or devices supplied by the Users entails personal responsibility. It is expected that Users will comply with WMPCS rules, act in a responsible manner, and will honor the terms and conditions set by the classroom teacher, the school, and WMPCS. Failure to comply with such terms and conditions may result in temporary or permanent loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action as necessary. In particular, students will be held accountable for their actions and are encouraged to report any accidental use immediately to their teacher or school administration.

With the increased usage of free educational applications on the Internet, digital storage areas, containing less sensitive User information, may or may not be located on the property of the school, WMPCS, or county. In some cases, data will be stored on local servers. Therefore, Users should not expect that files and communication are private. WMPCS reserves the right to monitor Users' online activities and to access, review, copy, and store or delete any electronic communication or files and disclose them to others as it deems necessary. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of WMPCS property, network, and/or Internet access or files, including e-mail.

WMPCS has a private and secure system for sensitive school records which will be managed by WMPCS staff.

### **Google Apps in Educational Applications**

WMPCS is offering Users a free educational suite of applications for use to enhance teaching and learning. Google Apps is a concept known as "cloud computing" where services and storage are provided over the Internet. WMPCS is providing Users with Google Message Security. This service provides System Administrators the capability to limit messages based on where they are from, where they are going, or the content they contain. WMPCS will use this technology protection measure to block or filter, to the extent practicable, access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, and harmful to minors over the network.

In order for Users to gain access to Gmail and his/her Educational Google Applications account on the Internet, WMPCS must obtain parental permission for a minor under the age of 18 years. Students 18 years and older are also required to acknowledge and accept WMPCS's terms and conditions prior to obtaining access to technology within our schools.

### **Terms and Conditions**

These are examples of inappropriate activity on the WMPCS network, but WMPCS reserves the right to take immediate action regarding activities 1) that create security and/or safety issues for the WMPCS network, Users, school's network or computer resources; 2) that expend WMPCS resources on content it determines lacks legitimate educational content/purpose; or 3) other activities as determined by WMPCS as inappropriate.

- Violating any state or federal law or municipal ordinance such as: Accessing or transmitting pornography of any kind, obscene depictions, harmful materials, materials that encourage others to violate the law, confidential information or copyrighted materials
- Criminal activities that can be punished under law
- Selling or purchasing illegal items or substances
- Obtaining and/or using anonymous email sites, spamming, spreading viruses
- Causing harm to others or damage to their property
- Using profane, abusive, or impolite language; threatening, harassing, or making damaging or false statements about others or accessing, transmitting, or downloading offensive, harassing, or disparaging materials
- Deleting, copying, modifying, or forging other Users' names, emails, files or data, disguising one's identity, impersonating other users, or sending anonymous email
- Damaging computer equipment, files, data or the network in any way, including intentionally accessing, transmitting or downloading computer viruses or other harmful files or programs, or disrupting any computer system performance
- Using any WMPCS computer/mobile devices to pursue "hacking," internal or external to WMPCS, or attempting to



access information protected by privacy laws

- Accessing, transmitting or downloading large files, including “chain letters” or any type of “pyramid schemes.”
- Using websites, email, networks, or other technology for political uses or personal gain
- WMPCS internet and intranet property must not be used for personal benefit
- Users must not intentionally access, create, store or transmit material that may be deemed to be offensive, indecent, obscene, intimidating, or hostile; or that harasses, insults or attacks others
- Advertising, promoting non-WMPCS sites or commercial efforts and events
- Users must adhere to all copyright laws
- Users are not permitted to use the network for non-academic related bandwidth-intensive activities such as network games or transmission of large audio/video files or serving as a host for such activities

## **Cybersafety and Cyberbullying**

*All Users* - Despite every effort for supervision and filtering, all Users and Students’ parents/guardians are advised that access to the network may include the potential for access to content inappropriate for school-aged students. Every User must take responsibility for his or her use of the network and make every effort to avoid those types of content. Every User must report security or network problems to a teacher, administrator, or system administrator.

## **Personal Safety**

In using the network and Internet, Users should not reveal personal information such as a home address, school attended, social security number, birth date, or telephone number.

## **Confidentiality of User Information**

Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet.

## **Active Restriction Measures**

WMPCS will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent Users from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful to minors. Attempts to circumvent or ‘get around’ the content filter are strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of this policy. WMPCS will also monitor the online activities of Users through direct observation and/or other technological means.

## **Interactive Web 2.0 Tools**

Technology provides an abundance of opportunities for Users to utilize interactive tools and sites on public websites that benefit learning, communication, and social interaction.

Users may be held accountable for the use of any information posted on these sites if it detrimentally affects the welfare of individual users or the governance, climate, or effectiveness of the school. From time to time, teachers may recommend and use public interactive sites that, to the best of their knowledge, are legitimate and safe. As the site is “public” and the teacher, school, and WMPCS is not in control of it, all Users must use their discretion when accessing information, storing, and displaying work on the site. All terms and conditions provisions in this policy also apply to User-owned devices utilizing the WMPCS network.

## **Student Use of Interactive Web 2.0 Tools**

Online communication is critical to students’ learning of 21st Century skills, and tools such as blogging, podcasting, and chatting offer an authentic, real-world vehicle for student expression. Student safety is the primary responsibility of teachers.

Therefore, teachers need to ensure the use of Google Documents, classroom blogs, student email, podcast projects, email chat features, or other Web interactive tools follow all established Internet safety guidelines including:

- The use of Docs, blogs, podcasts, or other web 2.0 tools is considered an extension of the classroom. Therefore, any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of blogs, podcasts, or other web 2.0 tools. This includes—but is not limited to—profanity, racist, sexist, or discriminatory remarks
- Students using Docs, blogs, podcasts, or other web tools are expected to act safely by keeping ALL personal information out of their posts.
- Students should NEVER post personal information on the web (including, but not limited to, last names, personal details such as addresses or phone numbers, or photographs).
- Students should NEVER, under any circumstances, agree to meet someone they have met over the Internet.
- Any personal blog a student creates in class is directly linked to the class blog which is typically linked to the student profile and therefore must follow these blogging guidelines. In addition to following the information above about not sharing too much personal information (in the profile or in any posts/comments made), students need to realize that anywhere they use the blog login it links back to the class blog. Therefore, anywhere that login is used (posting to a separate personal blog, commenting on someone else's blog, etc.), the account should be treated the same as a school blog and should follow these guidelines.
- Students should never link to websites from their blog or blog comments without reading the entire article to make sure it is appropriate for a school setting.
- Students using such tools agree to not share their username or password with anyone besides their teachers and parents and treat Web posting spaces as classroom spaces. Speech that is inappropriate for class is also inappropriate for a blog.
- Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or be subject to consequences appropriate to misuse.

## **Student Use of Mobile Devices**

School Administration and WMPCS Technology staff may search the student's memory device if they feel school rules have been violated, which may include, but are not limited to, audio and video recording, photographs taken on school property that violate the privacy of others, or other issues regarding bullying, etc.

- Students may not use an audio recording device, video camera, or camera (or any device with one of these, e.g. cell phone, laptop, tablet, etc.) to record media or take photos during school unless they have permission from both a staff member and those whom they are recording.
- These rules apply to student-owned devices as well. A student-owned mobile device is a non-district supplied device used while at school or during school or district-sponsored activities. The students may use the student-owned mobile devices in class only with the teacher's expressed permission.

## **Student Supervision and Security**

WMPCS does provide content filtering controls for student access to the Internet using WMPCS's network as well as reasonable adult supervision, but at times inappropriate, objectionable, and/or offensive material may circumvent the filter as well as the supervision and be viewed by students. Students are to report the occurrence to their teacher or the nearest supervisor. Students will be held accountable for any deliberate attempt to circumvent WMPCS technology security and supervision.

Students using mobile and cellular devices while at school, during school or district-sponsored activities are subject to the terms and conditions outlined in this document and are accountable for their use.

## **Health-related Policies**

### **Immunizations and Health Assessment**

Students entering Washington Montessori must have a health assessment form. This assessment must include a medical history and physical examination with screening for vision and hearing. Legislation requires that the results be recorded

on a special form PPS-2/K Rev. 12/99. It is the parent's responsibility to secure the health assessment for their child from the local health department or from a private health provider.

Students entering Washington Montessori must also have a copy of their birth certificate and any other records the school may require. Students may also provide a social security card number. They further must have the North Carolina required immunizations. North Carolina State law requires specific minimum doses which can be found at:

<http://www.immunizenc.com/NCRulesandLaws.htm>.

### **CDC Fact Sheets**

In compliance with state healthcare regulations, please see the Center for Disease Control site to assist you in getting information about meningitis, HPV, and influenza: <http://www.cdc.gov/DiseasesConditions/>. Information can also be obtained at the office.

### **Illness and/or Injury**

Children may become ill or get injured at school. When this happens, the school will contact the parent and the child will be subsequently released to his/her care. Working parents and those without telephones must provide the school with the names and telephone number of a person who can be contacted in case of emergencies. It is of the utmost importance that all parents update emergency numbers as changes occur.

Keep your child at home if he or she is sick. As a guideline, children should be kept home for the following reasons:

- Above-normal temperature (100°F or above)
- Active cold with these symptoms: yellow mucus, fever, diarrhea, and/or nausea or rash of unknown origin
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- If your child is not well enough to go outside
- Head lice

A sick child should be free of any symptoms or diagnosis of an illness such as fever, diarrhea, rash or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. If the Director or designee feels the safety of other students is in jeopardy, they may choose to extend the 24 hours. Please call the school between 8:00 AM and 8:30 AM to let the office know your child will be absent. The school also needs to know if a child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease or head lice so that other families can be alerted even if the disease is symptom free.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice infestations do not pose a health hazard, are not a sign of uncleanliness, and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. To better manage and limit the spread of head lice infestations, school employees shall report all suspected cases of head lice to the school administration. A designee will discretely examine the student. An infestation shall be determined by looking closely through the hair and scalp for viable nits or live lice.

If nits are found but there are no live (crawling) lice on the hair, the parent/guardian shall be notified by the end of the day via telephone, email, and or note sent home with the student. If live lice are found, the parent will be notified to pick up the student immediately. To avoid misdiagnoses, nits should be removed by the parent/guardian. Staff shall maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice.

### **Asthma and Anaphylactic Reactions**

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute § 115C-375.2, the School ensures that a student with asthma or a student subject to anaphylactic reactions, or both, may possess and self-administer medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events. As used in this section, "medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions" means a medicine prescribed for the treatment of asthma or anaphylactic reactions and includes a prescribed asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector. This Policy includes a requirement that the student's parent/guardian provide to the school:

- Written authorization from the student's parent or guardian for the student to possess and self-administer

medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions;

- A written statement from the student's health care practitioner verifying that the student has asthma or an allergy that could result in an anaphylactic reaction, or both, and that the health care practitioner prescribed medication for use on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events;
- A written statement from the student's health care practitioner who prescribed the medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions that the student understands, has been instructed in self-administration of the medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions, and has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions and any device that is necessary to administer the medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions;
- A written treatment plan and written emergency protocol formulated by the health care practitioner who prescribed the medicine for managing the student's asthma or anaphylaxis episodes and for medication use by the student;
- A form of the same medication must be provided to the school as well as the medication that is handled by the student;
- A statement provided by the school and signed by the student's parent/guardian acknowledging that the local school administrative unit and its employees and agents are not liable for an injury arising from a student's possession and self-administration of medication for asthma or anaphylactic reactions; and
- Other requirements necessary to comply with state and federal laws.

The student must demonstrate to a school staff first responder the skill level necessary to use the asthma medication and any device that is necessary to administer the medication. The student's parent/guardian shall provide to the school backup asthma medication that shall be kept at the student's school in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

Information provided to the school by the student's parent/guardian shall be kept on file at the student's school in a location easily accessible in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency. If a student uses asthma medication prescribed for the student in a manner other than as prescribed, a school may impose on the student disciplinary action according to the school's disciplinary policy. A school may not impose disciplinary action that limits or restricts the student's immediate access to the asthma medication. The requirement that permission granted for a student to possess and self-administer asthma medication shall be effective only for the same school and must be renewed annually. The Board, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any act authorized by this Policy, or for any omission relating to that act, unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing.

Unauthorized use, misuse, or unauthorized possession of prescription medication may subject a student to disciplinary action.

### **HIV Policy**

Schools may not discriminate against HIV-positive students or employees. Educational decisions regarding a student with HIV/AIDS and his/her placement in the program will be made on a case-by-case basis. Most students will be allowed to attend school since the risk of transmitting HIV in a school setting is negligible. School attendance by students who lack control of their body secretions, who display behavior such as biting, or who have medical conditions such as oozing lesions will be reviewed on an individual basis.

### **Administering Medicine**

The staff cannot dispense non-prescription medicine (such as aspirin or creams for itching, etc.) to students. Students who need to take prescribed medication must have a current prescription and a completed "Dispensing Medications Form" that can be obtained from the administrative office. This form must be filled out by a doctor, signed by a parent, and returned to the office before the medication can be administered. All prescribed medication will be kept in a locked box to be accessed and dispensed by designated staff only. Except in the case of asthma and anaphylactic reactions as stated in the policy above, no student should have in their possession any type of medication. Any medications not picked up by a parent/guardian will be disposed of at the end of the school year.

## **Self-medication/Self-carry medication**

The only medications that are allowable to be self-administered or self-carried by a student are rescue meds, epi-pens, insulin, and inhalers.

## **Concussion and Head Injury**

WMPCS recognizes that concussions and other head injuries may be serious and potentially life threatening and that such injuries may result in serious consequences later in life if managed improperly. WMPCS is committed to practices that reduce the potential for short-term or long-term effects from such injuries. In support of this commitment, the board directs school employees to comply with the concussion safety requirements for interscholastic athletic competition established by G.S. 115C-12(23) as amended in the Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act of 2011, and to implement and follow all concussion safety requirements set forth in State Board of Education rules and policies. The School Director, Athletic Director, or designee shall develop plans consistent with state requirements and shall implement and monitor compliance with this policy. The Director or designee is authorized to investigate the use of baseline testing for student-athletes and require that student-athletes undergo such testing prior to their participation in any interscholastic athletic competition.

## **Concussion Definition**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in a loss of consciousness.

## **School Head Injury Information and Concussion Training for Staff**

Each year, all coaches, athletic directors, first responders, volunteers, student-athletes, and parents of student-athletes must be provided with a concussion and head injury information sheet that meets the requirements of the State Board. Before any student, school employee, volunteer, or first responder will be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletic activities, including tryouts, practices, or competitions, he or she must sign the head injury information sheet and return it to the coach. Parents also must sign the sheet and return it to the coach before their children may participate in any interscholastic athletic activity.

## **Concussion Management and Assessment**

The concussion assessment and management program will be provided free of charge for student athletes. At least once annually, prior to practice or playing a collision or contact sport (basketball, softball, soccer, or volleyball), student athletes will complete a concussion baseline assessment under the supervision of a school employee if possible. Students will be required to have a baseline assessment on file within the first two weeks of the start of school. A student athlete will be required to participate in the concussion management assessment program, which includes returning the permission form to the coach or school athletic director and completing the initial annual baseline testing before the student will be allowed to practice or play. Failure to comply with testing protocol and procedures for the concussion management program will result in the removal of the individual from the athletic team. If the student-athlete does not have a valid baseline on initial testing with the coach, the following will take place:

The coach will administer a second baseline test as soon as possible.

If the second testing does not result in a valid baseline test in all areas, the student-athlete will be referred to the school nurse who will administer the test a third and if needed, a fourth time. After the 4th test, if the student-athlete is not valid in all areas, he/she will be permitted to compete in athletics. If the athlete has a concussion, the post-test will be administered and the athlete will be expected to score within 5% of all areas that were valid.

The student athlete will not practice or compete until a valid baseline test or the test has been administered/taken four times. School employees shall require new transfer students enrolling after the start of the school year to have completed

a baseline assessment prior to participating in any extracurricular collision or contact sport listed under this policy.

In order for a student-athlete to return to play in sports requiring concussion assessments under this policy, WMPCS shall require written clearance from a physician (MD or DO) and a post-concussion assessment indicating the student athlete's results are at or within acceptable guidelines as compared to his or her baseline assessment. The parent and/or student-athlete will be given the baseline results and post-concussion assessment results to share with his or her medical provider.

## **Meals**

A nutritious lunch (including beverage) packed in a lunch box or bag is the responsibility of the parent. On the first through fourth Wednesday, WMPCS will typically have a special lunch (pizza, chicken, etc.) brought into the school which can be purchased. This is referred to as our Hot Lunch. Students will have an option to participate or bring lunch from home.

Students are not permitted to accept food delivery services on campus. Parents should limit the number of times they drop off lunch for students. The Montessori philosophy encourages students to hold themselves accountable for preparing themselves for the day, therein fostering independence.

## **Snacks**

Children should bring a snack of nutritional value to school for the morning snack break. Classes in the Children's House have a program for providing snacks to their students. Your child's teacher will provide individual information if a snack program is available in the classroom. Students are not permitted to bring energy drinks.

## **No Smoking/Vaping Policy**

Smoking or vaping is not allowed on the school premises by anyone at any time. WMPCS requires that parents/visitors adhere to this policy while on campus or on school field trips.

## **No Alcohol, Tobacco, Illegal Drugs, Nicotine Products, Prescription**

### **Drugs without a Medical Form**

Possession and/or use of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, nicotine products, or prescription drugs without a medical form are prohibited at all times on campus, field trips or school events.

<b>Whom to contact for what 2023-24</b>	
Matters of education or academics Matters of admission Montessori curriculum questions and/or resources Day School program Parent education/informational meetings Teaching opportunities Volunteering in the classroom Matters of discipline	Austin Andrews Acting Director austin.andrews@wmpcs.org

Matters of finance or school administration Business sponsorship opportunities Questions regarding the lottery process Contract questions, HR records Donations, grants, and foundations Facilities Public requests for information Before and After School Care (BASC) program/Athletic Program (non-schedule related)	Rick Yakubowski Director, Administration and Resources rick.yakubowski@wmpcs.org
Matters related to High School	Amanda Holton Acting Secondary Head of School amanda.holton@wmpcs.org
Transcripts Post-secondary college information, transferring, requesting to take classes at BCCC Secondary schedules	Jennifer Cornelius Post-Secondary Head of School jennifer.cornelius@wmpcs.org
Matters related to Lower Elementary Matters related to Upper Elementary	Kathy Carico Acting Elementary Head of School kathy.carico@wmpcs.org
Matters related to Children's House	JoDee Anderson Children's House Head of School jodee.anderson@wmpcs.org
ELL and Testing School-wide Interventions	Kathy Carico Intervention Coordinator kathy.carico@wmpcs.org
Medication forms for students Cumulative files for students Student I.D. # for PowerSchool Montessori Records Express/Schoology portal username and password School All Call auto dialer system Driving Permit Eligibility Certificates Address and email list corrections Attendance and tardy records Volunteer Logs Student sign-in and sign-out Student admissions and applications WMPTO Administrative Contact	Carol Collier Administrative Coordinator carol.collier@wmpcs.org

Substitute Teacher Training and Information Volunteer opportunities School calendar Prospective parent tours Incident Reports	
Athletic schedules/Team events	Stroud Winstead Athletic Director <a href="mailto:stroud.winstead@wmpcs.org">stroud.winstead@wmpcs.org</a>
Day School and BASC tuition payments or information Extracurricular payments (cross-country, etc...) BASC payments School purchasing School payments	
Matters related to Special Education services for students EC Resources and Referrals Your child's IEP 504 plans	Amanda Holton EC Coordinator <a href="mailto:amanda.holton@wmpcs.org">amanda.holton@wmpcs.org</a>
Classroom volunteer opportunities End-Of-Grade Testing (EOGs) Logistics of classroom on-goings - i.e. schedules, field trips, special events, etc. Observing your child in class Scheduling classroom observations Student progress, academic questions Student assignments Student discipline Waivers to chaperone class field trips	The classroom teacher



# **Washington Montessori Public Charter School Day School**

## **Parent Policy**



**2023-2024**

## WMPCS Day School Information

Contact Information Director: Austin Andrews Phone: 252-946-1977 Fax: 252-946-5938 austin.andrews@wmpcs.org

*The day school students are held to the policies as stated in earlier sections of this handbook. Variations that apply only to Day School students are listed below.*

### **Admissions and Enrollment**

The WMPCS Day School is open to all siblings of current students or staff children or grandchildren of current staff although acceptance is not guaranteed. The hours of operation for the WMPCS Day School are from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The admissions process begins with a parent observation and tour of the day school. Interested parents may then submit an application. Parents will receive a letter in May inviting them and their child to a Kindergarten assessment and parent meeting in June. After the assessment and parent meeting, parents will receive a letter indicating their child's status of acceptance. Space is limited in the Day School Program. There is not a waiting list for day school. After initial enrollment is decided, the students are placed into an applicant pool.

A child must be 3 years old prior to the beginning date of the child's attendance unless determined otherwise by the day school administration. A child must also be toilet trained prior to entering our program. WMPCS defines toilet trained as a child who is trained to use the toilet independently and is not dependent on pull-ups for urination and/or defecation.

Washington Montessori Day School reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any child if it becomes apparent that it would be in the child's or school's best interest to do so.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Parents are expected to sign a tuition contract at the beginning of each school year outlining their tuition for that year. The first tuition payment is due prior to the first day of school. All other tuition payments are due on the 5th of each month beginning September 5th with final payments due May 5th.

### **Day School Program Options:**

**12:30 pick-up Rate: \$3,500.00 upfront or \$125 Registration Fee and 10 payments of \$350.00**

**3:00 pick-up Rate: \$5,450.00 upfront or \$125 Registration Fee and 10 payments of \$545.00**

**If a student stays past 3:00, he/she can participate in the school's Before and After School Care program (BASC). The BASC Fees and policies apply.**

**Additional Program Fees:** Snack Fee of \$10.00 due by the 15th of each month to be paid to the Office.

**Other possible program fees:** Field trips and special school events.

\*Payment for services provided by the Washington Montessori Day School will be accepted only in the form of a personal check, cashier's check, credit card, bank draft or money order. The canceled check or money order stub will serve as the receipt.

\*There is a 5 day grace period for tuition payments. All tuition payments received after the 10th will incur a \$10 late fee. There will be a \$36 check fee for returned checks.

## **Day School Operating Hours**

8:00 a.m.	Student Drop off occurs
8:15 a.m.	Classes begin
12:30 p.m.	Dismissal for 12:30 pick up
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal for 3:00 pick up

### **Arrival and Departure Procedure Arrival Procedures:**

If you arrive between 7:30-8 a.m.: Park in the parking lane beside Building 4 (former Middle School) and escort your child into the Before School room. It is the first door on the left when you enter the building.

If you arrive between 8-8:15 a.m.: Use the drop-off/pick-up lane in front of Building 3 (Children's House) and your child will be assisted out of the vehicle.

Arrival after 8:15 a.m.: Park and sign your child in with the office in Building 1 (Administrative and Upper Elementary). You will be given a key card and asked to escort your child to his/her classroom.

### **Departure Procedures:**

Early pick up: Park and proceed to the office (Building 1) and sign out your child.

12:30 p.m. pick up: Use the drop off/pick up lane in front of Building 3; a teacher will escort your child to the car.

3:00 p.m. pick up: Use the car line to proceed to the outside basketball court near Building 3; a teacher will escort your child to the car.

Students scheduled to be picked up at 12:30 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. should be picked up on time. If not, those children will be sent to the WMPCS BASC program and those fees will apply.

### **Behavior Policy**

Any inappropriate behavior by a child will result in appropriate logical consequences and a behavior note will be sent home. If a child constantly repeats the same offense and/or refuses to comply with redirection, a conference may be called with the parent to develop a plan for the child and/or may result in suspension from school for the afternoon or the next school day in keeping with the Charter School's Intolerable Student Behaviors Policy. Acts of violence are subject to the Charter School's Intolerable Student Behaviors Policy.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are an integral part of the Montessori curriculum that promote student exploration and experiences both near and far from home. Parents will be notified, in advance, of upcoming field trips. A permission slip detailing the date, location, and cost of the trip will be sent home approximately 2 weeks prior to the trip. Parents will receive a receipt for cash received.

Day School students are encouraged to participate in all field trips. Occasionally, a field trip will be scheduled in the afternoon which may not be developmentally appropriate for preschool-aged children.

Field trips are planned as positive and safe experiences for our children; therefore, WMPCS has put the following guidelines in place:

- Young children are often apprehensive about trips. Because they don't understand the principle of traveling without a person they are familiar with and are not always sure of where they are going, a parent or other responsible adult of 21 years old must accompany each child. This not only ensures each child's safety, but if the day should prove to be too much, parents will have the option of leaving. Parents must notify the teacher if they should choose to leave during the field trip.

- There is a 1:1 ratio for WMPCS day school students with the exception of siblings.
- If a parent or another responsible adult is unable to attend the trip, please notify the child's teacher. Students who cannot attend the field trip may have the option of attending school under the care of another teacher in some instances. If another teacher is unable to provide care for your child, you will be asked to keep your child at home that day.
- Follow the directions to the field trip destination. It is important that all drivers follow the same route.
- Notify the teachers of any inappropriate behavior you may witness.

## Appendices

### Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members

Title IX provides that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

It is the policy of THE SCHOOL that students should not be subjected to forms of unlawful discrimination or harassment, while at school or school-sponsored activities. Furthermore, the policy’s intent is to address the issue in a proactive manner through the establishment of a system for educating students and staff at the School regarding the identification, prevention, intervention, and reporting of such anti-social acts. The School acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The School strives to model an inclusive environment and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or sex, including sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ identification. The School will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment in any of its educational or employment activities or programs based on such protected classifications.

#### A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

##### 1. Discrimination or Harassment

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, the School expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment, based on sex or gender and prohibits sexual harassment (including sexual violence) and gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, requests for sexual favors in exchange for benefits (quid pro quo), and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. In accordance with Title IX, the School also prohibits gender-based harassment, which is unwelcome conduct based on a student’s sex, harassing conduct based on a student’s failure to conform to sex stereotypes.

Sex-based harassment can be carried out by school employees, other students, and third parties. All students can experience sex-based harassment, including male and female students, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, and students of different races, national origins, and ages. Title IX protects all students from sex-based harassment, regardless of the sex of the parties, including when they are members of the same sex.

##### 2. Retaliation

The School prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation. As such, the School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy. After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations, the Head of School or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under Title IX does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## **B. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

This policy prohibits unlawful discrimination or harassment by students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy is intended to apply to student's vis a via other students, faculty, staff, volunteers/visitors, or contractors. This policy also applies to employees, volunteers/visitors, and contractors. This policy applies to behavior that takes place within the School's "education program or activity," which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, behavior:

1. in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;
2. on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. at any bus stop;
4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
5. at any time or place when the individual is subject to the oversight and authority of school personnel;
6. at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools; and
7. while using school or personal electronic communications, including employee and student emails, text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, blogging, websites and social networking websites (i.e., Snapchat or Instagram).

## **C. DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this policy ONLY, the following definitions apply:

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any act or failure to act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on the basis of gender or sex (including transgender and LGBTQ+ identification). Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.

### 2. Harassment

Prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, under this policy means conduct on the basis of sex/gender that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo)
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to an education program, employment, or activity (i.e., hostile environment)

3. Sexual assault (as defined by Clery Act), or "dating violence," "domestic violence" and "stalking" (as defined by Violence Against Women Act).

For purposes of this policy, "hostile environment" means that the harassment is objectively severe and pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment and must be based on sex or gender. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior if sufficiently severe.

Examples of behavior that may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment. Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

Examples of sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, sexual violence, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

### 3. Conduct Not Covered by This Policy

Conduct that does not meet the definitions set forth above in this Title IX Policy are not subject to the School's Title IX Policy or any reporting/grievance procedures that govern Title IX matters. However, such conduct may still constitute a violation of other School policy, including the School's Code of Conduct, non-discrimination policy, and bullying policy. Please refer to and follow those policies for such conduct.

**TO REPORT A VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY: PLEASE REFER TO THE SCHOOLS TITLE IX REPORTING AND GRIEVANCE POLICY.**

This Policy as it pertains to Title IX shall remain in effect to the extent required by law.

## **Title IX Coordinator's Duties, Notice, Reporting and Grievance Policy**

This Policy sets forth the School's Notice, Reporting and Grievance policy for Title IX matters and should be read in conjunction with the School's Title IX policy. This Policy only pertains to Title IX and alleged violations of Title IX. It does not apply to any other type of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Please refer to the School's other policies, including Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and student conduct policies when Title IX does not apply.

The School's Title IX Coordinator is: Rick Yakubowski

## **A. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS**

The designated Title IX Coordinator shall establish training and other programs that are designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination or harassment and foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of the school community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan. The training or programs should:

- (1) provide examples of behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment;
- (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of unlawful discrimination, or harassment; and
- (3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, at school bus stops, on cell phones and on the Internet.

In addition, training of Title IX personnel, including the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s) and Decision-maker(s), must include training:

1. On the definition of the definitions of prohibited conduct, including sexual harassment;
2. The scope of the school's education program or activity;
3. How to conduct an investigation;
4. The grievance process including appeals, and informal resolution processes;
5. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias;
6. Relevance, including how to apply the rape shield protections provided only for complainants.

Moreover, training for Title IX personnel, including the Coordinator, Investigator(s), Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of sexual harassment. The School will post materials used to train Title IX personnel on their websites for a minimum of seven (7) years after posted, if any, or make materials available for members of the public to inspect.

## **B. NOTICE**

The designated Title IX Coordinator is responsible for providing effective notice to job applicants, student applicants, students, parents, and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment. This policy will be posted on the School's website, and copies of the policy are available at the front office. Notice of this policy will appear in all job applicant information, admissions information, student and employee handbooks, and in any School publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

## **C. TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for the SCHOOL and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination. Other major monitoring duties include, but are not limited to, the following recruitment and admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring and employment. Other areas of consideration include:

- Participating in the development and implementation of the SCHOOL's sexual harassment policy.



- Assisting faculty, counselors and administrators in complying with Title IX, and when a need arises, planning remedial actions.
- Making your presence known in the community by disseminating civil rights information or by speaking at parent-teacher group meetings, social or professional organization meetings, and other community functions.
- Serving as a resource on Title IX/gender issues.
- Monitoring and evaluating the SCHOOL's Title IX compliance efforts and making recommendations for any appropriate changes.
- Providing updated information to schools on Title IX implementation and issues.
- Identifying and disseminating information about Title IX educational resources (organizations, individuals, print, internet, and audio-visual)

#### **D. EVALUATION**

The Head of School or designee shall evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment and shall share these evaluations periodically with the School's Board.

#### **E. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The recipient, whether a School employee, staff member, contractor, or the Title IX Coordinator, must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the FERPA or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of Title IX, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Title IX grievance procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The records will identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The Title IX Coordinator also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the School to provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The Head of School shall report to the Board all verified cases of unlawful discrimination or harassment under the School's Title IX Policy.

#### **F. REPORTING TITLE IX VIOLATIONS**

##### **1. For Students:**

- To report discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex/gender, students or their parents should contact a trusted teacher or advisor, grade-level Principal, Head of School and/or Title IX coordinator immediately and file a complaint.
- Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. When anyone reports harassment and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the Title IX Coordinator, grade-level Principal, or Head of School, as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- If the Head of School is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the

Chair of the Board of Trustees.

2. For Employees: for discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment complaints based on sex/gender, employees should contact the Title IX coordinator immediately and follow the School's harassment and discrimination policy as well as its Title IX Reporting and Grievance policy.
3. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination or harassment based on sex/gender under this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.
4. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.
5. Reporting may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address listed

for the Title IX Coordinator.

## **G. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this and all other Title IX related policies, the following definitions shall apply.

1. "Complainant" is as an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. This means that any third party as well as the complainant may report sexual harassment. While parents and guardians do not become complainants (or respondents), parents and guardians have a right to act on behalf of parties (including by filing formal complaints) in Title IX matters.
2. "Respondent" is as an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
3. "Formal complaint" is as a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment and state that at the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant was participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the formal complaint is filed. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information required to be listed for the Title IX Coordinator, and by any additional method designated by the school.
4. "Document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by e-mail or through an online portal provided for this purpose by the school) that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during a grievance process, and must comply with requirements for Title IX personnel to be free from conflicts and bias.
5. "Supportive measures" are individualized services reasonably available that are non- punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment. The School's selection of supportive measures and remedies shall be based on what is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

## **H. MANDATORY RESPONSE AND PROCEDURAL OBLIGATIONS**

The School is required to respond whenever any employee has notice of sexual harassment, including allegations of sexual harassment or allegations relevant to mandatory reporting laws in North Carolina. Notice to the Title IX Coordinator or to any School employee, board member, or official with authority to institute corrective measures on the School's behalf, charges the School with actual knowledge and triggers the School's response obligations under Title IX.

The School will respond promptly to Title IX sexual harassment or discrimination in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent, which means a response that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The School shall also comply with the following mandates:

1. The School will offer supportive measures to the person alleged to be the victim (referred to as the "complainant").
2. The Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant confidentially to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.
3. The School will follow the grievance process set forth herein before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures, against a respondent.
4. The School will not restrict rights protected under the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment, Fifth Amendment, and Fourteenth Amendment, when complying with Title IX.
5. The School will investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint, which can be filed by a complainant, or signed by a Title IX Coordinator.
6. A complainant's wishes with respect to whether the school investigates should be respected unless the school determines that not pursuing an investigation would be deliberately indifferent (or that pursuing an investigation is necessary for community safety or similar reasons), in which case the Title IX Coordinator may sign complaint even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint (doing so will not be viewed as adversarial toward the respondent).
7. If the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in the School's Title IX policy, or the alleged conduct did not occur in the School's education program or activity, against a person in the United States, the School must dismiss such allegations for purposes of Title IX. However, the School may still address the allegations in any manner the School deems appropriate under the School's code of conduct or other policies.
8. Treat complainants equitably by providing remedies any time a respondent is found responsible, and treat respondents equitably by not imposing disciplinary sanctions without following the grievance process set forth herein.
9. Remedies, which are required to be provided to a complainant when a respondent is found responsible, must be designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.
10. All Title IX personnel (Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process) shall be free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.
11. There is a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
12. The School's grievance process shall not use, rely on, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.
13. Any provisions, rules, or practices that a school adopts as part of its grievance process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment must apply equally to both parties (complainant and respondent).
14. The standard of evidence to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard for all formal complaints of sexual harassment, whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including faculty member).

## **I. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES, REMEDIES AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

Supportive measures include: services, accommodations, and/or other assistance that the School puts in place for a complainant after receiving notice of alleged sexual misconduct but before any final outcomes – investigatory, disciplinary, or remedial – have been determined. The School wants students and employees to be safe, to receive appropriate medical attention, and to get the help they need to heal and to continue to access their educational opportunities. We also want students and employees to understand their reporting options and how to access available interim measures.

Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, the School will provide the complainant, or their advocate, with a written explanation of the interim measures available at School and through local community resources [insert name of local resources] and shall ask complainants, or their advocates, what measures are sought. Some possible interim measures are listed below, and the School determines which measures are appropriate for a particular complainant on a case-by-case basis. Not all of the measures listed below will be necessary in every case to keep victims safe and ensure their equal access to educational programs and activities. If the complainant or advocate identifies an interim measure that is not already provided by the School, the School will consider whether the request can be granted. In those instances where interim measures affect both a complainant and the respondent, the School will minimize the burden on the complainant wherever appropriate while ensuring that the measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

A complainant or their advocate may request the interim measures listed below. The School – after consulting with the complainant and/or their advocate – will determine which measures are appropriate to ensure the complainant's safety and equal access to educational programs and activities:

- Academic accommodations, including change in classes, testing, or assignments;
- Medical and mental health services, including counseling;
- Modifications to extracurricular activities, field trips or on or off-campus activities;
- A “no contact” directive pending the outcome of an investigation. Such a directive serves as notice to both parties that they must not have verbal, electronic, written, or third party communication with one another;
- Providing an escort to ensure that the student can move safely between school programs and activities;
- Transportation accommodations; and
- Assistance identifying an advocate to help secure additional resources or assistance including off-campus and community advocacy, support, and services.

### Remedies Include:

Depending on the specific nature of the problem, remedies for the complainant may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing an effective escort to ensure that the complainant can move safely between classes and activities;
- Ensuring the complainant and perpetrator do not share classes or extracurricular activities;
- Moving the perpetrator or complainant (if the complainant requests to be moved) to a different residence hall or, in the case of an elementary or secondary school student, to another school within the district;
- Providing comprehensive, holistic victim services including medical, counseling and academic support services, such as tutoring;
- Arranging for the complainant to have extra time to complete or re-take a class or withdraw from a class without an academic or financial penalty; and
- Reviewing any disciplinary actions taken against the complainant to see if there is a causal connection between the sexual violence and the misconduct that may have resulted in the complainant being disciplined.

When a respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment, the School will offer all remedies needed to eliminate the harm to the complainant and the school community and prevent the recurrence of sexual harassment. Simply sanctioning

a respondent found responsible, in some cases, may be insufficient to eliminate a hostile environment. Rather, in addition to sanctions, the School may consider offering appropriate remedies for the broader student/staff population after the final outcome, including the following:

- Training or retraining school employees on the school's responsibilities to address allegations of sexual violence and how to conduct Title IX investigations;
- Developing materials on sexual harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students;
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual harassment prevention programs with students and/or staff;
- Issuing policy statements or taking other steps that clearly communicate that the school does not tolerate sexual harassment and will respond to any incidents and to any student who reports such incidents;
- Conducting, in conjunction with student leaders, a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the school is free from sexual violence, and using that information to inform future proactive steps that the school will take;
- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team);
- When a school is unable to conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

Disciplinary sanctions include:

- For Students found responsible: verbal warning, written warning, interim suspension, restitution, suspension, required participation in appropriate training, counseling, required completion of a probationary period without additional infractions, or requiring the respondent to stay away from the complainant for a period of time.
- For Employees found responsible: sanctions for violations of Title IX vary depending on severity from formal written warning to dismissal.

## **J. INVESTIGATIONS**

The School shall investigate the allegations in any formal complaint and send written notice to both parties (complainants and respondents) of the allegations upon receipt of a formal complaint.

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate an impartial individual to serve as the Investigator and conduct an investigation. The Investigator may be the Title IX Coordinator. However, the Investigator shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The School may choose an outside investigator, School employee or contractor to conduct the investigation. During the grievance process and when investigating, the Investigator shall comply with the following:

1. The burden of gathering evidence and burden of proof must remain on the School, not on the parties.
2. The School must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. The School must not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no "gag orders").
4. Parties must have the same opportunity to select an advisor of the party's choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney.
5. The School shall send a written notice to the parties (complainant and respondent) of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings.
6. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
7. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to respond.

8. The School shall dismiss allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment set forth in the School's Title IX policy or did not occur in a school's education program or activity against a person in the U.S. Such dismissal is only for Title IX purposes and does not preclude the School from addressing the conduct in any manner the school deems appropriate.
9. The School may, in its discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.
10. The School shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.
11. The School may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
12. The School shall protect the privacy of a party's medical, psychological, and similar treatment records and shall not access or use such records unless the School obtains the party's voluntary, written consent to do so.

## **K. DECISION-MAKER**

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate a Decision-maker with regard to a Title IX complaint. The Decision-maker shall not be the Title IX Coordinator or Investigator, and shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The Decision-maker shall comply with the following rules:

1. Start with the presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
2. All Complainants are afforded rape shield protections, deeming questions and evidence about a complainant's prior sexual behavior irrelevant, unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove consent.
3. Use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision.
4. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
5. After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.
6. Issue a written determination regarding responsibility with findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.
7. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

## **L. GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Prompt Filing. The Complainant must file a formal complaint within a reasonable time, ideally within 10 days of the alleged incident. A complaint will not be disallowed solely because of the passage of time. The Title IX coordinator is charged with ensuring that all such complaints are timely, impartially, and appropriately investigated in accordance with applicable law.

Confidentiality. Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the complainant. There may be times where confidentiality may not be possible for the School to conduct a thorough investigation. There may also be instances where the School has a legal obligation to report certain information it receives to state or local authorities or to protect the

School community.

**Timeline.** While the timeframe for completing an investigation into individual complaints may vary depending on the circumstances, the Title IX coordinator will ensure that timeframes are reasonable and endeavor to complete any investigation, including any decision, within sixty (60) days of the filing of a complaint. The timeline may be extended where appropriate at the discretion of the School. Include reasonably prompt time frames for conclusion of the grievance process, including appeals and informal resolutions, with allowance for short-term, good cause delays or extensions of the time frames.

**Investigation.** The Title IX coordinator or other School official shall designate an impartial Investigator to conduct the investigation. The Investigator shall have full authority to investigate, including the authority to interview witnesses. The Investigator shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy in conducting the investigation.

**Decision-Maker.** The Decision-maker shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy and shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision. The Decision-maker shall timely provide written notice of the outcome of the complaint to the relevant parties.

**Appeal.** Either party may appeal the Decision-maker's decision to the Board of Trustees within 14 days after a decision is made or the School dismisses a formal complaint in a Title IX proceeding, on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter,
2. Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter, and/or
3. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias, that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Board of Trustees will appoint a panel of three board members to serve as the impartial review panel. The review will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and the panel may, but is not required to, request information directly from the parties. The three-member review panel will make a decision and will provide written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within fourteen (14) school days, unless circumstances require more time.

## **M. INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS**

After a formal Complaint is filed, the School may, in its discretion, offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice, so long as both parties give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt informal resolution. The School will not require participation in an informal process. And, at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.

The School does not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to a formal investigation and adjudication of formal complaints of sexual harassment. Any person who facilitates an informal resolution must be well-trained. The School will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student. Finally, the School may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

## **N. POLICY APPLICATION**

This policy shall remain in effect as long as required by law.

## **Non-Title IX Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process**

The School takes seriously all complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against unlawfully, bullied, or harassed in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying also should report such violations in the manner provided in this policy. Reports may be made anonymously. This policy does not apply where an individual seeks to assert allegations regarding or related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a student under

Section 504 or the IDEA, such allegations may be raised through the procedures governing such matter. This Policy also does not apply to Title IX complaints, behavior falling within Title IX or Title VII complaints. Please refer to the School's policies for Title IX and VII matters.

## **A. Reporting by Employees or Other Third Parties**

### **1. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees**

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of School Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection B.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **2. Reporting by Other Third Parties**

All members of the school community including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

### **3. Anonymous Reporting**

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

### **4. Investigation of Reports**

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying under this policy will be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and school officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

## **B. Complaints Brought by Alleged Victims of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying**

### **1. Filing a Complaint**

Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to the following individuals as applicable:

- a. the school counselor, teacher, dean of students, principal or assistant principal of the School for any claim of discrimination, harassment or bullying, including Title VI complaints;
- d. the Title IX coordinator for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
- c. the Section 504 coordinator or the ADA coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability; or
- d. any member of the Board if the alleged perpetrator is the Head of School.

### **2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint**

A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated at the discretion of school officials and outside the formal process described in Section C of this policy; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

### **3. Informal Resolution**

The School acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation. The School encourages the use of informal procedures such as mediation to the extent possible; however, mediation or other informal procedures will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual assault or sexual violence or complaints by a student of sexual harassment perpetrated by an employee. Informal procedures may be used only if the parties involved voluntarily agree. Any informal process should be completed



within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days unless special circumstances necessitate more time.

### **C. Process for Addressing Complaints of Alleged Incidents of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying**

#### **1. Initiating the Investigation**

- a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying pursuant to subsection B.1. shall immediately notify the Principal who shall designate an individual to conduct an investigation and respond to the complaint, such individual may be a school employee or outside consultant.
- b. As applicable, the investigator shall immediately notify the Title IX , or other relevant coordinator of the complaint, and, as appropriate, may designate the coordinator to conduct the investigation.
- c. The investigator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and the alleged perpetrator.
- d. Written documentation of all formal reports and complaints, as well as the school system's response, must be maintained in accordance with the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.
- e. Failure to report, investigate, and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action.

#### **2. Conducting the Investigation**

- a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of the Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly, and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant; (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); (3) individuals identified as witnesses by the complainant or alleged perpetrator(s); and (4) any other individuals, including other possible victims, deemed likely to have relevant information. The alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the general nature of the allegations. The investigation will include a review of all evidence presented by the complainant or alleged perpetrator.

If the investigator, after receipt of the complaint, an interview with the complainant, and consultation with the board attorney, determines that the allegations submitted, even if factual, do not constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying as defined in School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, the matter will be treated outside the scope of this policy. Information regarding the investigator's determination and the process for addressing the complaint will be provided to the complainant.

- b. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information. Any requests by the complainant for further confidentiality will be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the school system.

- c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, giving consideration to all factual information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age, and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances.

#### **3. Notice to Complainant and Alleged Perpetrator**

- a. The investigator shall provide written notification to the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:

- 1) reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and prevent it from recurring;
- 2) as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the complainant; and
- 3) as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the

complaint.

b. Information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be given to the complainant unless the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant).

c. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as set forth in School policy. If the corrective steps involve actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the Head of School or designee will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.

d. The alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or School policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences may be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with School policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with School policy and law. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude school officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

#### 4. Appeal

a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he or she may appeal the decision to the Head of School. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten days of receiving the notice of the results of the investigation. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the School's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the district. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes should have been taken by the district. The Head of School or designee may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the Head of School or designee determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The Head of School or designee shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed. The Head of School's decision is final.

b. If the alleged perpetrator is the Head of School or the Head of School declines to hear the appeal and refers it to the Board of Trustees, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing within ten days of receipt directly to the Board of Trustees. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing the Superintendent's decision with regard to (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the School's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the School. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes the School should have taken. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board Chair shall appoint a panel of not less than two members of the Board to hear and decide the appeal. The panel shall make reasonable efforts to meet and consider the appeal within twenty days after the chairperson refers the grievance to the panel. The panel shall review the complaint on the record unless it determines that additional information may be presented. No new evidence, written or verbal, may be presented without the prior knowledge and consent of both parties. At the Board Panel's discretion, they may hold a hearing and ask each party may make a brief oral presentation of no more than twenty minutes to summarize his or her position. The panel has the authority to ask questions, extend time limits, exclude extraneous or duplicative information, and otherwise maintain an efficient and fair appeal hearing. If a hearing is held, it will be recorded and shall be held in closed session. The Board panel may affirm, reverse or modify the decision. The Board panel shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching its decision. The Board panel will provide a final written decision within twenty days after the Board hearing unless the panel determines that additional time is needed for further review. The decision of the Board panel shall be final.

#### **D. Timeliness of Process**

If any school official charged with investigating the complaint or reviewing the investigation fails at any step in the process to communicate a decision within the specified time limit, the complainant will be entitled to appeal the complaint to the next step unless the official has notified the complainant of the delay and the reason for the delay. The school official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the complainant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of any legal rights are not permitted.

Failure by the complainant at any step in the process to appeal to the next step within the specified time or to attend a scheduled meeting or hearing under this policy will be considered acceptance of the results of the investigation and the School's response to the complaint, unless the complainant provided notice of the delay and the reason for the delay and the district consented in writing to the delay.

#### **E. General Requirements**

1. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the Board or by any School employee against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy. Disciplinary or other action may be taken against the complainant or other individual if the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with the School under this policy. Should the complainant choose to be represented by an attorney, an attorney for the School may also be present.
4. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Head of School or Board from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation or taking any other action deemed appropriate.

#### **F. Records**

Records will be maintained as required by School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.