



## **IDEA Public Charter School**

### **School Year 2020-2021**

### **Policies**

#### **Disciplinary Policies and Procedures**

##### **Code of Conduct: Expectations for Student Behavior**

Each student is an important and valued member of the IDEA Public Charter School community. In order to be a member in good standing, one must embody in word and action the following principles that guide who we are as a community:

- We are prepared to learn and do our best
- We respect ourselves, each other, and our community
- We take responsibility for our actions and learning
- We work together to resolve challenges in thoughtful and meaningful ways
- We celebrate our individual and collective successes

With that in mind, we have created these policies to ensure that the school functions in a manner that supports a superior learning environment and student achievement. The IDEA Code of Conduct is provided so that students and families understand our expectations and the consequences for failing to meet these expectations, both virtually and in person. Conduct must be consistent throughout the school day, during after school programs, at any school-sanctioned event on- or off-campus, and virtually. Students should also be aware that all Code of Conduct rules apply when they are travelling to and from school, when they are leaving the building, while they are on the school grounds, when a IDEA Scholar is in a capacity representing the school on or off campus and continue to apply until they have arrived at their home or other destination. Students who violate the Code of Conduct on their way to school or on their way home from school may receive disciplinary consequences based on circumstances around the infraction. Students and families are expected to review IDEA's Letter of Acknowledgement of Receipt & Understanding Form within the first two weeks of school (copies will also be available in the main office and electronically).

At IDEA all staff, students, and community members will work to create an atmosphere of decency, trust, and respect in our school/virtual community. These behavioral expectations stem from our five guiding principles and the following violation levels give examples but not a complete list, of some of the possible violations and disciplinary action to the school's



expectations.

## **LEVELS OF CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS**

### **LEVEL 1**

**Level 1** behaviors are defined as those behaviors that distract or disrupt staff members from teaching, supervising, or otherwise adequately performing their job. Level 1 violations may also be behaviors that distract or disrupt other students from learning and performing to the best of their abilities. Teachers are encouraged to implement a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies to address any behavior that does not facilitate a desirable learning environment. Many of the behaviors are often minor and are usually resolved quickly with an intervention administered by the classroom teacher or staff member who is supervising or witness to the student behavior at that time. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

**Level 1 violations include, but are not limited to:**

- Failure to comply when being redirected the first time (includes health and safety measures as a result of COVID-19)
- Refusing to make timely transitions during the ringing of the bell or traveling from point A to point B during any part of the day
- Possession of or consuming food items outside of the cafeteria unless prior permission has been granted
- Leaving the building or class to pay for food delivery or pick up fast food that has been delivered (UBER eats, Grubhub, Door dash , parent or guardian delivery)
- Uniform violations
- Intentional off-task, disruptive behavior or excessive noise in the classroom/virtual class, hall or building that distracts from the learning environment
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices at any point during the school day or school sponsored event
- Use of profanity and failure to self correct or be redirected

If a student is found to have committed a Level 1 violation of IDEA's Code of Conduct, the following corrective measures may be taken:

- Staff redirection
- Written or oral reflection in the moment
- Behavioral intervention strategies-verbal or written
- Conference (staff member and student)
- Before, during or after school detention
- Parent/legal guardian notification
- Confiscation of non-instructional item(s)



- Temporary removal from activity (with reviews for later reentry possibility)
- School/community work tasks

## **LEVEL 2**

**Level 2** behaviors are defined as those behaviors that create or contribute to a physically or emotionally unsafe learning environment for staff or students. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, and for student(s) to immediately stop and reflect on how their behaviors are impacting others. Many of these responses engage the student's support system and are designed to alter conditions that contribute to the student's inappropriate or disruptive behavior. These responses aim to correct behavior by stressing its severity and acknowledging potential implications for future harm, while keeping the student in school. These responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior so that students are respectful and can learn and contribute to a safe environment. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion. A teacher referral placed in Dean's List requesting follow up for administrative support is required for any serious incident or other incident that may impact or implicate the health or well-being of students. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

### **Level 2 violations include, but are not limited to:**

- Destruction of school or personal property valued at more than \$50 but less than \$500
- Using profanity or offensive words or gestures towards others (non- sexual or threatening) via any communication platform
- Disrespectful words, actions, or gestures towards other students
- Taunting, mocking, "teasing," "just playing with," "joning," "dissing," or making fun of others (in person or virtual)
- Roughhousing or play fighting, slap boxing, sparring
- Horseplay or running in the classroom, hall, or building
- Truancy/skipping class, being out of area
- Forgery (including hall passes) or lying or giving misleading information to staff
- Insubordination, or repeated refusal to follow instructions given by staff or arguing with a staff member
- Cheating or copying another student's work on any assignment
- Inappropriate use of instructional technology (laptops, digital cameras, etc.) including use without permission or accessing inappropriate content
- Refusal to surrender electronic device to staff
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

If a student is found to have committed a Level 2 violation of the IDEA's Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 1 disciplinary actions:

- Mediation



- Counseling/intervention
- Parent/guardian conference with staff or administrator
- Restorative Justice approach/ Circle
- Removal from extracurricular school activities (during and after school)
- Loss of privileges for an extended period of time or criteria period
- In-school suspension (from a class period up to three days)
- Disciplinary probation

### **Level 3 Violations**

**Level 3** behaviors are defined as those behaviors that are dangerous, unsafe, and illegal in a school environment. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, student(s) to immediately stop the behaviors, the building administrator to conduct an investigation to determine whether the student(s) acted in a way that was dangerous or illegal, and to determine the appropriate disciplinary action. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 3 violations include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening words or offensive gestures (verbally, electronically, or written)
- Communicating slurs based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, income, or sexual orientation
- Engaging in behavior that demonstrates gang/neighborhood crew affiliation (displaying clothing or gestures associated with gangs)
- Possessing or distributing material or literature that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, obscene, or damaging to students or staff. This includes posting material on the Internet or sending material electronically
- Tampering with, pulling fire alarm, or using extinguishers in non-emergency situations
- Damaging or defacing school or private property valued at more than \$500
- Stealing or attempting to steal school or private property, or knowingly receiving stolen or private property
- Leaving the school premises or school-sanctioned activity without permission; trespassing on school grounds after-hours, or during a suspension
- Instigating or encouraging (verbally or nonverbally) the aggressive or threatening behavior or actions of others
- Refusing to properly follow the security protocols (wandering, bag checks, etc.)
- Criminal act or any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other class that causes disruption to the academic environment, disruption to the school operation, destroys school property, or causes significant harm to self or others

If a student is found to have committed a Level 3 violation of the IDEA's Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 2 disciplinary actions:



- Removal from extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year
- Restricted privileges for the remainder of the school year including virtual non academic activities
- Restrictions on in-person learning and banning for in-school activities (1-10 school days) and parent/legal guardian conference     *\*\*online access to learning will be provided.*
- Disciplinary probation
- Recommendation for disciplinary review session/hearing

### **Level 4 Violations**

Level 4 behaviors are defined as those behaviors that are dangerous and pose a serious threat to the safety of staff and students. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, the building administrator to conduct an investigation to determine whether the student(s) acted in a way that was dangerous or illegal (which may include involving the police) and for a parent/legal guardian to immediately come to the school to meet with administration and pick up the child. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 4 violations may include, but are not limited to the following behaviors:

- Repeated/multiple Level 3 behaviors
- Threatening actions or behavior (verbal and non-verbal), bullying or harassment of students or staff (physical, verbal, or electronically), hazing, extortion
- Fighting or showing physical aggression towards students or staff
- Assaulting, threatening, or attempting to cause physical harm to a staff member or school personnel, including making terrorist threats
- Possession, sale, distribution or use of drugs, alcohol, chemical or organic solvent used to induce euphoria or hallucinations, or other prohibited items, including over-the-counter or prescription medication
- Committing or attempting to commit sexual assault or battery
- Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other class that causes disruption to the academic environment, disruption to the school operation, destroys school property, or causes significant harm to self or others
- Possession or use of mace, pepper spray or any item that can be used as a concealed weapon
- Rioting, group disobedience or disturbance, fighting
- Planning a fight or assault (premeditated participation of self or others)

If a student is found to have committed a Level 4 violation of the IDEA's Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 3 disciplinary actions:

- Parent notification
- Administrative investigation



- Continued education virtually for designated period
  - Wrap around supports continued if applicable
  - Pre-expulsion behavior contract with improvement plan
  - Expulsion/recommendation for dismissal
  - Police notification
  - Restrictions on in-person learning and banning for in-school activities (including long-term span of 6-10 days)\*\**online access to learning will be provided.*
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- Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities
  - Restitution
  - School-based or outside facilitated conflict resolution
  - Recommend for further action
  - Referral to alternative education
  - Referral to Student Support Team
  - Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services
  - Referral to health/mental health services
  - Expulsion

\*\*See consequence grid on IDEA's website\*\* [www.ideapcs.org](http://www.ideapcs.org)

## **Consequences and Procedures**

### **Academic and Discipline Meetings**

A parent or guardian may be required to attend and participate in open houses, conferences, or meetings related to a student's academic or disciplinary performance to determine the necessary next steps and/or consequences. These meetings may include the following participants: Administrator, Dean, Director of Student Service Support (designating representative) Director of Students with Disabilities and an academic representative.

### **Reflection (Teacher and Administration Issued)**

Reflections are during lunch, after school or in the moment for a period of between 30 minutes to one hour depending on the length of time assigned by the teacher or the administrator. On the spot reflections will happen in the moment. A follow up will be done as a touch point for both the scholar and person implementing the reflection. Students must immediately report to the designated room within five minutes of the start time.

During virtual learning, reflections will be completed at the direction of the Teacher or Administrator involved.

Failure to serve a reflection (including being tardy), or does not follow the rules of reflection the first time will face further restorative action, which can include, but is not limited to, being reassigned to serve that reflection, serving an extended reflection, a mandatory parent/school



discipline meeting, loss of privileges, reflection assignment or other forms of reprimand.

### **Out-of-School Restrictions (Tier 3 & 4 Violations)**

Out-of-school restrictions involve separation from the school and all school activities for a specified period of time, which is determined by an administrator. The primary intent is to impress upon the student and parent or guardian that a serious behavior problem exists and that steps must be taken to ensure that the behavior is not repeated. A student who has earned out of school restriction will be required to complete a reflective assignment during their time away from the traditional classroom setting. Continued access to virtual learning will be supplied prior to a student re-entering classes in person evidence of completion must be presented at the student/family re-entry meeting. A student and parent or guardian will be strongly encouraged to attend and participate in a re-entry meeting prior to the student being allowed to resume their normal class schedule, in person. If the parent refuses/unable we will work to make arrangements for parental participation, the re-entry meeting may still be held with the student.

If a student is suspended, the following steps will be taken:

### **Short-Term Restrictions (1-5 days)**

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, input from SST and SWD staff and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Principal McCrae for final recommendation for disciplinary action. If suspension is considered, Dean Briscoe and/or appointed staff member, Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story before a recommendation for suspension is made.

If the decision is made that results in a short term suspension, the student's parent will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered and the reason for the suspension. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible.

In the event that a student is participating via virtual learning, a plan to continue education in-person will be outlined and adhered to until completion of the restorative action is completed.

When a student is serving an out of school restriction, he or she may not be on school grounds before school, during the school day, or after school, or attend any IDEA-sponsored event. Students who violate this policy will be considered trespassing and may face additional consequences.





### **Long-Term Restrictions (6 to 10 days)**

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Principal McCrae and make a recommendation for restorative action. If suspension is considered, Dean Briscoe, the Director of Student Support Services /or Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story before a recommendation for suspension is made.

A student may be suspended for up to three days pending an investigation into the incident if the investigation cannot be completed on the same day as the incident. If a student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the school environment, they may be immediately removed from school without a conference with Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae but will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story before the recommendation for long term suspension is made.

If Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae recommend a long term restriction, a disciplinary hearing will be held within five school days of the recommendation for suspension. The student's parents will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered and the reason for the suspension. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible. The student will serve the first five days of the restriction pending the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, an impartial hearing officer will determine whether the student should serve the rest of their suspension. The student will continue to have access to virtual learning throughout this period of time.

Prior to the hearing, the student will be provided with all of the information that the school plans to present at the hearing. At the hearing, the student will be given an opportunity to respond to that information and to share any additional information they want the hearing officer to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney at the hearing. The hearing officer will issue a written decision within 24-48 hours of the hearing.

### **Parent or guardian Shadowing**

As an intervention, the administration may invite a student's parent or guardian to shadow his or her student during the school day to observe behaviors that the student displays throughout the course of the day, in person only. All parents/legal guardians must attend a visitor's orientation prior to the observation. This visit has to be scheduled and approved by the teacher and IDEA staff.





### **Reflection Assignment (Restorative Justice Intervention)**

Any student who earns a (RJI) detention, in-school reflection, or out-of-school restriction is expected to complete a reflection assignment. These assignments are written assignments that are designed to challenge students to continually reflect on their choices, particularly when they violate the school Code of Conduct. The assignment or reflective task or action will vary in length and theme, depending on the situation and is left to the discretion of the teacher or administrator.

Reflection assignments are mandatory and failure to complete them in the timeframe given may result in further corrective actions being taken.

### **Restitution**

A method of holding students accountable for their behavior or inappropriate action. The school may require that a student makes a monetary or non-monetary repayment such as community service to the school or victim for the reasonable value of the property lost, damaged, broken, or destroyed as the result of student negligence or vandalism.

### **Parent or guardian Participation and Guiding Principles Conference**

It is highly suggested that the parent or guardian of a student participate in an action taken by IDEA in connection with a student's disruptive or inappropriate behavior, academic concerns or attendance concerns. If a student is disciplined and/or restricted for the remainder of a school day, one of the student's parents/legal guardians must pick up their child at school in a timely manner as requested by the school, or grant the school permission to send the child home by telephone confirmation. Repeated non-compliance of a parent or guardian with this policy may be considered "educational neglect," and the school may be required to contact Child and Family Services and/or local authorities.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

A student who has committed repeated violations of the Code of Conduct and/or a major violation of the Code of Conduct may be placed on disciplinary probation. Prior to the imposition of disciplinary probation, IDEA Public Charter School will provide the student and his or her parents/legal guardians with an opportunity for an informal conference as in the case of suspension, above. If placed on disciplinary probation, the student and his or her parent or guardian will be notified in writing that the student has violated school policy and that future violations will incur more stringent disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from IDEA Public Charter School.

If, while on disciplinary probation, a student violates another major school policy, he or she may



face additional consequences. Each violation is treated on a case-by-case basis.

A Dean will make reasonable attempts ( phone calls or written communications or email or any other form of contact) to contact a parent or guardian regarding a student's disciplinary probation status. These attempts will be entered into one of our data collection platforms (PowerSchool, Dean's List). If a parent or guardian fails to communicate and/or refuses to sign a contract, the contract shall be enacted. A final copy of the contract will be provided to the parent or guardian.

#### Steps in Disciplinary Probation:

1. After a student is placed on disciplinary probation, she will be required to attend a conference with the dean and/or another member of the administrative team and his or her parent or guardian.
2. During this conference a disciplinary probation contract will be signed stating behavioral goals, interventions, and supports IDEA will provide, and/or a timeline for meeting behavioral goals (e.g. no restrictions and fewer than three detentions).
3. If a student meets the stated expectations of the disciplinary probation, he or she will be reviewed by their dean and/or administration at which point he or she may be removed from disciplinary probation.
4. If a student fails to meet the stated goals of the disciplinary probation contract, the student would be subject to further disciplinary action, which may include a final probation contract or expulsion from IDEA Public Charter School.
5. If the student violates disciplinary probation, he or she may be placed on a final probation contract, if the violation does not warrant expulsion. This contract is a serious document that makes clear that repeated minor or major violations of the Code of Conduct could result in a series of restrictions from IDEA Public Charter School
6. If a student meets the stated expectations of the final probation contract, he or she will be reviewed by his or her dean and/or administration at which point he or she will be placed on disciplinary probation.
7. If a student fails to meet the stated goals of the final probation contract, a disciplinary hearing will be scheduled and the administration will review the student's behavior to date and make necessary recommendations that could result in expulsion/ dismissal from IDEA Public Charter School.

#### **Expulsion**

Students may be expelled for:

- Any Level 4 violation(s) and repeated Level 3 violation(s).
- Extreme violations of the Code of Conduct that significantly and demonstrably harm the educational environment of IDEA Public Charter School or harm the safety or security of IDEA students, staff, faculty, or others associated with IDEA.



- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct after appropriate remediation has been attempted.
- Violation of disciplinary probation or a final probation contract.

### **Due Process for Expulsion**

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Dean Briscoe who will confer with Principal McCrae and make a recommendation for disciplinary action. If expulsion is considered, Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story virtually before a recommendation is made.

A student may be suspended for up to three days pending an investigation into the incident if the investigation cannot be completed on the same day as the incident. If a student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the school environment, they may be immediately removed from school without a conference with Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae but will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story virtually before the recommendation for expulsion is made.

If Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae recommend expulsion, an expulsion hearing will be held within ten school days of the recommendation. The student's parents will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered and the reason for the suspension by mail/email. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible. The student will be restricted pending the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, an impartial hearing officer will determine whether the student should be expelled.

Prior to the hearing, the student will be provided with all of the information that the school plans to present at the hearing. At the hearing, the student will be given an opportunity to respond to that information and to share any additional information they want the hearing officer to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney at the hearing. The hearing officer will issue a written decision within 24 hours of the hearing.

If a parent or guardian and/or scholar does not attend the expulsion hearing in person or virtually, a hearing will be held without them and they waive their right to appeal.

### **Appeal of Expulsion Decision**

Students may appeal the independent hearing officer's decision to expel by submitting a written appeal to IDEA's Executive Director, [Justin Rydstrom](#), within three (3) school days of the either in person days, virtual days or hybrid days issuance of the expulsion decision. The Executive



Director will determine whether to hold another hearing or whether a decision can be made without a hearing. A decision will be made in writing within ten (10) school days of Mr. Rydstrom's receipt of the appeal.

### **Re-enrollment for Expelled or Withdrawn Students**

Students who are expelled are not permitted to re-enroll at IDEA regardless of whether they receive a lottery match or offer. Students who withdraw prior to expulsion due to disciplinary reasons will be treated as expelled for purposes of re-enrollment and will also not be eligible to reenroll at IDEA. Any other students that withdraw from IDEA prior to graduation will be considered for re-enrollment on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and/or Executive Director based on a written request from the parent, guardian, or student (if over 18 y.o.) and may be required to submit a lottery application.

### **Student and Family Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **Enrollment**

District of Columbia residents are enrolled according to the enrollment procedures set forth by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. To be enrolled, a student is required to verify his or her DC residency and complete all necessary documentation and medical and immunization records. By a new OSSE mandate for SY 2020-2021, immunization records must be current or students will not be allowed to attend school.

Current students must re-enroll on an annual basis. Re-enrollment takes place in the months of April and May. Families who fail to provide necessary documentation by the re-enrollment deadline may forfeit their seat for the upcoming school year. Students who have been expelled (or students who are withdrawn during the expulsion process) are not permitted to re-enroll.

#### **Admission Preference**

IDEA Public Charter School gives enrollment preference to siblings of current students.

#### **Residency Verification**

All parents and legal guardians must demonstrate DC residency in order to enroll a student. If residency cannot be proven, the school may take additional steps, including, but not limited to, home visits and/or contact the Office of the State Superintendent of Education residency office or institute a residency investigation.

Falsifying documents will result in immediate withdrawal and a referral to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.



In some cases, non-residents may attend DC public schools, but they must pay tuition after meeting established criteria. In addition, in order for non-residents to attend a public school, that school may not have any residents on its waiting list.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parent or guardian the right to access their children's education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parent or guardian to the student. The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

### **Homeless Students (McKinney-Vento Act)**

IDEA provides services for students who qualify as homeless under the McKinney Vento Act. Families receive information on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act annually. The school's McKinney-Vento liaison acts as the main point of contact for families and government agencies. Referrals may be made to the appropriate administrator or McKinney-Vento liaison.

The McKinney-Vento liaison annually informs staff and parents and legal guardians of steps to take when referring a child for assessment, common signs of homelessness, and services that will be made available to all identified students. Referrals and assessments will be ongoing throughout the year. Once a student is successfully identified, the liaison—in cooperation with school staff—ensures and records that all services are being rendered to the student if need is presented. Metro cards, uniforms, and supplies will be handled through the office of the liaison. All students, regardless of the situation, are tracked academically through their advisory. If a student requires an Individualized Education Program (IEP), through the DCPS Office of Special Education, he or she will receive special education in a timely manner through the Office of Special Education. On a quarterly basis, the McKinney-Vento liaison will check in with all students identified as homeless to verify that services are being provided. If, at any time, a disciplinary hearing is required due to an identified student's actions, the liaison will sit in on the meeting to verify that those actions were not as a result of his or her living situation.

All identified students will be re-assessed annually, unless a change in living situation is presented to the school.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

**Under District of Columbia law, attendance is mandatory.**



Daily attendance is critical for student achievement. It is vital that students are present and on time daily. **An absence is defined as attending less than 80% of a school day.**

### **In Person and Individualized Virtual Attendance**

1. Under IDEA's provisions for on-going pandemic considerations, all students are expected to attend school every day, regardless of whether that learning is virtual or in-person.
2. All students must be on-time for their in-person classes and will be marked tardy if they arrive after class begins.
3. Students may complete their virtual work at any time during each day and will not be considered tardy at any time during that school day.

### **Virtual Learning**

1. In order to be counted as present, all students must check in with their homeroom advisor daily, through email, text, chat, phone, or video call.
2. In order to be counted as present, all students are required to use their ID numbers to swipe from their Chromebooks. Instructions for this process will be provided and live assistance will be available from the attendance team until the student understands the process.
3. Students whose names do not come up when typing their ID number in swipe WILL need to check in with their den leader or run the risk of being marked absent for that day of virtual learning.

### **In-Person Learning**

1. All students must attend all scheduled in-person, on-site classes as indicated on their class schedules.
2. All students must arrive at school on time every day that they are scheduled for on-site, in-person learning.
3. "On time" is defined as the student being seated and ready to begin class at the official beginning of class.

### **Tardy Arrival Procedures**

1. Any student scheduled for in-person classes, who is not in the building by the official beginning of that school day—whether it is a full day, a morning session, or an afternoon session—will be considered tardy.
2. Students who are not seated and ready to begin class at the official start time of the class are considered tardy.



3. Students scheduled for in-person classes arriving after 10:00 am must report to the main office to obtain a tardy pass. A phone call will be made upon the student's arrival to alert parents about the student's tardiness.
4. If a student is late to class and does not have a pass, they will not be admitted into class until they produce a pass. Students must report to a dean or administrator to obtain an unexcused tardy pass.
5. Students who are repeatedly tardy to school (more than 30 minutes) may be issued consequences, including afterschool reflection<sup>1</sup>, Saturday detention<sup>1</sup>, student/parent conference, or placement on an attendance contract.
6. If a student is late to class three or more times in one day, their parents will be called to notify them.

### **Early Dismissal Procedures**

In the rare event that a student needs an early dismissal, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Advance notice is mandatory.
2. Notice must be received no later than 9 AM on the day of the early dismissal.
3. Phone calls will not be accepted as dismissal requests (unless emergency).
4. The note must contain the reason for the early departure, the student's name, the phone number where the parent can be contacted for verification, and the signature of the parent.
5. The attendance office must verify by phone all early departure requests.
6. If parents do not send in a note and confirm the request via telephone, they must either come into the main office to sign the student out of school or teleconference with the attendance counselor to confirm the request.
7. No student will be dismissed without verification.
8. Unless prior arrangements have been made, only legal guardians, parents and/or emergency contacts may sign a student out of school.
9. Students must report to the main office to sign out and pick up dismissal pass.
10. There will be no early dismissals within the half hour before the official dismissal time.
11. All students must sign out in the main office before leaving the school building for early dismissal.

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<sup>1</sup> Once full-time, on-campus learning is resumed





### **What is Considered an Excused Absence?**

- Death in the student's immediate family (documentation required, such as a funeral program)
- Illness of the student (a doctor's note is required for more than three consecutive days)
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Family emergency
- (Out-of-school suspension or in-school suspension<sup>2</sup>)
- Other absences approved in advance by the IDEA administration upon the written request of a parent or guardian.

### **What is Considered an Unexcused Absence?**

- An absence is unexcused when a student fails to attend school and does not have a valid excuse. Parental approval for any of these absences does not excuse the absence. Here are some examples of unexcused absences:
- Lengthy vacations
- No clean uniform
- Oversleeping
- Child care for siblings or other children
- Skipping school
- Student employment or related absences.

**\*All absences excused/unexcused absences count towards chronic absenteeism.**

### **Turning in Documentation After Absence**

- Within five (5) days after an absence, students must submit a note to the attendance counselor/main office which includes the date(s) of absence, the reason for the absence, and any required documentation.
- An original doctor's note must be provided for medical appointments scheduled during the school day.
- An original doctor's note must be provided for absences due to illness totaling three or more days.

### **Truancy**

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<sup>2</sup> Once full-time, on-campus learning is resumed



Truancy is the willful absence from school by a minor (5–18 years of age) with or without a parent or guardian’s approval, knowledge, or consent. A truant is defined as any student who accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences in one school year.

A student is also considered truant if they:

- Leave school without permission
- Attend school, but are absent from class without permission (skip class)
- Obtain an early release pass but do not report to the designated location

### **What Are the Consequences of Truancy to Parents?**

Parents/guardians who fail to have their children attend school are subject to the following consequences:

“The absence of a child without a valid excuse (unexcused absence) is unlawful, and a parent/guardian of such a child is guilty of a misdemeanor.” (D.C. Code §38-203(c)(1) & (d))

### **Actions to Expect from IDEA After an Absence**

- Daily phone calls will be made to the guardians of every student marked absent from school for the day (in-person) or for the previous day (virtual).
- Daily alerts will be sent from PowerSchool to all students absent that day (in-person) or the previous day (virtual).
- After two (2) days of absence, the attendance team will conduct a virtual student conference.
- After three (3) days of absence, the attendance team will request a virtual parent conference.
- After four (4) days of absence, the attendance team will issue a warning letter.
- After five (5) days of absence, the attendance team will request a virtual home visit for which the student and the guardian both must be present.
- After six (6) days of absence, the attendance team will submit a referral to the Student Support Team, if additional services are deemed necessary.
- After eight (8) days of absence, the attendance team will issue a second warning letter.
- After ten (10) days of absence, the attendance team will issue an MPD letter (non-consecutive absences)
- After ten consecutive unexcused absences, the student and family will be referred to Child Protective Services (CPS).
- After fifteen unexcused absences, as mandated by DC law, the student will be referred to Truancy Court.



- After twenty consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be removed from the IDEA enrollment roster. *Students who are unenrolled due to truancy will not be eligible to return to IDEA.*

### **How Can Families Help Support Their Students for Consistent and On-time Attendance?**

- Frequently discuss your student's college or career goals with them. Connect that to their classes in school. Do they like drawing and want to be an architect? Do they love math and want to be an engineer? Help them identify what subjects they enjoy and what jobs are related to it?
- Help them identify what they would like to be doing ten years in the future. Engage with your student about the importance of education in helping them reach their goals.
- Have frequent and ongoing conversations with your student about their learning experiences online and in the classroom to be sure the individualized, hybrid format is working for them. Get their feedback on what areas they are struggling with and loop IDEA in for help.
- If your student has responsibilities caring for siblings or working a part-time job, ensure that adequate time is established and prioritized for their school work.
- Make sure any technology issues your student may have are quickly addressed or brought to the attention of their teachers.
- Encourage good sleeping and eating habits.
- Work with your student to come up with a consistent morning routine that includes plenty of time to get ready for school—virtually or in person.
- On in-person days, leave extra time for transportation issues, like metro delays and traffic.
- On in-person days, make sure your student arrives at school at least 15 minutes before class starts, whether for a full day or a half day.
- If possible, schedule medical and dental appointments outside of normal school hours.

### **Grievance Procedures for Allegations of Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation**

IDEA Public Charter High School does not engage in or permit discrimination, harassment, or retaliation and believes in the basic tenets of equality and fairness. Any person who believes that IDEA Public Charter High School has engaged in discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation may submit a complaint to the principal or to the head of school if the complaint involves the principal, at IDEA Public Charter School, 1027 45th Street, NE, Washington, DC 20019.



The grievance procedures outlined below establish how to file a complaint can and how they will be investigated and resolved. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints and may be used by employees, cadets, parent or guardian or third parties. These grievance procedures do not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

IDEA Public Charter School encourages individuals to discuss their concerns with appropriate school officials before resorting to a formal complaint, in order to facilitate prompt resolution. However, individuals are not required to do so before filing a formal complaint.

IDEA Public Charter School will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint or participates in an investigation in accordance with these procedures. IDEA Public Charter School will also not tolerate retaliation against such persons by others, and will take appropriate disciplinary steps against any IDEA Public Charter School employee found to have engaged in retaliation.

A formal complaint may be filed by following the steps outlined below:

**Step 1:**

Within 90 calendar days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, written notice of the complaint must be filed with the individual designated above. Grievants may use the complaint form attached to the grievance procedure, or submit the complaint in other written form as long as all of the identified information is provided. Grievants are encouraged to include all information and supporting documentation they believe is relevant to the complaint, including identification of any known witnesses, at the time the complaint form is submitted. The complaint form is also available on the IDEA Public Charter School website [www.ideapcs.org](http://www.ideapcs.org) and in the main office. The written notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence, the desired result, and must be signed and dated by the person making the complaint. Incomplete complaint forms will be returned to the grievant, with a directive for completion within five business days.

Upon receipt of the written notice of the complaint, the designated individual to whom the complaint was submitted will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of the complaint. This may include specific requests for additional information from the grievant or other individuals. Each investigation will include, as necessary, interviewing



witnesses, obtaining documents and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation is considered confidential, and should be maintained as such by the investigator to the extent not inconsistent with state or federal laws or the requirements for a thorough investigation.

Within 15 school days of receiving the written notice of the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will respond in writing to the grievant. A copy of the complaint and the response shall be forwarded to the board of trustees at this time as well. If the investigator determines that additional time is needed for the investigation, the individual shall notify the grievant of such information in writing within 15 school days of receiving the written notice of complaint and include the reason for the additional time and the expected date of response. The response will summarize the course and outcome of the investigation, and identify an appropriate resolution. If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken.

Step 2: If the grievant wishes to appeal the decision from Step 1, he or she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the executive director within 10 calendar days after receipt of the response. If the Step 1 decision was issued by the executive director (or if the complaint involves the executive director), the appeal may be submitted directly to: Board of Trustees at IDEA Public Charter School, 1027 45th Street, NE, Washington, DC 20019. The written appeal must include all documentation from the initial grievance and the reasons why the grievant does not agree with the decision. The executive director or board will review the submitted information. The executive director or board may, at his or its discretion, request a meeting with the grievant or other involved parties. If the grievant presents to the board, such presentation may be made in public or closed session, as appropriate. Within 15 school days of receiving the statement of appeal, the director will respond in writing to the complainant summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken. If the appeal is submitted to the board, the board will consider the information at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and will provide a written decision to the grievant within 21 calendar days of the meeting where the appeal is considered by the board.

A grievant may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights at any time before or during the grievance procedures. The regional office for the District of Columbia is located at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20022 and can be reached at (202) 453-6020 (ph), (202) 453-6021 (fax)



### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

**Non-Discrimination Policy** IDEA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Justin Rydstrom, Executive Director  
IDEA Public Charter School  
1027 45th Street NE  
Washington, DC 20019  
Phone: 202-399-4750  
[jrydstrom@ideapcs.org](mailto:jrydstrom@ideapcs.org)

**Open Meetings Policy:** IDEA is a public, non-profit educational institution governed by a volunteer board of trustees that hold meetings on the fourth Thursday every other month. All meetings are open to the public; recordings and notes are shared publicly. You may find IDEA board members and meeting dates listed on IDEA's website under "Board of Trustees".

### **Complaint Policy**

IDEA places a high value on the input of parents and legal guardians, and encourages any parent or guardian to offer feedback on any aspect of the school program. If you are a parent or



guardian who has a grievance, you are encouraged to contact the appropriate school staff member to discuss the area of concern. If your concerns are not addressed, please feel free to contact the following school leaders at IDEA.

Head of School/ Executive Director, Justin Rydstrom [jrydstrom@ideapcs.org](mailto:jrydstrom@ideapcs.org)

Principal, Nicole McCrae [nmccrae@ideapcs.org](mailto:nmccrae@ideapcs.org)

Vice Principal, Shomari Jennings [sjennings@ideapcs.org](mailto:sjennings@ideapcs.org)

Dean of Culture, Lori Briscoe [lbriscoe@ideapcs.org](mailto:lbriscoe@ideapcs.org)

Director of Student Support Services, Melody Washington [mwashington@ideapcs.org](mailto:mwashington@ideapcs.org)

If the leaders within the school are unresponsive, parent or guardian should address their concerns with the school's Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will try its best to work out all grievances with the family/student. The contact person is below:

Chair, Board of Trustees - Calvin Snowden - [calvinsnowden@comcast.net](mailto:calvinsnowden@comcast.net)