



Student and Family Policies
2022-2023

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Student Behavior and Engagement (Discipline) Policy

LAMB expects every member of our community to behave in a respectful way towards themselves and others. This philosophy is deeply embedded in our Montessori approach, which emphasizes respect for all community members and seeks to equip students with the skills to regulate their own behavior and resolve conflicts with their peers. Our Grace and Courtesy curriculum teaches our students to show respect in various ways. Teachers and all staff members communicate our expectations for how students will behave at school through direct instruction and modeling of those expectations. The PAZ acronym reminds all members of the LAMB community of the positive behaviors we practice:

- Positive Words
- Respectful Actions
- Learning Zone

Restorative Behavior Approach

In the 2022-2023 school year, LAMB is in its third year of implementation of a schoolwide restorative approach to student behavior. In our third year of implementation, we will continue training teachers on this approach and integrating some practices into our school wide routines, with the aim of adopting a full restorative model over the next several years. A restorative approach to behavior is one that seeks to understand the roots of behavior issues. This approach also supports students in being accountable and having an opportunity to be responsible, gather new skills and resources, offer repair steps to all who were impacted by a behavior or event, and turn these reflections into learning moments.

Proactive Practices

LAMB believes that the foundation of any student behavior approach should be proactive practices that help children feel welcomed in their classroom communities, that teach them to be aware of their own emotions and ways to manage them, and that give them skills to interact in a way that will eventually help them to resolve many of their own interpersonal conflicts. All classrooms at LAMB will build this foundation through Grace and Courtesy lessons, community-building activities, social-emotional learning-focused read alouds, peace tables, and other daily routines.

Response to Disruptive or Harmful Behaviors

When students have disruptive or harmful behaviors at school, these behaviors will be assessed on a scale of urgency and level of impact and will accordingly be given the resources, space, time, and facilitated support to have all voices heard and see if a restorative solution can be worked out for all.

A restorative process usually follows four stages of action. They are not linear and are often repeated if necessary:

- Co/Self-Regulate: help calm the child's nervous system so the child feels safe
- Reflect: provide inquiries to help all involved dig into the roots of issues
- Relate: provide empathy to the ways in which all parties were impacted and the underlying relationship and situational needs expressed

- Restore / Resource / Re-invent: Repair steps to both the relationship/s and the situation, gathering new resources (including trying/practicing new skills) and support, accountability practice, agreement-making practice, and follow-up.

Some core questions to be asked through a restorative approach to behavior include:

- “What happened?”
- “How were/are you feeling then/now? What were you/are you needing now?”
- “Who was impacted and how? Who else? How else?”
- “What needs to happen now to make it work for everyone?”
- “How will you know that this agreement worked for all?”

Addressing the severity of impact for behaviors is most important in our school in order to offer the social, emotional and academic well-being for our community members. For the most serious behaviors, LAMB may choose to implement an in-school suspension to allow students time to continue their coursework on school grounds with a “pause” from the relational difficulties as well as spaciousness and support for further individual reflection and repair steps. LAMB will not assign an in-school suspension unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress.

The following table describes the standard practices for responding to various student behaviors:*

Severity of Behavior	Frequency of Behavior		
	Single or occasional incidents	Multiple/Repeated	Consistent or Severe
	Possible interventions may include:		
Classroom disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirection • Verbal reminder of community norms and values • 1:1 check-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirection • Verbal reminder of community norms and values • Guided individual reflection (lower and upper elementary students) • Independent work space • Class conference/community meetings • Family communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent work space • Class conference/community meeting • Family Communication and restorative conference • Referral to SST or possible Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
Verbal teasing, exclusion, or name-calling causing emotional or social distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal reminder of community norms and values • Guided student reflection (lower and upper elementary students) • Guided conflict resolution/restorative inquiry or dialogue with teacher support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative circle with all parties impacted/involved with agreement and follow-up • Guided conflict resolution/restorative dialogue with teacher support • Guided student reflection (lower and upper elementary students) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative circle with all parties impacted/involved with agreement and follow-up • Family Communication and restorative conference • Referral for Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SST referral for behavior support and/or in-school counseling
Physical aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution/restorative inquiry or dialogue with teacher support Guided restorative student reflection (lower and upper elementary students) Family communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution/restorative dialogue with teacher support Guided restorative student reflection (lower and upper elementary students) Family communication and restorative conference Temporary separation from class community for reflection and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restorative circle with all parties impacted/involved with agreement and follow-up Family Communication and restorative conference Referral for Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) SST referral for behavior support and/or in-school counseling
Severe harmful behaviors (I.e. threat of serious violence to self or others or extreme harassment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary separation from class community for reflection and support Family communication and restorative conference (within 48 hours) Possible contacting of additional support (counselors) or authorities Restorative circle with all parties impacted/involved with agreement and follow-up Referral for in-school suspension Re-entry restorative agreement with resources and follow-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary separation from class community for reflection and support Family communication and restorative conference (within 48 hours) Possible contacting of other support (counselors) or authorities Restorative Circle with agreement and follow-up Referral for Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) SST referral for behavior support and/or in-school counseling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral for in-school suspension Re-entry restorative agreement with resources and follow-up 	

* Exceptions to these interventions may be possible in extreme circumstances.

Procedures for Students with IEPs and 504 Plans

All behavior reports that involve IEP or 504 Plan students require the involvement, support, and expertise of our SPED Manager and behavior specialists in the restorative process. The SPED Manager and/or their designee(s) will determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. If the behavior is a manifestation of their disability LAMB will reassess their behavior plan and/ or their services.

Restorative approaches research shows how this approach to behaviors supports SPED students' needs and especially students at different intersections of identities:

<http://powertopubliceducation.weebly.com/blog/zero-tolerance-policy-vs-restorative-practices>

Parents can request more information and a copy of the procedural safeguards by contacting our **Special Education Manager, Amanda Arellano** - amanda@lambpcs.org.

Non-discrimination Policy

LAMB is committed to giving all people an equal opportunity to get a good education. We follow federal and local nondiscrimination laws. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, familial status, or source of income.

If you have any questions about our non-discrimination policies, please contact Charis Sharp, our Executive Director (202-726-6200 or charis@lambpcs.org).

If you believe that LAMB has discriminated on the basis of any of the above categories, you may submit a grievance. Please follow our grievance procedures as described on page 39.

Admissions Policy

Enrollment Preferences

LAMB participates in the My School DC admissions lottery and gives preferences for enrollment in the following order:

1. Transfer of PK3 and PK4 students within the school (ends in SY23 after full consolidation of facilities at 14th St.)
2. Children of staff members
3. Siblings of currently-enrolled students
4. Twins of students offered enrollment
5. Siblings of students offered enrollment

LAMB is also supportive of the recent creation of a citywide policy allowing for preferential enrollment practices for students identified as “at-risk,” and will seek to apply for this preference for future years.

Previously Enrolled Returning Students

Students previously enrolled in our school for at least one school year may be able to re-enroll if they:

- Moved out of the DC metro area, including Northern Virginia and Maryland
- Didn't leave to attend another school in the DC metro area
- Weren't away for more than three years.

Procedures

- If a family meets these conditions, they can complete our Intent to Return form. Please fill out the form and include:

- A letter requesting re-enrollment with confirmation you met the conditions during your child's absence
- The grade level you'd like your child to be in.
- Re-enrollment paperwork including the DC residency verification form.

When complete, please send everything to our Registrar at admissions@lambpcs.org. If a student meets the requirements to re-enroll, they'll be assessed and placed in the proper grade. They may be moved to a more appropriate class based on academic, social, or emotional needs.

Student Records (FERPA Notice)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents/guardians should submit to the School Registrar (admissions@lambpcs.org) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian believes are inaccurate. Parents/guardians may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the School Registrar at admissions@lambpcs.org, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian, the school will notify the parent/guardian of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. FERPA also authorizes disclosure of directory information unless the parents/guardians notify the school in writing that they do not wish for directory information to be disclosed without prior consent. Directory information includes, but is not limited to, the following student information:
 - Student name
 - Address and telephone number
 - E-mail address
 - Photo

- Date and place of birth
- Grade level
- Dates of attendance

Parents/guardians may instruct LAMB to withhold any or all of the information identified above by completing the “Release of Student Directory Information Form,” available upon request in writing within one month after the first day of the school year.

5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend school every day that we are in session. LAMB is required to record and report absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals. At LAMB, school attendance is required for all students. Students are also expected to be on time. Every three unexcused tardies will be considered an absence.

LAMB is legally required to refer students to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), no later than 2 business days after the accrual of 10 unexcused full day absences within a school year. After twenty (20) consecutive days of unexcused absences, the student will be dropped from the school roster.

Attendance school-based support team

As described below, LAMB may refer a child (ages 5-13) to the Child and Family Services Agency (“CFSA”) after the accrual of ten (10) unexcused full-day absences within one (1) school year. The school-based student support team will meet within five school days of the referral and regularly thereafter to:

- Determine the underlying causes for a student’s absenteeism or truancy.
- Communicate and collaborate with the student and parents/guardians.
- Create and implement action plans in consultation with the student and parents/guardians.
- Make recommendations for academic, diagnostic, or social work services.
- Use school and community resources to reduce the student’s truancy including referrals to appropriate community-based organizations when available.

Reporting absences

Please note that absences may be verified or unverified, as explained above. LAMB may or may not excuse verified absences. The school will determine, in its sole discretion, whether an absence is excused.

In accordance with OSSE’s truancy guidelines and school reporting requirements, LAMB requires a written statement (email or paper) from the parent or guardian verifying the reason for a student’s absence. This written statement should be provided in advance, if possible, or upon

the student's return to school. This written statement does not guarantee that an absence will be excused; rather, it ensures that the absence will not be unverified. Unverified absences are counted as unexcused absences.

Parents/guardians are required to notify the school on all days when students will be absent. The preferred method of notification is an email sent to 14th Street (frontdesk@lambpcs.org), or South Dakota (frontdesksd@lambpcs.org). If email is unavailable, parents should call the school to report the absence.

Additional information will be required for an absence to be excused (see below). Absences will be deemed unexcused unless the student's parent/guardian provides the school with a valid excuse within 5 school days upon the student's return to school.

Excused absences

All absences will be reported as unexcused absences unless the school receives proper documentation within 5 school days for valid excused absences. Proper documentation includes parent notes, court documents, or doctor's note. Below are some examples of valid excused absences:

- Death in the student's family.
- Observance of a religious holiday.
- Suspension or exclusion from school by school authorities.
- Illness or other medical condition experienced by the student.
- Necessity for student to attend judicial or administrative proceeding.
- An emergency or other circumstances approved by school authorities.
- Absence due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestations, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons.
- Failure of DC to provide transportation in cases where there is a legal responsibility for the transportation of the student.
- Medical or dental appointments for the students – note only the portion of the day spent at the appointment plus travel is excused.

Unexcused absences

If you do not communicate with the school about your child's absence within 5 school days of the child's return to school, the absence will automatically be unexcused.

Even if documented, the following are examples of unexcused absences:

- Weather
- Vacation
- Car trouble
- Oversleeping
- Heavy traffic (unless is a city-wide emergency)

No child may be expelled or receive an out-of-school suspension due to an unexcused absence or tardiness.

Grievance Policy

The grievance procedures outlined below establish, generally, how complaints will be investigated and resolved. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt

and equitable resolution of complaints. Any person who believes they have been discriminated against or who otherwise wishes to bring a complaint related to LAMB's administration of its programs may file a complaint by following the steps outlined below. LAMB reserves the right to take whatever actions it deems appropriate to best educate students, keep them safe, and resolve conflict. That means that the school reserves the right to alter, amend, or interpret these provisions within its sole discretion, unless such action or interpretation would violate due process or applicable law.

LAMB strives to treat all members of its community fairly and with respect. However, the school realizes that disagreements may arise. LAMB is committed to resolving disagreements and misunderstandings while preserving good relationships among all members of its community.

Informal complaint

Ideally, anyone with a concern should first attempt to resolve it informally with school staff. You may bring an informal complaint to the attention of a classroom teacher or advisor, Assistant Principal, or BASE Director or BASE Coordinator. These individuals will seek to resolve the complaint by working with those involved to reach a cooperative agreement. Please remember that all concerns and complaints are very important to LAMB. Every member of the faculty and administration is also working diligently to run a school that focuses on education and safety, as well as making sure the students are engaged and having fun. To that end, LAMB asks that anyone seeking informal resolution please allow time for said resolution. The school's employees are encouraged to act as quickly as possible, and resolution may take time.

Formal grievance

A formal grievance may be brought if you are unable to resolve your concerns informally, or if you would rather bring your concerns in a more formal, documented manner, directly to the administration. In order to bring a formal grievance, **adults** (including parents and staff members) must complete the Formal Grievance Form. The Formal Grievance Form is available at the front desk in each school location. Formal Grievance Forms, along with any supporting documents, must be delivered in writing either in person or by postal mail to the address below, and cannot be sent by email.

Maria-Jose Carrasco
Chief Operating Officer
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS
5000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

Students may complete the Student Complaint Form, or may talk to any staff member and specify that they would like to make a formal complaint. The Student Complaint Form is available at the front desk in each school location. Students may give their forms to any staff member or can place them in the drop box located in their building.

Resolution of formal grievance

After receiving a formal grievance, the Chief of Staff will determine which member of the administration is best suited to resolve the grievance. That individual will:

1. Meet with the grievant.

LAMB will determine whether it needs any additional information before attempting to resolve the formal grievance. If it does, it will request a meeting or telephone call with the

grievant.

2. Determine whether mediation is appropriate.

LAMB will evaluate the complaint and, if appropriate, recommend mediation. The nature of mediation is flexible, but in general, one or more School officials will meet with the grievant and any other involved parties to discuss the incident(s) that led to the grievance and potential resolutions. The goal of mediation is for the parties involved to agree on a solution or resolution together.

3. Conduct an investigation.

LAMB will designate an individual to conduct an impartial investigation into the grievance if mediation fails or is not appropriate. An investigation may involve interviews, taking statements and/or collecting documents.

4. Provide a written response to the grievance.

LAMB will provide a written summary of the investigation findings, including a determination of whether the grievance was substantiated, and if so, a proposed resolution. Note that, depending on the nature of the grievance, LAMB may be limited in what information it can release to the grievant. LAMB will strive to provide this response within 20 school days after receipt of the Formal Grievance Form.

Appeal of a formal grievance

If you remain dissatisfied with the resolution of the formal grievance, you may submit a written statement of appeal to the Executive Director within 10 school days of receiving the grievance response. The statement of appeal must be delivered in writing either in person or by postal mail to the address below, and cannot be sent by email.

Charis Sharp
Executive Director
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS
5000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

If your grievance is with the Executive Director or if the Executive Director responded to the formal grievance, you may submit your statement of appeal to the Chair of the Board of Directors the address below. The statement of appeal must be delivered in writing either in person or by postal mail, and cannot be sent by email.

Alan Golding
Board Chair
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS
5000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

An appropriate member of the leadership team will contact the grievant after receiving the statement of appeal to schedule a meeting. Usually this meeting will occur within 10 school days of filing the statement of appeal.

The appropriate member of the leadership team shall provide a final written response explaining the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken. This final written

response will typically be provided within 20 school days after receiving a written request for appeal.

Prohibition against retaliation

LAMB prohibits retaliation against any individual who has made a complaint pursuant to this grievance policy in good faith, assisted in an investigation, or otherwise exercised rights protected by law. LAMB also prohibits taking any adverse action against an individual based on an unsubstantiated allegation or rumor. Any individual found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Parents and guardians, students, staff members, and other members of the LAMB community are expected to cooperate in good faith in the investigation and resolution of any grievance raised by them or against them.