



## **Student/Family Policies**

### **Discipline Policy**

#### **Community Expectations**

##### **Rights and Responsibilities**

All members of the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School community share the following three Rights and Responsibilities, designed to cultivate students' intrinsic motivation and self-discipline in service of a vibrant, nurturing community.

- Everyone learns.
- Everyone is safe.
- Everyone builds the community.

##### **Community Expectations for Students**

In order to live by the three rights and responsibilities, all students are expected to:

1. Speak and act with respect and care and interact with all staff and peers in a courteous manner
2. Use words to express feelings or needs and solve problems
3. Handle school materials appropriately
4. Respect the building and all physical facilities within the school and the surrounding community
5. Follow directions the first time they are given
6. Walk in the hallways, stairwells, and in classrooms
7. Approach conflict as an opportunity to learn, participating in conflict mediation (i.e. restorative practices) and processing respectfully and reflectively
8. Manage their own belongings
9. Be present and on-time for all classes and school events
10. Cooperate in learning activities and give their best effort

##### **Classroom Rules**

Within every classroom, teachers, students, and families work together to develop agreements about what every student and community member must do in order to uphold their rights and responsibilities and the school-wide expectations. Through this process, all learners in the community develop an understanding of the rules for participation in our community. Typical classroom rules include:

1. Share classroom materials
2. Focus on class work with their best effort
3. Use kind words and friendly language
4. Touch others only in gentle and appropriate ways
5. Ask for help when needed
6. Be where they have permission to be, leaving a space only with permission
7. Respect each other's privacy, space, and belongings
8. Take care of and keep in good condition the building and all property within

Inspired Teaching Demonstration School works to use a system of discipline called “restorative justice,” which is described below.

### **Expectations for Families**

Families are expected to model for students the collaboration and high standards for respectful participation that we aspire to cultivate in our students. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Respectful communication and interactions with all staff, other families, students, and neighbors of the school
2. Support for on-time arrival and appropriate preparation for learning each day
3. Participation in regularly scheduled Family Conferences and meetings requested by staff
4. Regular participation in student learning events such as Learning Showcases, performances, and presentations
5. Timely responses to email and/or phone messages from school staff
6. Compliance with the school’s dress code, discipline policies, nutrition policies, and attendance policies
7. Respect for the privacy of all families, students and staff
8. Support for the school’s commitment to diversity and inclusivity
9. Respect for the community surrounding the school including following guidelines for drop off and pick up of students
10. Approach conflict as an opportunity to learn, participating in conflict mediation (i.e. restorative practices) and processing respectfully and reflectively

When family members are not upholding school expectations for respectful communication and collaboration, the school reserves the right to:

- Ensure administrator is present in meetings and included in written communications
- Decline to respond to inappropriate or aggressively written communication
- End a meeting in response to disrespectful and/or aggressive behavior
- Require individuals (family/guardians) to leave the school premises and return to campus at a time designated by the school.

### **When and Where the Community Expectations Apply**

The Community Expectations are in effect when a student is traveling to and from school and school events, during the school day, and during all school related/school sponsored extracurricular activities. In addition, behavior that occurs online and outside of school may be subject to the Community Expectations when such conduct is disruptive to the school community or neighborhood. As such, students may be held to community expectations and disciplinary responses for infractions even if their actions take place off campus or outside of school hours.

### **Social Emotional Learning**

ITDS’ mission seeks to ensure that a diverse group of students achieve their potential. We believe that children’s energy, unique talents, and individuality are assets, not obstacles; therefore, explicit emphasis on social-emotional learning and student centered practices guide instruction. In order to support our students’ social and emotional well-being, the school provides a range of resources and learning opportunities to ensure that students have the

necessary tools to make appropriate behavioral choices. This includes but is not limited to recognizing emotions, empathy, self-advocacy, conflict resolution, inclusiveness, abuse prevention, and community building.

ITDS' model includes a wide-variety of supports for students' social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health, such as 1 full time social worker, 1 Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) social worker, a clinical specialist from a community partner organization, and related services for supports such as ABA therapy.

ITDS uses a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which is a framework that helps provide academic, social-emotional, and behavioral strategies for all students and their various needs.

Key components include:

- Universal screening of all students early in the school year
- Tiers of interventions that can be amplified in response to levels of need
- Ongoing data collection and continual assessment
- Schoolwide approach to expectations and supports
- Parent involvement

Programming is available at 3 tiers of intervention:

Tier 1 (Whole school or grade level services)

- Responsive classroom morning meeting or advisory
- Second Step
- Grade level specific whole group social emotional programming (i.e. boundaries, signs of depression, anti-drug)
- Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) administered to all K-8 students 3x a year

Tier 2 (Small group or 1:1 intervention services)

- DESSA aligned small groups facilitated by Culture, Equity, Access team members
- Social work small groups
- Restorative Justice circles
- 1:1 sessions with a school clinician

Tier 3 (IEP and 504 services)

- Specialized instruction
- Social work group and individualized sessions
- Testing accommodations and modifications

For additional information on the school's social emotional supports and programming, contact the Director of Culture, Equity, and Access, Jessica Hiltabidel, [jessica.hiltabidel@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:jessica.hiltabidel@inspiredteachingschool.org).

## Tiers of Discipline and Restorative Practices

As opposed to the traditional “crime and punishment” model of discipline, ITDS works to implement a Restorative Justice approach when responding to violations of ITDS’s Community Expectations. Restorative Justice is an approach to discipline that seeks to address the underlying cause of the misbehavior and find a way to repair the harm done to the community. This approach includes such actions as restorative circles and community service.

When responding to challenging or inappropriate behaviors, the school takes a tiered approach. Staff will consider closely the circumstances of student actions and classify the action into one of four tiers, which range from relatively minor infractions (Tier 1) to very harmful or dangerous actions (Tier 4). Staff members respond in proportionate ways that are considerate of the action, the impact on the community, the age and developmental stage of the student, and the student’s prior actions and will use the table below as a general guide to administer consequences and /or restorative practices. The family of any student involved in the breaking of Community Expectations — whether the initiator or the other party — will be notified of the events that took place. Consequences issued to those involved will not be shared with all parties involved in order to respect student and family privacy.

It should be clear that there are violations of the community expectations, which alone or by repetition may require that the student committing them be separated from the school, temporarily or permanently. These decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act. This Act states that students cannot be suspended or expelled unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds. Such disciplinary action is expected to support the school’s goals of self-motivated modification of behavior by helping students to understand that in order to participate in the school community they must conduct themselves appropriately. A student’s attendance at the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School presupposes the family’s acceptance and embrace of these expectations. The school will create a plan for providing instructional resources to any student who is suspended and will share the plan with the student’s family. The plan will include a point of contact for the student to communicate with school staff about assignments and the student will have an opportunity to make up any work missed during the suspension.

<b>Tier 1 Infraction Behaviors Include But Are Not Limited To:</b>	<b>Tier 1 Responses May Include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Off-task behaviors that demonstrate disregard for teacher direction</li><li>• Refusal to complete assignments or follow other staff directives</li><li>• General signs of disrespect</li><li>• Running in the classroom or hallways</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-verbal/Verbal redirection</li><li>• Restorative student conferences and/or family conferences</li><li>• Formal apologies to community members</li><li>• After School Reset Time</li><li>• Loss of a privilege, and/or other logical or restorative consequence</li></ul>

<b>Tier 2 Infraction Behaviors Include But Are Not Limited To:</b>	<b>Tier 2 Responses May Include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented patterns of persistent Tier 1 behaviors</li> <li>• Hurtful language or gestures to members of the school community</li> <li>• Use of profanity and/or vulgar language</li> <li>• Elopement from classroom</li> <li>• Disruptive physical contact between students</li> <li>• Willful destruction of peer's work</li> <li>• Physical aggression with peers</li> <li>• Inappropriate displays of student affection (including but not limited to inappropriate touching with hands or other parts of the body, hugging, sitting in each others' lap, kissing, unwanted advances or contact)</li> <li>• Inappropriate computer use/internet access or cell phone use</li> <li>• Possession of sexually explicit material</li> <li>• Concealment or use of non-school issued or non-approved technology (including but not limited to cell phones, e-readers, tablets, etc.)</li> <li>• Refusal to comply with Tier 1 consequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1 Responses AND</li> <li>• Classroom behavioral contracts</li> <li>• Break from classroom for reflection in "buddy teacher's" classroom</li> <li>• Completion of reflection sheet</li> <li>• Contact with parent/guardian</li> <li>• Afterschool restoration &amp; reflection</li> <li>• Notification of the Principal</li> <li>• Referral to SST for continued documented problem behaviors</li> <li>• Suspension*</li> </ul>

*\* Suspension decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act. This Act states that students cannot be suspended or expelled unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds.*

<b>Tier 3 Infraction Behaviors Include:</b>	<b>Tier 3 Responses May Include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented patterns of persistent Tier 2 behaviors</li> <li>• Cheating or Plagiarism</li> <li>• Theft</li> <li>• Bullying or hazing, in person or via photo or online</li> <li>• Persistent harassment</li> <li>• Sexual harassment</li> <li>• Pattern of elopement from classroom or campus</li> <li>• Destruction of property</li> <li>• Fighting and other acts of physical aggression towards peers or staff</li> <li>• Refusal to comply with Tier 2 responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 2 Responses AND</li> <li>• After School Reset Time</li> <li>• Family conferences (in some cases, immediate)</li> <li>• Behavior Intervention Plan development or review by Student Support Team</li> <li>• In-School Suspension</li> <li>• Out of School Suspension*</li> </ul>

*\* Suspension decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act. This Act states that students cannot be suspended or expelled unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds.*

<b>Tier 4 Infraction Behaviors Include:</b>	<b>Tier 4 Responses May Include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented patterns of persistent Tier 3 behaviors</li> <li>• Severe, persistent, or pervasive bullying, verbal, written, or electronic, or other physical behavior that results in another student's physical or emotional distress</li> <li>• Repeated sexual harassment</li> <li>• Possession of a weapon+</li> <li>• Possession or use of drugs or alcohol</li> <li>• Refusal to comply with Tier 3 responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 3 Responses AND</li> <li>• After School Reset Time</li> <li>• Family conferences</li> <li>• Creation, Review and/Modification of Behavior Intervention Plan</li> <li>• Out of School Suspension*</li> <li>• Recommendation for expulsion*</li> </ul>

*\* Suspension and expulsion decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act. This Act states that students cannot be suspended or expelled unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds. Effective this year, the 2020-2021 school year, the law applies to all students (Preschool - 8th Grade) at ITDS.*

*+Possession of a weapon will result in an automatic suspension and may result in expulsion.*

### **Policy regarding weapons, drugs, alcohol, and violence**

Our Community Expectations identify the presence of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol, violence, and threats of violence as serious offenses that require serious consequences. Possession of a weapon will result in an automatic suspension and may result in expulsion. Circumstances will be taken into account on a case by case basis. The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School abides by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) when suspending or expelling students who are a part of the Special Education Program.

Offenses include:

- Behavior that violates the Gun Free Schools Act
- Use, possession, or bringing a weapon to school. Weapons include but are not limited to: loaded or unloaded firearms, lighters, pocket knives, pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns, knives, razor blades, explosives, fireworks, tear gas, and tasers.
- Use, possession or distribution of alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes or smoking paraphernalia
- Use, selling, or distribution of marijuana or other substances with THC or CBD, prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia
- Physical assault/attack on a member of the school community
- Threats, intimidation, or other comparable conduct which causes or attempts to cause severe physical injury, substantial disruption, or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of Inspired Teaching Demonstration School
- Gang activity, or recruitment
- Sexual violence
- Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other level in this section that is illegal, causes significant disruption to the school's operation, threatens or causes substantial harm to self or others.
- Repeated acts of bullying and/or sexual harassment

### **Suspension**

Suspension may be designated to be served in school or out of school. Suspension of a student is a consequence for inappropriate behavior choices that warrant the removal of a student from the

classroom or the school for a period of time. During in school suspension, the student will be assigned to a designated space and may not participate in school events including extra-curricular activities. During out of school suspension the student may not attend school or participate in school events including extra-curricular activities. The school will create a plan for providing instructional resources to any student who is suspended and will share the plan with the student's family.

These decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act. This Act states that students cannot be suspended or expelled unless the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds.

- **Step 1:** The Principal or designee will contact the parent/guardian to inform them of the reason(s) and the decision to suspend the student, as well as provide the details of the suspension. All notices regarding suspension will be given to the parent/guardian in writing and must be signed by the Principal.
- **Step 2:** Students who are suspended will be given school work for the duration of time they are out of the classroom. Students will also have a designated point of contact to support completion of assignments. This is to ensure that the student continues to receive their education during the period of suspension.
- **Step 3:** For students with disabilities (this includes students with IEPs or 504 Plans and students who are in the process of being evaluated for Special Education) who are suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, a multi-disciplinary team will review all relevant educational records contained in the student's file or in possession of the school to determine whether the student's violation of school rules was a manifestation of the student's disability according to published guidelines for conduct of a Manifestation Determination.
  - a. If it is determined that the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the circumstance will be reviewed with consideration for the student's disability and the act or behavior warranting the review.
  - b. If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student's file will be reviewed to determine disciplinary action in accordance with the policies contained in this section.
- **Step 4:** The student and their family are asked to review and affirm their commitment to the school discipline policy.

#### **Appeals Process**

***Short-term Suspension (fewer than 5 days):*** For all suspensions, as noted in Step 1 above, parents/guardians will receive details of the suspension in writing. Parents/guardians will be given the appropriate contact information to discuss and/or appeal the suspension with the Principal or Head of School.

***Long-term Suspension (5 days or greater):*** Parents/guardians may appeal a long-term suspension through an appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee

consisting of the Head of School, a Principal, and other members of the school's team as deemed appropriate. The appeal must be made in writing within 24 hours of notification of suspension and be delivered by email, or by hand to the Head of School or designee.

A hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible after the Head of School receives notice of the appeal from the parent/guardian. To ensure that the student does not fall behind academically while the appeal is underway, the student will receive coursework until the appeal process is complete (as noted in Step 2, above).

- At the appeals hearing, the Principal will present the information supporting the recommendation for the long-term suspension.
- At the appeals hearing, the parent/guardian will present oral and or written statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal.
- Students (age eleven and older) may have the option to attend and present an oral or written statement.
- The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a decision within 24 hours of the hearing; ideally the decision will be made the same day.
- The decision of the appeals committee in affirming OR reversing the suspension decision is final.

Manifestation meetings, as required by law, will proceed regardless of whether a family appeals an expulsion decision

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an action taken only as a last resort, and only in accordance with DC Law. It is a consequence used for repeated offenses by a student who shows an inability to correct his or her behavior after repeated measures and options have been exhausted. It is also a consequence for a behavior that violates the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School's policy regarding weapons, drugs, alcohol, and violence.

## **Expulsion Process**

- If a student is under consideration for expulsion, the Principal will notify the parent via phone and in writing of the recommendation. The student will be considered suspended until the expulsion is final.
- Once the student is placed under consideration for expulsion, the parent/guardian is asked to pick up their student. The student is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school-sponsored activities, field trips, or programs.
- The Principal determines when to recommend expulsion. The recommendation will then be sent to the Head of School and a meeting will be held with the family/guardian to confirm the circumstances and the reason for the recommendation.
- The Head of School will make a final decision on the expulsion. The parent/guardian will be notified by phone and mail of the decision within 48 hours.

## **Appeals Process**

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to expel a student through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee consisting of the Head of School, the Principal, and other members of the school's team as deemed appropriate. The appeal must be



made in writing within 48 hours of notification of expulsion and be delivered by email, or by hand to the Head of School.

Once the appeal is received, a hearing is scheduled no more than three (3) business days after the Head of School receives notice of the appeal from the parent/guardian. To ensure that the student does not fall behind academically while the appeal is underway, the student will receive coursework until the appeal process is complete.

- At the appeals hearing, the Principal will present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the recommendation to expel.
- At the appeals hearing, the parent/guardian will present oral and or written statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal.
- Students (age eleven and older) may have the option to attend and present an oral or written statement.
- The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a written decision within 48 hours of the hearing.
- The decision of the appeals committee in affirming OR reversing the Head of School's decision is final.

Manifestation meetings, as required by law, will proceed regardless of whether a family appeals an expulsion decision.

## Attendance Policy

### Attendance

Attendance is critical to every student's success at the Inspired Teaching School. We expect all students to be at school every day, for the entire day. It is equally important that students arrive on time and leave on time. When a student is absent for any reason, please check with the teacher regarding missed work. Experience has shown that catching up after an absence can be difficult and stressful for a child, and for this reason we discourage absences for reasons other than illness or emergency.

**If a student must be absent, families MUST notify the school and provide the reason for the absence.**

Please call the school office at 202-248-6825 or email [attendance@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:attendance@inspiredteachingschool.org) by 8:30 am to report each day that a student will be absent. This report must be made on every day that a student is absent from school.

**Upon your student's return to school, the school must have on file a written explanation of the absence.** If you did not send an email on the day(s) of the absence, a written note or email, with your child's name, date of absence and reason for absence must be turned in to the school. The following conditions apply:

- If a student is absent for more than five (5) consecutive days he/she must return to school with a note from a doctor or other acceptable documentation explaining the absence.
- If a student is absent for eight (8) cumulative days in a school year, a parent's written excuse is sufficient for explaining the absence. Such absence will be excused if it falls under one of the excused absence reasons noted below; For nine (9) or more cumulative days per term, further documentation is required to excuse the absence. Written explanation of the student's absence must be submitted by a doctor or staff of a relevant agency, on official doctor's office/agency letterhead and signed by a relevant official.

**Any absence for which no excuse is provided within 5 days of the student's return to school will be considered an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences will not be changed to excused unless documentation of the reason for the absence is consistent with the laws of the District of Columbia (see below).**

### ***Excused Absences***

Absences can be excused within five days of the student's return to school and only for the following reasons as dictated by the laws of the District of Columbia:

- Illness of the student;
- Medical or dental appointment for the student;
- Exclusion due to contagious disease, infection or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons;
- Other immediate family emergency which requires the presence of the student outside of the school;
- Death in the student's immediate family;

- Religious Observance;
- Necessity for the student to attend judiciary or administrative proceedings as a party to the action or under subpoena;
- Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by school authorities.

If a student will be absent from school for an extended period due to an extraordinary circumstance, the Head of School, at his/her discretion, may determine the absence to be excused.

If a student is ill, he or she will not be permitted to attend school. Please do not send your child to school in the morning if the student:

- Expressed that they feel ill
- Has a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea
- Shows symptoms of a severe head cold, persistent cough, or sore throat
- Has a suspicious skin rash or is contagious (i.e. pink eye, head lice)

Parents will be called to pick up students who show signs of illness. Students are expected to be picked up within one hour of parent contact. At the discretion of the school Principal, students who are not picked up in a timely fashion may be transported to a local medical facility to receive appropriate care. Students must be symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Please contact the school immediately if your child has a contagious disease or condition (i.e. chickenpox, pink-eye, head lice) so that the school can respond appropriately.

### ***Truancy***

Students who have a pattern of lateness or are regularly absent from school will receive support and intervention from the school. This may include letters to the family reminding them of school arrival times and the reasons for missing school that would be considered “excused” and family conferences. If attendance does not improve, families will be asked to meet with school administrators to review DC law and school policies, and develop a truancy action plan.

In accordance with DC law, if a student accumulates ten (10) unexcused absences from school, they must be referred to Washington, D.C.’s Child and Family Services Agency as a chronically absent student. At the same time, the school must report the student to be truant to the Office of the State Superintendent for Education for follow up.

### **Excused Absences:**

Students who accumulate an excess number of excused absences are jeopardizing their educational and instructional progress at the school. When a student accumulates 12 excused absences, the student may be placed on the “Promotion in Doubt” list and the school will contact the family to develop an attendance intervention plan.

### **Unexcused Absences:**

In order to ensure that the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School is aware of the whereabouts of its students, and to ensure that the school is in compliance with local laws, policies and procedures of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the Public Charter School Board the following steps will be taken in response to unexcused absences:

<b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCE</b>	<b>The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School Response:</b>
Each unexcused absence	Parent/guardian will be contacted
At 6 unexcused	Parent/guardian will be contacted by the Principal, and documentation will be placed in the student's school records.
At 8 unexcused	The student will be placed on the "Promotion in Doubt" list for truancy and the school will contact the family to develop an attendance intervention plan.
At 10 unexcused	Students in grades K-8 will be referred to the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) in accordance with D.C. Law
At 15 unexcused	Students 14+ must be referred to DC Court Social Services & Office of the Attorney General, Juvenile Division per D.C. Law.

### ***Tardiness***

Prompt and regular attendance at school is essential to ensure a positive and productive learning experience for all students. Teachers take attendance in their classrooms promptly and students who arrive late must present the teacher with a late slip from the front desk so that school records accurately indicate late arrival to school. Families who accumulate excessive tardies may be referred for attendance support.

**Please Note: D.C. Law requires students to attend at least 80% of the school day to be considered present. Students missing more than 20% of the school day will be considered Absent. This means:**

- **Grades PK3-4<sup>th</sup> grade: Arrive after 10:00 AM or dismiss before 2:00pm is considered Absent.**
- **Grades 5-8: Arrive after 9:45AM or dismiss before 2:15pm is considered Absent.**

### ***Early Departure***

Students are expected to remain in class until the end of the day. Students who are picked up early miss important information and disrupt class because the teacher has to accommodate their early departure. Students under the age of 11 will not be allowed to leave the school grounds before dismissal without the physical presence of a parent/guardian or designated sibling over the age of 10, to sign them out of school at the front desk, or without written permission from the family.

We ask families to inform the school by email, [attendance@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:attendance@inspiredteachingschool.org), of any planned early dismissals by 11:00 AM. Families arriving early to pick students up must complete an early leave slip from the front desk. All early pick-ups must occur before 2:45, otherwise students will be dismissed at the regular dismissal time.

## **Grievance Procedures**

Inspired Teaching Demonstration School is committed to providing the best possible conditions for all members of the school community including students, families, visitors, teachers and administrators. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question receives a timely response from school supervisors and administrators. Inspired Teaching Demonstration School strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all students, families, visitors and employees. Everyone is expected to treat each other with mutual respect. If a student, parent/guardian, or visitor disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, or their treatment, he or she may express his or her concerns through the following problem resolution procedure. No person will be retaliated against or penalized formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Inspired Teaching Demonstration School in a reasonable, business-like manner or for participating in the investigation of a complaint pursuant to the grievance procedure.

A student, parent or guardian may initiate the grievance procedure to appeal any final decision of school personnel except as provided in section 1 below. Any person may initiate the grievance procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. This grievance procedure does not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

- This policy does not apply in the case of suspension or expulsion or in the case of alleged sexual harassment where the provisions of the Sexual Harassment Policy apply. The appeals process for expulsion and sexual harassment can be found in the Family/Student Handbook.
- Step I – Principal Conference – A parent or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the Principal to discuss the grievance and seek resolution. If a complaint of discrimination is being made against the Principal, the written request can be submitted to the Head of School, who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint. The request shall state in detail the basis for the grievance, name the specific policy, rule or law believed to have been violated, and specify the relief being sought. The written complaint can be sent or delivered to 200 Douglas St., NE, Washington, DC 20002. The following additional guidelines shall be observed in Step I:
  1. No grievance will be heard unless it has been filed in writing within thirty (30) calendar days after the act or condition giving rise to the grievance and such filing must state with particularity the basis for the grievance, the policy regulation and/or procedure, rule or law believed to have been violated, and the remedy sought.
  2. The Principal shall initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation and grant a conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the written complaint.
  3. The person making the complaint will be permitted to present any information, documents, or witnesses that he/she would like to be considered as part of this conference and investigation. All information related to the conference and investigation will remain confidential.

4. Within ten (10) school days of the conference, the Principal will respond to the complaint in writing summarizing the outcome of the investigation and any corrective or remedial action necessary.
- Step II – Appeal to Head of School – If the grievance is not resolved at Step I, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing to the Head of School. The written appeal can be sent or delivered to 200 Douglas St., NE, Washington, DC 20002. The appeal must be made within five (5) school days following receipt of the Principal’s written response. The Head of School or designee shall review the complaint, Principal’s response, and all information presented as part of the investigation, and meet with the individuals involved if necessary. Within 15 school days of receiving the appeal, the Head of School or will respond in writing summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary.
  - Step III – Appeal to the Board of Directors – If the grievance is not resolved at Step II, it may be appealed in writing to Chair of the school’s Board of Directors. Contact information for the Board Chair is as follows: Board Chair, Inspired Teaching Demonstration School, 200 Douglas St., NE, Washington, DC 20002; [boardchair@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:boardchair@inspiredteachingschool.org)

### **Notice of Grievance Procedures**

Anyone who believes that the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School has violated Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, Title II, and/or the Age Act may submit a complaint pursuant to the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School’s Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be found in this handbook or obtained by request through:

Kate Keplinger  
Chief Operating Officer  
Inspired Teaching Demonstration School  
200 Douglas St., NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-248-6825  
[kate.keplinger@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:kate.keplinger@inspiredteachingschool.org)

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School is committed to creating a diverse co-educational community and actively seeks students, faculty, and staff from different racial, cultural, religious, and economic backgrounds. The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School nurtures and values a rich intellectual environment that embraces authentic respect for individual talents, perspectives, and opinions.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VI”), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“Title II”), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (“The Age Act”), applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Inspired Teaching Demonstration Public Charter School (Inspired Teaching Demonstration School) are hereby notified that the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

Anyone having inquiries concerning the Inspired Teaching School’s compliance with Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act or who wish to file a complaint regarding such compliance should contact:

Kate Keplinger, Chief Operating Officer  
Inspired Teaching Demonstration School  
200 Douglas St., NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-248-6825; [kate.keplinger@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:kate.keplinger@inspiredteachingschool.org)

### **Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment of any sort including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The Inspired Teaching Demonstration School does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, genetic information, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place of residence, or any other protected characteristics as established by law.

Conduct deemed harassment includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating or hostile acts, denigrating jokes, display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through email), and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.



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

### **Student Records/FERPA**

Families are responsible for updating the school in the case of a change in their contact information. Changes in address, phone number, email for home or work and/or pick up authorization list must be reported to the school in writing. Families must also alert the school to any change in a student's medical record so that in the case of an emergency the school may respond appropriately. All medical and emergency information is confidential. Please submit any record changes to the receptionist using the Change of Information form as soon as possible in order to ensure that school records are up to date.

Families will be able to communicate with each other with the aid of a school directory, which is updated annually after the enrollment audit each fall. Families can opt out of the School Directory by e-mailing [info@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:info@inspiredteachingschool.org). The information in the directory may be used solely for the purposes of supporting the students, and not for commercial, religious, or political purposes.

Families can review their children's school records and request copies if desired; see below for specific information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Special education records are filed separately from the regular student files. Requests to view these records should be made directly to the student's special education case manager.

### **FERPA Rights for Families**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") 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 after the day the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School receives a request for access.

Parents, guardians, or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent, guardian or eligible student 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, or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Families or eligible students who wish to ask the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from 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) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer 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. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Inspired Teaching Demonstration 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

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(I) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))

- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11)). The Inspired Teaching School Directory contains student name and grade; parents' name, email, and phone number; and family zip codes for car pooling purposes. Families can opt out of the School Directory by e-mailing [info@inspiredteachingschool.org](mailto:info@inspiredteachingschool.org). The information in the directory may be used solely for the purposes of supporting the students, and not for commercial, religious, or political purposes.

## **Admission Preference Policy**

The Inspired Teaching Demonstration Public Charter honors the following Admission Preferences, in this order:

1. Children of Staff
2. Sibling Enrolled
3. Sibling Offered
4. Founding Board Members

ITDS also participates in the Equitable Access preference, designating a set number of seats each year for students who meet this criteria.