



# SCHOLAR & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-25



# Message From Executive Director



Dear Liberty STEAM Charter Scholars & Families,

The Liberty Team and family welcome you to the 2024-25 school year! We look forward to working with you to help your scholar be successful this school year. At Liberty STEAM Charter School, we strive to provide a safe learning environment for all children. We have high expectations of ourselves. To effectively meet our high expectations, we expect scholars and their families to take an active role in education by reading and following the Scholar & Family Handbook requirements.

This handbook is an overview of our schools' goals, services, and rules. It is an essential reference book describing what we expect of our scholars and parents, what you can expect from us, and how we will achieve our educational mission. We have attempted to make the language in this Handbook as straightforward as possible. Please note that the term "parent" is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or another person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a scholar.

The handbook includes general information regarding school policy and procedures, important health and safety information, academics and grading information, information regarding parental rights, and important notices regarding scholar information, computer resources, and electronic communication devices. The Scholar Code of Conduct is also included in the Handbook. Both scholars and parents need to be familiar with the Scholar Code of Conduct. The Scholar Code of Conduct is also available in the Academy Director's office at each school and is posted on LSC's website.

This handbook is designed to be in harmony with Liberty STEAM Charter School Board Policy. Please be aware that the Handbook and Scholar Code of Conduct may be amended or revised throughout the year. Changes in policy and procedure will be made available to parents and scholars online, through newsletters, or other communications. In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provision of this Handbook, the provision that the Board of Directors most recently adopted will be followed.

Finally, you are required to complete the required form – "Acknowledgment and Approval of Scholar Handbook" – via the electronic bank of parent/guardian forms. Questions about the material in this Handbook can be directed to the Academy Director. On behalf of the entire Liberty staff and community, best wishes for a great school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Trevor Ivey, NBCT  
Co-Founder & Executive Director



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# About Liberty STEAM Charter School

## **Mission**

Liberty STEAM Charter works to provide all scholars with equal access to a world-class K-12 education in an academically rigorous and scholar-centered learning environment, creating graduates who will be thoughtful and engaged citizens prepared to take on the leadership challenges of the 21st century.

## **Vision**

In partnership with our families and the community, our vision is to provide real-world interdisciplinary, personalized, and project-based learning experiences through a STEAM-based academic program where graduates become the next generation of leaders, employers, and employees who contribute to the economic well-being of their communities and families.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER SCHOOL ("LSC") does not discriminate in its educational programs and services, including its career and technology education programs, on the basis of sex or gender, race, religion, color, national origin, age, or disability. LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER SCHOOL complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by applicable law.

## **Homeless Liaison & Title I Participants**

Homeless children and youth are ensured specific educational rights and protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001. "Children and youth who are homeless," as defined by this federal law, means and includes children who:

- Are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement.
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations.
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations.
- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



# About Liberty STEAM Charter School

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain policies and procedures, including proof of residency requirements; immunization requirements; educational program placement; award of credit; graduation requirements; continuing enrollment in the “school of origin” or enrollment in a new school in the attendance area where the scholar is currently residing; and other related matters.

You are encouraged to inform Liberty STEAM Charter School if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. School staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

## **Special Programs**

### **Bilingual/Multilingual Learners Services**

LSC offers Bilingual/Multilingual Learners services for English language learners who are limited in their English proficiency. The program is designed to assist scholars identified as having Limited English Proficiency with development in language – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The goal of this program is to provide additional English language assistance to scholars, enabling them to become academically successful in all classes. Scholars are assessed with state-approved Oral Language Proficiency and Norm-Referenced Test to qualify for placement in the program. If the test results indicate either limited oral or limited cognitive academic English ability, the scholar (with parent approval) is provided additional English language support.

### **Special Education Services**

LSC has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities who are 5 to 21 years of age and who fall within the school’s jurisdiction. If you know or suspect that your scholar has a disability, please contact the Special Education department at your child’s school for information about available programs, assessments, and services. Parents of new scholars should advise the school of any previous IEPs or special services their child received in the past.

Special education services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of scholars with disabilities. Each scholar who receives special education services has an Individual Education Plan (“IEP”), which is developed by a team that includes but is not limited to a general educator, special educator, a school psychologist, a school administrator, and the child’s parent/guardian. The team considers the scholar’s disability and determines appropriate accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the scholar to participate in the general curriculum.

All special education services are provided in the least restrictive environment, which may be special education settings, general education settings, or a combination of both. All scholars receiving special education services are educated to the maximum extent



# About Liberty STEAM Charter School

appropriate with their non-disabled peers as well as participating in all school activities on the same basis as scholars who are not disabled.

LSC complies with South Carolina laws and the policies of the LEA who authorized our charter.

## **Providing Assistance to Scholars Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services**

If a scholar is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the Special Populations Coordinator to learn about LSC's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links scholars to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Scholars having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all scholars, including a process based on Response to Intervention ("RtI"). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on LSC's ability to meet the needs of all struggling scholars.

Parents are entitled to request an evaluation for special education services by presenting a written request to the Academy Director. LSC must, within 15 school days of receiving the request, either (1) give the parent an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation or (2) refuse to provide the evaluation and provide the parent with written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights if they disagree with LSC. Additionally, the parent will receive a copy of the Rights of Parents of scholars with Disabilities. If consent for evaluation is obtained, LSC must complete the evaluation and report within 60 school days of the date LSC receives the written consent. LSC must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

## **Section 504 Services**

LSC provides a free appropriate public education to each qualified scholar with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the scholar's disability. A "scholar with a disability" is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the scholar's major life activities, has a record of having such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. A scholar with a disability is "qualified" if he or she is between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive.

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related services that are (1) designed to meet the scholar's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of scholars who do not have disabilities are met; and (2) based on adherence to procedures that satisfy federal requirements for an educational setting, evaluation and placement, and procedural safeguards.



# About Liberty STEAM Charter School

Qualified scholars with disabilities will be placed in the regular educational environment unless LSC demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Should an alternate educational environment be necessary, LSC will comply with all legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment and comparable facilities for scholars with disabilities. In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, LSC will ensure that a qualified scholar with a disability participates with scholars who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

To be eligible for services and protection against discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a scholar must be determined, as a result of an evaluation, to have a "physical or mental impairment" that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If a scholar has or is suspected of having a disability, or requires special services, parents or teachers should contact the Academy Director for information concerning available programs, assessments, and services.

## **Getting Permission to Video & Audio Record a Scholar**

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from LSC to make a video or voice recording of your child. For purposes of this section, a "child" is a minor under the age of eighteen (18). We do reserve the right, however, to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity;  
or
- When it relates to the promotion of scholar safety in certain self-contained special education settings.

## **Parents Right to Know**

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Liberty STEAM Charter School would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your scholar's teacher(s) and/or other instructional staff members. The following information may be requested:

- Whether your scholar's teacher (s)— has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by additional and, if so, their qualifications.



# About Liberty STEAM Charter School

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the school's academy director.

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# ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT

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# Admissions & Enrollment

## **General Admissions & Enrollment Information**

Admission and enrollment of scholars shall be open to persons who reside within the geographic boundaries stated in the LSC charter, and who are eligible for admission based on lawful criteria identified in the charter and in state law. The total number of scholars enrolled in LSC shall not exceed the number of scholars approved in the charter or subsequent amendments. Total enrollment may further be limited by LSC based on occupancy limitations, code compliance and staffing availability and requirements as deemed necessary.

In accordance with state law, LSC does not discriminate in its admissions policy on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic or artistic or athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend.

## **Admissions Application**

Scholars wanting to attend LSC must submit an application by approved deadlines subject to LSC approval. LSC's annual lottery open enrollment period is from October 1-November 30 for the following school year. Applicants placed on our waitlist must re-submit an admissions application each school year within the timeline set by LSC.

## **Acceptance Procedures**

If fewer applications than spots available are received, scholars will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. If LSC receives more applications than it has spots available, it will annually conduct a random lottery the first Monday of December. Once all enrollment spots have been filled by the lottery, the lottery will continue, and applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. If a vacancy arises before the commencement of the school year, the individual on the waiting list with the lowest number assignment will be offered admission and then removed from the waiting list.

If an application is received after the application period has passed, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the applicants who timely applied.

Families offered enrollment will be provided a registration packet with instructions for registering. Families must complete and return the registration packet by the published deadline in order to secure enrollment. If an enrollment offer is declined or if you do not complete the registration packet by the established deadline, your child's seat will be offered to the next potential applicant or scholar on the waiting list. All enrollment applications and documentation must be completed and submitted within 10 days of enrollment confirmation. Documentation includes current immunization records, special education plans, lunch forms, proofs of residency, etc. Class sizes are maintained at 24 scholars with any vacant seats arising throughout the year filled from the existing waitlist.



# Admissions & Enrollment

## **Exceptions to Lottery Process**

LSC's lottery priorities are in accordance with state law, allowing preference to be given to the scholars of currently enrolled siblings as well as children of staff members & board directors in an eligible grade level being served by the school.

## **Scholar Information to Verify Enrollment Eligibility**

LSC ensures that appropriate measures are taken to verify, on enrollment, that a scholar is entitled to enroll. If the scholar was previously enrolled at any school, a scholar admitted to LSC must have records such as a report card and/or transcript from the previous school attended to verify his or her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required. Every scholar enrolling in LSC for the first time must present documentation of immunizations or exemption from such a requirement.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in LSC, the parent and public school in which the scholar was previously enrolled shall furnish records that verify the identity of the scholar. These records may include the scholar's birth certificate or a copy of the scholar's school records from the most recently attended school.

Children will not be denied enrollment because they failed to meet this requirement.

LSC will forward a scholar's records on request to a school in which a scholar seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the parents' consent.

## **Establishing Identification**

Any of the following documents are acceptable for proof of identification and age: birth certificate; driver's license; passport; school ID card; records, or report card; military ID; hospital birth records; adoption records; church baptismal record; or any other legal document that establishes identity.

## **Residency Verification**

As part of the registration process, schools must obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools in the area. To be eligible for continued enrollment in LSC, each scholar's parent must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment. Residency may be verified through observation, documentation, and other means, including, but not limited to:

- A recently paid rent receipt,
- A current lease agreement or current vehicle registration,
- The most recent tax receipt indicating homeownership,
- A current utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers.



# Admissions & Enrollment

## **Expulsions**

If a scholar commits an expellable offense, as outlined in the LSC Scholar Code of Conduct, administrators may expel the scholar only after due process has been afforded the scholar, as otherwise provided by State law, and a committee or responsible administrator has determined that expulsion is the appropriate consequence. All recommendations for expulsion shall be referred to a hearing officer appointed by LSC and shall be conducted an expulsion hearing in accordance with the district's guidelines.

## **Withdrawals**

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

A scholar under 18 years of age may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. LSC requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Parents may obtain a withdrawal form from the main office. The parent shall also provide the name of the new school in which the scholar will be enrolled and must sign the withdrawal request to document that the scholar will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by compulsory attendance laws.

A scholar who is 18 years of age or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature.

Withdrawing scholars and parents are expected to:

- Have a meeting with a school administrator;
- Return all textbooks and checked-out materials and equipment;
- Complete any make-up work assigned;
- Pay any unpaid balance for scholar fees, if any; and
- Sign a release of scholar records.

In all cases, withdrawal forms must be appropriately completed and signed before a withdrawal is complete.

### **Involuntary Withdrawal**

LSC may initiate withdrawal of any scholar for non-attendance if:

1. the scholar has been absent for fifteen unexcused absences, AND
2. the scholar has been declared truant by a court.



# **ATTENDANCE & TUITION**



# Attendance & Tuition

## Attendance

LSC's scholar attendance accounting system is in compliance with all laws, regulations, and South Carolina Department of Education rules governing attendance.

LSC shall ensure that attendance policies are distributed to staff, scholars, and parents/guardians.

Absenteeism unavoidably affects the quality of a scholar's work, interferes with normal instructional procedures in the classroom, and places additional demands on the teacher to provide remedial assistance. It negatively impacts the child who is absent as well as other scholars in the class.

In order for scholars to be counted present for the day they must be present for half the day: Monday-Thursday 51% = 226 mins and the scholar must be signed in before 11:44am or can't be signed out before 11:46am/Friday Friday 51% = 136 mins and the scholar must be signed in before 10:14am or can't be signed out before 10:16am.

## Tardiness

Nearly all tardiness is avoidable and is excusable only in cases of illness or emergency. If a scholar arrives late to school, a parent must report to the school office to complete a tardy slip. **Warning letters will be given for excessive tardies and absences.** Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary consequences as allowed by the Scholar Code of Conduct.

- 5 unexcused tardies result in a Tardy Intervention Plan (TIP) meeting,
  - Subsequent violations of the TIP will result in the AIP procedures being followed that include reporting to DSS & a board attendance hearing.

## South Carolina State Board Regulation: 43-274 - Scholar Attendance

School districts must adopt policies to define and list lawful and unlawful absences.

(A) Lawful absences include but are not limited to:

- Absences caused by a scholar's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others,
- Absences due to an illness or death in the scholar's immediate family,
- Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the scholar's faith, and
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal.

(B) Unlawful absences include but are not limited to:

- Absences of a scholar without the knowledge of his or her parents, or



# Attendance & Tuition

- Absences of a scholar without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.

(C) Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

Recognizing the importance of daily attendance, you should know that:

1. Children from ages 5-17 are required to attend school on all days that school is in session. Absences are to be used only for sickness and emergency situations.
2. A note from the parent/guardian or doctor should be sent to the school immediately following each absence (only five parent notes are accepted as excused per school year and five medical notes). Any notes or excuses that are submitted after three (3) days of absence will not be valid.
3. Parents will be contacted after three (3) consecutive or five (5) total unexcused absences.

## **Required Documentation of Absences**

A scholar absent from school, upon his or her return, must provide a written note to the school that explains the absence within two (2) days of school. The note must either be signed by a parent, guardian, or the scholar if the scholar is over the age of 17 or emancipated

## **Excused Absences**

LSC allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the scholar makes up all work. Aside from medical documentation to excuse no more than five (5) days for the year (with the exception of chronic illness or other documented medical needs) for excused absences, LSC will, only accept five (5) parent notes. In general, no more than 10 excused absences are allowed in one school year. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy day required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk;
- Documented health-care appointments for the scholar or a child of the scholar, including absences for recognized services for scholars diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the scholar's arrival or return to campus;
- Extended leave related to physical or emotional illness, a hospital stay, recuperation from an accident, or a contagious disease in the family;
- A death in the family (not to exceed one week) or mental health/therapy sessions;
- Prior school-approved travel for education or natural catastrophe and/or disaster;
- For scholars in the conservatorship (custody) of the state;



# Attendance & Tuition

- Temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, Academy Director, or Executive Director; or
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the activity outside of school hours.

Absences of up to five days will be excused for a scholar to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Absences of up to five days will be excused for a scholar to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. For religious holy days, required court appearances, activities related to obtaining citizenship, and serving as an election clerk, one day of travel to the site and one day of travel from the site shall also be excused.

## Unexcused Absences

Any absence not listed above or approved in advance by the Academy Director due to extenuating circumstances will be considered an unexcused absence. Vacations are not an acceptable cause for an excused absence from school.

## Procedures for Excessive Absences

- 3 unexcused absences - Phone call made to family (teacher/leadership)
- 4 unexcused absences - Excessive absence letter sent home
- 5 unexcused absences or 3 consecutive - Truancy letter sent home with intervention meeting date
- As absences continue, additional interventions are as follows:
  - 1st Violation
    - Follow up phone call from Academy Director or Academic Counselor
    - Home visit by leadership team and LSC/Overnight Suspension to Schedule a Mandatory Conference
  - 2nd Violation
    - AIP Revised, Office Referral #2, DSS Notified, Board Appearance
  - 3rd Violation = Referral to Family Court/Attendance Order  
*\*10 or More Unexcused Absences=Scholar will be retained.*

## Leaving Campus During School Hours

A scholar younger than 18 years old must have prior parent/guardian approval, either written or by a phone call, before that scholar may leave campus during school.

## Tuition

LSC may not charge tuition to an eligible scholar.



**REQUIRED  
INSTRUCTION  
& GRADUATION**



# Required Instruction & Graduation

LSC maintains compliance with all state laws and regulations governing curriculum and graduation requirements.

## Required Curriculum

LSC offers instruction in the essential knowledge and skills of the appropriate grade levels in the following required curriculum:

1. A foundation curriculum that includes:
  - a. English language arts and reading (HMH);
  - b. Mathematics (Eureka);
  - c. Science (Twig);
  - d. Social studies (SS Weekly) and;
  - e. STEAM (Project Lead the Way);
2. An enrichment curriculum that includes:
  - a. Languages other than English, to the extent possible;
  - b. Health education;
  - c. Physical education ("PE");
  - d. Fine Arts;
  - e. Career and technical education; and
  - f. Technology applications.

## Physical Education Requirements

All scholars in grades K–8 will engage in at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week as part of the physical education curriculum.

## Physical Education Exemption

Short-term exemptions from physical education are possible for scholars who have fewer physical abilities, illnesses, or other incapacities that a physician deems severe enough to warrant exemption or severe enough to warrant modified activity in such classes. Each case is handled on an individual basis as follows:

- Each request for exemption or for modified activity must be accompanied by a physician's certificate. Such certificates are honored but must be renewed each year.
- When the certificate will allow modified activities in class, the scholar should remain in physical education class. The teachers adjust the activities of the scholar to the disability.
- An exempted scholar may be admitted to regular physical education activities only upon presentation of a written statement from the same physician who signed the original exemption.

## Standardized Testing



# Required Instruction & Graduation

## **SC READY (South Carolina Educational Assessment Program)**

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, scholars in grades 3–8 will take state-mandated assessments, such as the SC READY, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–8.
- English and Language Arts, annually in grades 3–8.
- Science & Social Studies, as required to be administered in grades 4 & 8;

The SC READY program also includes assessments that address scholars receiving special education services and for English language learners who meet particular participation requirements set by the State.

*\*All scholars participate in the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test administered multiple times each year to assess a scholar's growth over time and what additional targets need to be set for a scholar to further increase proficiency standards.*

## **Attendance Needed for Credit**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a scholar must attend at least 180 days of each 190-day academic year. These days may include excused absences. Scholars in danger of failing due to excessive absences may be allowed to make up missed time in class sessions held outside the regular class time. The make-up sessions must be completed before the end of the current semester and all other policies must be met.

The attendance committee shall be comprised of a mix of school personnel and LSC family members. In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, thereby allowing for the scholar to be promoted, the Executive Director and/or attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be considered, with consideration given to special circumstances as defined by South Carolina Law.
- For a scholar transferring into LSC after school begins, including a migrant scholar, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a consensus about a scholar's absences, the attendance committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the scholar.
- The attendance committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the scholar or parent could exercise control.
- The attendance committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documentation expressing reasons for the scholar's absences.
- The attendance committee will consider the extent to which the scholar has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The scholar, parent, or another representative will be given an opportunity to present



# Required Instruction & Graduation

any information to the attendance committee about the absences and to discuss ways to earn or regain credit.

If credit is lost because of excessive absences, the attendance committee will decide how the scholar may regain credit or earn a final grade. If the attendance committee determines there are no extenuating circumstances and that credit or a final grade may not be earned, the scholar or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the LSC Board of Directors by filing a written request with the Executive Director. The appeal notice must be delivered to the Executive Director within 30 days following the last day of instruction in the semester for which credit was denied. The appeal will then be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Executive Director or designee shall inform the scholar or parent of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

## **Performance, Promotion, & Exit Standards**

### **General Philosophy Statement**

LSC's goal, as part of its mission and vision, is to reduce the achievement gap as quickly as possible for each scholar. However, it may be necessary from time to time to determine if a child would benefit from spending a longer period of time learning material to keep them on a trajectory to grade-level achievement. In the event that a scholar's promotion is in doubt, the classroom teachers, in tandem with the Academy leadership team and the child's parent, will use a range of indicators to formulate the decision, including formative and summative assessment data, anecdotal observations and notes, standardized test data, MTSS data, and examples of scholar work (portfolios) to determine whether or not to retain the scholar. LSC will alert the scholar's parents about the Promotion in Doubt Evaluation process as early as January and no later than Spring break of the current school year. Once a child is identified as being in doubt of promotion, classroom teachers with the support of the grade level and academy leaders will create a more targeted academic plan to help prevent retention. Classroom teachers will also work with the family of the child to offer suggestions for out-of-school interventions and suggestions for practices and activities to do while at home.

### **Special Education Scholar Population**

Scholars with IEPs and those being evaluated for special education placement will be promoted based on their individualized promotion criteria in addition to the indicators referenced above.

### **Promotion Policy**

This policy articulates the specific criteria that define promotion from one grade level to the next for all scholars in the elementary grades at LSC. All scholars are expected to meet or exceed rigorous academic standards in performance-based core curriculum, aligned to the SC Learning Standards, and, ultimately, to be prepared for college and careers.



# Required Instruction & Graduation

LSC is dedicated to meeting the educational needs of all scholars in a safe learning environment. Decisions regarding promotion and retention are based on state law and criteria defined in the current document.

All scholars at LSC are held to specific criteria that define promotion. Those criteria exist in the areas of:

- Meeting the grade level SC Learning Standards for Literacy and Mathematics.
- Scholars meet required annual attendance;
- Comprehensive classroom assessments that include portfolios, samples of scholar work, anecdotal notes, teacher assessments and observations.
- Progress reports; and benchmark assessments
- Summer school work, when applicable.
- Goals and mandated criteria on Individualized Education Program (IEP)

**LSC reserves the right to make a decision for promotion or retention when standardized test scores do not match previous scholar achievement as seen through portfolios, anecdotal notes, or teacher assessments as defined by the promotional criteria.**

The above criteria apply to the following groups of scholars in the following ways:

## **English Proficient General Education Scholars**

- Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.

## **Multi Lingual Learners (MLs)**

- Grades K-2: Consideration of language development; limited English proficiency alone is not the sole basis for retention; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria. Promotion decision is made by the Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of number of years enrolled in the United States School System; consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, NYSESLAT and State Test Scores. Promotion decision is made by Academy Director.

## **Scholars with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services**

- Grades K-2: Consideration of Grade level progress of all applicable criteria, mastery of IEP goals. Promotion decision is made by Academy Director.
- Grades 3-6: Consideration of Grade Level progress, mastery of IEP goals, IEP



# Required Instruction & Graduation

promotional criteria, State test scores. Promotional decision is made by Academy Director.

## **Scholars That Aren't Responding to the Intervention**

If, after interventions in the general education classroom & through the school's MTSS program,, the scholar continues to experience difficulty, school personnel may refer the child for a special education evaluation. Referrals for determination of eligibility for special education services may be initiated by:

- School personnel (including general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.);
- Child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s);
- Any other person involved in the education or care of the child.
  - The official referral begins the formal process of determining eligibility for special education services. Once a referral is provided, the school must obtain consent from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to begin the evaluation phase of the referral process.

## **Announcement of Promotion-in-Doubt/Retention**

Families are notified orally and in writing of possible retention through Family Conferences. The first indication of concern will be noted in by LSC staff to family of scholar and documents through a "Promotion-in-Doubt" notification by February 1. Families will be required to meet with the teachers and administrators to set goals for the scholar in this situation. If the scholar does not demonstrate improvement by May of the school year, they are identified for Retention for the following school year. Retention meetings are scheduled for the families to meet with the LSC Administration in May.

LSC will alert the student's parents about the Promotion in Doubt Evaluation process in the month of February for the current school year. Once a child is identified as being in doubt of promotion, classroom teachers, with the support of the grade level and academy leaders, will create a more targeted academic plan to help prevent retention to review with the parent by the end of February and reviewed again with the parent between six and eight weeks after the plan's initial implementation.

During the second parent conference, the parent will be notified if the scholar is being dismissed from the promotion-in-doubt list, s/he will be conditionally promoted upon completion of summer PRIDE academy, or retention is still possible.

During the third parent conference, the teacher and parent will complete the Light Retention Questionnaire together to assess the current state of the scholar's total academic performance. Classroom teachers will continue to work together with the



# Required Instruction & Graduation

family of the child to offer suggestions for out-of-school interventions and suggestions for practices and activities to do while at home.

If significant progress has not been made in correlation to an improved score on the Light Retention Questionnaire by mid-May, then a formal retention recommendation will be made by the Academy Director. A third and final conference must be held with the parent by late May followed by written notification from the Academy Director. Parents who wish to appeal the Academy Director's decision can only do so by formal written notification to the Executive Director by June 1. The Executive Director must notify parents of his/her appeal decision in writing by June 15.

## **Referral to Summer School**

Students in Grades K-5, who do not meet the promotional criteria by late May are referred to summer PRIDE Academy (Pathways for Respect, Innovation, Discipline, & Excellence). The Summer PRIDE Camp is a minimum of two weeks for K-2 scholars and three weeks for scholars in grades 3-5. The summer PRIDE academy will offer intensive academic & culture support for scholars performing six months or more below grade level. A scholar who does not complete PRIDE will be retained in the same grade the following school year.

## **Appealing the decision for Retention**

Parents who wish to appeal the Academy Director's decision can only do so by formal written notification to the Executive Director by June 1. The Executive Director must notify parents of his/her appeal decision in writing by June 15. The Executive Director will consider all relevant criteria for promotion and make a final decision for the new school year and may involve members of the relevant board committees.

## **Academic Promotion Benchmarks**

The list below includes all LSCPA school-wide assessments & other criteria used in determining promotion. The chart outlines the expected benchmarks for each assessment, at each grade level, as well as other non-negotiable criteria used for promotion decisions.



# Required Instruction & Graduation

Criteria	Time Period	Grade Level & Goal
Easy CBM (K-1 Common Formative Assessment)	Administered 4-6 X's a Year	Per Grade Level
xSEL Assessment	Administered 2x's a Year	Scholars ending the year in red could be considered a viable candidate for retention.
ELA & Math MAP Assessment	Administered 3x's a Year	All scholars should perform as follows on the EOY assessment:  Red Group (CSI - Meets Growth Target)  Yellow & Green Group (Meets Growth Target & Norm Percentile)
Response to Intervention (SIPPS/Bridges) Assessment	Administered 4 x's a Year	All intervention scholars must meet mastery benchmarks for each subtest.
ELA & Math SC Ready Assessment	Administered 1x a Year	All scholars are expected to "meet expectations." For any scholar who scores "does not meet expectations" or "approaches expectations" will automatically begin the following school year in MTSS. Scholars who do not meet expectations in 3rd grade reading are subject to summer camp based on the Read to Succeed guidelines in state statute.
Attendance	EOY	Scholars are expected to be present 95%. For any scholar who has 10 or more unexcused absences in a school year will automatically be retained.

reimagine

**HEALTH**

innovate



## Health-Related Resources, Policies, & Procedures

### Mental & Physical Health Resources

Parents and scholars in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the following campus and community resources:

- The school nurse;
- The school counselor;
- The local public health authority;
- The local mental health authority.

### Policies and Procedures That Promote Scholar Physical & Mental Health

LSC has adopted policies that promote scholar physical and mental health, in the following subject areas:

- Food and nutrition management,
- Wellness and health services,
- Physical examinations,
- Immunizations,
- Medical treatment,
- Communicable disease prevention,
- Crisis intervention,
- Trauma-informed care,
- Scholar safety,
- Child abuse and neglect prevention,
- Freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and
- Freedom from bullying.

### Prohibition of Tobacco & Alcohol

#### Alcohol-Free School Notice

To provide a safe and alcohol-free environment for scholars and employees, all alcoholic beverages are prohibited on LSC property at all times and at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property. Scholar violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Scholar Code of Conduct.

#### Tobacco-Free School Notice

Scholars are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any form of smokeless tobacco or electronic vapor product while in school buildings, vehicles, or on or near school property, or at school-related or



school-sanctioned events off school property. Scholar violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Scholar Code of Conduct.

### **Drug-Free School Notice**

LSC believes that scholar use of illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, LSC prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by scholars or any other individuals on school premises or any school activity, regardless of its location. LSC also prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of look-alike substances and/or synthetic substances designed to imitate the look and/or effects of illicit drugs. Violators are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Scholar Code of Conduct.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

If a scholar has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, LSC staff will seek emergency medical treatment unless the parent has previously provided a written statement denying this authorization. Parents are asked each year to complete an "Emergency Care" consent form, which includes information about their scholar's allergies to medications, etc. Parents should keep emergency contact information current (e.g., name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.).

### **Immunizations**

The State of South Carolina requires that every child in the state be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with an established immunization schedule.

To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your scholar, please refer to South Carolina Code of Laws.

Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

LSC shall ensure compliance with immunization laws and regulations and complies with laws and regulations regarding reportable diseases.

### **Provisional Enrollment**

A scholar may be enrolled provisionally if the scholar has an immunization record that indicates an immunization program is in progress. To remain enrolled, the scholar must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. LSC shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled scholar every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end



of the 30-day period, a scholar has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, then the scholar is not in compliance, and LSC shall exclude the scholar from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

A scholar who is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. § 11302), shall be admitted temporarily for 30 days if acceptable evidence of vaccination is not available. LSC shall promptly refer the scholar to appropriate public health programs to obtain the required vaccinations.

### **Exclusions from Immunization Requirements**

Exclusions from immunization requirements are allowable on an individual basis for medical reasons, reasons of conscience (including a religious belief), and active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

To claim exclusion for medical reasons, the scholar must present a statement signed by the scholar's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the scholar, in which it is stated that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the scholar or any member of the scholar's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

To claim an exclusion for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, written notice must be presented by the scholar's parent, stating that the scholar's name, date of birth, and decision to exempt their child from the school vaccination requirements. This must be provided at the beginning of each school year in which an exemption is sought. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one scholar in the family, a separate notice must be provided for each scholar. Scholars who have not received the required immunizations for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health.

To claim exclusion for armed forces, the scholar must prove that he or she is serving on active duty with the armed forces of the United States. Scholars who have not received the required immunizations for reasons of military service may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health. If a parent seeks an exemption for more than one scholar, a separate form must be provided for each scholar.

### **Immunization Records Reporting**

LSC's record of a scholar's immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the South Carolina Department of Education, local health departments, and South Carolina Department of Health, and transferred to other schools associated with the



transfer of the scholar to those schools.

## **Food Allergy Information**

The parent of each scholar enrolled in LSC must complete a form provided by LSC that discloses (1) whether the child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that should be disclosed to LSC to enable it to take any necessary precautions regarding the child's safety and (2) specifies the food(s) to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction.

For purposes of this requirement, the term "severe food allergy" means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

LSC may also require information from a child's physician if the child has food allergies.

Food allergy information forms will be maintained in the child's scholar records and shall remain confidential. Information provided on food allergy information forms may be disclosed to teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with Board policy and as permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA").

Documentation must be signed by a primary physician and should be provided to the nurse for any scholar with known allergies. Documentation of known allergies will be shared with Food Services staff, teachers associated with scholars, and/or any staff appropriate to the scholar. Classrooms that have a scholar(s) with any type of **NUT** allergy will be marked both inside the classroom and outside the door with a placard indicating that it is a "Nut Free Zone". Any item brought to the school by staff or families will be required to be purchased from a store, and must still have the label of ingredients attached and intact on the item. Incentive socials should have food items that adhere to all allergies within the classroom. It is recommended that we not have any ice cream, but instead popsicles as an option.

## **Communicable Diseases**

To protect other scholars from contagious illnesses, scholars infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of scholars with a communicable or contagious disease should notify the Academy Director or designee so that other scholars who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

School authorities, including network staff, an Academy Director, teacher, school health official, or counselor, will report those scholars who are suspected of having a reportable condition. A list of reportable conditions can be retrieved from the main office at each campus or through the South Carolina Department of Health.



Any scholar excluded from school attendance for reason of communicable disease may be readmitted by one or more of the following methods, as determined by the local health authority:

- Certificate of the attending physician, advanced practice nurse, or physician assistant attesting that the child does not currently have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease or to the disease's non-infectiousness in a school setting;
- Submitting a permit for readmission issued by a local health authority; or
- Meeting readmission criteria as established by the commissioner of health.

## **Administration of Medication**

Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. If necessary, medication can be administered at school under the following circumstances:

- Prescription medication brought to school must be submitted by a parent, along with a written request. The medication must also be in the original and properly labeled container and given to the nurse. No other school employee is able to accept it.
- Prescription medications administered during school hours must be prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and filled by a pharmacist licensed in the State of South Carolina.
- Prescription medications must be submitted in a labeled container showing the scholar's name, name of the medication, reason the medication is being given, proper dosage amounts, the time the medication must be taken, and the method used to administer the medication. Medications sent in plastic baggies, or unlabeled containers will NOT be administered.
- If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if required by the scholar's Individualized Education Program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan for a scholar with disabilities.
- Only the amount of medication needed should be delivered to the school, i.e., enough medication to last one day, one week, etc. In cases of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Extra medication will not be sent home with the scholar.
- Children require an over-the-counter written consent form signed by parent/guardian prior to administration of OTC medications. Parents indicate on the OTC form which medications the school staff may administer when providing care to the child. Verbal consent will not be accepted.

Changes to daily medication require written instruction from the physician or dentist, and written permission from the parent. Parents are responsible for advising LSC that a medication has been discontinued.



## **Authorized Employees**

Employees authorized by LSC to administer prescription medication include: registered nurse & staff members trained by the registered nurse.

## **Self-Administration of Prescription Asthma or Anaphylaxis Medicine**

The nurse of each campus shall ensure that a scholar with asthma or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer prescription medication if the scholar has physician's orders and parent permission. The medication must have been prescribed for the scholar and be in an original container with a prescription label. If a scholar experiences a severe allergic reaction, the nurse or supervising adult is authorized to administer the appropriate anaphylaxis drug. A scholar may self-administer the drug if he/she meets the requirements below.

Before a scholar may be allowed to self-administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication, the parent must provide:

- Signed, written authorization for the scholar to self-administer the prescription medicine while on school property or at a school-related activity; and
- A written statement signed by the child's physician or provider that states that the scholar has asthma and/or anaphylaxis and is capable of self-administering the prescription medication;
- The name and purpose of the medicine;
- The prescribed dosage of the medicine;
- The time(s) at which or circumstances under which the medicine may be administered; and
- The period for which the medicine is prescribed.

Written authorizations to self-administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication should be updated annually unless otherwise indicated by the scholar's physician.

## **Psychotropic Medication**

An employee may not:

- Recommend that a scholar use a psychotropic drug;
- Suggest any particular diagnosis; or
- Preclude a scholar from attending class or participating in a school-related activity if the parent refuses to consent to the administration of a psychotropic drug to a scholar or to a psychiatric evaluation or examination of the scholar.

This does not prevent an employee from:

- Making an appropriate referral under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education



Act;

- Recommending that a child be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner if the employee is a registered nurse, advanced nurse practitioner, physician, or certified/credentialed mental health professional;
- Discussing any aspect of a scholar's behavior or academic progress with the scholar's parent/guardian or another LSC employee.

## **Dyslexia & Related Disorders**

From time to time, scholars may be tested and, where appropriate, treated for dyslexia and related disorders in accordance with programs, rules, and standards approved by the state. Parents will be notified in the event that LSC determines a need to identify or assess their scholar for dyslexia and/or related disorders.

## **Vision & Hearing Screenings**

All children enrolled in South Carolina schools must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems in accordance with state law and regulation. Scholars in certain grade levels identified by state regulations shall be screened for vision and hearing problems annually. A scholar may be screened using photo screening to detect vision disorders. Parents will be notified of the results of any such screening.

## **Exemption**

A scholar is exempt from screening requirements if screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is an adherent or a member. To qualify for the exemption, the individual or, if the individual is a minor, the minor's parent, managing conservator, or guardian, must submit to the Academy Director or designee on or before the day of admission an affidavit stating the objections to screening.

## **Pest Control**

LSC periodically applies pesticides to school buildings and grounds to control unwanted pests, such as insects and rodents. We will post notices of those treatment dates as required by law and will schedule treatment times when scholars or employees are least likely to be in the building or on the grounds.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

All school facilities have been inspected for asbestos by a licensed Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act ("AHERA") inspector. An Asbestos Management Plan has been created for LSC in compliance with state and federal regulations. Parents may view the Asbestos Management Plan in the office during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you have any questions, please contact LSC's Director of Operations.



## **Posting of Steroid Notice**

LSC does not permit steroid use. A notice shall be posted in a conspicuous location in the school gym or in each other place in a building where physical education classes are conducted.

## **Toileting**

Toilet training is a process that varies from age to age and ability to ability. Typically children are toilet trained between the ages of 2 and 3 years old. Therefore, most children entering LSC's Kindergarten program are able to toilet themselves with minimal supervision, including properly wiping.

The background is a solid dark red color. It features a repeating pattern of white line-art icons representing various educational fields: science (microscope, globe, beaker), arts (palette, pencil), mathematics (compass, ruler), and general education (books, desk, graduation cap). The words 'reimagine' and 'innovate' are written in a large, white, lowercase, sans-serif font, with a slight transparency. The words 'SCHOLAR SAFETY' are written in a bold, white, uppercase, sans-serif font, positioned in the center-left of the page. A faint, light-colored circular graphic is visible in the lower right quadrant.

# reimagine

# SCHOLAR SAFETY

# innovate

## **Scholar Code of Conduct**

LSC has adopted a Scholar Code of Conduct in accordance with Federal, State, and Local laws.

The Academy Director shall ensure that the Scholar code of conduct is distributed to each scholar at the beginning of the year. Transfer scholars shall receive a Scholar Code of Conduct upon enrollment.

Scholars with disabilities: any change in placement and/or any disciplinary action regarding a scholar with a disability, who needs or is believed to need special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act, shall be in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

## **Child Abuse Reporting & Programs**

Using resources developed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS), LSC provides child abuse anti-victimization programs and cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. LSC also provides training to its teachers and scholars in preventing and addressing incidents of abuse and other maltreatment of scholars, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a scholar may be a victim of abuse or maltreatment. Assistance, interventions, and counseling options are also available.

School administrators will cooperate with law enforcement investigations of child abuse, including investigations by the South Carolina DSS. School officials may not refuse to permit an investigator to interview at school a scholar who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect. School officials may not require the investigator to permit school personnel to be present during an interview conducted at school.

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the scholar's parents.

## **Reporting Child Abuse**

Any LSC employee, volunteer, or agent who believes a child has been adversely affected by physical, sexual, or mental abuse or neglect shall make a report immediately upon first suspecting such abuse or neglect. The report shall be made to law enforcement or the South Carolina DSS. School personnel who reasonably suspect child abuse or neglect will make a report in good faith. A "reason to believe" is sufficient in order to make a good faith report. State law provides both civil and criminal immunity to those reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in good faith. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to make a determination of whether the child is in need of protection. Any involvement of school personnel in investigation or treatment should be in conjunction with the local child protection unit of the department of social services.



Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to the South Carolina DSS within twenty-four (24) hours. Reports may be made by contacting local law enforcement or 911.

While the Board recognizes that certain employees are mandatory reporters as provided in S.C. Code § 63-7-310, it also believes that communication through a central point person on staff is the most efficient way in which to meaningfully address such concerns. It is ideal for that individual to be LSC Academic Counselor. The Board believes that the LSC Academic Counselor should be the designated point person for each campus. If the Academic Counselor is not on campus, the Academy Director is designated as that individual. If an employee does not wish to make the report with the LSC Academic Counselor, the employee making the report is asked to inform the LSC Academic Counselor of any oral or written report submitted in a case of child abuse or neglect. It is the Board's desire that the Executive Director always be made aware of any reports that are made. The LSC Academic Counselor is responsible for arranging training and disseminating information necessary to help staff members identify possible instances of child abuse and neglect.

Any matter that requires the attention of law enforcement should always be made through the School Resource Officer. If at any point in time the additional presence of law enforcement on campus is requested outside of an emergency situation (i.e. active shooter, etc.), it should be made through the Academy Director and the School Resource Officer. Whenever this occurs, the Executive Director should be made aware and the Network Office Serious Incident Report should be completed via Liberty Connect. LSC has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children (the "Plan"). The Plan is addressed in this section of the Handbook.

## **Methods for Increasing Awareness Regarding Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment of Children**

### *For Staff*

LSC annually trains staff in all content areas addressed in the Plan. Training is provided by campus staff, administrative staff, and/or outside agencies as determined by campus administration.

### *For Scholars*

School counseling staff shall address issues to increase awareness regarding sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, along with anti-victimization programs with age-appropriate conversation and materials no less than once per school year. These discussions will occur in classroom group settings.

### *For Parents*



Parents must be aware of warning signs indicating that their child may have been or is being sexually abused or otherwise maltreated. A child who has experienced sexual abuse or other maltreatment should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that evidence of sexual abuse or other maltreatment may be more indirect than disclosures or signs of physical abuse. It is important to remain calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing in coming to you.

The fact that the abuser is a parent or other family member does not remove your obligation to protect the child. Parents and/or guardians who permit a child to remain in a situation where he/she may be injured or abused may also be subject to prosecution for child abuse or neglect. Also remember that parents and/or guardians are legally responsible for the care of their children and must provide their children with safe and adequate food, clothing, shelter, protection, medical care, and supervision, or arrange for someone else to provide these things. Failure to do so may be considered neglect, and may also subject the parent/guardian to prosecution for child neglect. The Academy Director or designee will provide information regarding counseling options available in your area for you and your child if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment. The South Carolina DSS also provides early abuse intervention through counseling programs.

These websites are also helpful:

- Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs:  
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventions-programs/sexualabuse/>
- Promoting Healthy Families in Your Neighborhood:  
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/packet.pdf>
- Signs of Child Abuse:  
<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>

### **Likely Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment**

Psychological and behavioral signs of possible sexual abuse or other maltreatment may include:

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation.
- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; becoming withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, "checking out" or showing significant changes in eating habits.
- Depression or irritability.
- An older child behaving like a young child, for example, bedwetting or thumb sucking.
- Developing fear of certain places or resisting being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons.
- Resistance to routine bathing, toileting, or removing clothes, even in appropriate



situations.

- Play, writing, drawings, or dreams of sexual or frightening images.
- Refusal to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child.
- Leaving clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.
- Using new or adult words for body parts.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children.
- Developing special relationships with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Intentionally harming him or herself, for example, drug/alcohol use, cutting, burning, running away, and sexual promiscuity.
- Thinking of self or body as repulsive, dirty, or bad.
- Becoming increasingly secretive about Internet or telephone use.

Physical symptoms of possible sexual abuse or other maltreatment include:

- Stomach aches or illness, often with no identifiable reason.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Stained or bloody underwear.
- Genital or rectal pain, itching, swelling, redness, or discharge.
- Bruises or other injuries in the genital or rectal area.
- Unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around mouth, sexually transmitted disease, or pregnancy.

Any one sign does not necessarily mean that a child has been sexually abused or maltreated, but the presence of several signs is the time you should begin asking questions and seeking help. Often signs first emerge at other times of stress, such as during a divorce, death of a family member or pet, problems at school or with friends, or other traumatic or anxiety-inducing events.

### **Actions That a Child Who Is a Victim of Sexual Abuse or Other Maltreatment Should Take**

During scholar awareness sessions concerning sexual abuse and other maltreatment issues, scholars will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in a private and confidential conversation if they have been a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment or have been in situations that make them feel uncomfortable in any way. School employees are trained to take appropriate actions to help the child obtain assistance and to follow proper reporting procedures. Older scholars will also be provided with local crisis hotline numbers to obtain assistance.

### **Freedom From Discrimination, Harassment, & Retaliation**

#### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

LSC prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any scholar on the basis of race,



# Scholar Safety

color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by law. LSC also prohibits dating violence, as defined by this Handbook. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of school policy.

## **Discrimination**

For purposes of this Handbook, discrimination against a scholar is defined as conduct directed at a scholar on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law and that adversely affects the scholar.

## **Prohibited Harassment**

Prohibited harassment of a scholar is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the scholar's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities.

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **Sexual Harassment & Gender-Based Harassment**

In compliance with the requirements of Title IX, LSC does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. Sexual harassment of a scholar, including harassment committed by another scholar, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

- Affects the scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities.



Examples of sexual harassment of a scholar may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

LSC also does not tolerate the sexual harassment of a scholar by school employees, or vice versa. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between scholars and school employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a scholar and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

Sexual harassment of a scholar by a school employee and/or sexual harassment of a school employee by a scholar includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- A school employee causes the scholar to believe that the scholar must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educated decision based on whether or not the scholar submits to the conduct; or
- The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:
  - Affects the scholar or employee's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities; or
  - Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a scholar's gender, expression by the scholar of stereotypical characteristics associated with the scholar's gender, or the scholar's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a scholar, regardless of the scholar's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## **Dating Violence**

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a scholar may include physical or sexual assault, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the scholar or the scholar's family members or members of the scholar's household, destroying property belonging to the



scholar, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the scholar ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the scholar from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

For purposes of this Handbook, dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects the scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities.

## **Retaliation**

LSC prohibits retaliation against a scholar alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another scholar who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation. Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

A scholar who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a school investigation regarding discrimination or harassment is subject to appropriate discipline and may be subject to prosecution.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any scholar who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment or believes that another scholar has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, the Academy Director or designee, or other school employee. Alternatively a scholar may report prohibited harassment directly to the appropriate Coordinator identified in this Handbook.

A scholar shall not be required to report prohibited harassment to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX Coordinator or ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, may be directed to the Board of Directors. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

## **Investigation of Complaints**

After receiving a complaint of prohibited discrimination or harassment, LSC may require the scholar to prepare a written report. Oral complaints will be reduced to written form. Upon



receipt of a complaint, the appropriate Coordinator or other authorized school official shall promptly authorize and undertake an investigation and prepare a written decision regarding the complaint, including a determination of whether prohibited discrimination or harassment occurred.

When appropriate, LSC may take interim action to avoid additional opportunities for discrimination or harassment. In extreme cases, law enforcement may be notified. The school investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and any others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. If the results of the investigation establish that prohibited discrimination or harassment occurred, LSC shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the discrimination or harassment and prevent its recurrence. LSC may take disciplinary action based on the results of an investigation, even if it concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy.

The Academy Director, or the Academy Director's designee, may make a report to local law enforcement authorities if, after an investigation is completed, the Academy Director or designee has reasonable grounds to believe that a scholar engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense.

### **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, LSC shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.

### **Appeal**

A scholar or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the LSC grievance procedure. A scholar shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### **Freedom From Hazing**

LSC prohibits hazing, which means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off-campus directed against a scholar for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization if the act:

- Is any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity;
- Involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the scholar to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the scholar;



# Scholar Safety

- Involves consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance, other than described in item 5 below, that subjects the scholar to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the scholar;
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the scholar to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the South Carolina Penal Code; or
- Involves coercing, as defined by Penal Code, the scholar to consume a drug or an alcoholic beverage or liquor in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the scholar is intoxicated.

LSC will not tolerate hazing, and will impose disciplinary consequences for hazing conduct as allowed by the Scholar Code of Conduct. Additionally, it is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report to the Academy Director or Executive Director.

## **Freedom From Bullying & Cyberbullying**

LSC prohibits bullying and cyberbullying as defined below, as well as retaliation against anyone who reports or is involved in an investigation of bullying.

State law defines "bullying" as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more scholars directed at another scholar that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a scholar, damaging a scholar's property, or placing a scholar in reasonable fear of harm to the scholar's person or of damage to the scholar's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a scholar; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or LSC; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which is defined by state law as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

LSC's anti-bullying policy applies to:



# Scholar Safety

- Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
- Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately-owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of scholars to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying:
  - Interferes with a scholar's educational opportunities; or
  - Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any scholar who believes that he or she has experienced any form of bullying or believes that another scholar has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to the Academy Director or designee, a teacher, counselor, or other LSC employee. A report may be made orally or in writing and may be submitted anonymously. Any LSC employee who receives notice that a scholar has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the Academy Director or designee. The Academy Director or designee shall notify the victim, the scholar who engaged in bullying, and any scholar witnesses of available counseling options.

The Academy Director or designee will also provide notice of the incident of alleged bullying to:

- A parent or guardian of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the date the incident is reported; and
- A parent or guardian of the alleged bully within a reasonable amount of time after the incident.

## **Investigation of Report**

The Academy Director or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited discrimination or harassment and, if so, proceed under that policy instead. The Academy Director or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate, including contacting law enforcement, if necessary.

The Academy Director or designee shall prepare a written report of the investigation, including a determination of whether bullying occurred. If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the school shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance



# Scholar Safety

with the Scholar Code of Conduct. LSC may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the school concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying under this policy.

A scholar who receives special education services will be disciplined for conduct meeting the definition of bullying or cyberbullying within applicable requirements under federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.). LSC may not impose discipline on a scholar who, after an investigation, is found to be a victim of bullying, based on that scholar's use of reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying.

The Academy Director, or the Academy Director's designee, may make a report to local law enforcement authorities if, after an investigation is completed, the Academy Director or designee has reasonable grounds to believe that a scholar engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense.

## **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, LSC shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

## **Appeal**

A scholar or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through LSC's scholar or Parent Complaint or Grievance Concern procedure.

## **Interrogations & Searches**

In the interest of promoting scholar safety and attempting to ensure that LSC is safe and drug-free, school officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may question a scholar regarding the scholar's own conduct or the conduct of other scholars. In the context of school discipline, scholars have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Scholars shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by school officials. School officials may search a scholar's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the scholar's voluntary consent.

A search is reasonable if (1) the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation and (2) the scope of the search is reasonably related to the circumstances justifying the search, such as the extent of the search, the objectives of the search, the age and sex of the scholar, and the nature of the infraction.



## **Desk & Locker Searches**

Scholars should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers, desks, or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to scholars remain at all times under the control and jurisdiction of LSC. LSC will make periodic inspections of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or scholar consent. School officials will remove any item that violates school policy or that may potentially be dangerous.

Scholars have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found therein. A scholar's parent shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a scholar's locker or desk, or on the scholar's person.

## **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property and property under school control are under the jurisdiction of LSC and may be searched at any time if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the search will result in evidence that school rules or other laws have been violated. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the scholar/owner shall be asked to unlock the vehicle and consent to a search of the vehicle. If the scholar refuses to permit the vehicle to be searched, LSC may contact the scholar's parents and/or law enforcement officials. A scholar may be held responsible for and in possession of prohibited items found in his or her vehicle parked on school property or at a school-related event.

## **Law Enforcement Agencies**

### **School Resource Officers at LSC**

School Resource Officers (SROs) are full-time sworn law enforcement officers who are employed by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office. School Resource Officers' responsibilities fall into three main categories, which the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) refers to as the SRO Triad: teacher, informal counselor, and law enforcement officer. SROs are responsible for the physical security of campuses, while also cultivating positive relationships with students and staff to help resolve conflicts and issues before they escalate into serious issues. SROs are also called upon to present to students on professional topics such as laws, report writing, accident reconstruction, and crime scene techniques. SROs only become involved in a discipline issue at LSC if a law is suspected to be broken or has been verified by a school administrator to be broken.

### **Questioning of Scholars**

When law enforcement officers wish to question or interview a scholar at school, the Academy Director will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:



# Scholar Safety

- The Academy Director or designee shall verify and record the identity of the official and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the scholar at school.
- The Academy Director or designee ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the scholar's parent, unless the interviewer raises what the Academy Director or designee considers to be a valid objection.
- The Academy Director or designee ordinarily will be present during the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the Academy Director or designee considers to be a valid objection. If a scholar requests the presence of a school representative during questioning from law enforcement or Department of Social Services, then the request will be honored.
- If DSS does question a scholar on school premises, the parent/guardian will not be notified.

When the investigation involves allegations of child abuse, special rules apply.

## **Scholars Taken Into Custody**

State law requires LSC to permit a scholar to be taken into legal custody:

1. Pursuant to an order of the juvenile court;
2. Pursuant to the laws of arrest;
3. By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the scholar has engaged in conduct that violates a penal law, delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision, or conduct that violates a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile and/or circuit court;
4. By a probation officer if there is a probable cause to believe the scholar has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile and/or circuit court;
5. Pursuant to a properly issued directive to apprehend;
6. By an authorized representative of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, as required by law; or
7. To comply with a properly issued directive to take a scholar into custody.

Before a scholar is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the Academy Director or designee will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, verify the official's authority to take custody of the scholar.

The Academy Director or designee will immediately notify the Executive Director and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the Academy Director or designee considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the Academy Director or designee does not have the authority to prevent



or delay a scholar's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

## **Staff Notification**

LSC is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a scholar who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile or circuit court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a scholar who has been convicted, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate school personnel in regards to a scholar who is required to register as a sex offender.

## **School Visitors**

All visitors to LSC must sign-in at the school campus administrative office. A sign at the entrance to the campus will direct visitors to the appropriate location.

All visitors must present a form of identification or, at a minimum, their name, and date of birth. LSC personnel process each visitor through the Ident-A-Kid system, and/or other database system which checks for sex offender status and any open warrants. All approved visitors will be issued a badge that is to be worn at all times while visiting the school campus. Upon their departure, they must sign-out at the central administrative office and return the visitor's badge. Visitors who do not submit a form of identification or their name and date of birth for the purpose of checking sex offender status shall not be allowed on school grounds. A parent of a scholar enrolled at LSC who does not provide identification or name and date of birth shall follow the same policy.

## **Volunteers at LSC**

A volunteer is an adult who is not employed by the School, and who serves on an occasional or regular basis in the school setting to assist the professional staff. A volunteer gives his or her time for the purpose of helping children through planned auxiliary services, and serves without receiving compensation or economic benefits. Volunteers at LSC must:

- Be at least 18 years of age; and shall agree, in writing to abide by all policies, regulations, and procedures of the school; are subject to the same screening procedures used for the regular school employees, including but not limited to the following: The school will require appropriate state criminal background checks as outlined in law on any individual recommended to be employed in a paid or volunteer position; and shall serve under the immediate supervision of a licensed



professional school employee to the extent practicable;

Volunteers will be categorized by two levels.

Level 1 volunteers are persons who will be under the supervision of an LSC employee and will be screened through the National Sex Offenders Registry through the Ident-a-Kid check-in software in the front office of LSC.

Level 2 volunteers are persons who will possibly be unsupervised while with LSC students and will undergo a more comprehensive SLED criminal background check. The school will pay the fee for the background checks for volunteers who wish to be approved for Level 2. The school will not permit individuals whose names appear in the National Sex Offender Registry or individuals who have been required to register as a sex offender pursuant to the state law to work or serve in the school in any capacity (field trips, mentors, etc.). All Level 2 volunteers must complete the full volunteer application found online at the LSC website by applying for the "volunteer" position.

Volunteers are not considered employees of the school, and have no right to any benefit of employment provided to the school employees, including, but not limited to, wages other pay, insurance, or employment rights; Serve in an at-will capacity, and may be relieved of their volunteer duties whenever, in the judgment of the Executive Director or his/her designee, it is in the best interests of the school to do so; Shall not provide transportation for school-sponsored activities, and shall not transport any individual student in his/her capacity as a school volunteer; Shall maintain the same confidentiality standards expected of certified personnel, and shall not access confidential student records or files; Serve as role models who influence the development of young people and are subject to the same standards of conduct and ethics as expected from all other staff, both at school and away from campus.

## **Registered Sex Offenders**

Registered sex offenders are generally prohibited from entering school grounds.

### **Exception**

A parent/guardian who is required to register as a sex offender may enter school grounds for the following limited purposes:

- To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the academic and/or social progress of the parent/guardian's child;
- To attend an IEP meeting or other conference where evaluation or placement decisions may be made respecting the scholar's special education services;
- When the Academy Director has requested the parent/guardian's presence for any other reason concerning the parent/guardian's child; or



- To transport the child to school or pick up the child from school.

Requirements for the Exception to Apply:

1. The parent/guardian must notify the Academy Director of the purpose of the visit and when the visit will occur, including date and time, before the parent/guardian enters the school grounds.
2. The Academy Director shall notify the administrative offices of the parent/guardian's intent to visit.
3. The parent/guardian must check-in at the campus administrative office upon arrival and departure from the school.
4. The parent/guardian must remain under the direct supervision of staff at all times.

Even under the limited circumstances set out above, the parent/guardian will not be permitted to enter or be present on school property if:

- The individual's parental rights have been terminated;
- The individuals' presence at school is prohibited by court order or conditions of probation; or
- The Executive Director or campus administrator determines that the individual poses a threat to scholar safety or is likely to cause a disturbance to the educational environment.

In those cases, communications regarding the scholar will be conducted by alternate means such as telephone, mail, or electronic communications. Where the administration determines that a meeting is necessary, it will identify an appropriate meeting place where scholars are not present.

## **Procedures for Use of Restraint & Time-Outs**

School employees, volunteers, or independent contractors are authorized to use restraint in the event of an emergency and subject to the following limitations:

- Only reasonable force, necessary to address the emergency, may be used.
- The restraint must be discontinued at the point at which the emergency no longer exists.
- The restraint must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the scholar and others.
- The scholar may not be deprived of basic human necessities.

If a major disturbance occurs at LSC involving a scholar, the Disturbance Incident Response Team will be activated. Trained members also receive CPI training (Crisis Prevention Institute Training) for restraining purposes. At no time, however, may a scholar be placed in



seclusion. Seclusion is an involuntary confinement of a scholar alone in a room or area from which the scholar is physically prevented from leaving. This procedure isolates and confines a scholar until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to self or others for an extended period of time. It may be used on an individual basis for a limited time to allow the scholar the opportunity to regain control in a private setting. This method must not be used to address behaviors such as general non-compliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusal. Such behaviors must be responded to with less stringent and less restrictive techniques.

A scholar with a disability may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet, or other specially designated locked space as either a discipline management practice or a behavior management technique.

### **Fireworks**

A person may not explode or ignite fireworks within 600 feet of any LSC campus unless that person receives authorization in writing from that school.

### **Weapon & Concealed Handgun Prohibition**

LSC prohibits the use or possession of any firearm, knife, club, or other weapon while on the premises of the school or any school grounds or building in which a school activity is being conducted.

Any scholar who possesses, uses, or transfers a firearm on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity will be recommended for expulsion for one calendar year. A firearm is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive. The term firearm also includes any explosive, incendiary, poison gas, bomb, or grenade. On a case-by-case basis, the SCPCSD Superintendent with the recommendation of the [school leader and/or school board] may modify the one calendar year expulsion recommendation.



**MISCELLANEOUS  
PROVISIONS  
RELATING TO  
SCHOLARS**



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

## Religious Expression

LSC prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of religion.

A scholar enrolled has the right to silently pray or meditate at LSC, so long as it does not disrupt the instructional day or other activities of the school. LSC shall not require, encourage, or coerce any scholar to engage in or to refrain from prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## Pledges of Allegiance

Each school day, scholars will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag. Parents may submit a written request to the Academy Director or designee to excuse their scholar from reciting a pledge.

## School Calendar

LSC operates according to the school calendar adopted annually by the Board of Directors. Holidays may be used as school make-up days for days lost due to bad weather. The latest changes to the calendar will be available on the LSC website.

## School Day

### Primary Academy

- Monday - Thursday 7:50 am - 3:10 pm
  - Drop-Off & Breakfast Served 7:30 am - 7:50 am
  - Scholars are marked tardy after 7:55 am. Back gates open at 2:45 pm with scholars being loaded beginning at 3:10 pm.
- Fridays 8:00 am-11:50 am
  - Drop Off & Breakfast Served 7:30 - 7:50 am
  - Scholars are marked tardy after 7:55 am. Back gates open at 11:15 am with scholars being loaded at 11:40 am. All scholars must be picked up by 12:15 pm.

### Elementary Academy

- Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 3:20 pm
  - Drop-Off & Breakfast Served 7:40 am - 8:00 am
  - Scholars are marked tardy after 8:05 am. Side gates open at 2:45 pm with scholars being loaded beginning at 3:20 pm.
- Fridays 8:00 am-11:50 pm
  - Drop Off & Breakfast Served 7:40 - 8:00 am
  - Scholars are marked tardy after 8:05 am. Side gates open at 11:15 am with scholars being loaded at 11:50 am. All scholars must be picked up by 12:15 pm.



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

## **Textbooks & Curriculum Materials**

State-approved textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class, except for dual credit courses. Materials must be used by the scholars as directed by the teacher and treated with care. A scholar who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

Scholars must return all textbooks and supplemental materials to the teacher at the end of the school year or when the scholar withdraws from school. Any scholar failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and educational materials until the scholar and/or parent pay for the damages. However, a scholar will be provided textbooks and educational materials for use during the school day. LSC may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the scholar is from a low-income family. Release of scholar records, including official transcripts, will be delayed pending payment for lost or severely damaged textbooks or when the scholar withdraws from school.

## **Transcripts**

LSC maintains an academic achievement record (transcript) for each scholar enrolled. Transcripts list complete personal scholar data, give complete scholastic grades, and report scholar activities, honors, and scores on standardized achievement tests.

## **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, & Organizations**

Participation in school-related activities is an excellent way for a scholar to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other scholars. Participation, however, is a privilege and not a right. Additional information regarding extracurricular activities, clubs, and organizations may be obtained from the Academy Director.

Participation in these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When LSC arranges transportation for these events, scholars are required to use the transportation provided by LSC to and from the event. Exceptions may only be made with approval from the activity's coach or sponsor.

**Please note:** Sponsors of scholar clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior – including consequences for misbehavior – that are stricter than those for scholars in general. If a violation of organization rules is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Scholar Code of Conduct or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

## **Fees**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a scholar. Scholars are expected to provide their own consumable



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

items, such as pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, calculators, headsets, etc. scholars may be required to pay certain fees or deposits, including:

- A fee for materials for a class project that the scholar will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials;
- A fee for voluntary scholar health and accident benefit plan;
- A reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school;
- A fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the scholar;
- A parking fee;
- A fee for replacement of a scholar identification card;
- If offered, a fee for a driver training course, not to exceed the actual cost per scholar in the program for the current school year;
- A fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff;
- A fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year;
- A reasonable fee, not to exceed \$50, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a scholar who was absent from class receives instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a financial hardship or discourage the scholar from attending the program;
- A fee for lost, damaged, or overdue library book; or
- A fee specifically permitted by any other statute.
- Activity fees, as appropriate.

LSC may waive any fee or deposit if the scholar and parent are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the Academy Director or designee, and include evidence of inability to pay. Details for the fee waiver are available in the Academy Director's office.

## **Meals in the Eagle Cafe**

LSC proudly participates in the Community Eligibility Program as part of the National School Lunch Program where all scholars are able to eat breakfast & lunch at no cost. A grant through the US Department of Agriculture provides for this opportunity, but families are required to annually complete the alternate household income form in August.

## **Displaying a Scholar's Artwork, Projects, Photos, & Other Original Work**



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

Teachers may display scholar work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of scholar achievement. However, LSC will seek parental consent before displaying scholar artwork, special projects, photographs taken by scholars, and other original works on the LSC website, on any campus or classroom website, in printed materials, by video, or by any other method of mass communication. LSC will also seek consent before displaying or publishing an original video or voice recording in this manner.

## **Distribution of Materials or Documents**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for LSC may be posted or distributed with prior approval by the Academy Director and/or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

### **Non-School Materials**

Scholars must obtain express prior approval of the Academy Director or designee before distributing, posting, selling, or circulating written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials on campus.

Non-school literature shall not be distributed by scholars on LSC property if:

- The materials are obscene, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience.
- The materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of scholars.
- The materials promote illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.
- The distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person.
- The materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others.
- The materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action.
- The materials are hate literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or contain content aimed at creating hostility and violence, and the materials would materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of others.
- There is reasonable cause to believe that distribution of the non-school literature would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Any scholar who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed. Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials over which LSC does not exercise control shall not be



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

sold, circulated, or distributed by persons or groups not associated with LSC or a school support group on school premises unless the person or group obtains specific prior approval from the Executive Director or designee. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring organization or individual.

## **Electronic Devices & Technology Resources**

### **Possession & Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices & Other Electronic Devices**

While we strongly encourage scholars NOT to have any personal cell phones, they are permitted to keep one in their bookbag out of sight for safety purposes. Cell phones are considered by LSC to be a distraction during the school day and not allowed to be used. Any communication that is urgently needed to be relayed to a scholar can be done through the school Remind App which is monitored by our front office staff, Class Dojo which is monitored by each individual teacher, or by calling the main office of the respective campus.

A scholar must also have permission from the Academy Director to possess other personal telecommunication devices (such as a pager, notebook computer, laptop, tablet, or other portable computing device) at school. Scholars may also be permitted to possess other electronic devices (for example, MP3 players, iPods, video or audio recorders, DVD players, or similar electronic devices). Such devices must be turned off between the regular school day hours, including after-school programs. Such devices may not be visible in the pocket of a jacket or pants; items must be completely put away and out of sight.

If a scholar possesses a personal telecommunication device or other electronic device without permission (being used or visibly out during the school day), school staff will collect the item and turn it into the Academy Director's office. A parent will be required to pick up the device and meet with a designated school administrator and logged into ABE as a warning conference. Future violations will result in disciplinary action. The use of mobile telephones or any other device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in restroom areas or other sensitive areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event. It is prohibited to capture any images, electronic or otherwise, of a person's body to which he/she has a reasonable expectation of privacy.

If a scholar uses a telecommunication device or other electronic device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. If the scholar and parent have executed a waiver permitting the scholar to possess an electronic communication device at school, LSC officials may power on and search the device if there is reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct and/or Federal, State, or local laws. These guidelines apply even if the item in use is not the property of the scholar found in violation of the policy. A confiscated device may be picked up from the Academy Director's office and



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

a warning conference will be held & logged into ABE. LSC will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of confiscated items. Future violations will result in disciplinary action.

## **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunication & Other Electronic Devices**

In some cases, scholars may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Scholars must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. When scholars are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action. LSC is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen personal device.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology Resources**

School-owned technology resources for instructional purposes may be issued to individual scholars. Use of these technological resources, which include LSC's network systems and use of school equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Scholars and parents will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgment Form regarding the use of these school technology resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

## **Unacceptable & Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Scholars are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually-oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is LSC-owned or personally owned if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually-oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Scholar Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a scholar, we encourage you to review with your child the "Before You Text: Sexting & Bullying Prevention, Education & Intervention Course," a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology. You can view the course here:  
<https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>

In addition, any scholar who engages in conduct that results in a breach of LSC's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.



# Miscellaneous Provisions Relating to Scholars

## **Change of Address or Telephone Number**

Parents are responsible for notifying LSC when a scholar's address or telephone number changes. Proof of residency at the new address may also be required.

## **Uniform Requirements**

As authorized by the LSC charter, scholars are required to wear uniforms to school. LSC's uniform policy and grooming standards are designed to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, minimize safety hazards, and provide a dress standard that offers flexibility for the parent and scholar. Scholars must come to school cleanly and neatly groomed and wearing clothing that will not be a health or safety hazard to the scholar or others and that will not distract from the educational atmosphere of LSC. A daily uniform culture check will be conducted each morning and parents will be contacted via phone/letter if their scholar is out of uniform. As a uniform-based school, participation in the uniform policy is mandatory.

Parents must provide their scholar(s) with the required uniform. LSC will annually provide one free uniform polo shirt to each scholar in the beginning of the school year. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the Academy Director or designee and include evidence of the inability to pay. Further details are available in the Academy Director's office. Uniform checks are conducted daily and parents are contacted of any scholar in violation by 9:00 am. Scholars who do not follow LSC's guidelines for personal attire and appearance may be subject to discipline under the Scholar Code of Conduct. Newly enrolled scholars may be provided with a grace period of up to two weeks to obtain the LSC uniforms that include the Liberty logo while wearing, at a minimum, non-LSC logo color-approved polo shirts and approved color shoes, socks, & belt. All scholars wearing bottoms are expected to have their shirts tucked in with a belt.

## **Child Nutrition Program CNP**

LSC participates in the Community Eligibility Program within the National School Lunch Program sponsored by the USDA, which allows scholars to receive a nutritionally balanced lunch daily at no cost. Breakfast is served in the classroom and is free to all scholars. For more information regarding our Child Nutrition Program, visit our school website.

## **Transportation**

If a special needs scholar is receiving bus transportation as a result of an Individual Education Plan ("IEP"), the Individual Education Plan ("IEP") Committee will have the discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences related to inappropriate behavior in a school vehicle. All other scholar infractions on school vehicles will be handled by the Scholar Code of Conduct.





# Scholar Code of Conduct

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all scholars by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of every scholar. In addition to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship must also be taught and modeled by school staff. To foster an orderly and distraction-free environment, LSC has established this Scholar Code of Conduct ("the Code") in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws and the school's open-enrollment charter. The Code has been adopted by the Board of Directors and provides information to parents and scholars regarding expectations for behavior, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline.

The Code will be posted at each LSC Academy and/or will be available for review at each Academy Director's office. Parents will be notified of any violation that may result in a scholar being suspended or expelled. Scholars and staff must be familiar with the standards set forth in the scholar Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

The Code does not define all types and aspects of scholar behavior, as LSC may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Code. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the scholar and may or may not constitute violations of the Code. When scholars participate in scholar activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines and constitutions that further specify the organization's expectations, scholar behavior, and consequences.

## **Authority & Jurisdiction**

LSC has disciplinary authority over a scholar:

- During the regular school day and/or while the scholar is going to and from school on LSC transportation;
- During open lunch periods in which a scholar is allowed to leave campus;
- While the scholar is in attendance at any school-related event or activity, regardless of time or location;
- For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
- For any expulsion offense committed while on LSC property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of LSC or of any other school in South Carolina;
- For any expulsion offense committed away from LSC property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the misconduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment;
- While the scholar is in transit to or from school or to or from school or school-related activities or events;
- When retaliation against a scholar, school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
- When the scholar commits any felony, regardless of time or location; and



# Scholar Code of Conduct

- When criminal mischief is committed on or off LSC property or at a school-related event.

## Reporting Crimes

In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Standards for Scholar Conduct

Each scholar is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Meet LSC's standards of grooming and dress.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of scholars, teachers, and other LSC staff and volunteers.
- Respect the property of others, including LSC property and facilities.
- Cooperate with and assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Scholar Code of Conduct.

## Discipline Management Techniques

Disciplinary techniques are designed to improve conduct and to encourage scholars to adhere to their responsibilities as members of the school community. Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Discipline will be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the scholar's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the scholar's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements.

Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense, unless otherwise specified by law, may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

## Techniques

The following discipline management techniques may be used—alone or in combination—for behavior prohibited by the Scholar Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

- Assignment of school duties such as cleaning or picking up litter.
- Behavioral contracts.
- Cooling-off time or "time-out."



# Scholar Code of Conduct

- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel.
- Rewards for positive behavior.
- Demerits.
- Detention.
- Expulsion from LSC, as specified in the expulsion section of the Code of Conduct.
- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by policy.
- In-school suspension, as specified in the suspension section of the Code of Conduct.
- Out-of-school suspension, as specified in the suspension section of the Code of Conduct.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Referral to an outside agency or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by LSC.
- School-assessed and school-administered probation (final warning contracts).
- Seating changes within the classroom.
- Sending the scholar to the office or other assigned area.
- Techniques or penalties identified in individual scholar organizations' extracurricular standards of behavior.
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- Verbal correction, oral or written.
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, field trips, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.
- Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges.
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by school officials, including, but not limited to, requests that parents "shadow" their children at school for a specified period of time.

## **Corporal Punishment**

LSC will NOT administer corporal punishment upon a scholar for misconduct.

## **Board of Directors Perspective regarding Scholar Conduct**

It is the opinion of the board that acceptable scholar behavior, including the following criteria, is to be expected from all scholars: respect to peers, faculty, and staff exhibited through actions and speech, pride in personal and school property exhibited by taking care of the physical building and respecting the property rights of others, desire and effort toward educational achievement are to be priorities as exhibited by following teacher/staff direction; reporting to class promptly and consistently; and being prepared to work without interfering with instruction, obedience to all laws, discipline code, rules, and community norms

The board believes that all scholars should receive fair and consistent discipline when



# Scholar Code of Conduct

school rules are violated. Therefore, this definitive code on scholar discipline was developed with the assistance of parents/legal guardians, scholars, teachers, and administrators from Liberty STEAM Charter.

Scholars in grades pre-k through 12 will participate in code of conduct instructional sessions as part of culture camp and be retaught during culture resets at the change of each quarter. Teachers and scholars will document that instruction has occurred. After instruction has been completed, academy directors will sign and submit an attestation form to the discipline office. Each school will provide intervention strategies that address or redirect non-conforming behaviors.

## **Scholar Conduct Away from School Grounds or School Activities**

The board expects administrators to take appropriate action when information becomes available about scholar misconduct away from school grounds or school activities that may have a direct and detrimental effect on or seriously threaten the discipline, educational environment, safety, or general welfare of scholars, faculty, staff, and/or administrators of the network. When assessing the impact of out-of-school behavior on a school, the administrator will take into consideration the seriousness of the alleged out-of-network offense and the protection of scholars, faculty, staff, and administrators from the effects of violence, drugs, and/or disruptions.

Administrators are directed to evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, administrators or their designees should meet with the scholar upon his/her arrival at school, give the scholar notice of the concerns based on the reported out-of-network behavior, and allow the scholar an opportunity to present his/her side of the story. Based upon all of the circumstances, including a finding that the alleged conduct will have a direct and immediate effect on the school will or threatens the discipline, educational environment, safety, or general welfare of scholars, faculty, staff, and/or administrators of the school, the administration may either permit the scholar to attend classes as usual or may take appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension in order to conduct an investigation into the matter. The parents/legal guardians of scholars will be notified of any action taken by the administration and offered the opportunity for a team conference.

In the event the scholar is arrested or incarcerated based on his/her out-of-network conduct, the academy director or his/her designee will notify the scholar that he/she is to meet with the administration prior to returning to school. At the conclusion of the inquiries to obtain more information on the matter, the administrator or his/her designee will take appropriate action, which may include, but not limited to, one or more of the following: returning the scholar to his/her normal class schedule and removing all evidence of suspension, placing the scholar on probation and allowing the scholar to resume his/her normal class schedule, placing the scholar on probation, allowing the scholar to continue class work, but restricting the scholar's participation in extracurricular activities and/or designated school activities (e.g. clubs, study halls, pep rallies, scholar government, etc.), suspending the scholar, recommending expulsion of the scholar from



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regular school and placement in the network's alternative program, recommending expulsion, or recommending expulsion of the scholar for the remainder of the year.

The disciplinary action must be supported by the evidence and take into full consideration the impact of the scholar's presence at school on the discipline, educational environment, safety, or general welfare of other scholars, faculty, staff, and/or administrators.

## **Scholar Code of Conduct Offenses & Consequences**

The categories of conduct below are prohibited at school, involving school work and during all school-related activities, or as otherwise described in the Authority and Jurisdiction section above, with Level I as the least serious offenses and Level III as the most serious offenses. Each level also has a listing of corresponding administrative actions.

### **Level I Offenses**

Activities engaged in by scholar(s) which tend to impede orderly classroom procedure or instructional activities, orderly operation of school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturb the classroom or school.

- Aiding others
- Bus violation (refer to the transportation policy)
- Cheating
- Confrontation/altercation
- Cutting activity
- Cutting class
- Detention violation
- Dishonesty
- Disrupting class
- Dress code violation
- Driving violation
- Gambling
- Horseplay
- ID violation
- Inappropriate affection
- Inappropriate behavior
- Inappropriate language
- Littering
- Loitering
- Obscene gesture
- Off limits area
- Property misuse



# Scholar Code of Conduct

- Refusal to obey/defiant
- Running
- Excessive absences or tardies
- Profanity towards scholar
- Violation of Attendance Intervention Plan
- Unauthorized device

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

Violations in this level may result in, but not exceed, the following administrative actions:

### *Grades Pre-K through five*

- 1st offense: temporary removal from class & overnight suspension to hold an administrative warning conference with the parent/guardian, scholar, and school staff
- 2nd offense - one (1) to two (2) class days Center for Personal Responsibility (in-school suspension) & parent/legal guardian conference with Intervention Agreement
- 3rd Offense – one (1) day of Saturday School & update Intervention Agreement (Parent Required to Attend Saturday School)
- 4th offense - one (1) to three (3) class days out-of-school suspension, update to Intervention Agreement
- 5th offense - three (3) to five (5) class days out-of-school suspension & Strict Probation Contract, Notification to Executive Director
- 6th offense - five (5) to seven (7) class days out-of-school suspension & Pre-Expulsion Conference Facilitated by the Executive Director
- 7th offense - Recommendation for Expulsion

## **Level II Offenses**

Activities engaged in by scholar(s) which are directed against persons or property, and the consequence of which tends to endanger the health or safety of oneself or others in the school.

- Bite/pinch/spit
- Bullying\* (Violation of an "On Notice" Agreement)
- Computer violation
- Cutting school
- Cyberbullying\*
- Failure to comply with disciplinary action
- Fighting\*



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- Forgery
- Harassment\*
- Hit/kick/push
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Intimidation\*
- Larceny/theft
- Leaving school
- Major disruption
- Other offense (minor)
- Profanity towards adult
- Sex violation
- Threat\*
- Throwing object
- Tobacco
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- Vaping
- Repetitive Level I offenses – i.e. two or more level I offense administrative referrals within a semester

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

(may not necessarily be followed in order and progressive disciplinary measures are not required)

### *Grades pre-K through 5*

- 1st Offense - one (1) to three (3) class days out-of-school suspension and Implementation of an Intervention Agreement
- 2nd offense - three (3) to five (5) class days out-of-school suspension and parent/legal guardian conference, Updated Intervention Agreement & Strict Probation Contract, with Notification to Executive Director
- 3rd offense – five (3) to seven (7) class days out-of-school suspension, Updated Intervention Agreement, & Pre-Expulsion Conference Facilitated by the Executive Director
- 4th offense - Recommendation for Expulsion

*Note regarding special education scholars:* Administrators must ensure that all procedural safeguards afforded to special education scholars are also implemented in such circumstances and procedural safeguards are given to the parent at the time the decision is made.

The following aggressive offenses may result in a recommendation for expulsion with the



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second offense:

- Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Fighting
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Threat
- Any combination of these six offenses

## Level III Offenses

Activities engaged in by scholar(s) which result in violence to oneself or another person's property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others in the school.

- Aggravated assault
- Alcohol/liquor violation
- Arson
- Bomb threat
- Bribery
- Burglary
- Contraband
- Strict probation contract violation
- Drug distribution
- Drug possession
- Drug usage
- Embezzlement
- Extortion
- Tampering with the fire alarm
- Fireworks
- Force sexual offense
- Fraud
- Gang activity
- Homicide
- Indecent exposure
- Kidnap/abduction
- Non-force sex offense
- Other offense (criminal)
- Pornography
- Robbery
- Sexual harassment
- Simple assault



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- Vehicle theft
- Possession of weapons (real or look alike)
- Any discretionary or mandatory expulsion violation under South Carolina Code of Laws.
- Any repetitive Level II offenses - i.e. two or more level II offenses or three or more over the course of a year, whether the same or in any combination.

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

(may not necessarily be followed in order and progressive disciplinary measures are not required)

Offenses in this level require a suspension and an administrative hearing that may result in expulsion from school. Decisions will be based upon the maturity level and age of the scholar.

- referral to the hearing officer
- 10 days out-of-school suspension until the hearing before the hearing officer which will take place within seven (7) days of the written notification at a time and place designated by the hearing officer

## **Scholar Code of Conduct Consequences**

### **Detention or Loss of Privileges**

Detention may be held on each day during school for up to two hours. Scholars who serve detention must make arrangements to be picked up from school. Loss of Privileges may also be assigned that could include, but not be limited to, recess being taken away, not participating in school-wide incentive activities, silent lunch detention, etc.

### **Saturday School**

As an alternative to out of school suspension for Level I offenses, the school provides the opportunity for the scholar to be retaught culture expectations & school-wide procedures during Saturday School over a three-hour period (9am-12 Noon). Scheduled and facilitated by the Academic Counselor or his/her designee, parents of scholars attending Saturday School are required to attend. If the parent/guardian is unable to participate, the scholar cannot participate and the consequence reverts back to in-school suspension.

### **After School Detention**

The following rules apply to scholars assigned to after school detention:

- Scholars will bring materials to complete. Classroom materials may also be sent by a teacher.
- Scholars will not be permitted to go to their lockers during detention; all materials



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must be brought to the detention room when reporting.

- Sleeping is not permitted.
- Scholars will follow all rules concerning classroom behavior. Failure to comply will mean suspension from school.
- Any scholar assigned to detention must stay the entire time. scholars refusing to complete their time will be suspended from school.

## **Suspension**

LSC utilizes four kinds of suspension: in-school suspension designated as the Center for Personal Responsibility (CPR), out-of-school suspension, overnight suspension, or reverse suspension.

### *Overnight Suspension*

When a scholar is assigned an overnight suspension, s/he is not allowed to return to school until a parent conference is held with school staff. For each day a scholar is absent until a parent conference is held, the scholar's attendance will be recorded in PowerSchool as an "out of school suspension."

### *Reverse Suspension*

When a scholar is assigned a reverse suspension, the parent is required to attend school with the scholar a minimum of one-half of the length of a fully school day. The parent must check in with the Academic Counselor to review the expectations of appropriate conduct while being in the classroom with their scholar and then review their "exit ticket" with the academic counselor before leaving.

### *In-School Suspension*

The following rules and regulations apply to all scholars assigned to in-school suspension, also referred to as the Center for Personal Responsibility (CPR).

- The goal of the Center for Personal Responsibility consequence is to keep the scholar in the learning environment but have a consequence that allows the scholar to learn from their mistakes and earn their way back into the regular classroom environment.
- Scholars must report to the Culture Interventionist at 8:00 a.m. CPR will be run from 7:45 a.m. until dismissal time.
- Scholars will bring materials to complete, including a CPR assignment with their teachers' names, subjects, and assignments. scholars are responsible for obtaining assignments from each teacher.
- Scholars will not be permitted to go to their lockers. All materials must be brought to the room when reporting.
- Scholars may not bring food or drink into the CPR room.



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- No disruptive behavior will be allowed.
- Unexcused absences from suspension will be referred to the Academy Director.
- Sleeping is prohibited.
- Scholars must abide by the LSC policies and behavioral standards during their suspension period.
- A scholar who misses a scheduled CPR session without a confirmed excuse will be assigned one day out of school suspension. If a scholar misses more than one scheduled CPR session without a confirmed excuse, he or she may be subject to expulsion.

Failure to follow these guidelines will be reported to the Academy Director for further action, which may include up to three days of out-of-school suspension or any other Level I consequence.

## *Out-of-School Suspension*

The Academy Director will give notice of suspension and the reasons for the suspension to the scholar. In deciding whether to order out-of-school suspension, the administrator may take into consideration factors including self-defense, prior discipline history, intent or lack of intent, the academic value of in-school suspension, and other appropriate or mitigating factors determined by the administrator.

## **Removal From School Transportation**

A scholar being transported by LSS transportation to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity may be removed from a school vehicle for conduct violating LSC's established standards for conduct in a school vehicle.

*Note regarding special education scholars:* Administrators must ensure that all procedural safeguards afforded to special education scholars are also implemented in such circumstances and procedural safe guards are given to the parent at the time the decision is made. Scholars with identified disabilities - notify school psychologist; see discipline for scholars with identified disabilities addendum.

## **School Leader Actions to Take For Level 1-3 Offenses**

The Board of Directors and its administration will treat all scholars with fairness during the resolution of disciplinary matters. Administrative actions may vary based upon the seriousness of behavior and developmental age of the scholar. The board directs the administration to adhere to due process requirements when making decisions directly affecting scholars' protected rights under federal and state law in accordance with policy *Scholars' Due Process Rights*. Actions may range from in-school suspension to permanent expulsion.



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Administrators must do the following:

- Give rudimentary hearing
- Oral notice of charges to scholar
- Explanation of evidence against scholar
- Scholar given opportunity to tell his/her version
- Require notification to parent/legal guardian
- Require classroom interventions for Level I offense in accordance with the school discipline plan, when applicable
- Require payment for damages, if applicable
- Will confer with staff on the extent of the consequence
- Make referral to appropriate school staff for intervention services (required for Level I, and Level II)
- Consider a possible referral to outside agency, as required
- Consider a possible referral to law enforcement agency
- Require the scholar to make up class work missed while on suspension in accordance with the network's make-up policy
- Notify the parent anytime disciplinary action is being taken against a scholar via phone
- Require conference with parent/legal guardian when scholar's behavior results in suspension
- Inform the parent/legal guardian that the hearing officer will conduct hearings in accordance with state law and in compliance with board policies (*Expulsion of Scholars*), as required
- Investigate alcohol or drug related offenses; see procedures for investigation (*Drug and Alcohol Use by Scholars*) and guidelines for drug/alcohol related offenses as provided by the school intervention program
- Investigate bullying, intimidation, and harassment (HIB) offenses; see procedures for investigating (*Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying*)

## **Extenuating, Mitigating, & Aggravating Circumstance**

The board confers upon the Executive Director or his/her designee the authority to consider extenuating, mitigating, or aggravating circumstances that may exist in a particular case of misconduct. Such circumstances should be considered in determining the most appropriate action. The board realizes extenuating circumstances occur in which a scholar may bring an unauthorized item to school. Upon realizing the item is in his/her possession, he/she must immediately notify a teacher, staff member, administrator, or school resource officer. However, if the scholar chooses not to submit the unauthorized



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item to school officials, and he/she is found in possession of the item, the scholar is subject to the disciplinary process outlined in this administrative rule.

## **Discipline of Scholars with an Individual Education Program (IEP)**

Liberty STEAM Charter school follows the provisions as outlined in the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Exceptional Children's guide entitled Special Education Process Guide for South Carolina (Revised March 20, 2013) and according to any subsequent revisions. This guide is posted on the Special Education Department's page on the district's website.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows the parents of a child who has not been determined eligible for special education and related services to assert IDEA protections, including the use of due process, in circumstances when the LEA/District had knowledge that the child was a child with a disability before the occurrence of the behavior that caused the disciplinary action. (34 CFR § 300.534(a).

When a child with a disability violates the Scholar Code of Conduct, that behavior could result in suspension or expulsion. Such removals from school are subject to the disciplinary provisions of special education law. Therefore, the LEA/District officials must consider suspension and expulsion for children with disabilities very carefully.

A student defined under IDEA as having a disability or a student defined under Section 504 as having a handicap may not be suspended for more than 10 school days unless an IEP or a 504 school-based team of professionals who have knowledge of the student and the handicapping condition meets to first determine that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability/handicap. In such cases, if suspension is imposed, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team is obligated to provide an educational program for students with disabilities as defined in the Special Education Process Guide for South Carolina. A student with a disability may be removed by school/district administrators to an interim alternative education setting for 45 school days for drugs, weapons and serious bodily injury offenses. The district may not be obligated to provide services in an alternative setting for Section 504 students.

## **Conferences, Hearings, & Appeals**

All scholars are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by applicable state and federal law, and LSC policy.

## **Process for Suspensions**

In addition to the above list of Code of Conduct violations, the Academy Director has authority to suspend a scholar for a period of up to ten school days for any of the following additional reasons:



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- The need to further investigate an incident,
- A recommendation to expel the scholar, or
- An emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

## *Prerequisites to Suspension*

Prior to suspending a scholar, the Academy Director or designee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the scholar to:

1. Notify the scholar of the accusations against him/her,
2. Allow the scholar to relate his or her version of the incident, and
3. Determine whether the scholar's conduct warrants suspension.

## *Notification to Parents/Guardians*

If the Academy Director or designee determines the scholar's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the Academy Director or designee will make a reasonable effort to notify the scholar's parent(s) that the scholar has been suspended before the scholar is sent home. Ideally, a parent conference is held the same day in which the disciplinary action is being taken. The Academy Director or designee will notify a suspended scholar's parent(s) of the period of suspension, the grounds for the suspension, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the Academy Director.

## *Reverse Suspension*

Anytime a scholar receives an out-of-school suspension, a parent must bring their scholar back to school on the day after their last suspension to participate in a readmission conference with the goal of creating an intervention agreement to prevent further incidents. In addition, the parent/guardian may be required to stay in school the first day back with their scholar to participate in the regular school day activities as their scholar's "shadow."

## *Overnight Suspension*

Anytime a parent conference is required by LSC administration but cannot be held on the same exact day or when a parent cannot be reached, a scholar can be assigned an overnight suspension that requires the parent/guardian to bring their scholar to school the following morning for a conference with school leaders. Overnight suspensions are not recorded on a child's record unless the parent does not report with their scholar on the following day.

## **Scholar Expulsion Policy and Procedures**

If the Executive Director or his/her designee (the administration) investigates a report of student misbehavior, and the administration determines the student should be recommended for expulsion, the administration shall notify the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the recommendation, suspend the student from school and all school activities during the time of the expulsion procedures, and refer the matter directly to the



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LSC Board of Directors. To remove any bias, LSC will utilize a hearing officer with no ties to the school who is a licensed educator in the State of South Carolina and holds an Tier II principal certification. The Board charges the Executive Director with implementing this policy.

## **Notice of Expulsion Recommendation and Preliminary Hearing**

Within seven (7) calendar days following receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the LSC Board Chair or officer who will preside over the preliminary expulsion hearing will notify the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), in writing, of the following:

- the rule(s) infraction alleged to have occurred;
- the right of the student to review his/her records, including the investigative documents and any other evidence the administration intends to present at the preliminary expulsion hearing;
- the right of the student to a hearing on the evidence;
- the time and place of the preliminary hearing; and
- the procedures to be utilized at the preliminary hearing, including the student's right to be represented by legal counsel at his/her expense.

The notice will include a response form requesting that the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) advise the LSC Board of Directors whether they intend to appear at the preliminary expulsion hearing, and whether they will be represented by legal counsel. If the response form is not signed and returned to the LSC Board Chair or hearing officer at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the scheduled preliminary hearing date, the preliminary hearing may proceed as scheduled or the preliminary hearing may be postponed by the hearing officer. The hearing officer shall schedule the preliminary hearing as soon as practical, but no more than fourteen (14) calendar days following the notification to the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the expulsion recommendation, unless a later date is agreed to with the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s). An audio recording of the preliminary hearing and/or written minutes summarizing the preliminary hearing will be taken.

The hearing officer will conduct the preliminary expulsion hearing. Both the LSC administration and the student will be permitted to present evidence related to the recommendation for expulsion. Each side will be limited to ten (10) minutes for their presentation and five (5) minutes to ask questions of the other side. The hearing officer shall determine if the recommendation for expulsion should be upheld and turned over to the LSC Board of Directors for an expulsion hearing and final decision. If the hearing officer decides to uphold the recommendation for expulsion, the student shall have an expulsion hearing before the LSC Board of Directors. The hearing officer only has the power to enter a final decision to overturn the recommendation for expulsion. Within ten (10) days of the



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preliminary hearing, the hearing officer shall issue a written decision to the parties.

## **Expulsion Hearing Procedures**

If the hearing officer upholds the recommendation for expulsion, the LSC Board Chair or his/her designee shall notify the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) in writing within seven (7) days of the hearing officer's decision of the time and place of the expulsion hearing, the right of the student to a hearing on the evidence, the procedures to be used at the expulsion hearing, and the student's right to be represented by legal counsel at his/her expense. The record from the preliminary expulsion hearing will be provided to both parties at least three (3) days before the hearing in front of the LSC Board.

The expulsion hearing will begin with the administration presenting the hearing officer's decision and the reasons for the hearing officer's recommendation that the student be expelled for the remainder of the school year. Following the administration's presentation, the student and/or his/her representative will be provided an opportunity to present to the LSC Board why the hearing officer's recommendation should not be followed and/or to present his/her case. After the administration concludes its presentation, the student and/or his/her representative will be given an opportunity to present his/her case. The case may consist of written statements or other materials, in addition to any testimony offered by the student and witnesses on the student's behalf. Following the presentation, the administration will also be allowed an opportunity to ask questions of the student and/or any witnesses presented.

Typically, each side's presentation will be limited to ten (10) minutes and each side's opportunity to ask questions of the other side's witnesses will be limited to five (5) minutes. The LSC Board of Directors may, in its discretion, grant additional time upon request by a party, and if granted, each side will be allowed an equal amount of time to present its case. Following both presentations, the LSC Board of Directors will have an opportunity to ask questions. The LSC Board of Directors will then deliberate and return to open session to issue a decision. The student's name will not be used in open session.

## **Action Following the Expulsion Hearing**

At the expulsion hearing, the LSC Board of Directors will decide whether to uphold, reverse or alter the expulsion recommendation of the Executive Director. Within ten (10) days of the expulsion hearing, the LSC Board of Directors will issue written confirmation of its decision to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s). If the recommendation for expulsion is reversed, all absences resulting from the suspension will be excused, the student's record will be cleared with respect to the recommendation, and the student will be allowed to make up all missed work.



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## **Scholar & Parent Grievance Policy**

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and efficient process for reviewing and resolving student grievances, which may be filed and pursued by a student's parent or guardian. LSC will keep all grievance proceedings confidential to the extent permitted by law. The LSC student grievance process may be used by LSC students or their parents or guardians as follows:

1. To address an alleged violation of applicable law or regulations that directly affects the student.
2. To address an alleged violation of LSC Board Policy that directly affects the student.
3. To address an alleged violation of LSC charter compliance that directly affects the student.
4. To address alleged discrimination or harassment against the student.

A student who files a grievance has the right to be represented by legal counsel at the student's own expense. If the timelines set forth herein are not met, the grievance may be deemed waived by the LSC official(s) charged with investigating and deciding the grievance.

The LSC official(s) charged with investigating and deciding grievances are entitled to extend the timelines herein for investigating and issuing decisions if necessary to conduct a thorough and complete investigation into a grievance or appeal.

### **Step One: Informal Discussion with the Academy Director**

Subject to the following paragraph, the aggrieved student must first initiate an informal discussion with the other person(s) involved in the incident giving rise to the grievance within ten (10) school days of the incident or when the aggrieved student learned of the incident for the purpose of attempting to resolve the grievance. If the grievance includes allegations of discrimination or harassment against the student, the student is not required to initiate an informal discussion with the person(s) allegedly discriminating against or harassing the student, and the student may proceed immediately to Step Two.

### **Step Two: Submit a Written Grievance to the Executive Director**

If the informal discussion does not resolve the student's concerns, the student may within seven (7) school days after the informal discussion submit a written Grievance Form to the LSC Executive Director. If the grievance includes allegations of discrimination or harassment, the student shall submit a written Grievance Form within seven (7) school days of the incident or when the student learned of the incident to the LSC Executive Director, or to the LSC Student Grievance Committee pursuant to Step Three if such allegations are against the Executive Director.

The student must include in the Grievance Form a description of the grievance, the actions already taken by the student to attempt to resolve the grievance, and the relief requested. A Grievance Form that does not contain such information will be deemed incomplete and returned to the student to complete within the required timeline. Submission of an incomplete Grievance Form does not extend the required timeline. Only the issues set forth in the written Grievance Form shall be considered thereafter.

Upon receipt of a Grievance Form, within fifteen (15) school days the Executive Director shall schedule a conference with the student and any other individual(s) deemed necessary by the Executive Director to discuss the allegations. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision to the student within ten (10) school days of the conclusion of the conference(s).

### **Step Three: Final Appeal to the LSC Scholar Grievance Committee**

If a student is not satisfied with the Executive Director's written decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the LSC Scholar Grievance Committee within seven (7) school days of receiving the Executive Director's written decision, which can be accomplished by submitting the written appeal to the LSC Student Grievance Committee Chair. The LSC Student Grievance Committee shall be comprised of one member of the Executive Committee and two members of the Academic Committee. The written appeal must include a copy of the original written Grievance Form, a copy of the Executive Director's written decision, and a written description of why the student was not satisfied with the Executive Director's written decision. An appeal that does not contain such information will be deemed incomplete and returned to the student to complete within the required timeline. Submission of an incomplete appeal does not extend the required timeline.

Within twenty (20) days of receipt of a written appeal (or the original Grievance Form if the grievance involves allegations of discrimination or harassment against the Executive Director and is filed directly with the Board), the LSC Student Grievance Committee will schedule a hearing date and provide the student with notice of the hearing date and the procedures for the hearing. All hearings conducted pursuant to this Grievance Policy are considered non-adversarial. The hearing shall be held before the Student Grievance Committee, which will make a recommendation to the full LSC Board of Directors to consider at the Board's next meeting. The LSC Board of Directors will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of the meeting in which it votes on the Student Grievance Committee's recommendation, which will be final and binding. The LSC Board of Directors is entitled to extend these timelines if necessary for the purpose of conducting a thorough and complete investigation. The decision by the LSC Board is the final decision and there is no right to a hearing in front of LSC's Sponsor's Board, except as outlined in the Charter Schools Act, S.C. Code Ann. Sec. 59-40-50(C)(1) regarding a student denial of admission for a reason other than space limitations.

#### *Appeal to the Board of Directors*

The full Board of Directors must hold a hearing for any scholar who has been referred by the Hearing Officer for expulsion in accordance with the LSC expulsion guidelines. Should the board uphold the Hearing Officer & Executive Director's recommendation decision to expel a scholar, there are no appeal rights to the scholar. Parents who wish to appeal any other disciplinary action taken by the school must follow the grievance procedures with appeal rights to the Grievance Committee of the Board of Directors.



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**Please note:** discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an extended suspension or expulsion to the Board.

## *No Credit Earned*

Except when required by law, scholars will not earn academic credit during a period of expulsion.

## *Emergency Placement & Expulsion*

If the Academy Director or designee reasonably believes a scholar's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with scholars in a class, with the ability of a scholar's classmates to learn, and/or with the operation of LSC or a school-sponsored activity, the Academy Director or designee may order the immediate removal of the scholar. The Academy Director or designee may impose an immediate suspension if he or she reasonably believes such action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the scholar will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

## *Mandatory Reporting of "Threats of Terrorism" or "Threats of Violence"*

The Academy Director or designee shall thoroughly investigate any and all threats of terrorism or threats of violence that have been reported, with such investigation including an interview with the person reporting the threat, the person allegedly making the threat, and all witnesses. If the investigation supports that a threat is credible and imminent, it shall be immediately reported to the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

## **Placement of Scholars With Disabilities**

All disciplinary actions regarding scholars with disabilities (504 or special education under IDEA) shall be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

## *Suspension/Expulsion Requirement*

A scholar with a disability shall not be removed from his or her current placement for disciplinary reasons and/or pending appeal to the Board of Directors for more than ten days without IEP Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim and otherwise in accordance with applicable federal and state law. If a special education due process appeal to a South Carolina Department of Education special education hearing officer is made, the scholar with a disability shall remain in the then-current education setting in place at the time such appeal is noticed to LSC, unless LSC and the scholar's parents/guardians agree otherwise.

## **Gun-Free Schools Act**

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, LSC shall expel, from the scholar's regular



# Scholar Code of Conduct

program for a period of one year, any scholar who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. The Academy Director may modify the term of expulsion for a scholar or assess another comparable penalty that results in the scholar's expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with legal requirements.

For the purposes of this section, "firearm" means:

- Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- Any destructive device. "Destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

## Glossary

The glossary provides legal definitions and locally established definitions and is intended to assist in understanding terms related to the Scholar Code of Conduct.

**Abuse** is improper or excessive use.

**Armor-piercing ammunition** is handgun ammunition used in pistols and revolvers and that is designed primarily for the purpose of penetrating metal or body armor.

**Arson** is defined by South Carolina Code of Laws as (1) the intentional damaging by any explosive substance or the setting fire to any property of another, without the consent of the owner or (2) the starting of a fire or causing an explosion while the offender is engaged in the perpetration or attempted perpetration of another felony offense even though the offender does not have the intent to start a fire or cause an explosion.

**Assault** is defined in part by South Carolina Code of Laws as an attempt to commit a battery, or the intentional placing of another in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery.



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**Bullying** is defined as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more scholars directed at another scholar that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a scholar, damaging a scholar's property, or placing a scholar in reasonable harm to the scholar's person or of damage to the scholar's property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a scholar; (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or the School; or infringes on the rights of the victim at school. Bullying also includes "cyberbullying," which means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device including a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social medial application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool. Bullying conduct includes conduct (1) that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property; (2) that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of scholars to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and (3) cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying (i) interferes with a scholar's educational opportunities or (ii) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, the school, or a school-sponsored or school-related activity.

**Chemical dispensing device** is a device designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of dispensing a substance capable of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being.

**Club** is an instrument specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death, including but not limited to a blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk.

**Controlled substances or dangerous drugs** include but are not limited to marijuana; any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, barbiturate; anabolic steroid; or prescription medicine provided to any person other than the person for whom the prescription was written.

**Criminal street gang** means three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Dating violence** is the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person with whom the scholar has



# Scholar Code of Conduct

or has had a dating relationship, as defined by South Carolina Code of Laws.

**Deadly conduct** occurs when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, and includes but is not limited to knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building, or vehicle.

**Deferred adjudication** is an alternative to seeking a conviction in court that may be offered to a juvenile or person deemed an adult under the law for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Deferred prosecution** may be offered to a juvenile or a person deemed an adult under the law as an alternative to seeking a conviction in court for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Discretionary** means that something is left to or regulated by a local decision-maker.

**E-Cigarette** means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. The term does not include a prescription medical device unrelated to the cessation of smoking.

**Explosive weapon** is any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the Academy Director purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror, and includes a device designed, made, or adapted for delivery or shooting an explosive weapon.

**False alarm or report** occurs when a person knowingly initiates, communicates, or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he or she knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily:

- Cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, or place of assembly.

**Firearm silencer** means any device designed, made, or adapted to muffle the report of a firearm.

**Graffiti** means making marks with paint, an indelible pen or marker, or an etching or engraving device on tangible property without the effective consent of the owner. The markings may include inscriptions, slogans, drawings, or paintings.

**Harassment** is:



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- Conduct that meets the definition established in LSC Board policy and/or the scholar Handbook; or
- Conduct that threatens to cause harm or bodily injury to another scholar, is sexually intimidating or obscene, causes physical damage to the property of another scholar, subjects another scholar to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously and substantially harms another scholar's physical or emotional health or safety.

**Hazing** is an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off-campus, by one person alone or acting with others, that is directed against a scholar and endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a scholar for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization.

**Hit list** is a list of people targeted to be harmed, using physical force of any kind or a firearm, a knife, or any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm.

**Indecent exposure** means exposing any portion of one's anus or genitals with intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person while being reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by the act.

**Intimate visual material** means visual material that depicts a person (a) with the person's intimate parts exposed, or (b) engaged in sexual conduct.

**Knuckles** means any instrument consisting of finger rings or guards made of a hard substance and designed or adapted for inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with a fist enclosed in the knuckles.

**Machine gun** is any firearm that is capable of shooting more than two shots automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.

**Mandatory** means that something is obligatory or required because of an authority.

**Online impersonation** occurs when a person, without obtaining the consent of another person and with the intent to harm, defraud, intimidate, or threaten any persons, uses the name or persona of another person to:

- Create a web page on a commercial social networking site or other Internet website; or
- Post or send one or more messages on or through a commercial social networking site or other Internet website, other than on or through an electronic mail program or message board program.

**Online impersonation** also occurs when a person sends an electronic mail, instant message,



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text message, or similar communication that reference a name, domain address, phone number, or other item of identifying information belonging to any person:

- Without obtaining the other person's consent;
- With the intent to cause a recipient of the communication to reasonably believe that the other person authorized or transmitted the communication; and
- With the intent to harm or defraud any person.

**Paraphernalia** are devices that can be used for inhaling, ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into a human body. It also includes equipment, products, or materials used or intended for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, or concealing a controlled substance.

**Possession** means to have an item on one's person or in one's personal property, including but not limited to clothing, purse, or backpack; a private vehicle used for transportation to or from school or school-related activities, including but not limited to an automobile, truck, motorcycle, or bicycle; or any other school property used by the scholar, including but not limited to a locker or desk.

**Prohibited weapon** means an explosive weapon; a machine gun; a short-barrel firearm; a firearm silencer; knuckles; armor-piercing ammunition; a chemical dispensing device; a zip gun; or a tire deflation device.

**Public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang** means an organization composed wholly or in part of scholars that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the scholars enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified scholar.

**Reasonable belief** is a determination made by the Executive Director or designee using all available information, including the information furnished under South Carolina Code of Laws.

**Self-defense** is the use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself or herself.

**Short-barrel firearm** is a rifle with a barrel length of less than 16 inches or a shotgun with a barrel length of less than 18 inches, or any weapon made from a rifle or shotgun that, as altered, has an overall length of less than 26 inches.

**Switchblade knife** is any knife with a blade that folds, closes, or retracts into the handle or



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sheath and that opens automatically by pressing a button or by the force of gravity or by the application of centrifugal force. The term does not include a knife that has a spring, detent, or other mechanism designed to create a bias toward closure and that requires exertion applied to the blade by hand, wrist, or arm to overcome the bias toward closure and open the knife.

**“Threat of Terrorism”** means communication, whether oral, visual, or written, including but not limited to electronic mail, letters, notes, social media posts, text messages, blogs, or posts on any social networking website, of any crime of violence that would reasonably cause any scholar, teacher, Academy Director, or school employee to be in sustained fear for his safety, cause the evacuation of a building or cause other serious disruption to the operation of a school.

**“Threat of Violence”** means communication, whether oral, visual, or written, including but not limited to electronic mail, letters, notes, social media posts, text messages, blogs, or posts on any social networking website, of any intent to kill, maim, or cause great bodily harm to a scholar, teacher, Academy Director, or school employee on school property or at any school function.

**Under the influence** means lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person's physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A scholar “under the influence” need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Use** means voluntarily introducing into one's body, by any means, a prohibited substance.

**Zip gun** is a device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled-bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.





# Information for Parents & Important Notices

## **Accommodations for Children of Military Families**

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain school requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a scholar visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by LSC. LSC will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

## **Scholar or Parent Complaints and Concerns**

LSC values the opinions of its scholars and parents, and the public it serves. Parents and scholars have the right to express their views through appropriate informal and formal processes. The purpose of this grievance policy is to resolve conflicts in an efficient, expeditious, and just manner.

The Board of Directors encourages parents to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal meetings with the Academy Director. Concerns and complaints should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. If an informal resolution is not reached, scholar and/or parent complaints shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by LSC. Copies of documents that support the complaint shall be attached to the complaint form or presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless their existence was unknown to the complainant before the Level One conference. A complaint that is incomplete may be dismissed.

Neither the Board of Directors nor any LSC employee shall unlawfully retaliate against a parent or scholar for voicing a concern or complaint.

For purposes of this policy, "days" shall mean calendar days, and announcement of a decision in the scholar's or parent's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

## **Informal Conferences**

A parent or scholar may request an informal conference with the Academy Director, teacher, or other campus administrator within seven days of the time the parent or scholar



# Information for Parents & Important Notices

knew or should have known of the event(s) giving rise to the complaint. If the person is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he or she may submit a written grievance form to the Academy Director. Grievance forms may be obtained from the Academy Director's office.

## **Formal Grievance Process**

The formal grievance process provides all persons with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, a person can bring concerns or complaints to the Board of Directors, as outlined below. A grievance must specify the harm alleged by the parent and/or scholar, and the remedy sought. A parent or scholar should not submit separate or serial grievances regarding the same event or action. Multiple grievances may be consolidated at the school's discretion. All time limits shall be strictly complied with; however, if an administrator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or to issue a response, the administrator shall inform the parent or scholar in writing of the need to extend the response time and provide a specific date by which the response will be issued. Costs of any grievance shall be paid by the grievant. Parents are required to follow the Appeals & Grievance Process as outlined in the "Grievance Procedures" subsection of the "Scholar Code of Conduct" section of this handbook.

*Level One – Review with the Academy Director*

**Please Note:** A complaint against the Executive Director shall begin at Level Three.

*Level Two – Review with the Executive Director*

*Level Three - Review with the Board of Directors Grievance Committee*

## **Additional Complaint Procedures**

This parent and scholar complaint process does not apply to all complaints:

- Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law shall be submitted as described in "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation," section of this Handbook.
- Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted as described in the "Reporting Procedures," section of this handbook.
- Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted as described in the "Freedom from Bullying and Cyber-Bullying," section of this Handbook.



# Information for Parents & Important Notices

- For complaints concerning loss of credit on the basis of attendance shall be submitted as described in "Attendance Needed for Credit" in this handbook.
- For complaints concerning disciplinary long-term suspensions and/or expulsions shall be submitted as described in "Conferences, Hearings, and Appeals" under "Scholar Code of Conduct" in this handbook.
- Complaints concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a scholar with a disability within the scope of a Scholar IEP plan shall be submitted as described in "scholar or Parent Complaints and Concerns" above, except that the deadline for filing an initial Level One grievance shall be 30 calendar days and the procedural safeguards handbook.
- Complaints concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a scholar with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with applicable Board policy and the procedural safeguards provided to parents of all scholars referred to special education.
- Complaints regarding the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the school is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, political beliefs, age, disability, national origin, or limited English proficiency. (Not all bases apply to all programs.) Reprisal is prohibited based on prior civil rights activity. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which is available online at the following website: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339, or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## **Notice of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary scholars certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- Consent before scholars are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the scholar or scholar's parent;



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- Mental or psychological problems of the scholar or scholar's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the scholar or scholar's parent; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a scholar out of:
  - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a scholar, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, scholars or educational institutions.)
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
  - Protected information surveys of scholars and surveys created by a third party;
  - Instruments used to collect personal information from scholars for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a scholar who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

LSC will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect scholar privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. LSC will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. LSC will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of scholars who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. LSC will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the



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school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

### **Student Privacy Policy Office**

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202

### **Notice of Parent & Scholar Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and scholars who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible scholars") certain rights with respect to the scholar's educational records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the scholar's education record within 45 days after the day LSC receives a request for access. Parents or eligible scholars who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the Academy Director a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Academy Director or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible scholar of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the scholar's education records that the parent or eligible scholar believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible scholars who wish to ask LSC to amend their child's or their education record should write the Academy Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If LSC decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible scholar, LSC will notify the parent or eligible scholar 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 scholar when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to provide written consent before LSC discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the scholar's education records, except to the extent that



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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 LSC as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel);
- A person serving on the Board of Directors;
- A volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by LSC, performs an institutional service or function for which LSC would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of LSC with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist;
- A parent or scholar volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or
- A parent, scholar, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

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

Upon request, LSC discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a scholar seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the scholar's enrollment or transfer.

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

**Student Privacy Policy Office**

U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

**Directory Information Notice**

FERPA, a federal law, requires that LSC, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, LSC may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised LSC to the contrary in accordance with LSC's procedures.

LSC has designated three forms of directory information: (1) disclosure for school-related purposes; (2) disclosure to military or college recruiters; and (3) limited disclosure to law



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enforcement authorities.

## **Directory Information for School-Related Purposes**

LSC has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure for school-related purposes:

- Scholar name;
- Date and place of birth;
- Major field of study;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received;
- Dates of attendance;
- Grade level;
- Most recent educational institution attended;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Photographs (including video images) and
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams.

School-related purposes are those events/activities that LSC conducts and/or sponsors to support the school's educational mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Extracurricular programs or events (e.g., playbills or programs for events such as school plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremony, etc.).
- Publications (e.g., printing scholar names and pictures in newsletters and yearbook, etc.), including sharing directory information with companies who have a contractual relationship with LSC and/or that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.
- Honor roll and other scholar recognition lists.
- Marketing materials of LSC (e.g., using directory information for print media, website or social media accounts operated by LSC, videos, newspaper articles, etc.).

### *Directory Information Supplied to Military and College Recruiters (Secondary Scholars Only)*

Two federal laws require LSC to provide military recruiters or an institution of higher education, upon request, with access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary scholar served by LSC, unless parents have advised LSC that they do not want their scholar's information disclosed without their prior written consent. A secondary scholar is defined as a scholar who is enrolled in grade 9-12.

### *Directory Information Supplied to Law Enforcement Officials & Authorities*

LSC has designated the following categories of information as directory information for purposes of responding to requests for general scholar information made by law enforcement officials and authorities:

- Scholar's name, address, and telephone number.



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## *Guidelines for Release of Directory Information*

LSC shall not release directory information except for the purposes indicated above, namely, disclosure relating to school-related purposes; for the purpose of disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education for secondary scholars; and for the purposes of disclosure upon request by law enforcement officials and authorities.

A parent or eligible scholar may opt-out of the release of directory information for any or all of these designated purposes by submitting a written objection to the school office within 15 days after receiving this "Notice of Parent and Scholar Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)."

## **Disclosure of PII Without Consent**

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from scholars' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible scholar, 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 scholar, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires LSC to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible scholars have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

LSC may disclose PII from the education records of a scholar without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible scholar:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution LSC has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom LSC has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in the FERPA regulations are met.
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the scholar seeks or intends to enroll, or where the scholar is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the scholar's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of the FERPA regulations.
- 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 South Carolina Department of Education. 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, if applicable



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requirements are met.

- In connection with financial aid for which the scholar has applied or which the scholar has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as 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.
- 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 or circuit court system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the scholar whose records were released, subject to the FERPA regulations.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer scholar aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of an eligible scholar if the scholar is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to the FERPA regulations.
- Information LSC has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under the FERPA regulations are met.
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a scholar's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the scholar in foster care placement.
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions.

## **Scholar Acceptable Use Policy**

The purpose of this document is to set forth the policies governing the use of all LSC technology resources by scholars while on or near school property, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored activities on- or off-campus, as well as the use of all LSC technology resources via off-campus remote access.

LSC reserves the right to modify the terms and conditions of this policy at any time.

## **Introduction**

LSC is pleased to offer scholars access to school computers, communications systems,<sup>(1)</sup> the Internet and a wide array of other technology resources to promote educational excellence and enhance the classroom experience. Technology can expand a scholar's



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access to educational materials, prepare scholars by providing workforce skills and college readiness, and lead to personal growth. LSC recognizes, however, that access to technology must be given with clear guidelines, expectations, and supervision to protect scholars. This policy is designed to make parents, teachers, and administrators partners to teach scholars how to be responsible users of technology.

LSC will educate all scholars about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

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*(1) "Communication Systems" include educational-related communications between and among LSC and scholars by email, web sites, cell phones, pagers, text messaging, instant messaging, blogging, podcasting, listservs, and/or other emerging technologies.*

LSC will hold ALL scholars responsible for their use of technology, whether LSC-provided or personal, and they are expected to act in an appropriate manner in accordance with campus procedures, LSC policy and procedures, and legal requirements. This applies to the use of all LSC technology resources by scholars while on or near school property, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored activities on or off-campus, as well as the use of all LSC technology resources via off-campus remote access.

This policy shall be used in conjunction with the Scholar Code of Conduct.

## **Using the Internet & Communications Systems**

LSC provides technology resources to scholars for the express purposes of conducting research, completing assignments, and communicating to the faculty, staff, and others to complement their educational experience. Just as scholars must demonstrate proper behavior in a classroom or school hallway, they must also behave appropriately when using any LSC computer networks, personal electronic devices, personal device data plans, software or websites sanctioned or used by LSC, and any personal technology used in an educational setting. Access to LSC's technology is a privilege, not a right. scholars must comply with all LSC standards set forth in this policy at all times in order to maintain the privilege of using its technology resources.

Scholars and their parents are advised that any information stored on and/or sent through LSC's technology resources is the property of LSC. Accordingly, in connection with ensuring scholar safety, LSC network administrators and/or other appropriate personnel will engage in periodic reviews and searches of stored files and communications stored on LSC technology resources to maintain system integrity and ensure that scholars are complying with this policy and using technology in a responsible and appropriate manner. Such reviews will include scholars' use of LSC-approved educational websites or software to ensure that



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they are using it in an appropriate manner consistent with LSC's expectations for such use. Scholars do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy over any information stored on LSC technology.

LSC remains committed to integrating technology to enhance its curriculum for scholars, which it believes increases scholars' educational experience for them and allows for better preparation for job skills and college success. Access to the Internet enables scholars to use extensive online libraries, databases, and websites selected by LSC for use in instruction.

Although LSC strives to ensure that any Internet access avoids any inappropriate material, scholars and their families should be aware that some material accessible on the Internet may contain information that is inaccurate, profane, sexually-oriented, defamatory and potentially offensive to some. LSC does not condone any scholar accessing, or attempting to access, such material, and it remains deeply committed to safe Internet use. LSC takes steps to minimize scholars' opportunities to do so, including the implementation of extensive content-filtering software. This software is not fail-safe, however, and while at school LSC strives to ensure that scholars' Internet use is supervised, it is possible that the software may miss some content, or scholars may find a way around the software to access inappropriate material. For this reason, this policy is strictly enforced, and scholars who misuse any LSC technology outside its intended purpose, including the use of LSC-recommended websites for purposes outside the educational intent, will be in violation of this policy, which may lead to disciplinary consequences for the scholar.

With this in mind, LSC still believes that the benefits of allowing scholar access to the Internet to enhance the educational experience outweighs any potential harm to scholars.

## **Proper & Acceptable Use of All Technology Resources**

LSC requires scholars to use all technology resources, including any websites or software used in the classroom, in a manner consistent with the following rules. LSC will hold scholars responsible for any intentional misuse of its technology resources, or any other failure to comply with the rules in this policy. When using LSC technology systems outside the school, parents/guardians should strive to ensure that scholars do so in compliance with the rules set forth in this policy, as LSC is unable to supervise scholars' technology use at home. LSC's content-filtering software will not work in a scholar's home, so parents/guardians are encouraged to place content-filtering software on their home computers or take any other steps necessary to monitor scholars' Internet usage at home.

Scholars who unintentionally access inappropriate material in connection with their use of any LSC technology, including websites and software used in the classroom, shall immediately stop accessing the material and report it to a supervising adult. LSC shall take immediate steps to ensure such material is blocked from further view at school by its



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content-filtering software.

All LSC technology resources, including but not limited to LSC computers, communications systems and the Internet, including any websites or software used in the classroom, must be used in support of education and academic research and in accordance with the rules set forth in this policy.

Activities that are permitted and encouraged include the following:

- School work and assignments;
- Original creation and presentation of academic work;
- Research on topics being discussed in classes at school;
- Research for opportunities outside of school related to community service, employment, or further education;
- Reporting inappropriate content or harassing conduct to an adult.

Activities that are barred and subject to potential disciplinary action and loss of privileges, whether on an LSC- provided or personal electronic device, include the following:

- Using LSC or personal technology during the administration of state standardized testing, End of Course, and/or final examinations unless expressly allowed to do so by a teacher;
- Using technology for plagiarism or otherwise representing the work of others as the scholar's own;
- Presenting any copyrighted, registered, or trademarked work as that of the scholar;
- Using obscene or profane language on any LSC technology resource, to include posting such language on any website or software used by LSC;
- Engaging in abusive, harassing, insulting, ostracizing, intimidating, or any other online conduct which could be considered bullying and/or damaging to another's reputation while using any LSC technology resource, to include the use of any website or software used by LSC;
- Using any LSC technology resource to take, disseminate, transfer, or share obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content;
- Searching, viewing, communicating, publishing, downloading, storing, or retrieving any inappropriate or offensive material, including but not limited to obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic materials, or any material that is not related to the permitted activities set forth above;
- Using a website or software program implemented by LSC in a manner outside the scope of the use specified by the classroom teacher, coach, or administrator;
- Engaging in any conduct that damages or modifies, or is intended to damage or modify, any LSC equipment, network, stored computer file, or software, to include



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- any conduct that results in a person's time to take any corrective action;
- Intentional or neglectful transmission or direct placement of computer viruses or other unauthorized programs onto LSC equipment, networks, stored computer files, or software;
- Attempting unauthorized access, or "hacking," of LSC computers or networks, or any attempts to bypass Internet content-filtering software used by LSC;
- Using USB, bootable CDs, or other devices to alter the function of any LSC technology equipment, network or software;
- Sharing online any personal information of another scholar or staff member, including name, home address, or phone number;
- Using any LSC technology for games, role-playing multi-user environments, gambling, junk mail, chain mail, jokes, or fundraising activities without prior approval by a classroom teacher or administrator;
- Participating in online chat rooms or using instant and/or text messaging without prior approval by a classroom teacher, coach, or administrator;
- Using any LSC technology resources for any commercial and/or for-profit purpose, to include personal financial gain or fraud;
- Refusing to submit to a search of a personal electronic device in accordance with the scholar Acceptable Use policy and Scholar Code of Conduct;
- Using any LSC technology resource to engage in any activity that violates any LSC Board Policy, the Scholar Code of Conduct, campus rule, local, state, and/or federal law.

Scholars shall immediately report any violations of this policy to a classroom teacher or administrator. If any scholar or parent has any question about whether any activity may be a violation of this policy, they should ask a classroom teacher or the Academy Director.

## **Privacy & Security**

Scholars are expected to use LSC technology resources responsibly and in a safe and secure manner, regardless of whether such technology is accessed using an LSC-issued or personal electronic device. scholars shall not share their individual logins, passwords, or access to LSC technology with others without the prior approval of a classroom teacher or administrator. scholars shall sign off or log off all LSC equipment, software, or Internet sites once they are done with their session in order to protect the integrity of their logins, passwords, or access.

## **Limitations of Liability**

LSC makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology resources it provides to scholars through LSC-provided and/or a scholar's personal electronic device. LSC is not responsible for any damages that a scholar may sustain, including those arising from non-delivery of information, erroneous delivery of information,



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service interruptions, unauthorized use by a scholar, loss of data, and any potential exposure to inappropriate material from the Internet. Use of any information obtained through the Internet is at the scholar's own risk, as LSC makes no representations, and denies responsibility for, the accuracy or quality of the information. In exchange for being allowed to use LSC technology resources, scholars and their parents hereby release LSC, its directors, employees, and representatives from any and all claims for damages that arise from the intentional or neglectful misuse of LSC's technology resources by the scholar.

## *Consequences*

Violation of LSC policies and procedures concerning use of the computer on the network will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of school policy, including the Scholar Code of Conduct. Any or all of the following consequences may be enforced if a scholar violates the terms of this policy:

- Loss of computer privileges/Internet access, with length of time to be determined by campus administration.
- Any disciplinary consequence, including suspension or expulsion, as deemed appropriate by the administration.
- Suspension may be considered for flagrant violations or violations that corrupt the educational value of the computers or the Internet.
- Expulsion may be considered in instances where scholars have used the school's Internet access to engage in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief, have deliberately attempted to bypass installed security software or copy/modify another scholar's work files, and/or in other instances where online conduct is subject to expulsion under the Scholar Code of Conduct.
- Criminal prosecution, if applicable.

## **Services Available to Students with Special Health Care Needs**

*Parent Notice (IHPs, Section 504, IDEA, Medical Homebound): Required By S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-63-90 (Supp. 2023)*

Many health care services can be provided for students to keep them at school where they can learn and participate with other students. Our goal is to provide information to parents and legal guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day to help students succeed in school. It is important that the necessary health care information is shared with the appropriate people, such as teachers on duty during recess, bus drivers, and cafeteria employees—to make sure that the students' needs are met throughout the school day.

## **Individual Health Care Plans or Individual Health Plans (IHPs)**

Individual health care plans are also called individual health plans or IHPs. School nurses



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who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents or legal guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the school day. IHPs are also written for students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse, Nurse Katy Ardis at the Elementary Academy or Kristen Welch at the Primary Academy.

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)**

Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make adjustments so that students with certain disabilities can learn and participate in settings like other students who do not have disabilities. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity must be determined without reference to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures or lessening of the impact of the condition by the use of medication, medical supplies, equipment, or appliances, low-vision devices (not including ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics, including limbs and devices, hearing aids and cochlear implants, or other implantable hearing devices, mobility devices, or oxygen therapy equipment and supplies. A team decides if a student is eligible. The team should include the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's disability, such as a teacher, a guidance counselor, a school nurse, and other school staff. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the school will meet the student's needs while at school and may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. To learn more about Section 504, contact Nicky Pack, Special Populations Coordinator and 504 Coordinator.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

Students, ages 3 to 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for services under the IDEA. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The team develops an individualized education program (IEP) if the student meets federal and state requirements. The IEP outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team. The IEP may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. Contact Nicky Pack, Special Populations Coordinator to learn more about the IDEA.

## Medical Homebound Instruction

Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant must certify that the student has such a medical condition but may benefit from instruction, and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school district provides. The school district then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school district will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school. To learn more about medical homebound services, contact Nicky Pack- Special Populations Coordinator.

## Personal Electronic Device

For purposes of this policy, "*personal electronic device*" includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, pagers, gaming devices, or other devices that emit an audible signal, vibrate, display a message, display or record an image, or otherwise summon or deliver a communication to the possessor. Personal electronic devices do not include devices authorized for classroom use. While scholars may have them in their possession, scholars are prohibited from accessing/utilizing any personal electronic device during the school day. Unauthorized use of a personal electronic device may include, but is not limited to, using a cell phone, texting, taking pictures or recording without permission, cheating, harassment or bullying, use during any emergency drill, use during unauthorized times, or use for unlawful activities. Violations of this policy may result in the confiscation of the device and all its components. Scholars are not allowed to erase the history or remove the battery, SIM card or any other part of the device before giving it to the school official. A parent or legal guardian will receive the phone at the end of the school day. LSC is not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal electronic device brought on school grounds, in the school buildings, on buses, or during any other time they are under the direct administrative jurisdiction of the school, whether on or off the school grounds.

**Consequences:** The following procedures will apply when a personal electronic device is accessed during the school day.

- **First Offense:** The student will receive a warning and parent or legal guardian will be contacted.
- **Second Offense:** Personal electronic device confiscated and returned to parent or legal guardian after conference.
- **Third offense:** Overnight suspension, One Day of Center for Personal Responsibility & Saturday School.
- **Fourth offense:** Out of school suspension.

The administration reserves the right to handle any of the above actions or any other action determined to be a misuse of technology in the manner they feel is the most appropriate for all concerned. LSC will take appropriate steps to safeguard personal electronic devices that are confiscated; however, LSC will not be responsible if the devices are lost or stolen or damaged. Legal References: South Carolina Proviso 1.103

The background is a solid dark red color. It features a repeating pattern of white line-art icons representing various educational fields: books, a microscope, a graduation cap, a globe, a computer monitor, a desk with a chair, a pencil, a palette, a beaker, a medal, a microscope, a graduation cap, a book, a globe, a computer monitor, a desk with a chair, a pencil, a palette, a beaker, a medal, a microscope, a graduation cap, a book, a globe, a computer monitor, a desk with a chair, a pencil, a palette, a beaker, a medal. The word "reimagine" is written in a large, white, lowercase, rounded font across the middle. The word "innovate" is written in a large, white, lowercase, rounded font across the bottom. The text "REQUIRED FORMS" is written in a bold, white, uppercase, sans-serif font on the left side, overlapping the "reimagine" text.

**REQUIRED  
FORMS**



# Required Forms

- **Acknowledgment and Approval of Scholar & Family Handbook & Scholar Code of Conduct**
- **Directory Information Opt-Out Form**
- **Use of Scholar Work in School Publications**
- **Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgment Form**
- **Electronic Communication Device Commitment Form**
- **Photo/Videotape Release Form**
- **Child/Scholar Allergy Form (Section 1 & 2)**
- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy ACT**
- **Allergy Form**
- **Alternate Household Income Form**