

Parent Student Handbook

2016-2017



District of Columbia Public Charter School

The Children's Guild Public Charter School
Washington DC Campus

SCHOOL MISSION

The Children's Guild Public Charter School is a tuition-free, publicly funded charter school open to all students in Washington, D.C. regardless of testing or screening. The campus is located in Washington DC and serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

The Children's Guild District of Columbia Public Charter School's Mission: is to use the philosophy of Transformation Education to prepare all our students for college, career readiness, and citizenship in their community by developing in them critical thinking and creative problem solving skills, self-discipline and a commitment to serve a cause larger than themselves.

Our mission's overall goal is to prepare each student for success in the 21st century, giving them the knowledge, tools and confidence to function in an interconnected, dynamic global economy. The Children's Guild Public Charter provides an enriched curriculum of academic rigor, adventure-based learning, a focus on arts and technology in a school environment that stimulates all the senses. Students are encouraged to think creatively and solve problems with kaleidoscope thinking, i.e., finding more than one answer. Small class sizes and highly qualified, committed faculty allow the school to foster team building, character development and high academic achievement.

TRANSFORMATION EDUCATION

Transformation Education (TranZed) is an organizational philosophy that guides the creation of a school culture designed to transmit the values and life skills necessary for a successful life. The basic premise of this philosophy is that life is a journey of personal growth and enlightenment that comes from the continuous struggle and search for meaningful responses to life's challenges. TranZed embraces the journey experience of the student and incorporates it into the school's culture by aligning the school's beliefs and values with the look of the school building, the school's instructional approach, the mindset and behavior of the teaching staff, and the school's operating system.

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School's physical environment is designed and equipped to:

- Foster integrated thinking
- Enhance critical thinking and creative problem solving
- Demonstrate connectedness to lifelong learning
- Apply lifelong learning to everyday living
- Emphasize respect for nature and the importance of caring for the physical environment

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School's physical environment is brain compatible, meaning it meets the human brain's need for contrast, challenge and variety.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Given fundamental levels of health, safety, and love, all people can and want to learn. Project-based learning (PBL) harnesses the natural passion to learn, by presenting learning experiences as expeditions into the unknown. PBL cultivates and fosters greater continuity of relationships between students and teachers, draws on the power of small groups, creates an in-depth and focused curriculum, and builds strategic links between school and community. We are a PBL school because the design offers us a vision that allows us to implement our curriculum in a consistently hands-on, interactive, rigorous and dynamic manner.

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OUR PROMISES

In our school culture the following Promises play a visible and important role in communicating a common set of expectations for students and teachers. Students are gradually exposed to all five promises in a developmentally appropriate sequence throughout their experience. The classroom norms will be linked to the promises and should help students better understand each promise. Linking these classroom norms with our promises also facilitates the process of giving students feedback about their progress and assisting with self-assessment.

MORNING MEETING

Each morning every student in the building will be involved in a Morning Meeting structure. This structure is designed to provide students with a daily opportunity to interact with grade-level peers and faculty in a way that promotes positive relationships, creates a sense of belonging, teaches students to value differences, and helps the group work together creatively. In addition to developing community, the Morning Meeting structure helps students understand and set realistic and rigorous character and academic goals while providing them ample opportunities to grow towards those goals. It is expected that all students attend their Morning Meeting, as they are seen as a vital component to the overall program at TCGDC.

ATTENDANCE

We have a lot to offer our students at TCGDC, and want every child to benefit from continuous, prompt attendance at school.

Excused and Unexcused Absences: TCGDC's distinguishes between excused and unexcused absences. The number of absences and incidents of tardiness will be noted on progress reports. Please call the school each day that a child will be absent, tardy, or picked up early. Please note that in order to record absences as "excused," we must also receive a written note upon the child's return to school. Absences may be deemed "excused" only if the reason falls into the category of excused absences listed below.

Excused

- Death in the immediate family
- Personal Illness*
- Court Summons
- Observance of a Religious Holiday
- State Emergency
- Hazardous Weather Conditions
- Approved Work or other activity sponsored by the school
- Other emergency or set of circumstances as designated by the Chief Executive Officer

** Note: The principal or school office will request a physician's certificate from the parent or guardian of a student reported continuously absent for illness.*

Reasons for absence not denoted under lawful absence including but not limited to oversleeping, vacation, babysitting, or missed bus are not considered excused absences.

To excuse an absence: If your child has missed school due to illness or other circumstances, please send in a written note or a physician's note that explains the nature of the illness or absence and the days he or she missed school.

Tardiness: Students who arrive later than 8:30 a.m. are designated tardy in our attendance recording system. Please escort tardy students to the office and sign them in.

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PLEASE NOTE: Absence, tardiness, and early departure is recorded as "excused" only if the parent submits a written excuse outlining the specific reason for the student's absence, and if the reason falls into the category of excused absences listed above.

Specific Procedures

- After three unexplained absences within any period of five consecutive school days, the school will communicate with the student's home to determine the reason for absence and whether additional assistance is needed.
- After five unexcused absences in a month, the school will request a meeting with the parent in an attempt to address the problem. In addition, the school may obtain the support of DCPS agencies.

Procedures also include provisions for assisting students and/or parents with services or programs that support regular attendance.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

BEFORE & AFTER CARE OPTIONS. For the upcoming school year, TCGDC has partnered with Springboard Education in America to provide families with before and after care options. **All students will either be enrolled in the Regular Schedule Program or Flex Schedule Program.** The Regular Schedule Program allows families to select a fixed schedule of one to five days per week, while the Flex Schedule Program provides the flexibility to schedule individual days based on your family's needs or in the event parents/guardians experience unexpected emergencies. The Regular Schedule Program is the most cost effective option. The rates for Flex Schedule Program are slightly higher. Please understand that TCGDC cannot accommodate frequent late pick-ups. In the event that you are more than 15 minutes late, your child will be "dropped" into the Springboard Flex Schedule Program. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any fees resulting from unplanned services. Fees must be cleared prior to the release of any school-related records. Please be sure that our office has the most recent version of your child's transportation plan.

TCGDC staff are unable to provide adequate supervision for children before school or after school (unless students are enrolled in the TranZed after school program, which ends at 5:00 p.m. on designated days. If you experience an emergency that prevents you from arriving at your child's regular dismissal time, please call the school as soon as possible.

Our school day begins at 8:30 a.m. The doors will open at 8:00 am. The main office opens at 8:00 am. Car riders should enter the building from their designated drop-off area and bus riders will enter the building from their drop off area. **Students should not be dropped off earlier than 8:00 a.m.** In the event that students arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m. students will be signed into the Springboard before care program. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any incurred fees. Fees must be cleared prior to the release of any school-related records.

Our school day ends at 3:30 p.m. We have developed our dismissal procedures to ensure the continuous supervision and safety of your child. In the event that a student must be dropped into the Springboard After care Flex Schedule Program. The parent/guardian will be responsible for any incurred fees. Fees must be cleared prior to the release of any school-related records.

****Wednesday Early Dismissal at 1:00 p.m.**

During early dismissal Wednesdays, students will utilize their regular dismissal schedule or be "dropped" into the Flex Schedule Program in the event that parents are more than 15 minutes late. In the event that a student must be dropped into the Flex Schedule Program, the parent/guardian will be responsible for any incurred fees. Fees must be cleared prior to the release of any school-related records.

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Teachers take great care to dismiss children to the proper bus or adult caregiver. We are mindful of daily changes in families' after-school arrangements, and ask for your cooperation in keeping us informed of those changes. Please inform your child's teacher or the receptionist in writing **ONLY** (with a copy of identification) on each day that your child will deviate from his or her usual routine. **Please DO NOT call the school office to make changes to your child's usual routine. Phone requests will not be honored to ensure the safety of our students.**

Inclement Weather—TCGDC does not follow county/district policy.

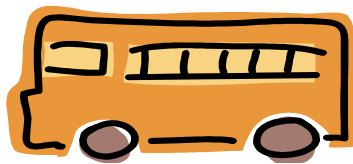
In the event of school closing due to inclement weather, The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School will announce via our website and Living Tree. Parents may also call the school's phone system for school updates (202-774-5442). In the event of a two hour delay, school will open at 10:00 am. In the event of a one hour delay, school will open at 9:00 am. Students receiving transportation services will be picked up on a delayed schedule and buses will run accordingly. For example, a 7:10 am pickup on a two-hour delay day would occur around 9:10 am (please be patient during delays in inclement weather as buses may be running slightly behind their delay schedule). In the event that we experience inclement weather on an early release Wednesday, school will be closed for students.

Early Dismissal

We request that whenever possible, doctor, dentist, or other special appointments be scheduled after school hours to reduce the potential for lost instructional time. However, **if your child needs to be released from school early, please send a note with your child or contact your child's teacher indicating what time he or she needs to be dismissed. Students leaving for early dismissal should be picked up from school by no later than 1:30 pm. Please contact the front lobby receptionist in the event that an early dismissal must occur.** Upon arrival to the school for early dismissal, you will need to fill out the early dismissal log in the school office. Your child will then be called from the classroom to meet you at the front desk. If proper notification and contact with the teacher has already been made your child will be waiting at the front desk for you when you arrive. If you are picking up a bus rider please arrive for early dismissal by no later than 1:30 pm so that we have ample time to communicate this change to staff and the bus driver.

Car Riders

Upon arrival all students will enter through the car rider entrance and proceed to class for breakfast. We ask that you refrain from parking or picking up students from areas not specifically designated for student drop-off and pickup. **Students are allowed to enter the building at 8:00 a.m. Please do not drop off children prior to 8:00 a.m.**



Bus Riders

Bus riders will be dismissed to their buses at the end of the school day. **It is the responsibility of the student to report to his/her designated bus at the end of the school day in a timely manner to avoid missing school bus departure.** Please do not pick up bus riders at dismissal unless you have already sent a written note. **Transportation requests cannot be taken over the phone.** Please be sure to arrive at your child's bus stop in a timely manner for pickup. Students returned to the school on more than one occasion due to a pickup person not being available at the stop will be subject to temporary or permanent bus service suspension. In addition, in the event that you are not able to pick-up your child upon bus drop off, your child

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will be “dropped” into the Springboard Flex Schedule Program. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any fees resulting from unplanned services. Fees must be cleared prior to the release of any school-related records. Please be sure that our office has the most recent version of your child's transportation plan.

DRESS CODE - Elementary Students

Grades K-5

Research indicates that schools using uniforms have a stronger school culture and students perform better. We encourage our students to dress for success. We enforce the dress code guidelines to help keep an orderly school environment focused on learning. Students who come to school with clothing that violates school policy are asked to change into clean clothing that we keep at the school or to call a parent for a change of clothing. The dress code is described in detail below.

On a regular school day, all students in GRADES K-5 are required to wear the basic uniform, which includes:

Uniform Dress Code

Grades K-5: Navy or White Shirt, Navy Pants, Navy Skirt/Dress

Please remember to label each supply item with your child's first and last name for grades K - 5

DRESS CODE – Middle School Students

Grades 6-8

On a regular school day, all students in GRADES 6-8 are required to wear the BASIC uniform, which includes:

Uniform Dress Code

Grades 6-8: Black or Yellow Top, Khaki Pants, Khaki Skirt/Dress

Socks, tights, in SOLID colors of white, black, brown, gray, or navy blue

Comfortable shoes or sneakers in white, black, brown or navy blue (no other colors, wheels, embellishments or lights)

Please remember to label each supply item with your child's first and last name for grades 6

In addition to our basic uniform, the following may be worn:

- Navy blue crew neck sweater or navy blue cardigan sweater. **Undergarments:** White or navy blue turtleneck or undershirt (worn underneath uniform shirt). Note: Undershirts should not hang below the uniform shirt.

Additionally, students must remove sunglasses, excessive jewelry, coats, hats, caps, knit hats, bandannas, and outdoor headgear (such as wool headbands) before entering the school building. Headgear may be confiscated if worn repeatedly in the building and held in the office for a parent to pick up.

We believe strongly that students, just like adults, need a balance of both physical and mental activity, and to spend time in outside environments. Students will spend time in outdoor activities throughout the year, unless it is raining or there are extreme temperatures. Please provide your child with climate appropriate apparel, including snow pants, boots, gloves, hats, and scarves to be kept at school during the winter months, sunscreen as needed, and sweaters or jackets.

BEHAVIOR MOTIVATION

To support our students in developing excellent academic skills, strong habits of work and character, and the personal sense of opportunity and direction they need to succeed in any high school they choose, we must be sure that our school is a safe school where every student can learn and grow. At TCGDC, being a safe community means that no one is harassed, intimidated, or physically hurt. It also means that all of us will

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work toward making school a safe place to speak your mind, to ask questions, to try things that you are not sure you will be good at, and to talk to people whom you do not know very well.

When students are stimulated, challenged, and held to the school community's norms of behavior, students are less likely to disturb the class. We recognize that students will test behavioral limits. When that happens, Monarch Academy provides behavioral interventions, which can cause positive change and become part of the learning experience. We recognize that this is part of our job as the adults in our community. TCGDC staff will use a variety of strategies and supports to approach classroom management to teach our students the skills that address and help prevent discipline problems.



STUDENT SUPPORT CENTER

While most of the behavior challenges will be handled in the classroom there will be those behaviors that need additional interventions and supports. This is necessary when the student behavior significantly interferes with the teacher's ability to provide effective instruction and/or when classroom based interventions prove ineffective. The Children's Guild Public Charter School offers the Student Support Center that provides students with behavioral and academic interventions based on the need of the student. There are various reasons that a student may go to the Student Support Center and with each visit the students' needs are evaluated and appropriate responses are given. When students are sent to the center, they complete a Student Reflection Process with an adult before returning to class. Based on the outcome of the discussion, one or more of the following may occur:

- Student completes and discusses the reflection with an adult; the reflection is filed
- A period of solitude and reflection is scheduled, followed by the creation of a behavior agreement
- Student will complete a restorative assignment determined by the Principal/Designee
- Parents are notified (phone call, email, and/or letter)

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Please see Appendix B for the discipline policy.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Please see Appendix C for the Bullying and Harassment Policy

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Balanced Literacy

The Children's Guild Public Charter School uses a balanced and integrated approach to teaching literacy. Teaching literacy across the curriculum involves integrating the writing process and essential reading strategies in all subjects and providing consistent feedback to students about the use of writing and reading as thinking and learning tools. Consistent practices, rubrics and processes are developed and implemented across grade levels for supporting and assessing the literacy development of all students.

The balanced literacy block is included in each student's schedule on a daily basis. During this time, explicit instruction is provided to students in the form of mini-lessons, guided practice, cooperative learning, independent practice and one-on-one conferencing with the teacher.

Reading instruction during the balanced literacy block uses Reading Workshop and Guided Reading to deliver explicit and differentiated reading instruction, as well as independent reading practice. During this time instruction focuses upon six core comprehension strategies (making connections, asking questions,

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visualizing, inferring, determining importance and synthesizing information) as well as decoding skills (print conventions, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness).

In addition to reading leveled texts, students are provided with opportunities to utilize trade books, high interest nonfiction texts, newspapers and magazines and other forms of printed material. Instructional practices that support dialogue and critical thinking (i.e. literature circles, Socratic seminars, learning logs, jigsaws) are encouraged throughout the balanced literacy block.

Students are also provided with numerous opportunities in to gain proficiency in writing for various purposes and audiences in Writing Workshop. Students use the writing process (brainstorming/prewriting, multiple drafts, revision with critique, editing and publishing) to create informative, entertaining, or persuasive and literary pieces. Through the use of models and exemplars students develop an understanding of quality writing and are expected to produce multiple drafts and assess each draft against rubrics and exemplars. Additionally, students use critique protocols to receive feedback and to revise their work.



Assessment in Balanced Literacy

In collaboration with specialists, teachers systematically assess student progress and track the growth of individual students. This is done by utilizing rubrics, keeping running records, conferencing with students, administering standards-based assessments, analyzing standardized test data and using recording forms and reader-response journals to document growth over time.

Literacy in Quests

Within learning expeditions students are given opportunities to apply and review writing and reading skills and strategies developed in the balanced literacy block. Teachers integrate reading to teach content and to develop literacy skills. An anchor text(s) is chosen for read-aloud to help teach expedition content and protocols are used for structured discussions on expedition-related articles and texts. Additionally, learning expeditions include written projects and products that are generated through the writing process.

Mathematics

Learning math involves understanding concepts, grasping procedures, and applying them to real-life contexts. In Project-Based Learning (PBL) schools mathematics is taught in an inquiry-based manner as emphasized by the Common Core Standard. The PBL approach focuses on big mathematical ideas, high quality student work, and structures for teaching math within and outside of learning expeditions. TCHDC math teachers invite students to find patterns and relationships, to become flexible problem-solvers, to articulate their reasoning, and to become metacognitive about their strategies. Teachers cultivate mathematical habits of mind: curiosity, risk-taking, perseverance, craftsmanship, and tolerance for ambiguity. Math class is often conducted as a workshop. It begins with a complex problem, and continues with independent or group work, a mini-lesson based on what students are struggling with or have discovered, sharing/comparing problem-solving strategies, and a synthesis of the day's learning. This sequence ensures that students are doing the thinking. We are using Engage NY as the core curriculum resource for Math instruction.



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Science and Social Studies

At The Children's Guild Public Charter School, teachers will use learning expeditions and projects, problem-based content, and interactive instructional practices to foster inquiry in science and social studies. These disciplines will primarily be taught through learning expeditions that focus on big ideas rooted in content standards from the Common Core Standards. Science and Social Studies instruction at TCGDC will require students to think, write, and research like social scientists or scientists, and to use the tools of inquiry specific to the disciplines studied. The in-depth investigations of science and social studies expeditions will focus on issues and problems that promote inquiry. Teachers will use instructional practices that invite curiosity and train students in inquiry.

Health & Physical Education

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School believes that students must be healthy in order to learn and reach their full potential. As a school we consciously promote health and wellness, through nutritious meals that will be provided during breakfast and lunch. The physical education and health curriculum emphasizes developing and practicing strategies for healthy living through interactive participatory lessons. We believe strongly that students, just like adults, need a balance of both physical and mental activity, and to spend time in outside environments. Students will spend time in outdoor activities throughout the year, unless it is raining or there are extreme temperatures. Please provide your child with climate appropriate apparel (See Dress Code).

Arts Integration

The arts will be fully integrated into the scholastic program with the goal of encouraging creative expression, arts appreciation, and a positive sense of self. Classroom teachers will use the arts in workshops and learning expeditions as a means for helping students learn about society, culture, history, science and the human experience. Many of our projects ask students to work in an artistic medium such as drawing or painting, drama, architectural rendering, etc. Every student is involved in arts and music during their time at our school. This work in the arts often inspires students to care about their work, and helps them see their growth over time. We believe that the arts are for everyone. We weave the arts into almost all of the work we do.



Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a scheduled academic experience that takes students out into the world to do studies and investigations at various sites around the county, city, and state. Fieldwork is an integral part of the educational program at TCGDC. Field studies are carefully structured to address the learning goals of the expedition, and afford students rich opportunities to “learn on location.” Students interview experts, examine artifacts, conduct research, make observations, and gather data through note-taking, sketching, and photography. Fieldwork deepens and extends students’ understanding of the content and nurtures their skills as life-long learners. Quality work is the expectation during field study activities, just as it is during in-school activities.

Most fieldwork takes place at local museums, parks, nature centers, businesses, and historic sites, and lasts from one to five hours. At times, field studies to locations outside Washington, D.C. are planned when distant resources are central to our students’ understanding of the content of an expedition.

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Service Learning

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School is deeply committed to contributing to the wider community. Many of our learning expeditions will have a service component, in which students learn the value of giving back to others.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Enrolled students with disabilities at The Children's Guild Public Charter School will adhere to the normal IEP process and be provided support services in accordance with their IEP's. TCGDC Special Education Coordinator will work with teachers to assure compliance, oversee the delivery of report program progress to school leaders, track academic data, and coordinate evaluations and related services. Teachers, supported by the Special Educator and Administrators, will work as a team to implement and update IEP's and portfolios consistent to the guidelines established by the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE). An inclusive model is used throughout the school day with opportunities for individual and/or small group instruction within the classroom setting. Individual Education Plans (IEP)

Child Find Children aged birth to 2 are eligible for services through the District of Columbia's Early Intervention Program (DC EIP), located within the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Children aged 3 to 5 are also eligible for service through the school if they qualify for services.

Contact Information Part C Birth to Age 2

Phone: (202) 727-3665

Fax: (202) 724-7230

www.osse.dc.gov

Part B Child Find (DC Early Stages) Ages 3-5

Phone: 202-698-8037

Fax: 202-535-1008

www.earlystagesdc.org

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202-774-5442

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English Language Learner (ELL) Identification and Screening

TCGDC remains committed to meeting the needs of all students, including students in which English is a second language.

Who qualified for ELL Services?

To be eligible for English language learner services, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in an LEA within the District of Columbia.
2. Have a primary language other than English or come from an environment in which a language other than English significantly impacts the individual's level of English language proficiency; and
3. Have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, and understanding English as shown by assessment results.
4. Achieve a qualifying score on the OSSE approved ELL assessments.

Once qualified, the school will develop a program to meet the needs of the student.

Whole Brain Teaching

Whole Brain Teaching is an approach designed toward maximizing student engagement, and focusing on the way the brain is really designed to learn. For the upcoming school year, TCGDC staff will utilize an integrated method combining effective classroom management and pedagogically sound approaches to student engagement to meet our student's needs. Below are the five norms that will guide support our positive behavior program.

- 1) Norm #1—Follow directions quickly

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- 2) Norm #2—Raise your hand for permission to speak
- 3) Norm #3—Raise your hand to leave your seat
- 4) Norm #4—Make smart choices
- 5) Norm #5—Respect yourself, others, & the environment

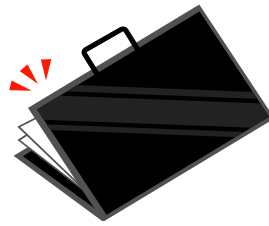
STUDENT ASSESSMENT

We believe that all students can accomplish high quality work and that their futures depend on it. We want all our students to produce excellent work. We strive to challenge students while also supporting them with the resources necessary to help motivate students of all ability levels find success. Our standards are high and we want to prepare students to have strong options for high school and beyond. Assessment of student work helps students and their families understand what the student has learned and how the student has progressed in the different subject areas. Students earn traditional grades and also present their work to parents and outside school partners. This combination creates a fuller picture of what students know and are able to do than just grades alone. In addition to more typical tests and quizzes, students are formally assessed by collecting their work in “portfolios” and present exhibitions of their work to parents and community partners.

Assessment Methods

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School uses a wide range of methods to develop a full picture of student performance. Some of these are traditional methods, like: homework, classroom tests and quizzes, and state-wide standardized testing. We will also use innovative techniques, such as: portfolios, student-led conferences, celebrations of learning, presentations of learning, field work, service projects, writing and reflection prompts, and final products.

Portfolios



Portfolios have been used in fields such as art and architecture for many years. A portfolio is a collection of work showing what a student has been thinking about, working on, and learning to do. It may contain written work, artwork, audio or videotapes of performances, photographs of three-dimensional constructions, and more. A portfolio does not include every bit of work; instead it is a selection made by the student with teacher help.

The purpose of the portfolio is to give an ongoing record of: 1) how a student's thinking about significant issues and questions has grown; 2) how a student's range of knowledge and skills has developed; and 3) the effort—including reflecting on and revising work—that the student has made to achieve worthwhile goals. Portfolios fit very well with learning expeditions, and can help students learn more at a deeper level, and measure their own growth over time. Students will complete a portfolio at the end of each grade level.

Student-Led Conferences

Instead of traditional parent-teacher conferences, student-led conferences are 20-minute student presentations to parents that include an introduction, a summary of a successful learning target in reading and math, and an explanation of a strong piece of written work. In addition, students explain the investigation/expedition that led to their culminating project from social studies and/or science. Student-Led Conferences: During this school year, students at TCGDC will prepare and present student-led conferences twice during the school year. As the name suggests this is an opportunity for each student to showcase his or her academic growth to his/her parent or guardian. Each conference lasts approximately 20 minutes with 15

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minutes being reserved for the student presentation and 5 minutes for questions. (This general structure will be modified at different grade levels to take into account student readiness and age appropriateness.)

Celebrations of Learning

A Celebrations of Learning (COL) is a public demonstration that lets students show parents, teachers, and members of the community what they are learning and doing in school. We ask that all students and families attend our exhibitions. The COL may be artwork, research results from an experiment, written work, tests, or other projects. The COL demonstrates what has been learned more clearly than just a grade on a report card can. It also gives other students ideas that will help them improve their own work and helps to set a standard for excellent work from all students. The COL is the most important way for us to both celebrate work and to hold students and the school accountable to parents and others who care about the school.

Stepping Up Ceremonies & Promotions

The Children's Guild Public Charter School celebrates the following student milestones with a Stepping Up / culminating ceremony in kindergarten. Students will be promoted from The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School in 8th grade.

Tests and Quizzes

To support course work during each learning expedition, students must learn specific knowledge and skills. They will be given tests and quizzes as one way of showing what they have learned and are able to do.

Standardized Tests

Students at The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School take the same district and state tests that all other District of Columbia Public School students take. Because reading, writing and math are such an integral focus of our core courses and of our learning expeditions, students receive a great deal of preparation for the various standardized tests.

Grade Reporting Procedures

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School closely aligns with the DCPS calendar for marking periods. Report cards and interim reports will be distributed to parents at least as frequently as DCPS. At the end of the DCPS school year, in accordance with the DCPS calendar, The Children's will provide students final course grades, will complete all students' records, including the next year's grade assignment and provide that information to DCPS as set forth in the DC Student Records requirements and guidelines or as directed by DCPS.

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School will utilize a set of standards-based grading practices that will clearly indicate whether each child has mastered core curriculum objectives in the Common Core Standards. Standards based report cards will be distributed to parents/guardians at the end of each marking period.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Families are vital partners in their children's education and in the life of the school. We count on our student's families to attend all school conferences and exhibitions of student work. Caretakers are also counted on to check homework, go over all progress reports, and make sure students are reading at least 20 minutes each night. Families have a voice in school governance and are strongly encouraged to get involved by attending The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School board meetings the second Tuesday of the month, joining us on trips into the community, offering their expertise to enrich our lessons, or come and check-in with their child during the day. The school administration and faculty will maintain communication through a number of different venues including Living Tree, newsletters, E-mail, personal phone calls and individual conferences.

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Family members are encouraged to participate in the daily life of their child's classroom. The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School welcomes family members as volunteers to work with individual students or small groups under the direction of the classroom teacher. Parents will be encouraged to assist with lunch, class projects, reading with students, and/or sharing personal strengths, hobbies, jobs, etc.

Classroom Visitations

Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in the daily life of their children's classrooms. We welcome family members (limited to legal guardians) to assist with lunch or class projects, and read or make presentations to the class. Please contact Mr. Peter Reece, Student Support Director, to schedule a classroom visit or to arrange a time for volunteering. He can be reached at reecep@childrensguild.org.

Birthdays and Special Events

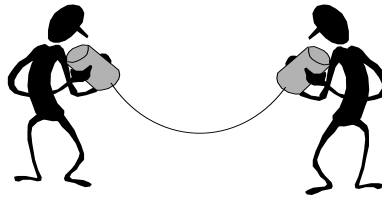
Students are allowed to dress out of uniform for their birthday. If a birthday falls on a weekend the student is allowed to dress out of uniform on the school day after the birthday. **We do NOT have classroom parties during school hours. Please DO NOT ask teachers to host and/or accommodate cupcakes or other treats for birthdays.** Our learning time with your child is valuable therefore we cannot accommodate parties. Parents are allowed to visit the classroom to read a story to their child's class. Please contact Mr. Peter Reece, Student Support Director, to schedule a birthday classroom visit. He can be reached at reecep@childrensguild.org.

School Celebrations

Throughout the year, families will be invited to participate in celebrations of learning. Students will perform, recite, demonstrate, and exhibit their wonderful ideas for an audience of peers and families at the conclusion of each learning expedition. Parents will receive written announcements through the monthly newsletter along with upcoming events posted on the school's website.

Conferences

Goal-setting Conferences and student-led conferences are the primary means of communicating student goals and growth during the school year. Student work samples, developmental checklists, and other assessment are explained at this time and provide families an opportunity to share information or concerns about their child's progress. See the school calendar for student-led conferences. The teacher or the parent may request additional conferences.



COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL

Ongoing communication between home and school is critical to the success of our students. Because TCGDC provides a different kind of educational program, families may have questions about daily classroom work and progress toward the learning standards. We encourage parents to send in notes, schedule conferences, phone school staff, and attend school functions in order to fully understand your child's educational experience and progress. Many announcements are sent home through email and directly from the teacher via phone. In addition, PBIS Reflector Progress Reports will be sent home with the student and will include things such as student progress for the day, class newsletters, TCGDC lunch menus, student work, or announcements from the class or school. Families may also contact teachers through e-mail. Please give teachers at least 48 hours to respond. In the event that you are not able to wait up to 48 hours, please contact the main lobby receptionist and leave a message for the teacher to call back with appropriate contact information. Please communicate with your child's teacher to figure out the best times for regular contact and communication during the school day.

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Communicating Concerns

Parent involvement is a very special element of our culture at TCGDC, and we strive to make our relationships with parents as productive and positive as possible. However, there are times when parents have a school-related academic, behavioral, or organizational concern. We welcome parent input, and while we can't guarantee that each suggestion will be adopted, or that every issue will be resolved in the manner that you wish, we can guarantee that parents will be heard, and that feedback will be thoughtfully considered. There are many venues for parents to express concerns or pose questions. Teachers send home a back to school letter, which contains their contact information. The principal, assistant principals and deans are available to communicate with parents via phone, e-mail, or in person. While it is our goal to respond to your concerns immediately, please provide at least 48 hours for staff to follow-up on your concern(s).

In communicating concerns, we expect that parents honor the same guiding principles we have developed for our staff:

1. **Go directly to the source** – if you have a classroom-level concern, please speak directly with your child's teachers. If you have a school-wide concern, please contact an administrator. An administrator will also field all concerns and questions regarding our facilities. If your concerns relate to the PTA, please contact the appropriate officers or committee chairs.
2. **Speak only for yourself** – concerns are best understood when communicated directly by the person experiencing the issue – not by others attempting to represent one another.
3. **Involve as few people as necessary to resolve an issue** – generally, an issue can be solved with a simple message or conversation between two parties.

Many miscommunications, misunderstandings, and false assumptions can be avoided by observing these guidelines. We create a settled and trusting atmosphere when we deal with issues personally and directly. **Please note that when issues do arise, out of respect for the confidentiality of all our students and families, we will not discuss students with families other than their own. We ask that our many parent volunteers also respect children's confidentiality and refrain from discussing what they see and hear in the classroom.**

Resolving Disputes

Please see Appendix A for the process to resolve disputes.

Chaperones

Critical to the success of field studies are the adults entrusted with the care and supervision of our students. For most field studies, a request is announced to solicit parent volunteers to chaperone. Parent involvement is an important part of our school's culture, and chaperoning on fieldwork is a great way to participate in your child's education. Chaperones perform a wide range of functions. They ensure children's safety, monitor behavior, carry out teachers' instructions, and support individuals and groups in gathering information. Chaperones help interpret exhibits and presentations, and they sometimes provide instruction to small groups of students. TCGDC takes seriously the responsibility to provide safe and productive learning experiences for students. On fieldwork, doing so requires that we make chaperone decisions that we feel are in the best interests of the class.

The following principles guide our chaperone selection process:

- The school may limit the number of chaperones to suit the nature and destination of the fieldwork. Prior to any fieldwork, the school determines if parents who are not chaperoning a field study will be permitted to join the class on their own.
- Chaperones are selected for each field study with a number of factors in mind, including individual student needs, gender balance, and previous chaperone experience.
- Chaperone selections are made based on what is best for the class, not what is best or fairest for adults.

Requirements for chaperones for day fieldwork include:

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- Ability to commit to the field study for its entire duration
- Ability to safely and responsibly care for a small group of students
- Ability to follow teacher directions and comply with teacher expectations for chaperones
- Ability to maintain confidentiality regarding students and other parents

TCGDC and/or parent volunteer coordinators solicit chaperones for fieldwork. Every attempt is made to accommodate all parents wishing to attend. However, in some instances limits are placed on the number of chaperones if the means of transportation, destination, or nature of the fieldwork are best suited to fewer adults.

The fieldwork announcement specifies the number of chaperones needed for the field study. The announcement also indicates whether “extra” parents are permitted to attend on their own or for evening portions of the field study. Parents who meet the qualifications listed above are welcome to apply to be chaperones. Applications are reviewed, weighing the many factors that are unique to individual classes and fieldwork destinations. Chaperones are selected for field study with every effort made to include a combination of new and veteran chaperones. Classroom teachers will notify parents wishing to chaperone of chaperone selection.

Each field study has a carefully designed purpose and set of learning activities. The school strives to prepare chaperones in advance so that they may be most effective in supporting student learning. Expectations of parent chaperones during fieldwork include:

- Leave siblings under the care of another adult, as siblings are not permitted on fieldwork
- Dress in clothing that is appropriate for the weather and fieldwork destination
- Ride the bus with the class unless otherwise specified
- Follow instructions of school personnel regarding schedules, behavior and academic expectations
- Maintain continuous proximity and supervision of the assigned children
- Avoid chatting exclusively with teachers and other parents during activity portions of fieldwork
- Use student management strategies and language consistent with the school's approach
- Inform teachers of student management issues that require intervention
- No cell phone use
- Provide a level of support to students as directed by the teachers

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Our Health Room

We receive nursing services. There is a health professional on site during each school day. Children who receive medication in school must have all TCHDC documentation completed. Medication will be administered to students based on the physician's orders. The nurse's extension is ext. 3421.

Health Records

Students' health records are maintained separately and confidentially from other school records, as required by law. Please be sure that all immunizations are up to date and be prepared to provide documentation of all immunizations. Students who do not have up-to-date immunizations will not be permitted to attend school in the event that all attempts to resolve the matter have been exhausted.

Allergies

Please alert us to any allergies your child may have and provide medication (if necessary) to the nurse to prevent a serious allergic reaction. This includes allergies to plants, animals, foods, medicines, and other substances.

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When to Keep Your Child Home

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep your child home:

- A fever of 101 or higher
- Open or draining sores
- Vomiting
- Severe coughing
- Loose bowel movements or diarrhea
- Severe coughing
- Pain
- Rash or hives
- Difficulty breathing
- Lice, ringworm or other contagious conditions
- Runny nose with thick yellow or green discharge
- Pink eye



Early Dismissal Due to Illness

The determination to send a child home is made by the school nurse or, in her absence, the principal, assistant principal or deans, using the “Keep Home” criteria. Parents or caregivers will be notified by telephone of the nature of the illness and will be asked to pick the child up. Please provide the school with emergency contact information so that you, or your designee, may be reached at all times. We expect that ill children will be picked up within one hour of notification.

If your child becomes injured at school, you will be contacted and we will administer emergency first aid and complete an accident report for you to share with your child's physician. In the event of serious injury requiring immediate emergency care, 911 will be called. The Principal/Designee will accompany the child to the hospital in the event the parent or caregiver cannot be reached.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

All students at TCGDC are eligible for free breakfast and lunch. Menus are made available at least one week prior to allow families to plan their budgets and menus. Please advise your child's teacher of any special diet needs or food allergies. Students are allowed to bring lunches packed at home. Breakfast is provided free of charge for all TCGDC students. Upon arrival, students eat breakfast from 8:00 – 8:20 am.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PROCEDURES

School Visitor Policy

While we welcome families and visitors to The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School, all visitors to TCGDC must first report to the school office, sign the visitor's log book, and provide a government issued identification card that will be held until the visitor's badge is returned to the office. Visitor badges must be worn at all times while in the school and should be returned before leaving the building. Visitors must also sign out before leaving the school.

These precautions are necessary for the safety of our students and staff. Parents are welcome to volunteer or visit classrooms. Please make arrangements with Mr. Peter Reece, Student Support Director, at least 3 days

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prior to the date on which you would like to visit. During testing, classroom visitations cannot be accommodated.

Bus Transportation

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School provides bus transportation, free of charge to qualified families. For students who arrive by bus, it is important that your child's teachers know the bus route number and stop, and days (if any) that your child will not be taking the bus. In the morning, buses will stop in front of the school and students are welcomed directly into the school building. In the afternoon, students are released at dismissal and are responsible to reporting to their bus in a timely manner.

Bus Behavior Policy

All Children's Guild DC Public Charter School students must follow the Bus Behavior Expectations and Safety Requirements described in The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School Bus Transportation contract.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if misconduct jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of students riding the bus. Students are expected to observe the rules for safety and courtesy on the bus outlined in the bus transportation policy. Parents are responsible for the supervision and safety of students from home until they board the bus, and from the bus stop to home.

Internet, Electronic Information, Services, and Networks Use & Safety Policy

The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School students will have the opportunity to use the computer network, which includes access to the Internet. The primary reason for using the Internet is to participate in curricular projects developed or utilized by some of your child's teachers. Additionally, the adoption of online local and state testing is gaining popularity and is expected to become a common practice in the near future. A multitude of instructional opportunities are prevalent on the Internet. These resources make it possible for teachers to increase local instructional materials with a vast array of content designed by experts from all over the world.

In order to participate in the learning opportunities available over the Internet, your child will be issued a student logon that will enable him/her to access the network. This logon will allow your child to take part in curricular activities designed and monitored by his/her teacher, take web-based tests and utilize software applications specially designed to provide your child with an enriched instructional environment.

Access to the Internet means there is potential availability of materials that may be deemed objectionable. The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School (TCGDC) has implemented a state-of-the-art content filtering system to ensure that students access information consistent with the goals of our instructional program. The filtering system is effective in blocking access to inappropriate content such as pornography, violence, and terrorist sites. However, it must be stated that it is impossible to limit/control access to all materials on such a global network.

Students should not bring personal devices to school. Technological equipment lost, damaged, or stolen will not be the responsibility of TCGDC.

Student Behavior and Responsibilities When Using Computer Resources

The student is responsible for appropriate behavior while using the school's computer network in the same manner as they are expected to exercise responsible behavior anywhere in the school. The following activities described below are deemed unacceptable. (These are samples of activities and are not to be considered all-inclusive)

- Using someone else's network logon.

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- Using any network account for non- school related activity.
- Unauthorized copying of licensed software (also illegal).
- Downloading material for the purpose of plagiarizing its contents.
- "Instant" messaging.
- Removing or damaging computer components.
- Seeking to override or bypass computer or network security provisions.
- Accessing of obscene or inappropriate materials.
- Student use of obscenity or profanity on a computer or network.

Using the school computer network is a privilege, not a right. Violations of the above guidelines will result in the student losing his/her computer network privileges or other disciplinary actions depending on the severity of the infraction. The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School is committed to providing quality instructional opportunities for all students. The use of technology and the Internet are now essential components of the overall instructional program. Although the use of technology and informational websites is encouraged, parents should actively supervise student Internet usage, especially social media sites.

Parents are strongly encouraged to actively monitor any social media websites students' use such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Inappropriate use of ANY social media sites (including the above) that impact social interactions and relationships in school will be subject to documentation and/or disciplinary action in alignment with the District of Columbia Code of Conduct.

Students in grades 3-8 with cell phones and access to any social media sites (personal phones and/or at home) will be required to sign a social media safety agreement after their social media usage training at the beginning of the school year. Please take a few moments to discuss with your child the importance of using these resources responsibly.

Cell Phones



Cell phones are permitted but cannot be used during school hours. Should a school-wide emergency arise, school personnel will contact parents. Cell phones will be collected at the beginning of the day by CARE Team members and returned to students during dismissal. In the event that students elect not to submit their cell phone device in the morning, their phone will be confiscated by school personnel and will be returned directly to the parent/guardian before or after school. Staff are unable to accommodate parents who drop in during the school day to collect confiscated devices.

Additional Prohibited Items include toys, sports equipment (footballs, basketballs, etc.), electronic devices (hand-held games, electronics, etc.) **The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School is NOT responsible for any lost or stolen items should items listed above be brought to school.**

Notice of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, District of Columbia Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq. (Act), the Children's Guild DC Public Charter does not discriminate (including employment therein and admission thereto) on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion,

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national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is prohibited. Discrimination in violation of the aforementioned laws will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies of TCGDC will be handled as follows:

- Employees with inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies related to employment and employees should contact: Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist Office of Labor Management & Employee Relations District of Columbia Public Schools 1200 First St, NE, 10th Floor Washington, DC 20002 (202) 442-5424 Section 504 regulation forbids excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services.
- Students, parents and/or guardians with inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies related to students and student activities, including Section 504, should contact: Vice President of Human Resources, The Children's Guild, 6802 McLean Blvd. Baltimore, MD 21234. 410-444-3800.

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Community Service Providers

The following guidelines are offered for outside service providers who are assigned to provide services to students of TCGDC. TCGDC wishes to make the most of the clinical/supportive services being provided by outside agencies or entities as well as for mental health providers in support of students. Naturally, each situation is unique. These guidelines were designed to ensure that agency and community based providers work collaboratively with TCGDC staff during visitations.

We ask that service providers maintain an open mindset that is affirming and receptive to collaboration. Visitations should occur during non-core instructional periods (e.g., Math, ELA S.S., and Science) and should be scheduled in advance to ensure that students maximize their learning. All students will be escorted from class to meet their service provider by a TCGDC staff member unless the service requires in-class therapeutic support (e.g., OT/Speech). Additionally, service providers will be provided visitation rooms to ensure privacy. Every effort will be made to map and coordinate resources and schedules.

**Appendix A
Resolving Complaints**

Policy:

All Children's Guild program participants and/or their parents/guardians have the right personally, or in combination with other persons, to present grievances and to recommend changes to policies and services without fear of reprisal, restraint, interference, coercion, or discrimination from The Children's Guild.

Program participants and/or their parents/guardians residing in the District of Columbia also have the right to present a grievance to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

Rationale:

Every student/client, parent and/or guardian has the right to receive a formal and unbiased hearing at which his or her complaints can be addressed.

A program (charter school, special education school, group home, foster care, or outpatient mental health) shall provide every parent, and student when applicable, with complete and up to date information about its program, including at minimum its academic policies, IEP process, policies on behavior management, student rights and privileges and the process for a parent to make a complaint about the services or treatment a student is receiving at the school or program.

Procedures:

Filing a Grievance with the Children's Guild

1. The student/client, parent and/or guardian, personally or in concert with others, or through a proponent of his or her choosing, may present grievances to the appropriate Program Manager. Program managers include the following:
Charter Schools, Special Education and Non-public Schools: Principal
Group home, foster care, or outpatient mental health: Program Managers.
2. A written complaint shall be submitted to the appropriate Principal/Program Manager.
3. The Principal/Program Managers shall maintain a permanent record of all submitted complaints. These records shall be kept confidential and stored separate from the student/client records.
4. The written grievance shall be handled in the following manner:
 - a) The Principal/Program Manager will schedule a grievance conference with the program participant and relevant staff within three (3) working days after receipt the grievance.
 - b) The Principal/Program Manager will discuss his/her response verbally with the complainant and provide the program participant with a written response within three (3) working days after this conference.
 - c) The Principal/Program Manager will submit the grievance and the response to the Vice

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- President of Educational Services, Vice President of Special Education and Student Support, or the Vice President of Services to Children, Families and Community within three (3) working days after the conference.
- d) If the program participant is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Principal/Program Manager, the program participant will be advised that (s)he has the right to have the decision reviewed by the Vice President of Educational Services, Vice President of Special Education and Student Support, or the Vice President of Services to Children, Families, and Communities.
 - e) If necessary, the Vice President of Educational Services, Vice President of Special Education and Student Support, or the Vice President of Services to Children, Families, and Community will review the decision and shall respond, in writing, to the program participants' grievance within three (3) working days after the review.
5. If the Vice President of Educational Services, Vice President of Special Education and Student Support, or the Vice President of Services to Children, Families, and Community decides in favor of the program participant's grievance, prompt steps will be taken to rectify the situation, as it may be appropriate
 6. If the Vice President of Educational Services, Vice President of Special Education and Student Support, or the Vice President of Services to Children, Families, and Communities decides against the program participant's grievance, the complainant shall be notified within three (3) business days. The program participant has the option to present the grievance to the Executive Management Team for consideration.
 7. If the program participant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Management Team, the complainant shall notify the President of the organization within three (3) business days.
 8. If the decision of the President is not acceptable to the program participant, the grievance may be presented within three (3) business days to the Board of Trustees for review.
 9. The program participant will not be subject to any form of discipline solely because (s)he sought a remedy through, or participated in, the grievance procedures established by this policy.
 10. Obstruction by any employee or volunteer of The Guild of any investigation or disposition of a complaint shall be reported to the President, who shall decide upon the necessary appropriate action.

Filing a Grievance with OSSE

1. The student/client, parent and/or guardian, personally or in concert with others, or through a proponent of his or her choosing, may present grievances to the OSSE State Compliant Office (SCO) using the complaint form or other written format.
2. Complaints may be faxed to the SCO or emailed if the complaint is signed, scanned, and attached to an email to enable receipt. (An individual who is unable to fax or email the complaint should contact the SCO for assistance)
3. A copy of the complaint must be submitted to The Children's Guild.
4. The SCO has a maximum of 60 days after the complaint is filed to investigate the allegation(s) and issue a final written decision.
5. Upon receipt of the complaint, the SCO will assign an investigator to take responsibility of the complaint.
6. The SCO will determine if the complaint meets the requirements for filing and will 1) notify the complainant to re-file or 2) investigate the issue (for due process involvement or no further investigation warranted).
7. Once the outcome is determined, the SCO will notify the complainant and The Children's Guild if the action.
8. If an investigation is warranted the SCO will send written notification of receipt of the complaint to the complainant with copies of the Procedural Safeguards Notices for Part B and/or Part C and will include the date the complaint was filed with the SCO, the individual filing the complaint, and the issue raised.
9. The SCO will request a written response and supporting documentation within 10 days business days

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upon receipt of the complaint from the SCO. Failure to respond may result in noncompliance sanctions but an extension of 10 business days may be granted if necessary for the complainant and The Children's Guild to resolve the issue themselves.

10. If needed, mediation services are available through OSSE.
11. If the complainant and The Children's Guild are able to resolve the issue within 60 days after the complaint is filed and so inform the SCO, the SCO will close the case without issuing a decision.
12. Within 60 days following the receipt of the complaint the SCO will conduct an investigation, which may include an on-site visit.
13. All relevant information will be reviewed and the SCO will provide a written decision.
14. If the SCO find The Children's Guild has failed to provide adequate service to address the needs of a child with a disability, the SCO may require a corrective action plan (CAP), which must be submitted to SCO for approval.
15. Upon completion of the CAP the SCO will notify The Children's Guild of its final decision. Additional monitoring or corrective action may be required.

Further details of this process can be found in the publication "District of Columbia Formal State Complaint Policy & Procedures" available on the OSSE website.

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Appendix B
The Children's Guild DC Public Charter Discipline Policy

Policy:

The teaching of discipline shall be directed toward helping students take responsibility for themselves, become capable decision-makers, become self-directed learners and promote the social and moral development of the child. Individualized approaches to the teaching of self-discipline will be tailored to the specific developmental level of the child.

Definitions:

Team--The team can include a special education teacher, classroom teaching assistant, therapeutic behavioral aide (dedicated aide), school counselor, related services providers, nurse, behavioral and instructional coaches, and the youth life educators where appropriate.

Direct Care Personnel--Any staff member who provides a direct service to the student (i.e., teacher, teacher assistant, school counselor, related service provider, and therapeutic behavior aide, youth life educator, etc.).

Cross Reference: Guild Policy #04-02-03 Exclusion/Isolation, Physical Restraint, and Seclusion

Why Does The Children's Guild Teach Self-Discipline Rather Than Obedience, and Why Obedience Doesn't Work

Rationale:

Discipline comes from the Latin word meaning, "to teach". We are trying to teach children to reach the goal of self-discipline; that is, to take responsibility for the action they choose, not to act on impulse alone, and to assess probable consequences of several courses of action before making a decision. Obedience is defined as the ability to carry out or yield to command, authority, or instruction. Traditional models of education are based on curriculums of control. The educator establishes the rules and the student must obey the rules of the classroom, so that the teacher can move through the lesson plan in an orderly fashion. These models are designed more to instruct than to teach. This system takes the pleasure, ownership, and competency out of the learning process for students. In essence the rule centered educational environment states, "Do what I tell you, or here's exactly what I'll do to you." (Kohn 1996)

The traditional view of behavior in regard to education states that a system of rewards and punishments is necessary to gain control of children. This view is based on two assumptions. The first assumption is that children cannot learn without being controlled by an adult and second, "if the teacher isn't in control of the classroom, the most likely result is chaos" (Kohn 1996). Unfortunately, these assumptions foster the idea that adults have to be enforcers or class cops. This approach limits the social and moral development of a child because it assumes that children cannot learn to take responsibly for themselves unless they are punished or rewarded. Even if an educator has a group of students "under control" the likelihood is that when the adult is not with them, the group of students will not behave because they have not developed the skills to do so in other contexts. "If the goal is to create self-discipline in children then having students define the meaning of rules is the best way to help students become thoughtful decision makers." (Kohn, 1996)

Procedure:

- A. Staff is always physically and visually present in the learning environment to provide supervision and guidance to students in their development of socially appropriate patterns of behavior, self-expression, and coping mechanisms. Staff will develop a repertoire of behavioral interventions that promote those skills in their students. Such interventions will include: modeling, positive enforcement, choices, consequences, incentives (if developmentally appropriate), and therapeutic discussions as dictated by the student's developmental level.

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- B. Staff responses to inappropriate behavior will include the implementation of natural and logical consequences as dictated by the situation. Alternative behavior choices and their impact will be explored and processed with the student, thereby enabling him/her to make productive decisions.
- C. Staff will develop intrinsic motivation in their students through the use of positive social recognition (praise, positive enforcement, academic achievement).
- D. Staff responses to students' behavior will be individualized to meet the developmental needs of the student and within the context of each unique situation.
- E. In resolving problematic behaviors in the classroom, staff will review situations by considering the context within which the behavior(s) occurred. This includes such contextual components as:
 - 1. The words, actions and reactions of staff in the environment and how these may have contributed to the problem.
 - 2. Explore underlying, unresolved relationship issues and generate strategies for resolution.
 - 3. Identify unmet needs of the student(s) and how these contributed to the problem.
 - 4. Identify skills needing further development and handicapping conditions on manifested behaviors.
- F. When a student engages in unsafe behavior, and as a last resort, physical intervention(s) will be utilized to ensure the safety of the student, others and property.

How Do We Develop a Climate That Fosters Student Achievement?

In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was amended to include a recommendation for implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a form of intervention for behavioral issues that impact learning. PBIS is a systems approach to discipline that examines the four subsystems; school-wide, individual student, classroom, and non-classroom that comprise the totality of a school. The interaction of these four systems creates a climate for learning. "The goals of school-wide systems are to define, teach, and support appropriate behavior that establishes a culture of competence within schools. When a competent culture is established, the students are more likely to support appropriate behavior and discourage inappropriate behavior by their peers." (Sugai, 1999).

PBIS is a systematic way of implementing school-wide systems of teaching, acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior to all students in the school. The procedures to implement a positive behavior support program include:

- 1. Behavioral expectations are defined in a small number of clearly defined behavioral expectations
- 2. Behavioral expectations are taught and practiced throughout the school day
- 3. Appropriate behaviors are acknowledged through various forms: praise, recognition tokens and reward.
- 4. Behavioral errors are corrected proactively by providing information on what behavior was unacceptable and how to prevent future situations.

How Do We Promote the Social and Moral Development of the Child?

Rationale:

Just as there are physical stages of development for children, there are also stages of social and moral development (Kolberg, 1981). These stages demonstrate how a child should go from selfishness to selflessness. To effectively move the child through these stages in the educational setting, three factors

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should be considered. First, the development of self-discipline within the student must be in sync with the child's predominant level of moral development. This requires the staff member to not only assess and intervene with the child at the child's current level of moral development, but the staff member must then implement individualized strategies to move the child to higher levels of moral development. The IEP is the mechanism by which a long-termed individualized plan is created to move the student through these levels of moral development. The second factor is that interventions must also be in sync with the child's emotional and cognitive abilities. Lastly, classroom communities must be established. For it is through connection and communication with others that a child has the opportunity to work cooperatively, while developing pro-social behaviors.

Procedures:

In order to determine each student's level of moral development and the best procedure(s) for facilitating continued growth, teams will complete a functional behavior assessment on each student to include:

- A. A functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan will be developed specific to the targeted behavior impacting student engagement in the learning process
- B. Monthly thematic units to assist in facilitating the development of character education and moral development traits through implementation of daily lessons, social skills training and group therapy.

How Can Most Student "Misbehavior" Be Eliminated Through Good Instruction?

Rationale:

One of the most successful interventions in reducing acting out behavior is effective teaching. Therefore, if children are acting out, or "misbehaving", the educator must first look at the quality, technique, and coherence of their instruction. In this view, acting out is not a symptom of illness, but of poor instruction. This approach demands the educator to ask the question, "What do children need?" as opposed to "How do I get them to do what I want?" (Kohn, 1996). Our policy requires educators to transform the traditional teacher centered, lecture driven, and rote deskwork to multi-dimensional, hands-on, active, and cooperative methods of teaching that engage verbal, tactile, visual, and auditory senses. The curriculum is integrated and relates ideas and knowledge across subject areas. By challenging students in an engaged, creative, and meaningful process of learning, the educator channels the student's energies from acting out to involved learner.

Procedure:

- Classroom teams will develop and implement daily lesson plans that include a creative, hands-on instructional delivery system.
- Development of effective lessons will include:
- Determining and accessing prior knowledge of the students to begin concept development.
- Incorporating instructional modifications based on the needs of the students.
- Developing lesson plans inclusive of an anticipatory set, direct instruction, guided practice, independent practice.
- Student engagement in creative, hands-on activities.
- Implementing differentiated learning strategies to address varied student levels of performance within the classroom setting.
- Assessment of concept attainment.

How Do Students Learn Self-Responsibility?

Rationale:

Students learn self-responsibility by being active participants in the problem-solving process. This involves acknowledging responsibility for their own behavior and accepting natural and logical consequences.

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Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior, demonstrate effecting coping and decision-making skills not only in the classroom, but at home and in the community as well. Opportunities for learning and developing necessary skills and strategies for problem solving are presented in a structured classroom environment. Through this process, students are able to make informed decisions and appropriate choices. Discipline is regarded as a learning experience that promotes individual growth emotionally, academically and behaviorally.

Procedure:

- A. The team will facilitate the development of a classroom environment by assisting students in developing behavior expectations and goals.
- B. The team will engage students in discussion and exploration of the decision-making process, and provide opportunities for implementation.
- C. PBIS matrix is used to guide the team in fostering commitment and responsibility.
- D. Teams will conduct Team Primacy meetings to address development of communication and social skills, enhance problem-solving skills, examine the impact of behavior for self and others and apply natural and logical consequences for inappropriate behavior.

How Do We Make The Mindset Switch From The Product/Market Perspective To The Journey Perspective?

Rationale:

Educators must examine their own assumptions and transform their own beliefs regarding discipline and how it is used in teaching. Many of today's educational systems are designed with the market mentality. During the Industrial revolution, the market perspective dominated American views and policies. This perspective focused on the end product and the marketplace. If you produced more of the product, the faster you were rewarded. If you failed to produce or did not produce at the rate and quality expected, the market was unwavering and unsympathetic in its deliberation of punishment and economic sanctioning. It was during the Industrial Revolution that many of our school systems were developed. Learning was seen as a product. Children were given concrete standards and were rewarded for achieving those standards. Consequently, they were punished if they did not meet the standards, i.e., not allowed to participate in sports, clubs, trips, or even in educational areas in which the child excelled. In contrast, the journey mindset focuses on why and how the process works to achieve the end product. The journey mindset does not ignore the end product, but includes both the product and the process. If educators believe that learning is a process, then it is imperative for students to make decisions regarding this process and understand how it applies to them. To achieve this goal an educator must create a classroom where conflict is valued, and seen as an opportunity for learning, because conflict provides teachable moments. For example, "The constructive classroom, is one in which the process matters at least as much as the product. The wrestling with dilemmas, the clash of ideas, and the need to take others' needs into account-these are more meaningful than any list of rules or guidelines that may ultimately result." (Kohn 1996) This new understanding of discipline alters educators' attitudes from control to discovery, moving them from the market mindset to the journey mindset.

Procedure:

Strategies may include:

- Student role-playing the decision making process demonstrating alternative behaviors to resolving conflicts.
- Student participate in restorative practices restitution processes for destructive or hurtful action(s)
- Daily community circles to build relationships and explore ways of preventing similar problems in the future
- Student Government Association to provide authentic application of decision making skills and conflict resolution strategies.

Classroom teams will teach alternative, appropriate social skills weekly. Students will role-play steps to facilitate incorporating these skills into their behavioral repertoire.

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Restorative practices will include peer mediation and conflict resolution strategies and will be taught and implemented regularly with the students.

Student Expectations:

Student expectations for behavior are determined by the developmental level of individual students and consist of the following:

- Initiate and complete all assigned classwork in a timely manner, to be determined by the special education teacher, as an active, cooperative participant.
- Follow all directions and demonstrate active listening skills.
- Be respectful of others by displaying effective social skills. Students will not disrupt others, should ask for assistance when needed, and ignore others' inappropriate behavior.
- Students should always maintain safety towards themselves and others.
- Students will acknowledge responsibility for their own behavior, engage in the problem-solving process as needed and accept natural and logical consequences for misbehavior.
- Students will demonstrate expected behaviors as identified on the Positive Behavior Supports and Intervention matrix. Specific behaviors will be identified, taught and reinforced for each location on the matrix (hallway, bathroom, cafeteria, bus).

Staff Training Expectations:

- Staff is trained in The Guild's policies and procedures relative to student behaviors within 30 days of beginning employment. Training in these policies and procedures will routinely be offered each August prior to the start of the school year and also each January.
- Staff working in the Special Education program will be trained and certified in the Professional Crisis Management System® prior to working directly with students. These trainings will routinely be offered each August during the staff orientation program prior to the start of the school year and periodically through the year. No staff member will initiate a physical intervention without completing these trainings and passing the written and physical evaluations needed for system certification.
- These trainings are scheduled and monitored by the Principal with the support of the Vice President of Organizational Learning.
- All Professional Crisis Management® instructors will be certified through training programs, and will be required to participate in a re-certification program as mandated by the system utilized. The Principals with the support of the Vice President of Organizational Learning will ensure that appropriate individuals are trained to provide Professional Crisis Management® Guild staff.
- All direct care staff will participate in in-service training for the purpose of professional advancement and education. Training will include further development in areas of positive behavior strategies and interventions and overall classroom management. In-service training for day school staff is provided weekly on Wednesday afternoons.
- Additional training will be provided monthly or bi-monthly or on select dates during the year for specific disciplines, i.e., Clinicians, Special Education Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Classroom Assistants, and Therapeutic Behavior Aides. Attendance is mandatory for all direct care staff.

Behavior Deemed A Crisis

A crisis is defined as a situation in which a student has the potential to cause harm to himself or others.

Use of the Multi-Sensory De-Escalation Room:

The Multi-Sensory De-Escalation Room (MSDR) provides an alternative approach to working with extreme emotions and behavior in children. The basic principles for the use of the MSDR at The Children's Guild, Inc. include:

- MSDRs are never locked

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- Students are never isolated or left alone in the MSDRs
- The primary purpose of the MSDR is to teach students to soothe themselves and regulate their senses, emotions, and behaviors
- MSDRs are never to be used in a manner that communicates punishment or negativity to the student.
- Staff will use visual, tactile, auditory, and olfactory stimulation to help students organize their senses and gain control of their bodies.

Procedures:

- At the student's admission, the parent/guardian is advised of MSDR philosophy and procedures, including both proactive interventions and physical intervention.
- When a student is unavailable for learning and requires a change in environment, the child, or staff, can request that the child visit the MSDR.
- Upon entering the MSDR, a Student Intervention Report (AD-166) must be completed.
- When the student has demonstrated the capacity to process the situation with staff and is ready to re-enter the learning environment, the student returns to the classroom.

High Risk Behavior for All Programs:

- The staff member witnessing the high-risk behavior must initiate appropriate safety procedures to ensure safety of all involved individuals.
- Once safety is secured for all, the team counselor should be notified.
- The staff member and team counselor shall promptly interview the student and determine the appropriate course of action. If physical intervention is utilized for more than 10 minutes, or if either student or staff complain of injury, medical personnel will be notified where applicable.
- The staff member witnessing the high-risk behavior must complete a Student Intervention Report (Form AD-166), quoting the student's words and objectively describing the student's actions in detail.
- Precipitating events and staff/student responses are to be included.

Behavior that results in the removal from school

- A student may be suspended prior to a conference pursuant if he or she is contributing to an emergency situation in a school. An emergency situation may exist either because of general conditions in the school (e.g., a series of fires or False Alarms; a manifestly high level of student tension; an increasing number of fights or physical attacks; a large number of abuses of property) or because the behavior of an individual student is so disruptive or dangerous that he/she poses a very real and immediate threat to the health and safety of other members of the school community, or to the ability of the school community or the school or portion thereof to continue normal operations.
- A student may be expelled from TCGDC only for the commission of an infraction as set forth below. These behaviors are illegal, cause significant disruption to the school operation, or cause substantial harm to self or others.

Suspension or Expulsion

The following behaviors shall be considered for suspension or expulsion:

- Acts of Exceptional Misconduct at other schools;
- Vandalism/destruction of property over \$500;
- Selling or Distribution of marijuana, prescription drugs, controlled dangerous substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, controlled or drug paraphernalia;
- The Possession or Distribution of alcohol;
- The Possession of drug paraphernalia or controlled substance, irrespective of the amount or type, pursuant to the criminal statutes of the District of Columbia, codified at D.C. Official Code § 48-1101 et seq. (2001)

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- Causing serious disruption or damage to school's computer systems, electronic files, or network;
- Possession of fireworks or explosives;
- Theft or attempted theft using force, coercion, intimidation, or Threat of violence;
- Assault or physical attack on student or staff;
- Fighting which results in a serious physical injury;
- Participating in group fight which has been planned, causes major disruption to school day or results in substantial bodily injury;
- Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to injure another individual;
- Use, threatened use, or transfer of any weapon;
- Use, Possession, or bringing to school a loaded or unloaded firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 (2000), including but not limited to pistols, blank pistols, starter pistols, revolvers, rifles, and shotguns.
- Any behavior that violates the Gun-Free Schools Act;
- Deliberate acts that cause severe physical injury to another person(s).
- Assault with a weapon;
- Commission or attempted commission of any act of sexual assault or sexual aggression;
- Arson;
- Biohazard;
- Bomb threat;
- Any other intentional use of violence, force, coercion, Threats, intimidation, or other comparable conduct which causes or attempts to cause severe physical injury, substantial disruption, or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school;
- Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that is illegal, causes significant disruption to the school operation, or causes substantial harm to self or others; and
- Documented Pattern of Persistent Extreme Behavior.

Students who have been suspended or expelled shall not be eligible to participate in any school function for the duration of their Suspension or Expulsion. The only exceptions that may be authorized by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services or his or her designee shall be for system-wide testing, or College Board or admission examinations. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REGISTER VOL. 56 - NO. 33
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A student who has been suspended or expelled shall have access to an Education Plan as follows:

- If a student is suspended for fewer than eleven (11) days, the principal initiating the Suspension shall provide an Education Plan that meets the student's educational needs and allows the student to make up any class and homework assignments and exams without penalty.
- If a student is suspended for eleven (11) days or more or expelled, the student shall be placed in an alternative setting that will allow the student the opportunity to continue to earn credits towards promotion or graduation requirements.

Restitution and/or school service may be required in any case involving school property (e.g., arson, vandalism, burglary, robbery). The amount of restitution or type of school service shall be determined by a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services..

Students younger than the age of fourteen (14) who have been suspended or expelled shall not be allowed to leave school grounds during school hours unless accompanied by a parent or guardian, or his or her designee. Students older than fourteen (14) who have been suspended or expelled shall not be allowed to leave school grounds during school hours until a parent or guardian, or his or her designee, has been contacted by phone or in person and given a reasonable opportunity to arrange for proper supervision of the student. If the parent or guardian of a suspended student cannot be notified by phone or in person, the student must remain at school until the end of the school day.

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If the parent or guardian of a student who has been suspended cannot be contacted by phone or in person before the next school day, and the student arrives at school, he or she must remain in the building until a parent or guardian can be contacted and given a reasonable opportunity to arrange for proper supervision of the student or until the end of the school day. The student may be segregated and must be appropriately supervised during this time. Any such day will count toward fulfilling the term of the student's Suspension.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

Authority to impose Suspensions and Expulsions is as follows:

- On-site Short-Term Suspension may only be authorized by the principal or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services.
- Off-site Short-Term Suspension may only be authorized by the principal or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services
- Off-site Medium-Term Suspension may be proposed by the principal and may be authorized only by a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services. A person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services may modify the proposed action including rescission.
- Off-site Long-Term Suspension may be proposed by the principal and may be authorized only by a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services. A person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services may modify the proposed action including rescission.

Any student who is to be suspended or expelled shall be given a conference with the school official responsible for proposing the disciplinary action, prior to the Suspension or Expulsion. In the event that a student is suspended due to emergency conditions, the conference shall be held no more than three (3) school days after the Suspension is initiated.

The conference shall include a discussion of the following:

- The grounds for disciplinary action as referred to in this chapter including a citation of the rule(s) upon which the action is based, and a description, in reasonable detail, of the facts and events upon which the disciplinary action is proposed;
- An explanation of the evidence or facts upon which the school official has determined that the student has committed an infraction including a summary of the recommended disciplinary action;
- An opportunity for the student to present the student's version of the facts or to explain the events or action upon which the alleged infraction is based;
- The decision regarding the infraction and the recommended disciplinary action to be provided after the student has had an opportunity to present his or her version of the facts and/or to explain the events or actions upon which the alleged infraction is based;
- A statement informing the adult student, or minor student's parent or guardian, of the right to examine the student's records and any official report of the incident prior to the imposition of the proposed discipline.

If the principal is recommending Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion, the principal shall report his or her findings and recommendations from the conference in writing to the student and parent or guardian and a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services. The principal shall also inform the student and parent or guardian in writing of disciplinary hearing procedures, appeal rights, the intervention supports available to the student, and the requirements for readmission. The conference may include the parent or guardian, witnesses, and/or legal representative, but participation by such party(ies) shall not be required.

Students and parents or guardians shall be provided written notice of all Suspensions and Expulsions as follows:

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- No student may be suspended or expelled, including on-site Suspension, without written notice to the adult student or minor student's parent or guardian.
- Following the oral notice provided to parents or guardians verifiable written notice using contact information provided by the parent or guardian (e.g. email, certified mail, or hand-delivered mail with a signature receipt of relative/guardian) of all authorized or proposed Suspensions and Expulsions must be sent to the parent or guardian or to the adult student no later than one (1) school day after the decision by the principal or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services to authorize or repose Suspension or Expulsion.
- The notice must inform the parent or guardian of the identity of the person
- who has the authority to modify or rescind the proposed Suspension or
- Expulsion.
- Adult students shall receive notification of their infraction in the same manner.
- The notice must also include a description of the infraction including a
- citation of the rule(s) upon which the action is based, a summary of the facts, the length of the proposed Suspension or Expulsion, the principal's recommendation for an Education Plan or Alternative Educational Setting;
- and a description of the student's right to appeal pursuant to § 2505.13 or to a hearing.
- A student who has been given a notice of proposed Expulsion may be immediately placed on Suspension in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in this section.

A principal or school official proposing Medium- or Long-Term Suspension must immediately submit the proposal to a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education. A person designated by the Vice President of Special Education may authorize the proposed Suspension or modify it to reduce the number of days suspended.

A principal or school official proposing Expulsion shall make a written recommendation for Expulsion to a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services no more than one (1) school day after the Expulsion conference. The principal's recommendation may be made based upon an initial recommendation from a teacher or other school official. The recommendation to expel shall be supported by sufficient written documentation to enable a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services to make an independent decision regarding Expulsion. A copy of this recommendation and any attendant documentation shall also be provided to the parent or guardian of the student involved.

No more than five (5) school days after receiving the principal's findings, a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education shall either concur with or modify the recommended action. If a principal recommends Expulsion for bringing a weapon as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 into TCGDC in violation of the Gun-Free Schools Act, only the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services may modify the Expulsion recommendation.

A student who has been suspended for fewer than eleven (11) days may appeal the Suspension as follows:

- Short-Term Suspension may be appealed to the principal.
- A Medium-Term Suspension may be appealed to a person designated by a Vice President of Special Education and Student Services.
- All appeals must be made by the student's parent or guardian or the adult
- student, either orally or in writing to the principal or person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services, as appropriate, no later than two (2) school days after receiving the notice of Suspension, and may be made prior to receiving formal written notice of the Suspension. An appeal made orally shall be put in writing by the person receiving the request.
- All appeals will be heard by the principal (for Short-Term Suspensions) or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services (for Medium-Term Suspensions) no later

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than one (1) school day after the appeal is requested. Upon request of the adult student or minor student's parent or guardian, the time for the appeal may be extended up to three (3) school days. The appeal may be held by telephone upon request of the parent or guardian if necessary due to health, work, or childcare.

- The student and his or her parent or guardian may present evidence and ask witnesses to speak.
- At the conclusion of the conference, the principal or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services, as appropriate, shall render a final decision.

No more than one (1) school day after the conference, the principal or a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services, as appropriate, shall give the student and his or her parent or guardian, a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services a written summary of the conference proceedings, including the final decision.

Once a hearing is scheduled by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services, the student shall be placed on Suspension, or in another appropriate placement until the conclusion of the hearing and appeals processes.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

- Disciplinary hearings shall be held at a time and place that is reasonably convenient to the student and parent or guardian.
- For Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions, the hearing shall be held not more than four (4) school days after a written notice regarding disciplinary action is provided to the parent or guardian or adult student, except that the hearing may be postponed for not more than five (5) school days upon the request of the adult student, minor student's parent or guardian, or his or her representative, where postponement of the hearing is necessary to prepare for the hearing, provide for the hearing, or provide for the attendance of necessary parties, including interpreters. The Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall provide written notice to the parent or guardian or adult student of the date, time, and location of the hearing immediately upon scheduling the hearing. The notice from the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall state what consequences, if any, result from failure to attend the hearing.
- The student shall have a right, but shall not be required, to have a representative or legal counsel, selected by the parent or guardian or adult student.
- The student, parent or guardian, or representative shall have the right to question any witness or challenge any documentary evidence.
- The parent or guardian or adult student shall have the opportunity to present testimony and documentary evidence, including the opportunity to call any witness to present testimony relevant to the disciplinary action or other school system recommendation. The right to call witnesses shall include the right to require the presence of any involved school official.
- It shall be the burden of the TCGDC to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the student did commit the infraction(s) upon which the disciplinary action is based.
- The Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall ensure that all due process procedures have been followed or waived.
- The Vice President of Special Education and Student Services may question any witness or party and shall examine all documentary evidence.
- The hearing shall not be conducted according to the rules of evidence. However, the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services may exclude any testimony or evidence that is irrelevant or repetitive. The Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall ensure that the hearing is conducted in a fair and orderly manner and shall have the authority to exclude any party or other person from the hearing on the grounds of substantial interference or obstruction of the orderly hearing process. The Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall make an official report of the hearing, which constitute the official record thereof. Upon request, a copy of the report shall be made available to the parent or guardian, adult student, or representative and the local school

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principal. This provision shall not preclude a parent or guardian or representative from also recording or transcribing the hearing at his or her expense.

**VICE PRESIDENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES
RECOMMENDATION**

- Within one (1) school day of the conclusion of a disciplinary hearing, the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall issue a written recommendation which shall include the following: A statement of the facts, as determined from the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing; A conclusion as to whether the required due process procedures have been properly followed or waived;
- A conclusion as to whether the student committed the infraction(s) upon which the disciplinary action is based; and a determination regarding the appropriateness of the proposed disciplinary action or an order for a modification thereof, including consideration of the factors enumerated in § B2500.8 and explicit justification for any recommended modification.
- For Long-Term Suspensions, a person designated by the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services shall render a final decision no later than one (1) school day after receiving the Vice President of Special Education and Student Service's recommendation.
- If the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services recommends disciplinary action is not warranted, based on the fact that the student did not violate any TCGDC rule or policy, the determination shall include an order to destroy all school records regarding the disciplinary action, including any reports that relate to the incident upon which the disciplinary action was proposed, insofar as those reports individually identify the student. If the Vice President of Special Education and Student Services determines that disciplinary action is not warranted and either: (a) fails to state whether a DCPS rule or policy was violated, or, (b) states that a TCGDC rule or policy was violated but nevertheless finds the disciplinary action to be unwarranted, the school may maintain documents concerning the alleged infraction until the conclusion of the school year immediately following the incident.

Documentation and Communication

- Parents of students with an IEP that includes exclusion/seclusion/physical restraint will be advised of discipline procedures, including physical intervention during the admission process. The parent/guardian is required to sign a Consent for Treatment and/or Evaluation.
- When a student is unavailable for learning and creating a disturbance in the learning environment, thereby requiring removal from the classroom, a Student Intervention Report (AD-166) must be completed.
- Demonstration of unsafe behavior (physical assault to self or others, property destruction) requiring physical intervention must be documented on a Student Intervention Report (AD-166).
- The Student Intervention Report Form will be completed as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the day. The staff members that are directly involved with the student have the responsibility for completing the Student Intervention Report. The staff involved is responsible for ensuring completion of the Student Intervention Report.
- The Student Intervention Report shall contain:
 1. The name of the student involved in the intervention;
 2. Description of the specific behavior(s) that lead to the student leaving the area;
 3. Names of staff members involved in the intervention;
 4. Less intrusive de-escalation techniques that were used or attempted;
 5. Description of the behaviors displayed and verbal comments during intervention;
 6. Date and time of the intervention;
 7. Description of any physical injuries to the student or others; any medical intervention;
 8. Resolution of the issues (processing strategies) and time student returned to the classroom;
 9. Signature of the staff member completing the report.

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- After the Student Intervention Report is completed, it is given to the senior clinician/clinical director. The senior clinician/clinical director will review the Intervention Report for completeness. If the report is incomplete or poorly documented, the Student Services Coordinator/designee will return the report to the team to be completed. Once the report is deemed complete and properly documented, it is given to the senior clinician for final review and sign-off. The Behavioral Coach will provide the final review and sign-off. He/She will submit the form for data entry.
- The Behavioral Coach/designee will enter the information into SWIS. The data will be reviewed by the administrative team weekly and presented to staff monthly.

Procedural Protections for Students with Disabilities

For students with disabilities, TCGDC must provide the additional procedural protections. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) is a federal law that ensures all children with disabilities receive an appropriate public education. It requires additional procedural protections for students with disabilities (under certain circumstances) who are facing suspension or expulsion from school.

Ten Day Protections

If a school wants to exclude students for more than ten (10) school days, then additional protections apply. If a student has been subjected to a series of removals that total more than ten (10) school days in a school year for similar behavior that constitutes a pattern, then additional protections apply.

Because expulsions are permanent exclusions, students with disabilities facing expulsion should always receive these additional protections. Removals (or patterns of them) for more than ten (10) school days are considered a change in the student's placement due to discipline. In these cases, the school must apply the following additional procedural protections:

- Hold a Manifestation Determination Review Meeting (MDR)
- After notifying the parent or guardian of the student with a disability of the proposed change in placement, the school must also provide them with a copy of a document called "procedural safeguards."
- The school must also have a meeting within 10 school days called a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR).

Manifestation Determination Reviews

MDR have the following processes:

1. At the MDR, the necessary members of the students Multi-disciplinary Team (i.e. Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Team) must discuss and determine whether the reported misbehavior is primarily the result of the disability.
2. The student's Team must also determine at the MDR whether the reported misbehavior was the direct result of the school's failure to provide the services, instruction, and behavioral support listed in the student's IEP, 504 Plan or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) (if they have one).
3. During the MDR, the team must at least review and consider the student's evaluation and diagnostic results, information provided by parents, observations of the student, and the contents of the student's IEP, 504 Plan and any BIP's.
4. If the student's reported behavior is determined to be a manifestation of (in other words, the primary result of) the student's disability or disabilities, then the school must allow the student to return to school, except under special circumstances.*
5. If the behavior is determined to be the result of a failure of the school to follow the student's IEP (or 504 Plan) or BIP, then the school must allow the student to return to school, except under special circumstances.*
6. If either of the above two conditions are met then the Team must either conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and implement a BIP, or if a behavioral assessment or plan has already been developed, review and modify it as necessary to address the behavior.

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***Special Circumstances**

Regardless of the outcome of the MDR, Students with disabilities can be suspended and moved to another educational placement for up to 45 days if any of these special circumstances exist.

1. The student carries or possesses a weapon on school grounds;
2. The student knowingly possesses, uses or sells drugs at school; or
3. The student has inflicted serious bodily injury while at school.

Additional Protections for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities (or suspected disabilities) have additional protections. The Student's Team cannot allow the suspension to move forward unless all of the following are true:

- The IEP and school placement were appropriate.
- Special education services, supplementary aides and services, and behavior intervention strategies were provided consistent with the student's IEP and placement.
- The student's disability did not impair the ability of the student to understand the impact and consequences of the behavior that caused the suspension.
- The student's disability did not impair the ability of the student to control the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

TCGDC may remove students with disabilities, despite the MDR result, under the "special circumstances" listed in this resource.

Additional Rights of Suspended Students with Disabilities

If the Team conducts a proper MDR and decides the suspension is appropriate, then the student may be suspended similar to students without disabilities. However, students with disabilities still have additional rights.

- While suspended, students with disabilities are entitled to an opportunity to continue to progress toward their IEP goals and to access their school work. IEP Teams are required to determine the appropriate setting for this to occur, and to make the services and setting available before the student is suspended more than ten (10) school days in one school year.
- The student's parent or guardian can file an administrative complaint called a Due Process Complaint to request that the student be allowed to return to school. The hearing for this complaint will be expedited. While the complaint is pending, the student must be provided educational services in the setting determined by the IEP Team.

Rights of Students Suspected of Having a Disability/ Section 504

Once a parent or guardian has requested an evaluation for special education or a school is otherwise on notice that the student may have a disability, the student is afforded all protections provided to students with disabilities under IDEIA. The school must be on notice of the student's suspected disability prior to imposing the school discipline in order for this rule to apply. Note: It is best to provide all requests for evaluations in writing so that the date of the request can be documented.

If a parent requests a special education evaluation after the school suspends the student, the school must conduct an evaluation in an expedited manner. If the student is found to have a disability under IDEIA, then he or she gets all the protections provided to students with disabilities, including an MDR.

Students with 504 Plans have at least the same protections as students with IEPs, including MDRs.

Due Process

A special education due process hearing provides the opportunity for both the parents and the public educational agency to present their point of view on the issue(s) of disagreement through witnesses and documents to a trained, independent and impartial hearing officer. The hearing officers are not employees of

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the District's public education system. After the hearing is held, the hearing officer will make a final decision on the issues of disagreement and provide it to the parent and public educational agency. A due process hearing decision can be appealed to court.

IDEA requires that specific procedure be followed by both parties when requesting a due process hearing and there are specific timelines and rules for the parent, the public educational agency, and the hearing officer to follow. Due to the formality of this process and the legal nature of the proceedings, parents often have an attorney represent them, but may represent themselves.

Due Process forms can be found at <http://osse.dc.gov/publication/due-process-complaint-form>. Forms are also available at the Special Education Office at the school.

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Appendix C

Bullying and Harassment

Introduction

School Climate TCGDC ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive and safe learning environments for all students and employees. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regard to bullying. This change will require the effort of all school personnel: teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses, volunteers and other non-instructional staff; parents and students. Schools shall provide instruction to students and school personnel that will include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying in schools. Schools designated as Positive Behavior Intervention and Support schools will use the PBIS methods to enhance positive social climate.

Bullying Definition

Bullying is defined as:

“Bullying” means any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

- May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
- Shall be reasonably predicted to:
 1. Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property;
 2. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
 3. Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
 4. Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

Harassment

TCGDC ensures that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. TCGDC will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school Bullying and harassment also encompasses:
 - a. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
 - b. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - c. Incitement or coercion

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- d. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of TCGDC
- e. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Cyber Stalking

Cyber stalking, means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Support

The student services department is available to provide assistance if needed. Education of students and school employees at the beginning of each school year, the administrators, in writing, inform school staff, parents, and others responsible for the welfare of a student of TCGDC's bullying prevention policy. This will be done through TCGDC employee handbooks and/or other reasonable means. All school employees are mandated reporters of any known bullying or harassment incidents.

Supports include a school-based component to address intervention and assistance as determined appropriate by the intervention team that includes:

- Counseling and support to address the needs of the victims of bullying or harassment
- Research-based counseling/interventions to address the behavior of the students who bully and harass others (e.g., empathy training, anger management)
- Research-based counseling/interventions, which includes assistance and support, provided to parents/legal guardians, if deemed necessary.

Notification of the Policy

Each school year, administrators will:

- Provide all employees and volunteers' instruction in methods of reporting and investigating claims of bullying and harassment, and on TCGDC bullying prevention policy and procedures
- Develop an annual process discussing the TCGDC policy on bullying and harassment with Display reminders of the policy and bullying prevention messages such as posters and signs in each school. Bullying prevention messages will also be displayed on TCGDC school buses.

Reporting

All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or designee. All other school community members are strongly encouraged to report alleged violations. An in-person or anonymous report may be filed with the Principal, Nakia Nicholson; Assistant Principal, Bryan Daniels; or the Dean of Students, Jacqueline Frye. The school number is 202-774-5442. Any written or oral report shall be considered an official means of reporting. Anonymous reports may be filed and must be investigated by the designated official, but formal disciplinary action will not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anyone who reports in good faith, an alleged violation of this policy, to the appropriate school official, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself, or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith report will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades learning or working environment or work assignments. School procedures for reporting bullying and harassment incidents

The Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students may accept a bullying or harassment report;

- The principal or designee will report the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by the policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day as the investigation is initiated. Notification shall be via telephone, personal conference, and/or in writing. Notification will be documented.

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- The Pupil Personnel Worker, Nicole Duff, will initiate the investigation of all reported acts of bullying or harassment. The investigator may not be the victim or the accused perpetrator.

School Procedures for Investigating Reports

1. At no time will the alleged victim and perpetrator be interviewed together
2. Interviews of the alleged victim, perpetrator and any witnesses will be conducted privately and separately. Interviews are documented and are to be kept confidential
3. The investigator shall collect and evaluate facts, including but not limited to:
 - a. description of the incidents: nature of the behavior and context in which the alleged incident took place
 - b. how often the conduct occurred
 - c. any past incidents or continuing patterns of behavior
 - d. the relationship between the parties involved
 - e. characteristics of the parties involved (age, grade, etc.)
4. Identity of all individuals involved in incident
5. whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education
6. whether the alleged victim perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported behavior
7. the date, time and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted
 - a. A determination of policy violation is made based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances
 - b. Remedial steps to stop the bullying and/or harassment behavior are recommended
 - c. A written report of the investigation and outcome is submitted to the principal. If the principal is the investigator, he/she will maintain a written report.
 - d. The school will report violations of the policy through the AS400 discipline reporting system, and as appropriate, the SESIR reporting process. A maximum of 10 school days shall be the time limit from initial filing of incidents to completion of the investigative procedural steps.

Confidentiality

The highest level of confidentiality possible is to be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or report of bullying and/or harassment, and the investigation that follows. Parent notification is to be consistent with student privacy rights under FERPA regulations.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action:

For students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and or expulsion, as outlined in the Discipline policy. Consequences for perpetrators of bullying include appropriately correcting the bullying behavior; preventing another occurrence of bullying or retaliation; and protecting the target of bullying. Further, application of consequences must be flexible in method and severity based on (1) nature of incident; (2) developmental age of the person bullying, and; (3) any history of problem behavior from the person bullying.

- For school employees found to have committed acts of bullying or harassment may be discipline in accordance with TCGDC policies, procedures and agreements. Egregious acts of harassment by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator's state issued certificate
- For visitors and volunteers found to have committed acts of bullying and harassment shall be determined by the school administrator, and may include reports to appropriate law enforcement officials
- For any parties who wrongfully and intentionally accuse another of an act of bullying or harassment, the consequences are the same as those listed as consequences and appropriate remedial action for those found to have committed any acts of bullying and harassment. When bullying or harassment is

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suspected, or a bullying incident has been reported, a teacher or parent/guardian may request an informal consultation with school personnel – teachers, counselors, administrators - to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern.

Parental Notification

Notification to parents must take place the same day as the initiation of the investigation. If the bullying incident results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the principal or designee shall inform the parent of the victim, by telephone or first class mail, of the Unsafe School Choice Option, (NCLB Title IX,, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532), which provides that a student who is a victim of a crime is allowed to attend a safe public school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school. TCGDC also provides for the victim of a crime to request that the offender attend another school than that of the victim or the victim's siblings.

Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). If the bullying incident results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the principal, or administrator, shall by telephone or in writing by first class mail, inform parents/legal guardian of the victim(s) involved in the bullying incident about the Unsafe School Choice Option (No Child Left Behind, Title IX, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532) that states "...a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of an elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school." Once the investigation has been completed and it has been determined that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, all appropriate local law enforcement agencies will be notified by telephone and/or in writing.

Employee Bullying Complaints

The principal shall report the following bullying complaints to the Human Resources Department:

- A student files a complaint against an employee
 - An employee makes a complaint against a supervisor
 - An employee makes a complaint against another employee
- The Executive Director of Human Resources will conduct the investigation of these complaints. The Family Life and Students Services Department of TCGDC is available to provide guidance on bullying prevention law and policy, faculty training, and consultation.

Expectations

TCGDC expects students and employees to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

1. TCGDC prohibits the bullying of any student or school employee:
 - a. During any educational program or activity conducted by TCGDC;
 - b. During any school-related or school sponsored program or activity or on a TCGDC school bus;
 - c. Through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a computer system, or computer network of TCGDC. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section;
 - d. Through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school sponsored program or activity, or on a TCGDC school bus; or

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- e. While TCGDC does not assume any liability for incidences that occur at a bus stop or en route to and from school, a student or witness may file a complaint following the same procedures for bullying against a student and the school will investigate and/or provide assistance and intervention as the principal/designee deems appropriate, which may include the use of the School Resource Officer.
2. All administrators, faculty, and staff, in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will incorporate systemic methods for student and staff recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success, as seen in the required school plan to address positive school culture and behavior.
3. Student rights shall be explained as outlined in this policy and in the Student Code of Conduct.
4. Proper prevention and intervention steps shall be taken based on the level of severity of infraction as outlined in this policy and in the Student Handbook.

Scope

- If the complaint is within scope of TCGDC, move to Procedures for Investigating Bullying and/or Harassment.
- If it is outside scope of TCGDC, and determined a criminal act, refer to appropriate law enforcement.
- If it is outside scope of TCGDC, and determined not a criminal act, inform parents/legal guardians of all students involved.

Appeal Process

Individuals who dispute a charge of bullying and harassment may follow the following procedure:

Procedures:

1. The student/client, parent and/or guardian, personally or in concert with others, or through a proponent of his or her choosing, may present grievances to the appropriate to the principal.
2. The Principal shall maintain a permanent record of all submitted complaints. These records shall be kept confidential and stored separate from the student/client records.
3. The grievance shall be handled in the following manner:
 - a. The Principal will schedule a grievance conference with the program participant and relevant staff within three (3) working days after receipt the grievance.
 - b. The Principal will discuss his/her response verbally with the complainant and provide the program participant with a written response within three (3) working days after this conference.
 - c. The Principal will submit the grievance and the response to the Vice President of Educational Services within three (3) working days after the conference.
 - d. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Principal, the program participant will be advised that (s)he has the right to have the decision reviewed by the Vice President of Educational Services.
4. If necessary, the Vice President of Educational Services will review the decision and shall respond, in writing, to the program participants' grievance within three (3) working days after the review.
5. If the Vice President of Educational Services decides in favor of the complainant's grievance, prompt steps will be taken to rectify the situation, as it may be appropriate
6. If the Vice President of Educational Services decides against the complainant's grievance, the complainant shall be notified within three (3) business days. The complainant has the option to present the grievance to the Executive Management Team for consideration.
7. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Management Team, the complainant shall notify the President of the organization within three (3) business days.
8. If the decision of the President is not acceptable to the program participant, the grievance may be presented within three (3) business days to the Board of the Charter for review.

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9. The complainant will not be subject to any form of discipline solely because (s)he sought a remedy through, or participated in, the grievance procedures established by this policy.
10. Obstruction by any employee or volunteer of The Guild of any investigation or disposition of a complaint shall be reported to the President, who shall decide upon the necessary appropriate action.