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Discipline Policy

Safety & Discipline, Student Code of Conduct

At the beginning of each school year, students and families will receive a Student Code of Conduct with explicit expectations for student behaviors relevant to your child's grade and development. It is important that you review the information and understand that your signature on the Student Code of Conduct means that you have read and understand the Code and the conditions under which they may be implemented. Not returning the Code of Conduct implies agreement and consent to the policies listed within the document.

CMI Core Beliefs about Student Behavior

CMI staff share a set of Core Beliefs about Student Behaviors. These beliefs, in line with the Greenspan model approach to child development, inform the actions that staff members take to improve and respond to student behaviors. We have adopted and created policies and procedures to ensure a safe environment with these values in mind. The Core Beliefs are as follows:

- We believe that every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity of both the adult and the student.
- We believe that there should be a logical connection between misbehavior and resulting responses.
- We believe that misbehavior should be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world as opposed to a personal attack on the school or staff.
- We believe that students should have the opportunity to tell their side of the story (due process hearing) when consequences appear to be unfair.
- We believe that it is best if a student does most of the thinking.

Student Behavior Expectations

While this language of Core Beliefs is shared primarily between staff members and families, all students learn in the first week of school that at CMI we expect the following:

- Students will treat everyone they encounter with respect
- If you cause a problem, we will ask you to solve it.
- If you choose not to solve it, we will have to do something.
- What we do will depend on the special person and special situation.

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- If at any time you feel we have not been fair, you can whisper, “I don’t think this is fair,” and we can talk.

As our beliefs and expectations point out, our goal is to create a culture where community members practice the Personal Goals, but are creative, responsible problem-solvers when faced with challenges. Our mission is for students to do most of the thinking about problems because we know that is how mistakes become learning opportunities and how children build the life skill of self-discipline. These values are promoted across grade levels, from our youngest learners to our middle schoolers. By utilizing the common language of Personal Goals

and shared expectations for common areas throughout grade levels, our students will understand that we are united in our expectations for the community. This common experience provides students with the needed structure to feel safe and comfortable. Each teacher uses these points as conversation starters, allowing students to have thoughtful discussions about what it means to problem-solve and respect the boundaries of others throughout the school day. These expectations manifest themselves very differently throughout developmental levels and all families will receive more specific classroom guidelines for their individual child’s classrooms.

A Restorative Response to Misbehavior

CMI has created a research-based behavior system tailored to our unique mission and philosophy to provide a structured and safe learning environment while teaching students skills that will benefit them as they engage within the real world. Our approach aligns to the Greenspan model’s dedication to positive relationship-building between adults and children while viewing every child as a unique individual. Whenever possible, staff deliver restorative responses geared toward providing the student an opportunity to right the wrong they committed. Balancing accountability with a desire to provide supports to prevent the misbehavior in the future, restorative consequences are related to the function of the misbehavior, are respectfully delivered, and are reasonable in duration and severity depending on the child’s developmental level. These are not arbitrary punishments, but meaningful opportunities for students to make restitution, realizing the real weight of cause and effect when it comes to their decision-making. As students grow in their development, the goal is to empower students to solve their own problems and identify ways to right a wrong that they have caused. Staff also utilize restorative conferencing with those affected in order to restore damaged relationships and reintegrate the student back into the learning community. Throughout the year, the school will offer workshops on how parents can better partner with the school to ensure we are collaborating to support students who may be encountering behavioral challenges.

If rules are continuously broken in ways that interfere with our students’ safety, security, or ability to learn, and we are unable to address a student’s negative behavior through positive interventions and classroom redirection, families will be contacted, and administrative disciplinary action will be taken. As our school’s philosophy views each individual and behavioral situation as unique, we do not utilize a one-size fits all approach, but tackle each situation by thoughtfully prioritizing the physical and emotional safety of all students.

We know that parents play an important role in supporting positive behaviors at school. We encourage your support and involvement in problem-solving difficult behaviors as they arise. Our staff will document students’ social, emotional and behavioral challenges and communicate with parents as needed.

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy - Objectives & Purpose

CMI expects all students and staff to behave in a way that promotes an understanding of the Personal Goals outlined in the social-emotional curriculum, derived from the IEYC, IPC & IMYC. These Personal Goals allow

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us to maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all students, CMI staff, and community members. CMI expects students and staff to treat each other with respect and does not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation,

or bullying. Similar to violent or highly disruptive behaviors, this type of conduct violates the rights and abilities of students to engage in learning and makes it difficult for CMI staff to adequately educate students in a safe environment. CMI has created a bullying prevention and intervention policy in order to protect our school culture, safety, and wellbeing of all members of our school community. CMI staff will utilize this policy to immediately investigate reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation and determine appropriate next steps for all involved in an incident.

Definition of Bullying

CMI defines bullying as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. 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
2. Shall be reasonably predicted to:
 - a) Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to his or her person or property;
 - b) Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
 - c) Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
 - d) 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.

Prohibition Against Bullying

Acts of bullying, including cyber bullying, whether by youth, volunteers or staff, are prohibited:

1. On CMI grounds and at CMI sponsored or related events on and off the CMI grounds, on any vehicle used for CMI business, at any transit stop at which youth wait to be transported to CMI business, or through the use of any electronic devices owned by CMI, leased by CMI or used for CMI business;
AND
2. At a location or function unrelated to CMI, through the use of any electronic devices, including those not owned or leased by CMI, if the acts of bullying or cyberbullying create a hostile environment at CMI for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at CMI or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of CMI.

Retaliation against a youth, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

Reporting Bullying Concerns

The Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy, and age appropriate versions thereof, will be distributed to CMI students and parents annually through the Student & Family Handbook as well as the Code of Conduct. All CMI staff will be trained on the bullying policy and reporting procedures annually. Our School Wellness Team are responsible for coordinating CMI's bullying prevention efforts. All questions, comments, and concerns about the bullying policy and CMI prevention efforts can be directed to our School Social Worker or School Counselor by calling 202-588-0370.

Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation

CMI expects all staff members to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or are made aware of. Staff members should immediately report all such incidents to the School Social Worker or School Counselor. Students, parents, and guardians are encouraged by CMI to report any incidents of bullying that they witness or become aware of. Reports of bullying may be made to the School Wellness Team by completing an online reporting form, a paper form, or calling 202-588-0370.

Reports of bullying by students, parents, and guardians may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action cannot be taken by CMI solely on the basis of an anonymous report, though such a report may trigger an investigation that will provide actionable information. All reports received as part of this process will be transcribed onto a CMI Bullying Incident Report Form.

Investigating Incidents of Bullying

An investigation of an incident will be initiated no more than one day after the School Wellness Team (SWT) receives a report of bullying and will conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation the SWT will interview any involved or relevant parties. Prior to the investigation of an incident, the SWT will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in a reported bullying incident. These steps will be designed to restore a sense of safety to the victim and to protect them from further incidents if necessary. Examples of such actions may be to establish a staff "safe" mentor, create preferential seating, or to change the alleged bully/bullies' school schedule when necessary. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.

Once a report of bullying has been received by CMI, the following groups will be notified as needed by the School Wellness Team:

Parents and guardians:

CMI will notify the parents or guardians of victims, bullies, and if appropriate, witnesses to an incident of bullying behavior about the nature of the incident and the procedures and steps in place for responding to it.

Law enforcement agencies:

If Creative Minds International PCS determines that the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities after approval of the school principal. As part of making this determination the School Wellness Team may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel with the respective Program Director's guidance. Notification will be undertaken to ensure that services are provided to victims and bullies and to protect victims from further or sustained victimization. CMI will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents.

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The School Wellness Team is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the SWT determines that an incident of bullying has occurred, appropriate disciplinary steps will be taken in conjunction with the school administration to prevent the recurrence of an incident and restore the safety of a victim.

Consequences of Bullying and Retaliation

CMI recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying prevention plan, they must be applied consistently, fairly, and equitably. To this end, CMI shall ensure that staff follows these guidelines as closely as possible, while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be applied on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense, the disciplinary history of the student(s) involved, and the age and developmental status of the student(s) involved. Responses to incidents of bullying are outlined in the student handbook. Potential consequences of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Change in proximity
- Loss of privileges
- In or Out of School Suspension

To ensure that single incidents of bullying do not become recurring problems, CMI's response to an active incident of bullying will always include the referral of both victim(s) and bully/bullies to the School Counselor for remedial mental health services. CMI does not endorse the use of punitive strategies associated with "zero-tolerance" policies when applying sanctions to an incident of bullying. CMI shall communicate to students these consequences that students can expect for participating in bullying behavior.

Appeals

Parties dissatisfied by the outcome of a bullying investigation may appeal the determination of the School Wellness Team at Creative Minds International PCS. This appeal should be submitted no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Program Directors in consultation with the Executive Director will conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. This 30-day period may be extended by up to an additional 15 days if the Creative Minds International PCS indicates why more time is needed to conduct an investigation.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are the school's most serious disciplinary actions and will only be considered when serious or repeated conduct violates the rights of others to feel safe and engaged in learning. CMI works hard to be a low-suspension and no expulsion school by implementing consequences that give students an opportunity to restore their relationships, fixing the problem they have caused, rather than be excluded from a learning environment. In keeping with our Core Beliefs, our goal is to keep students in class and learning, and we believe that punishing students does not alter behaviors, but that interventions do. Suspension is defined as the denial of the right of a student to attend CMI, including all classes and school activities, for a defined period of time, not exceeding ten school days. Expulsion is the denial of a student's right to attend CMI, including all classes and school activities, for at least one school year or longer.

The Executive Director and Director of Student Culture will determine the number of days for a suspension based on the severity of the infraction, the developmental stage of the student, and any previous infractions.

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In the event that a student is suspended or expelled, the parent will be contacted and informed of the suspension and will need to pick up the student from school. If the parent is unable to pick up the student that day, the suspension will begin on the next immediate school day. A copy of the suspension letter will be sent home with the student and another will be retained in his or her permanent school file. Parents wishing to appeal a suspension must do so by making an appointment with the appropriate leadership staff.

Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions

Any student involved in a very serious discipline incident (e.g. Tiers 4 or 5, defined in Appendix 3) may be a candidate for long-term suspension or expulsion. According to the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act of 2018, no student may be subject to an out of school suspension for longer than five consecutive days for grades K-5 and ten consecutive days for grades 6-12. IDEA discipline provisions are observed in cases regarding students with disabilities. Only the Executive Director will make the decision regarding long term suspensions or expulsions. Expulsion is an action taken as a last resort. It is a consequence used for repeated offenses by a student who shows an inability to correct his/her behavior after repeated measures and options have been exhausted.

Expulsion Process

The final decision for expulsion lies with the Executive Director. If a student is under consideration for expulsion, the Executive Director will contact the parent/guardian to arrange a meeting for a review of the conduct which led to the consideration for expulsion. The student will be considered suspended until the expulsion is final. Students and families must follow the rules in the suspension policy outlined above. Once under consideration for expulsion, the parent/guardian is asked to pick up the student, and the student is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school sponsored activities, field trips, or programs. The Executive Director will then convene the school's disciplinary committee to make a final decision regarding expulsion and notify the parent/guardian by telephone and in writing.

Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal the decision to expel a student through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an Appeals Committee, consisting of the Board Chair (or his/her designee) and two other board members. The appeal must be made in writing within 48 hours of notification of expulsion and delivered by email or regular mail to the Executive Director. Once the appeal is received, a hearing is scheduled no more than 48 hours after the Executive Director receives notice of the parent/guardian's appeal. At the appeals hearing, the Executive Director may present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the decision to expel. At the appeals hearing, the parents/guardians may present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal. The student's parents are encouraged to attend and present an oral or written statement. The Appeals Committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a decision within 48 hours of the hearing.

Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities

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CMI abides by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and DCMR Chapter 25 and Chapter 30 when suspending or expelling special education students. When a student with an IEP demonstrates significant behavioral challenges at CMI, the following procedures will apply:

- If the student's IEP includes specific disciplinary guidelines, the student will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear to be ineffective, or if there is concern for the health and safety of the student or others, if the guidelines are followed with respect to a specific infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Special Education Coordinator for action;
- Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary action may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy related to DCMR Chapter 25 relating to each infraction. If the Program Director decides to suspend the student, the Special Education Coordinators will arrange for appropriate alternative instruction;
- If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of ten days, the student must be immediately referred to the Special Education Discipline Committee ("SEDC") for a manifestation meeting. The SEDC is made up of the Executive Director, the Special Education Coordinator, and the student's teacher. The SEDC will explore whether the infraction is a result of the disability. Special Education services are not to be interrupted during the manifestation process or long-term suspension. If it is determined that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability and the student is suspended beyond 10 days, educational services, including access to the general curriculum, must continue.

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

Parents and guardians also play an integral role in helping CMI create a Safe and Supportive School Environment. Parents/guardians have the right to:

- Be a partner in a supportive and safe school environment that fosters quality relationships, mutual respect and effective communication;
- See their child experiencing success through meaningful and relevant curriculum;
- Feel safe;
- Be treated with care, cooperation, courtesy and respect.

Parents/guardians have a responsibility to:

- Actively support and contribute to the development of a safe and supportive school environment;
- Support and encourage their children to participate to the best of their ability in all aspects of the curriculum;
- Behave and communicate in a way that respects and supports the safety and well-being of self and others;
- Treat others with care, cooperation, courtesy and respect.

Parents and Guardians are encouraged to;

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- Inform the school of any situation or information that is relevant and concerns their children's behavior;
- Encourage their children to follow the school expectations and Personal Goals;
- Support their children in taking responsibility for their behavior by using problem solving strategies;
- Attend any meetings arranged by the school to discuss their children's behavior; and
- Work in partnership with CMI to develop a safe and supportive school environment.

APPENDIX 3: Discipline Chart

Creative Minds International Public Charter School Discipline Chart

Tier 1 - Tier 1 behaviors are those behaviors that are insubordinate or cause minor disruptions to the academic environment but do not involve damage to school property or harm to self or others. Tier 1 behaviors result in classroom-level disciplinary responses that may be elevated to administrative response if they are not successfully abated by the teacher.

Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off task behaviors • Not finishing work or homework • Non compliance • Inappropriate movement around the school • Using inappropriate language • Chewing gum • Littering • Bringing inappropriate items to school • Being late • Being in an inappropriate area • Inappropriate displays of affection • Communication with staff and peers that is not polite, courteous, or respectful • Unauthorized use of portable electronic devices during school hours (e.g. mp3 players, cell phones) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical and restorative consequence • Verbal redirection • Teacher/student conference • Parental contact in writing or by phone • Teacher/Parent conference • Temporary Removal of Student from Classroom • Loss of privilege • Lunch or Aftercare Reflection Room • Other school-based consequences as approved by the Director of Student Culture
	Supportive Interventions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior contract • Relationship building

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsafe movement around the school or AFRH campus • Leaving classroom without permission • Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that is insubordinate or causes minor disruption to the academic environment but does not involve damage to school property or harm to self or others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Circles • Seat change • Teacher proximity • 1:1 meeting with teacher • Floortime session
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Tier 2 - Tier 2 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that cause disruption to the academic environment, involve damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others. Tier 2 behaviors result in school-based and administrative disciplinary responses.

Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using computer/office equipment without permission • Intentional misuse of school equipment/supplies/facilities • Noncompliance with an approved dress code • Inappropriate use of CREATIVE MINDS PCS computer or network (restricted websites, offensive emails) • Acts of vandalism, destruction of property, or graffiti (tagging) • Sale or distribution of any item without authorization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical and restorative consequence • Verbal redirection/reflection • Teacher/student conference or Administrator/student conference • Parental contact in writing or by phone • Administrator/family conference • Temporary Removal of Student from Classroom

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possession or distribution of obscene or pornographic material on school premises Obscene, seriously offensive, or abusive language or gestures Causing disruption on school properties or at any Creative Minds PCS-sponsored or supervised activity Gambling Leaving school without permission Academic dishonesty, forgery, lying to or giving misleading information to school staff Unexcused absence from class Unauthorized presence in hallway during class time Unexcused absence from school Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between students Directing profanity or obscene/offensive gestures toward students or staff Throwing objects that may cause injury or damage property Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes disruption to the academic environment, involves damage to school property, or may cause minor harm to self or others Acts of exceptional misconduct at other schools Vandalism/destruction of property over \$500 Causing serious disruption or damage to school's computer systems, electronic files, or network Documented theft of school or personal property without force Interfering with school authorities or participating a major disruption of the school's operation Tampering with, changing, or altering an official record or document of a school Trespassing or inappropriate/unauthorized movement on AFRH campus Documented pattern of persistent Tier 1 behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other school-based consequences as approved by the Director of Student Culture <hr/> <p>Supportive Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior contract Individual behavior chart with individualized incentives Behavior Intervention Plan Consider referral for counseling Floortime session(s) Environmental supports (stress ball, manipulative, seating alternatives) Reinforce replacement behavior Modified schedule Teaching new coping strategies (breathing, "stop and think") Restorative Circles
<p>Tier 3 - Tier 3 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that involve causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause bodily injury or emotional distress. In addition to lesser consequences, Tier 3 behaviors may result in either on-site or off-site Suspension.</p>	

Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal, written, or physical threat to person or property (including intimidating postures) Communicating slurs based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business, including derogatory sexual language Engaging in sexual acts on school premises or at school-related functions Posting or distributing material or literature that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to students and/or staff. This includes posting material on internet or sending material via email or cell phone Engaging in behavior that demonstrates gang/neighborhood crew affiliation (displaying clothing or gestures associated with gangs) Hazing Bullying, or using humiliating, or intimidating language or behavior including Internet bullying Possession of tools or instruments which school administrators deem could be used as weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logical and restorative consequence Verbal redirection/reprimand Teacher/student conference or Administrator/student conference Parental contact (written or by phone) Parent conference Temporary Removal of Student from Classroom (defined below) Behavior contract In-School Disciplinary Action (defined below) On-site Short-Term Suspension (defined below) with provision of appropriate intervention services Off-site Short-Term Suspension (defined below), except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in reckless behavior that may cause harm to self or others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off-site Medium-Term Suspension (defined below), except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence
	<p>Supportive Interventions</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restorative Circle/Conference Behavior contract Referral to mental health and community resources Floortime session(s) Teaching new strategies (breathing, “stop and think) Reinforce replacement behavior Modified schedule

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extortion Fighting where there is no injury and no weapon Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes harm to self or others Documented pattern of persistent Tier 2 behavior
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Tier 4 - Tier 4 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that cause disruption to the school operation, destroy school property, or cause significant harm to self or others. Tier 4 behaviors may result in off-site Suspension.

Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct Sexual harassment Retaliation for reporting harassment and sexual harassment Fighting which creates substantial risk of or results in minor injury Inciting others to violence or disruption Contaminating food Possession of a weapon (definition below) or replica or imitation of a weapon (including water guns), other than weapons subject to the requirements of the Gun-Free Schools Act Using an article that is not normally considered a weapon to intimidate or threaten another individual Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that causes significant harm to self or others Documented pattern of persistent Tier 3 behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logical and restorative consequence On-site Short-Term Suspension with provision of appropriate intervention services Off-site Short-Term Suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence Off-site Medium-Term Suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence Off-site Long-Term Suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence
	<p>Supportive Interventions</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Circle/Conference • Behavior contract • Referral to mental health and community resources • Floortime session(s) • Modified schedule
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Tier 5 - Tier 5 behaviors are those behaviors not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that are illegal, involve causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause bodily injury or emotional distress or cause substantial harm to self or others. Tier 5 behaviors may result in off-site Suspension or Expulsion.

Example Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of fireworks or explosives • Theft or attempted theft using force, coercion, intimidation or Threat of violence • Assault/physical attack on student or staff • Fighting which results in a serious physical injury • Participating in planned group fight 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 School Act • Deliberate acts that cause severe physical injury to others • 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 D.C. Public Schools • Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other tier in this chapter that is illegal or causes substantial harm to self or others • Documented pattern of persistent Tier 4 behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical and restorative consequence • On-site Short-Term Suspension with provision of appropriate intervention services • Off-site Long-Term Suspension, except in response to unexcused tardiness or absence • Expulsion
	<p>Supportive Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Circle/Conference • Behavior contract • Referral to mental health and community resources • Alternative or modified schedule

Attendance Policy

Our goal is for students to attend on-time on a daily basis. In order to meet the instructional needs of all of our students, it is critical to form good habits of punctual arrival and infrequent absences. The District of Columbia Public Schools mandatory school attendance laws (D.C. Law 8-247) apply to students five years of age and older; as a public charter school, Creative Minds International PCS strictly enforces D.C. Law 8-247. Parents are held accountable for students' regular attendance to school. The attendance committee at Creative Minds

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International Public Charter School developed the following guidelines in an effort to document tardiness and absences. Students who have ten or more unexcused absences are considered to be chronically truant under the law and must be reported for truancy and investigation to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) at 202-671-7233.

Family Vacations

Please note that extended family vacations are not automatically recorded as excused absences. Please contact the Parent Liaison who will direct you to the appropriate Leadership team member with whom you should discuss any such plans.

Tardiness

All students who enter the building after 8:45 a.m. are marked tardy by the classroom teaching staff. If you have an excuse for your child's tardiness, you must submit a written note to the classroom teacher or the registrar. If a child has a note from the parent, the note will be added to his/her file.

Children who eat breakfast at school should arrive by 8:15 a.m. so they will be ready to start the school day at 8:45 a.m. The attendance committee will review each student's attendance on a monthly basis and will contact parents to discuss regular absences or tardiness. Parents will receive a letter when a student reaches five unexcused absences and will be invited to the school for a meeting.

Excused Absences

Valid excuses for absence are:

- Student illness or medical cause
 - Illness or other family emergency that requires the presence of the student in the home or prevents the parent from bringing the child to school
 - Exclusion by direction of the authorities of the District of Columbia, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons
 - Medical or dental treatment
 - Death in the student's family
 - Necessity of the student to attend legal proceedings
 - Observance of religious holidays
 - Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by the school administration
 - Temporary closing of the school due to severe weather, official holidays, unsafe conditions, or emergencies
 - Visiting a parent or a legal guardian who is in the military; immediately before, during, or after deployment
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- Other absences approved in advance by the Head of School upon written request of the parent

Absence Procedures

Parents should notify the child's teacher when absences can be anticipated. For unanticipated absences, please call the absence hotline (202-588-0370 x118). In addition, a note to the teacher and registrar

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(including the reason for the absence) is required when the student returns to school. A student who is absent for three or more consecutive days must present a doctor's note upon his/her return to school. Any student who is sent home sick (fever, vomiting, etc.) must be symptom free without medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Grievance Procedures

Grievance Procedure

Any person who believes that CMI has discriminated on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial

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status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or otherwise may submit a complaint to the CMI Chief Operating Officer (COO).

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

CMI encourages individuals to discuss their concerns with appropriate school officials before resorting to a formal complaint. However, individuals are not required to do so before filing a formal complaint.

CMI will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint or participates in an investigation in accordance with these procedures. A formal complaint may be filed by following the steps outlined below:

Step 1

Within 90 days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, written notice of the complaint must be filed with COO. If the complaint is being made against the COO, the complaint may be submitted to the CMI Executive Director. The written notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence, the desired result, and must be signed and dated by the person making the complaint.

Upon receipt of the written notice of the complaint, the designated individual to whom the complaint was submitted will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation of the complaint. Each investigation will include, as necessary, interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents and allowing parties to present evidence. All documentation related to the investigation will remain confidential.

Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the written notice of the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will respond in writing to the complainant. The response will summarize the course and outcome of the investigation, and identify an appropriate resolution. If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that discrimination or harassment have occurred, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken.

Step 2

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision from Step 1, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the CMI Executive Director, within ten (10) business days after receipt of the response. The Executive Director will review all relevant information and meet with the parties involved, as necessary. Within twenty-one (21) business days of receiving the statement of appeal, the Executive Director, will respond in writing to the complainant summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken. If the complaint is being made against the CMI Executive Director, the appeal may be submitted to the Board of Trustees. The Board Chair, Ornella Napolitano, may be reached by email at ornella.napolitano@verizon.net.

Step 3

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the school Board of Trustees within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the Executive Director's response. A statement of appeal to the Board may be submitted to the Executive Director who will provide the statement to the Board. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board shall review all relevant information and meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of the

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receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within fifteen (15) business days of this meeting.

Grievances may also be filed with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html. For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or ocr.dc@ed.gov.

Notice: Programs for students with Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504/ADA defines a person with a disability as anyone who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. The school has the responsibility to provide adjustments, modifications and provide necessary services to eligible individuals with disabilities. Creative Minds International Public Charter School acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504/ADA to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the school.

CMI does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

CMI is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each student has the right to learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices.

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Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic is strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of income in its programs, and that: (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through e-mail).

CMI does not discriminate on the basis prohibited by law of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of income in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In addition, we do not allow discrimination of any kind in the workplace. We are an equal opportunity employer and also take affirmative action measures against discrimination in all aspects of employment and School business. This policy applies not only to personnel decisions, but to all aspects of the School.

We ask that everyone in the CMI community respect everyone around them—students, family members, teachers, staff, and management alike.

Anyone having inquiries concerning the CMI nondiscrimination policy or who wish to file a complaint alleging discrimination by CMI should contact our Human Resources Manager.

Any person who believes that CMI has discriminated on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or source of income, or otherwise may submit a complaint pursuant to CMI's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be found in the student/family handbook document or obtained by request through the individual(s) identified above.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the *School District* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-5901

FERPA requires that CMI obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, CMI may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised CMI to the contrary in accordance with CMI's procedures. If you want to limit the disclosure of directory information about your child, please advise the school yearly by the first day of school. CMI has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address (parent/guardian or student)
- Photo
- Date and place of birth

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- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

Open Meetings Policy (Board of Trustees)

The Board's overall objective is to conduct school business in a transparent manner; many Board documents, including financial statements, are available for view online. While many Board meetings deal with personnel issues, awards, or other matters of confidential nature, we will hold a minimum of one open Board meeting in the Fall per school year. We will announce the date of this open meeting on the CMI website, and in an email to the CMI community, at least ten days in advance. This schedule complies with CMI's bylaws, which specify there shall be at least ten meetings of the Board held each year. Members of the CMI community who wish to contact the Board are welcome to do so at any time.