

PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO SCHOOL CULTURE

Crew

SJS aspires to create a positive, supportive, emotionally and physically safe school culture infused with SJS school values, where students feel that they are supported and part of a community. Furthermore, we want our students to feel that they are empowered to create positive change in their community.

As an Expeditionary Learning (EL) Education school, we strive to foster and celebrate students' character development by building a culture in which students and staff work together to become effective learners and ethical people who contribute to designing a better world. Our students will "live and breathe" the school values throughout all they will do at SJS. To ensure students learn to embody the values of the school, SJS will work to build a spirit of Crew: students and staff working together as a team to sustain a learning community where students feel that they are empowered to create positive change in their community, belong, and succeed. We will do this through the structures discussed below. Our work is informed by EL Education Core Practice 21: Creating a Community of Learning and Core Practice 23: Building the Culture and Structure of Crew.

The Crew Model

SJS will implement Crew, a highly successful model from EL Education, as a key component of each school day. According to EL Education, the tradition of Crew is both a culture and a structure because in EL Education schools, "there are no passengers, only crew." The culture of Crew inspires all members of a school community to work together as a team to pitch in and help others. We will implement a developmental design culture, one where students and teachers work together to democratically establish consistent schoolwide positively stated expectations. These expectations will be taught and practiced during Crew.

A key component of our model is that "every student is known." Students are more likely to be successful if they have an adult that they feel they can trust, to guide them with academics, social, and emotional challenges. Every SJS student will be paired with a school educator who will be their Crew leader throughout the duration of their years at the school. If a teacher should leave, a new Crew will be selected through a process that ensures an effective and meaningful student and Crew leader match. The Crew leader's goals are to make connections with the student and the family, to monitor progress academically, emotionally, and behaviorally, and to be the primary point of contact for the

school and the family.

Before the school year begins, teachers and leaders will create intentionally integrated Crews, which will be diverse in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, students with disabilities, and languages spoken. Students refer to and view advisory as a team, or “Crew,” synonymous with a team working together to all achieve their collective goal of being prepared for college and citizenship.

The bedrock structure of Crew is daily meetings to support everyone’s learning and growth. During this time, students, in a small setting, will build meaningful relationships with peers and their Crew leader while reflecting on and monitoring academic progress and focusing on character development. As SJS, Crews will meet once daily for 30 minutes each time.

Other school structures can help build Crew culture and ensure that every student is well known and supported by peers and adults. Crew is an engine for equity and inclusion, a place where all students feel they belong and can succeed; it is a place for teaching Social Justice strategies, where students will also participate in race and equity seminars. In Crew, we will implement the lessons and strategies that are articulated in *Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to teach Social Comprehension*. Each chapter in *Being the Change* contains lesson plans and strategies that help students understand and analyze a social comprehension issue. Students explore diversity, bias and learn to address microaggressions. These lessons will be aligned to the Social Justice Standards. Parents will also participate in race and equity seminars on a semester basis to ensure the school community is meeting its commitment to equity.

Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS)

Part of learning Habits of Character is understanding how to make choices that lead to positive outcomes. We will use the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports System (PBIS) to encourage positive behavior. This is a research-based program, shown to work with similar populations that includes incentives for positive behavior, and consistent behavioral expectations across the school. In addition to PBIS, we have school-wide supports for recognition of positive behavior and exemplars of the Habits of Work and Character such as awards and recognition at Morning Meetings. “Habits Bucks” as both an incentive and a reward. We support students by explicitly teaching Habits of Work and Character and setting Habits goals, as well as facilitating community-building activities

during Crew. When harm occurs, restorative practices will be used for those involved “to understand what happened, its impacts, and how to repair the harm.

We have a tiered PBIS system so that ALL students can participate in incentives and not just the same group of students. There is an earned incentive twice a month, such as a roller-skating party, and there are quarterly incentives that all students will be able to participate in as members of our community. In addition, students may use their “Habit Bucks” at our school store. Students can purchase snacks and other SJS swag at the school store. Teachers use Class Dojo in order to track student behavior.

Social Justice School Habits of Character & Learning Targets

Habit	Compassion	Perseverance	Designers	Responsibility	Think Critically
Descriptor words	Practice kindness & empathy	Be relentless in academic and social justice pursuits	Create your highest quality work	Own your role and be accountable	Ask questions, explore, and design solutions

Teachers use Class Dojo in order to track student behavior.

Classroom Management through Developmental Designs

Developmental Designs is an approach to creating a school culture where students are invested. In this model, teachers teach students to be self-aware and to manage their behavior. To do this, students and teachers work together and democratically establish 3 to 5 consistent schoolwide positively stated agreements. These agreements are taught and practiced during Crew.

Some of the components of Developmental Designs are:

- *Goal Setting:* In Crew, students and Crew Leaders work together to establish short term and long term academic and social goals.
- *Modeling/Practicing:* Staff, students and families model the school-wide expectations and students practice the school-wide expectations in class and

during Crew. Teachers model the Habits of Character and students practice them in class and during Crew.

Social Contract

Students and teachers work together to create a Social Contract. The Social Contract outlines between three and five schoolwide agreements that will govern the school. The three to five consistent school-wide positively stated agreements will be based on the themes of Safety, Belonging, Mutual Respect, and Engagement. Teachers and students also work together to democratically establish three to five schoolwide pathways (redirections) towards self-control.

Pathways of Self Control

The pathways of self-control are strategies that students use to get back on track when a disciplinary issue has occurred. It's important to note that Developmental Design stands in contrast with rigid one-size-fits-all classroom management frameworks. There are prescribed consequences for specific actions in rigid classroom management frameworks. For example, if a student does X then they automatically receive consequence. Developmental Designs is built on the idea that teachers have a menu of pathways (consequences) to use in order to get students back on task. The teacher assigns the pathway that works for that student based on their relationship and knowledge of that student's need.

Those pathways could include:

- Take a Break in the classroom: Student is assigned or chooses to go to the designated "take a break" space with their work and rejoins the class when they are focused
- Take a Break outside of the classroom: Student is assigned to or chooses a space in a different teacher's classroom to go to and take a break space with their work, and rejoins the class when they are focused and check-in with the teacher
- Loss of Privilege: Student might not be able to attend recess or choose their seat during lunch
- Short Problem-Solving Conference: Student and teacher meet to identify a written agreement that both the teacher and student agree to in order to resolve the problem
- Long-Term-Problem Solving Conference: Student, teacher, Principal and family

meet to identify a written agreement that both the teacher and student agree to in order to resolve the problem that the student is facing

- After School Reset: If referred to detention, the student will attend detention from 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. After School Reset is a space for students to reflect on their behavior, understand its impact on themselves and others, and to develop a plan to repair the harm done or to make the situation better.

Student Behavior Responses

We will use the following responses when students act inappropriately. It is also important to note that teachers may use a variety of different redirections to ensure that students get back on track. In addition, school administrators have discretion to take appropriate disciplinary action even if not explicitly listed in this policy. This policy applies to behavior on school grounds, during any school-activity, and off campus behavior, even if not during a school-activity, if the behavior has an impact on another SJS student, the school community or disrupts the school environment.

Disciplinary action will be individualized, fair, equitable, developmentally appropriate, proportional to the severity of the student’s offense, and, if appropriate, restorative.

	Sample Behaviors	Redirection
1	Minor disrespect Not following norms Calling Out Unaccountable Talk Checked out, off-task	Reminder/redirect Proximity Regroup/take break Positive modeling Teacher/advisor check-in Move student Formal apologies Teach Habits of Character Reflection sheets
2	Using profanity Possession of electronic items during the school	Office referral

	<p>day</p> <p>Disruptive behavior</p> <p>Horseplay</p> <p>Disrespect to staff or other students</p> <p>Excessive noise in the classroom, hall, or building</p> <p>Running in the hall, or building</p> <p>Offensive gestures (non-sexual or non-threatening)</p> <p>Writing or tagging that is not permanent or etched/engraved into school property</p>	<p>Family Meeting¹</p> <p>After school reflection</p> <p>Restorative circle</p> <p>Community service</p> <p>Short-term problem solving conference</p>
3	<p>Destruction of school or personal property valued at less than \$500</p> <p>Academic Dishonesty</p> <p>Excessive disrespect to staff or other students</p> <p>Failure to attend detention or class during the regular school day</p> <p>Forgery (including forging passes i.e. bathroom, library, nurse, etc.)</p> <p>Repeated Office Referrals</p> <p>Gambling</p> <p>Lying or giving misleading information to school staff</p> <p>Non-threatening verbal altercations including language that is bigoted or prejudicial or</p>	<p>Meeting with family and Crew Leader</p> <p>Restorative Circle</p> <p>Community Service</p> <p>After school reflection</p> <p>Saturday School Service Projects</p> <p>Re-entry procedure</p> <p>Behavior Plan</p> <p>Family Meeting²</p> <p>Long-term problem solving conference</p>

¹ Student's return to school is not contingent on parent attendance at a family meeting.

² Student's return to school is not contingent on parent attendance at a family meeting.

	<p>stereotypical</p> <p>Offensive gestures that are sexual or threatening behavior</p> <p>Possession, sale, or distribution of flammable products such as matches, lighters, lighter fluid, torches, firecrackers, etc.</p> <p>Promotion of fighting or other violent behavior</p> <p>Skipping class and/or leaving class without permission.</p> <p>Leaving the building without permission.</p> <p>Use of electronic devices (phones, laptops, e-readers, tablets, smart watches, etc.) access inappropriate content</p> <p>Unauthorized possession of over the counter or prescription medication</p>	
4	<p>Unauthorized use, selling or distribution of over the counter or prescription medication</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>Sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, lewd or indecent public behavior; engaging in sexual acts on school premises or at school-related functions</p> <p>Possession, sale, distribution or use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products or other items that classify as drugs</p> <p>Possession or use of any item that can be used as a weapon</p> <p>Arson, biohazard or bomb threats</p>	<p>Tier 3 Consequences</p> <p>In-School Suspension</p>

	Possession of any gun	
5	<p>Any willful behavior that caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury³ or emotional distress⁴ on or off school grounds.</p> <p>Such behavior includes but is not limited to the following actions:</p> <p>Bullying that causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Unauthorized sale or distribution of Schedule 1 through Schedule 3 controlled substance⁵ that causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, sexual assault, lewd or indecent behavior that causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Dating violence that causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol, or other items that cause, attempt to cause, or threaten to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Possession or use of any item that can be used as a weapon that causes, attempts to cause, or</p>	<p>Suspension</p> <p>Expulsion</p>

³“Bodily injury” means a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement; physical pain; illness; impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary.

⁴ Emotional distress” means mental suffering or distress that requires more than trivial treatment or counseling.

⁵ As defined by 21 U.S.C. §813.

<p>threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Arson, biohazard or bomb threats that causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause bodily injury or emotional distress</p> <p>Possession of any firearm (as defined by the Gun Free Schools Act)⁶</p>	
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Suspension and Expulsion Process

When restorative responses are not available, and only for the most serious incidents of harm as a matter of ensuring safety, out of school suspension and expulsion may be used. Before any student is suspended, he/she will receive due process as outlined below. Any student who is suspended will continue to receive all assignments during the suspension, will have the opportunity to communicate with school staff about the assignments, and will have the opportunity to make up any work missed as a result of the suspension if it cannot be completed during the suspension. The assignments and staff contact information will be shared with the student and his/her parent(s).

Definitions:

- In-school Suspension means temporarily removing a student from the student’s regular class schedule as a disciplinary consequence, during which time the student remains on school grounds under the supervision of school personnel who are physically in the same location as the student.
- Out-of-school Suspension means the temporary removal of a student from school attendance to another setting for disciplinary reasons, during which time the student is not under the supervision of the school’s personnel and is not allowed on school grounds.
 - Out-of-school suspension includes the removal of the student from school attendance for less than 1/2 of a school day for disciplinary reasons, during which time the student is not under the supervision of

⁶ Possession of a firearm will result in automatic expulsion

- school personnel and is not allowed on school grounds
- For students with disabilities, the term “out-of-school suspension” includes a removal in which no IEP services are provided because the removal is 10 days or fewer as well as removals in which the student continues to receive services according to the student’s IEP.
- Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school for disciplinary reasons permanently. Students who are expelled will not be eligible to reenroll. Students who are withdrawn during the expulsion process before an expulsion decision can be made will not be eligible to reenroll.
- Emergency removal means the immediate out-of-school suspension of a student based on the school’s reasonable belief that the student’s presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school staff

In-school Suspension (ISS)

Before a student is assigned to ISS, he/she will be given a chance to meet with the Principal to discuss the behavior and tell his/her side of the story. During this meeting, the Principal will share with the student what the behavior of concern is and the information that the school has to believe the behavior occurred. The student will then be given a chance to share their side of the story and/or explain the behavior. If the student is assigned to ISS, the Principal will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the reason for and length of the in-school suspension.

Any student who is suspended will continue to receive all assignments during the suspension, will have the opportunity to communicate with school staff about the assignments, and will have the opportunity to make up any work missed as a result of the suspension if it cannot be completed during the suspension. The assignments and staff contact information will be shared with the student and his/her parent(s).

Out-of-school Suspension (OSS) – Short Term (5 days or less)

A student will only be assigned to OSS if the student willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person, including behavior that occurs off school grounds. “Bodily injury” means a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement; physical pain; illness; impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary. “Emotional distress” means mental suffering or distress that requires more than trivial treatment or counseling.

Students in grade 5 will not be suspended for more than 5 consecutive school days for an incident, unless the student is facing expulsion. Students in grades 6 through 8 may not be suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days for an incident, unless the student is facing expulsion.

No student will be suspended for more than 20 cumulative school days in a school year unless:

- the student is facing expulsion;
- the Executive Director provides written justification to the student and parent(s) explaining why more than 20 days is a more appropriate disciplinary action than another type of action; or
- the Executive Director provides written justification to the student and parent(s) explaining why the conduct necessitated an emergency removal.

Before a student is assigned to OSS, he/she will be given a chance to meet with the Principal to discuss the behavior and tell his/her side of the story. During this meeting, the Principal will share with the student what the behavior of concern is and the information that the school has to believe the behavior occurred. The student will then be given a chance to share their side of the story and/or explain the behavior. If the student is assigned to OSS, the Principal will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the reason for and length of the suspension.

If the student's continued presence at school poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school staff, the Principal may suspend the student for the rest of that day and the following day without meeting with the student. However, before any further suspension is issued, the Principal will meet with the student as outlined below. This meeting could occur by phone if the student's presence at school poses a continuing danger to other students or school staff.

Students who are suspended are not permitted on school grounds and can't attend school-related activities or events for the duration of their suspension.

Out-of-school Suspension (OSS) – Long Term (6 days or more)

The Principal may make a recommendation for long term suspension. The Executive Director makes the final decision after a disciplinary hearing is held with the student and parent(s). Once a recommendation for long term suspension is made, the student will be suspended pending a hearing.

Before the Principal makes a recommendation for long term suspension, he will meet with the student to discuss the behavior and give the student an opportunity to tell his/her side of the story. During this meeting, the Principal will share with the student what the behavior of concern is and the information that the school has to believe the behavior occurred. The student will then be given a chance to share their side of the story and/or explain the behavior.

If the student's continued presence at school poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school staff, the Principal may suspend the student for the rest of that day and the following day without meeting with the student. However, before any further suspension is issued, the Principal will meet with the student as outlined below. This meeting could occur by phone if the student's presence at school poses a continuing danger to other students or school staff.

If necessary, the Principal will investigate the circumstances of the behavior and the student's explanation. The investigation will be completed within three days of the incident or within three days of when the school was notified of the incident. If appropriate, the Principal may issue a short-term suspension pending the investigation.

If long-term suspension is recommended, the Principal will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the reason for and length of the recommended suspension. This notice will include information about the basis for the recommendation, the information that the school has to support the recommendation, and the disciplinary hearing process. A disciplinary hearing will be held within 5 school days of the date that the recommendation for long-term suspension is issued. Extensions of this deadline may be made on a case by case basis if necessary.

The Executive Director will preside over the disciplinary hearing. At the disciplinary hearing, the Principal will share the information relied on to support the recommendation for long-term suspension. The student and parent(s) will be given an opportunity to fully respond to the information shared by the Principal and to present any additional information that they want the Executive Director to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney.

The Executive Director will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the final determination on the next school day following the hearing.

Students who are suspended are not permitted on school grounds and can't attend school-related activities or events for the duration of their suspension.

Expulsion

The Principal may make a recommendation for expulsion. The Executive Director makes the final decision after a disciplinary hearing is held with the student and parent(s). Once a recommendation for expulsion is made, the student will be suspended pending a hearing.

Before the Principal makes a recommendation for expulsion, he will meet with the student to discuss the behavior and give the student an opportunity to tell his/her side of the story. During this meeting, the Principal will share with the student what the behavior of concern is and the information that the school has to believe the behavior occurred. The student will then be given a chance to share their side of the story and/or explain the behavior.

If the student's continued presence at school poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school staff, the Principal may suspend the student for the rest of that day and the following day without meeting with the student. However, before a recommendation for expulsion is issued, the Principal will meet with the student as outlined below. This meeting could occur by phone if the student's presence at school poses a continuing danger to other students or school staff.

If necessary, the Principal will investigate the circumstances of the behavior and the student's explanation. The investigation will be completed within three days of the incident or within three days of when the school was notified of the incident. If appropriate, the Principal may issue a short-term suspension pending the investigation.

If expulsion is recommended, the Principal will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the reason for the recommended expulsion. This notice will include information about the basis for the recommendation, the information that the school has to support the recommendation, and the disciplinary hearing process. A disciplinary hearing will be held within 5 school days of the date that the recommendation for expulsion is issued. Extensions of this deadline may be made on a case by case basis if necessary.

The Executive Director will preside over the disciplinary hearing. At the disciplinary hearing, the Principal will share the information relied on to support the recommendation for expulsion. The student and parent(s) will be given an opportunity to fully respond to the information shared by the Principal and to present any additional information that they want the Executive Director to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney.

The Executive Director will notify the student and parent(s) in writing of the final determination on the next school day following the hearing.

Students who are expelled are not permitted on school grounds and can't attend school-related activities or events for the duration of their expulsion.

Appeals

A student's parents/guardians have five school days to challenge a long-term suspension or expulsion by submitting an appeal of the Principal's decision, in writing, to the Executive Director and Chair of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will issue a decision in writing to the parents/guardians and the school administration within 5 school days after receiving the appeal. The Chair of the Board of Directors shall convene a special meeting of the Board of Directors to consider the appeal of the suspension or expulsion. The student and his or her parents/guardians, the student's teachers, a Principal, the Executive Director and other school staff may be invited to participate in this special meeting as the Board sees fit. The decision of the Board of Directors in affirming or reversing a Principal's or Board of Directors' decision is final.

Suspension & Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Suspensions of 10 School Days or Less

Students with disabilities may be suspended for up to 10 consecutive or cumulative school days per school year in the same way that general education students are suspended. Special education services will not be provided during the first 10 days of suspension in a school year.

Suspensions of More than 10 School Days

Additional disciplinary procedures will be followed for students with disabilities who are suspended for more than 10 days in a school year. These procedures may include a manifestation determination review meeting and the provision of services during the suspension.

A manifestation determination review meeting is required if:

- A student is suspended for more than 10 consecutive or cumulative school days in a school year, and
- The reason for the suspension constitutes a pattern based on these factors:
 - The child's behavior is substantially similar to their behavior in previous incidents that resulted in previous removals; and
 - The length of each removal, the total amount of time for each

removal, and how close the removals are to each other.

When a manifestation determination review meeting is required, the Principal or Director of Student Support Services will notify the parent in writing and provide the parent with a copy of the IDEA's procedural safeguards on the day that the notice of suspension or expulsion is issued. The manifestation determination review meeting will be held within 10 school days to determine if a student's behavior was a manifestation of their disability.

The review meeting covers the relationship between a student's disability and the behavior that caused the suspension. If a student's behavior was a manifestation of their disability, the student must return to school unless the IEP team agrees otherwise. If the student's behavior is not a manifestation of their disability, the student may be disciplined according to the school's discipline policy applicable to all students. If the student's behavior is a manifestation of their disability, the IEP team must also conduct a functional behavior assessment if one hasn't already been completed and develop a behavior intervention plan. If the student already has a behavior intervention plan, the existing plan must be modified, as needed.

A manifestation determination review meeting is not required if:

- A student is suspended for more than 10 cumulative school days in a school year, and
- The suspensions don't constitute a pattern based on these factors:
 - The child's behavior isn't substantially similar to their behavior in previous incidents that resulted in previous removals; and
 - The length of each removal, the total amount of time for each removal, and how close the removals are to each other.

Educational services will be provided for any student with a disability who is suspended for more than 10 days in the school year while they're suspended, but in another setting. Services will be provided to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and make progress towards their IEP goals. If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention services and modifications will also be provided to ensure that the behavior does not recur.

Special Circumstances

There are situations when a student with a disability can be removed from school for up

to 45 school days without regard to whether their behavior was a manifestation of their disability. These situations include:

- Possession of a weapon on school premises or during a school function
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises or during a school function
- Infliction of serious bodily injury on school premises or during a school function

With parent consent, the IEP team reserves the right to change a student's placement at any time.

Hearing Officer

If there is concern that a student's attendance at school is substantially likely to result in injury to themselves or others, the school can request a hearing officer's approval to place the student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days. The interim alternative educational setting would continue to provide services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards their IEP goals.

Students Not Yet Found Eligible for Special Education or Related Services

There may be a situation where a student hasn't yet been determined as eligible for special education and related services, but may still receive the same discipline procedure as students with disabilities. This is possible only if the school knew the student potentially had a disability before the behavior requiring action took place.

For the school to know that a student may have a disability, one or more of these actions must have occurred before the behavior occurred:

- The student's parent expressed concern in writing about the need for special education to the Executive Director, the student's parent or guardian requested an evaluation of the student.
- The student's teacher or another member of our school's personnel expressed specific concerns about a behavior pattern to the Director of Student Support Services Principal or Executive Director.

The school will not be deemed to have knowledge a student may have a disability if:

- The student was previously evaluated and didn't qualify for special education services;
- The parent refused special education services; or
- The parent refused to allow an evaluation of the child

Admissions

SJS is open to all students who live in the District of Columbia. To apply to SJS, families must submit an application through My School DC. Details about the application process and lottery can be found online at MySchoolDC.org

Enrollment

Families must complete the re-enrollment process each spring, beginning on or around April 1st, in accordance with District of Columbia laws and school policies. Students are automatically guaranteed a seat in the subsequent grades as long as families complete the re-enrollment process on time each year. The school will distribute enrollment and residency verification materials each spring with the published deadlines for families to return documents. Failure to complete the entire re-enrollment process prior to published deadlines will result in loss of space and the student will need to re-apply for admission through the My School DC Lottery and may be placed on the waitlist if no space is available. If circumstances change after re-enrollment deadlines have passed, students may still be able to re-enroll at the discretion of the Executive Director (pending available seats in the student's specified grade). If a student is expelled from SJS, they will not be able to re-enroll.

Lottery

SJS participates in the My School DC common lottery, a single, random lottery that determines placement for new students at all participating schools. Student-school matches are based on the number of available spaces at each school; siblings, and other lottery preferences; how each student ranked his or her school choices; and each student's random lottery number. Students' whose applications are submitted after the deadline specified on the My School DC website (www.myschooldc.org) are given post-waitlist lottery numbers and will automatically be placed at the end of any waitlists, in the order in which they signed up.

Preference

The District of Columbia Charter Law states that siblings of enrolled students receive preference for admissions. The sibling preference is managed by My School DC. Thus, if a family of an enrolled student would like a sibling to attend SJS, the family must submit a completed application to My School DC prior to the lottery deadline. Siblings of enrolled students will receive preference over applicants from new families. If there are more siblings than spaces available for a particular grade level, the student will be placed on the preference wait list in the order of their assigned lottery number.

SJS uses the following definition for sibling: Siblings are children who share one or more biological or step-parents or who share a custodial guardian. First cousins residing in the same dwelling each with their own parent and no common guardian are not considered siblings for the SJS sibling preference.

The law also provides for a preference for founding board members and full-time staff. These individuals must also apply through the My School DC lottery on time and claim their preference through our Operations team. The school distributes information about these preferences directly to founding board members and current staff.

Waitlist(s)

As spots become available for a particular grade during enrollment season, students will be offered seats according to the order of the waiting list for that grade. In accordance with the regulations set forth by the D.C. Public Charter School Board, SJS must start new waiting lists each year. For instance, a waiting list for sixth grade this year cannot automatically roll over to become the seventh grade waiting list for next year. Thus, every family on the waiting list will need to re-apply through My School DC every year.

GRIEVANCE

SJS believes that all employees, students, parents, and visitors have the right to advocate for their needs and voice their complaints or grievances about matters pertaining to the school. SJS recognizes the meaningful value and importance of full discussion in resolving misunderstandings and in preserving good relationships between community members. If a parent/guardian has a concern or disagreement about a classroom event, curricular decision, or other academic issue, she, they, or he should first contact the teacher to attempt to resolve the disagreement through informal discussion. If the conflict is not adequately resolved, the parent/guardian should request a meeting with the Principal to schedule a follow up conversation. If the situation is not adequately resolved, the following grievance procedures should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

Grievance Procedures

It is the policy of SJS that all employees, students, parents, and visitors have the right to voice their complaints or grievances about matters pertaining to school.

SJS recognizes the meaningful value and importance of full discussion in resolving misunderstandings and in preserving good relations between management and employees.

Accordingly, the following grievance procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

What May Be Grieved

The SJS grievance process should be used as follows: (1) to deal with complaints and concerns pertaining to educational environment, employment arrangements, or interpersonal conflicts; and (2) to resolve complaints of discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or otherwise.

Who May Grieve

The procedures set forth below may be used by grievants who are employees, students, parents, or visitors.

Other Remedies

The existence of this procedure does not bar grievants from also filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

Informal Grievance

Because most difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, grievants are encouraged to discuss their concern or harassment complaint promptly and candidly with the student's teacher, their immediate supervisor, the school principal, or the Executive Director.

The grievant is not required to attempt to resolve his or her complaint informally prior to initiating a formal grievance.

Formal Grievance

Within ninety (90) days of encountering the issue or complaint that is the subject of the grievance, a grievant shall file a written notice with the school principal or with the Executive Director. Grievants may use the Grievance Form, which is attached hereto and is also available online from the school website, or from the school principal or Executive Director. The written notice shall identify the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of occurrence, and the desired result, and shall be signed and dated by the person filing the grievance. In the event a grievance is being filed by the legal guardian or parent of a student, the student and the legal guardian and/or parent shall sign and date the grievance. The principal and the Executive Director can be reached at the contact information provided below.

The Principal or Executive Director will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable impartial investigation of the grievance. Each formal complaint will be investigated, and depending on the facts involved in each situation, will be decided after receiving information from the appropriate individuals. Each investigation will include interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents, and allowing parties to present evidence.

All documentation related to the investigation and discussions held in this process are considered EXTREMELY CONFIDENTIAL and are not to be revealed to or discussed by any participant with, persons not directly involved with the complaint, with its

investigation, or with the decision making process. This provision does not include discussions with governmental authorities.

Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the written notice, the Principal or Executive Director shall respond in writing to the grievant (the "Response"). The Response shall summarize the course of the investigation; determine the validity of the grievance and the appropriate resolution.

If, as a result of the investigation, harassment, or a valid grievance is established, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken.

Appeals

If the grievant is not satisfied with the Response, the grievant may appeal in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days of the date of the Response summarizing the outcome of the investigation. The written appeal must contain all written documentation from the initial grievance and the grievant's reasons for not accepting the Response. The appeal, in letter form, may be submitted to the Executive Director who will relay it to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Within twenty-one (21) days from receiving the written appeal, the Chair of the Board of Directors will respond in writing to the appellant as to the action to be taken and the reasons therefor.

Prohibition Against Retaliation

SJS pledges that it will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, SJS will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Modification

SJS may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the

modification (a) is for good cause, and (b) does not violate due process rights or policies of SJS.

Contact Information

Myron Long Executive Director myron@thesocialjusticeschool.org 202-714-8498	Brandon Johnson Principal brandon@thesocialjusticeschool.org 240-485-8726
Rael Nelson-James Board Chair, Board of Directors Rael@thesocialjusticeschool.org 202-725-6048	

SJS Board of Trustees

SJS's Board of Trustees is a diverse and passionate group of partners and parents who share a common vision of catalyzing the next generation of scholar-activists who will become designers of a more just world. Board members serve as trusted advisors to SJS's leadership team and maintain important financial and administrative oversight of the organization.

- SJS commits to publishing on SJS's website:
 - The names of SJS's Board of Directors
 - Contact information for SJS's Board Chair
 - Approved board meeting minutes

- SJS's annual board meeting schedule, including board meetings that will be open to the public

SJS also commits to meeting with SJS scholar-activists, parents, and staff to address any proposed closure, location change, or charter relinquishment.

NON DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ("The Age Act"), and the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with SJS are hereby notified that SJS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, source of income, status as a victim of interfamily offense, or place of residence or business in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

Students, parents and/or guardians having inquiries concerning SJS compliance with Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, the Age Act, and/or D.C. Human Rights Act as they apply to students, employees or third parties or who wish to file a complaint regarding such compliance should contact: Reginald Galloway, Director of Operations at reginald@thesocialjusticeschool.org or 240-305-9291 Mr. Galloway has been designated by SJS to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, the Age Act, and the D.C. Human Rights Act.

FEDERAL NOTIFICATIONS

Title I School

Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is designed to help close the achievement gap between low income and minority students and their peers. With more than 40% of SJS students eligible for free or reduced price lunch, the

school is considered a Title I school as defined by the law and receives ESEA funds.

Parents’ Right to Know—Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications

Parents of Title I students may request certain information from the Front Office on the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child.

Parents’ Right to Know—Non-Highly Qualified Teachers

Parents of students who are taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified will be notified by the school.

Family Involvement Policy

SJS recognizes that family involvement is vital to achieve maximum educational growth for students in Title I programs. Therefore, in compliance with federal parental involvement requirements, Title I schools will meet with families to provide information regarding their school’s participation in the Title I program and its requirements.

SJS will ensure that such meetings are held annually and at a convenient time. All parents shall be invited to attend. Title I funds may be provided for transportation, childcare, home visits, or other parental involvement services, as appropriate. SJS will ensure equivalence among schools in teachers, administration, and other staff and in provisions of curriculum materials and instructional supplies.

Parents will be informed of their right to be involved in the development of this SJS family involvement policy and the overall schoolwide plan.

This family involvement policy will be developed, agreed upon, and reviewed annually with families. SJS will ensure:

- Involvement of families in the development of the SJS overall schoolwide plan and the process of school review and improvement.
- Coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

- Development of activities that promote the schools' and families' capacity for strong parent involvement.
- Coordination and integration of family involvement strategies with appropriate programs, including the requirements of other federal title programs, as provided by law.
- Barriers to participation by families who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority are identified.
- Findings of annual evaluations are used to design strategies for more effective family involvement and to revise, if necessary, the requirements of this policy.
- Involvement of families in the school activities and are provided a flexible number of meetings.
- Designation of a minimum of 1 percent of the Title I, Part A allocation for family involvement.
- Provision of the policy to families in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the families can understand. The policy will also be made available to the local community.

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the SJS ("School") receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or

eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202.

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

- A. To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met.
- B. To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. SJS will forward such records upon request.
- C. To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the

parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.

- D. In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- E. To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38.
- F. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction.
- G. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- H. To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- I. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- J. To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- J. To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or authorized tribal organization when that organization is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student, pursuant to the Uninterrupted Scholars Act of 2013.
- K. Information the school has designated as "directory information" unless the parent or student over the age of 18 notifies the school in writing that they do not wish for directory information to be disclosed without prior consent. Directory information at SJS includes:
 - a. Student Name, Mailing Address and Telephone Listing
 - b. Photograph
 - c. Date and Place of Birth

- d. Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
- e. Weight and Height of Members of Athletic Teams
- f. Honors and Awards Received
- g. Major Field of Study
- h. Dates of Attendance, Grade Level, and Enrollment Status
- i. Most recent prior school of attendance
- j. Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot and will not be used for this purpose.)

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is critical to every student's success at SJS. Therefore, we expect students to attend school every day, arrive on time, and leave on time.

For all SJS's scholar-activists, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday school begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 4:15 PM. On Thursday, school begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 1:30 PM for all students.

If a student is absent with a valid reason, parents or the student must turn in written documentation within 5 days of the student's return. This will show up as an "excused absence" in our system and will allow students to make up work in their classes. If a

student has over 10 days of unexcused absences, the family will be referred to Child and Family Services Administration (CFSA) for truancy.

Attendance will be taken during distance learning in the event that COVID-19 impacts in-person learning. SJS will update its attendance policy for distance learning if this becomes necessary. SJS will email and mail a physical copy of the updated distance learning attendance policy.

Students with more than 4 total unexcused absences are required to have a Crew meeting led by an administrator, Crew Leader, and a Wellness Team member. Students and families may be required to participate in other interventions such as attendance plans, home visits, and frequent check-ins to support their student's attendance.

Absences

Attendance will be recorded in each classroom shortly after the beginning of the school day. An absence is defined as attending less than 80% of a school day.

If you know your student will be absent, please send an email to attendance at reginald@thesocialjusticeschool.org or send in a note when your child returns to school.

In order to excuse an absence, the school must receive a note or email from the family or a doctor. In the case of an absence longer than three days, a doctor's note is required. Notes and emails must be received within 5 school days of the absence. You may call the school's front office to inform us that your child will be absent; however, this call WILL NOT excuse the absence and is for our information only. The note/email must include the date of absence, parent name, student name, and the valid reason for absence and be turned into the main office at the student's campus. Forms are available at the front desk. If no documentation is submitted to the Operations Associate, the absence will be considered unexcused. Reporting the absence does not automatically excuse the absence.

Excused absences are granted for the following reasons:

1. Illness of the student or doctor's appointment;
2. Exclusion due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or

other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons;

3. Illness or other immediate family emergency which requires the presence of the student outside the school;
4. Death in the student's immediate family;
5. Necessity for a student to attend any judicial proceeding as a party or witness;
6. Observance of religious holy days;
7. Suspension or expulsion from school by an administrator pursuant to Section 3;
8. Failure of the District of Columbia to provide transportation in cases where the District of Columbia has a legal responsibility for the transportation of the student;
9. (k) Absences to allow students to visit their parent or a legal guardian, who is in the military; immediately before, during, or after deployment;
10. Temporary closing of the school facility or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring the closing of the school facility or suspension of classes; and
11. Other absences approved in advance by an administrator upon the written request of a parent/guardian.

Extensive absences significantly diminish the ability of the student to learn. **Families are expected to schedule recreational activities, school visits and vacations only during designated school breaks.** If you need to schedule an appointment for your child, please try to do so on weekends, or before/after school.

Persistent absenteeism from school will result in the following actions being taken:

Each unexcused absence	After each unexcused absence the parent/guardian of the student will receive an automatic call, text, or email to notify them of the unexcused absence. <i>(Note: Please keep an up-to-date telephone number with your child's campus front desk.)</i>
3 unexcused absences	Once a student accrues 3 unexcused absences, the school will send a formal letter to the student's family regarding their student's unexcused absences explaining the school's attendance expectations.

4 unexcused absences (cumulative)	<p>Once a student has accrued 4 unexcused absences, the student and their family are required to meet with a Crew Leader, school administrator, or Wellness Team member to create an attendance intervention plan. Other interventions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter mailed to the student’s family regarding absences • Referral to programs for truancy prevention support.
8 unexcused absences (cumulative)	<p>Once a student has accrued 8 unexcused absences, a school administrator will send a letter to the student’s family warning that their student is close to being considered “chronically truant”, and the student and family will be required to meet with a school administrator (i.e. attendance interventionist, school leader, Crew Leader and a Wellness Team member) to discuss/revise the student’s Attendance Intervention Plan.</p> <p>SJS staff may conduct a home visit to ensure the safety of the student.</p>
10 unexcused absences (cumulative)	<p>The student is considered chronically truant. The school will develop/revise the plan for immediate intervention including delivery of community-based programs and any other assistance or services to identify and address the student’s needs on an emergency basis.</p> <p>SJS will immediately refer all students who are ages 5-13 who have accrued 10 or more unexcused absences to the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), as required by D.C. law.⁷</p> <p>Additionally, the school will send a letter home notifying the family of their student’s truancy status.</p>
15 unexcused absences (cumulative)	<p>SJS will immediately refer all students who are ages 14- 17 who have accrued 15 or more unexcused absences to the Court Social Services Division of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and to the Office of Attorney General Juvenile Section, as required by D.C. law⁸.</p> <p>Additionally, the school will send a letter home notifying the family of their student’s truancy status.</p>

⁷ D.C. Mun. Regs. tit 5, § A2103.5(a) (2014).

⁸ D.C. Mun. Regs. tit 5, § A2103.5(b) (2014).

<p>20 or more consecutive unexcused absences and withdrawal</p>	<p>If a student is absent 20 or more consecutive full school days without a valid reason or excuse, SJS has the discretion to officially withdraw the student from the school.⁹ SJS will notify the family that the student has been withdrawn.</p> <p><i>Please note, if a withdrawn student wants to return to SJS for the next school year, s/he will need to reapply through the annual lottery process through My School DC.</i></p>
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Students with disabilities will not be treated adversely for absences that are directly caused by their disabilities. As a result, it is important for staff and parents to work in tandem to support student attendance.

Appeals

A student’s parents/guardians have five school days to challenge an attendance violation by submitting an appeal of the school’s decision, in writing, to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will issue a decision in writing to the parents/guardians and the school administration within 5 school days after receiving the appeal. The Executive Director shall convene a meeting to consider the appeal of the attendance violation. The student and his or her parents/guardians, the student’s teachers, a Principal, the and other school staff may be invited to participate in this special meeting. The decision of Executive Director in affirming or reversing a Principal’s decision is final.

Skipping Class and Leaving Without Permission

Students are expected to attend every class, every day. Skipping class and/or leaving school without permission directly impacts students’ learning and will be treated similarly to absenteeism.

When a student is absent from class for 2 or more consecutive days in a week, their Crew Leader will contact the student’s parent/guardian to inform them of their student’s absence from class and hold a conference with the student to discuss the reason why the student was absent. The teacher will log all instances of skipping and

⁹ D.C. Code § 38-203 (f-2) (2017).

contacts made with the student and student's parent guardian in ESchoolPlus.

When a student leaves school without permission, an administrator will contact the student's parents to inform them of their student's behavior and notify the student's teachers. The Administrator and Crew Leader, family and student will discuss the reason why the student left school without permission and identify ways to support the student. The Administrator Will log all instances of a student leaving school without permission in ESchoolPlus.

If a student demonstrates a chronic pattern of skipping class and/or leaving school without permission, the teacher may request an in-person meeting with the student, their Crew Leader and their family, as well as other relevant school staff who support the student's attendance. If appropriate, the school may also request the student's parent/guardian to participate in a shadow day with their student.

NOTE: A student's opportunity to make-up any work that was missed as a result of the student skipping class and/or leaving school without permission is limited by teacher discretion.

Extended Absences

As mentioned above, extensive absences (excused or unexcused) significantly diminish the ability of students to learn. Families are expected to schedule recreational activities, school visits and vacations during school breaks. However, we understand that students may have extenuating circumstances that require an extended absence from school.

If you are aware that your child will be absent for more than 5 consecutive days (due to a valid reason such as a family emergency, medical issue, and/or legal obligation), we request that parents schedule a meeting with a Wellness Team member or grade-level administrator to establish a work plan for your student to make-up the work that will be missed during their absence.

Students who are home- or hospital-bound because of a health issue are entitled to tutoring services. In order to activate this service, families must obtain paperwork from your school's Assistant Director of Special Education or Wellness Team member and obtain a signature from your student's doctor. SJS will coordinate tutoring

services with the family based on the student's schedule.

Leave of Absence

SJS understands that there are special circumstances under which our families must leave the country or the D.C. Metropolitan Area (within 50 miles) for a temporary period of time. Applicable scenarios may include out-of-state employment, military and Foreign Service posts, and family commitments.

Current SJS families who need to leave the school for a period of time due to any of the above reasons may request a leave of absence from the Executive Director (ED). In order to initiate the process to request a leave of absence, the family must submit a written request including the following information:

- Reason for the request
- Estimated period of the absence
- Contact information for the parent/guardian that will remain in contact with SJS throughout the period of absence.

All written requests must be submitted to the ED prior to the last day of the current school year or at the time of departure for students leaving mid-year. Once the written request has been received by the ED, the ED will review the request with the school's leadership team and inform the family of a final decision. If a leave of absence is granted, the student will be able to re-enroll at SJS without reapplying through the My School DC Lottery for up to two years from the date of departure. Extensions are available by request and at the discretion of the ED.

Please note that the SJS Leave of Absence Policy exists outside of the official My School DC enrollment process and has no impact on any existing student waitlist for the impacted grades.