

Student and Family Policies
I Dream Public Charter School

Discipline Policy

I Dream PCS will utilize the Community Code of Conduct as a guide for determining appropriate responses to missteps and relationship repair. As a matter of equity, each misstep, conflict, or violation of a classroom or school agreement will be resolved as an individual matter with the support of peers, tribes, staff, families, and the Restorative Justice Council.

I Dream Glossary

Logical response or response = disciplinary action

Misstep = behavior **Family**

= parent/guardian **Learner**

= student

Temporary removal from school community = suspension

Permanent removal from school community = expulsion

It should be clear that missteps may occur, which alone or by repetition may require that the learner committing them leave the school community, temporarily or permanently. These decisions will be made in accordance with the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act 2018. This Act states that learners cannot be removed from the school community temporarily or permanently unless the learner willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause bodily injury or emotional distress to another person or to himself/herself, including incidents that occur off school grounds. Such logical responses are expected to support the school community's goals of self-awareness, social-awareness, and responsible decision-making by helping learners understand that in order to participate in the school community they must conduct themselves appropriately.

A learner's attendance at I Dream PCS assumes the family accepts and supports these expectations. The school will create a plan for providing instructional resources to any learner who is temporarily removed from the school community and will share the plan with the learner's family. The school and the family will co-create a learning plan, if possible. Such a plan will include a staff member who is the point of contact for the learner and/or the family to be able to communicate about assignments and the learner will have an opportunity to make up any assignments missed during the removal upon his/her return to the school community.

It should also be clear that:

1. Learners in grades K -5 will not be suspended for more than 5 consecutive days.
2. PK3 and PK4 learners will not be suspended out of school at all.
3. School leaders will take special consideration regarding a learner with a disability. See Manifestation Determination Review section described in this policy.

Category A Missteps:

- Disruptive behavior that prevents learning, hallway transitions, or school operations
- Teasing, verbally hurtful to others

- Laugh at or encourage in any way another learner's disruptive behavior or teasing of another learner
- Failure to follow the classroom or school expectations co-created by learners and staff
- Ignoring reminders or redirection from adults and/or peers
- Disregarding the dress code
- Use of inappropriate language in conversation (not directed at someone)
- Use of cell phone or other electronic devices without staff permission or for non-educational purposes
- Being a bystander instead of an upstander

Logical Responses for Category A Missteps

(One or more of the following)

- Conversation
- Written reflection
- Time in the Zen Zone with Social Worker, school leader, or designated staff
- Reparation
 - Verbal apology
 - Written apology letter
 - Educational service - read, write, draw, or perform apology
 - Community service (e.g., tutoring those who missed instruction during your disruption of learning)
 - Restitution - A kind gesture to repair relationship or replace property
 - Self sanction - learner negotiates with adult what can be done to repair harm
 - PK3 - K learners receive list of a few options for self sanction
- Peer mediation (e.g., Peace Circle or VOMP (Voice Ownership Moccasins Plan Protocol))
- Loss of privileges
- Research project about issue or topic
- Tribe Circle
- Restorative Justice Council referral (if continuing misstep)
- Parent or Family notification by coach or staff member
- Parent or Family conference with coach or staff member
- Confiscate electronic device for retrieval by family member

Category B Missteps:

- Continued Category A Missteps after receiving a logical response
- A lie with the intent or effect to cause harm
- Unsafe actions or behavior not intended to cause harm (e.g., climbing on cubby, sliding down a railing)
- Attempt to leave the school building or assigned area without permission or supervision
- Cheat, destroy the work of others
- Commit forgery (e.g., signing a permission slip as a parent or guardian)
- Violate password protection of a computer, download illegal software or any software without adult permission, download software to cause damage to a system or cause a security breach, or alter a system file
- Play that is aggressive, can cause harm, makes someone feel threatened or unsafe, or inappropriate for the space
- Skipping class or refusal to go to an assigned class or area

- Visiting unapproved websites or online games during the school day
- Cause minor vandalism or damage to school property or personal property, including computers (e.g., popping off keys, breaking/cracking screen, removing parts)
- Participate in gambling (e.g., playing cards for money or snacks)
- Handling objects in a way that endangers the safety of oneself or others
- Use school property or presence in school spaces without permission
- Theft or misuse of school or personal property that is readily replaceable but may cause annoyance, frustration, or anger
- Failure to attend Restorative Justice Council appointment

Logical Responses for Category B Missteps

(One or more of the following)

- Peer mediation
- Time in the Zen Zone with Social Worker, school leader, or designated staff
- Reparations
 - Verbal apology
 - Written apology letter
 - Assist the person harmed in receiving treatment
 - Educational service - read, write, draw, or perform apology
 - Community service - (e.g., repairing computer during Me Time or after school)
 - Restitution - A kind gesture to repair relationship or replace property
 - Self sanction - learner negotiates with adult what can be done to prepare harm
 - PK3 - K learners receive list of a few options for self sanction
- Restitution (e.g., repair school or personal property after school or on weekend)
- Referral to Mental Health support (in-school or community service provider)
- Loss of privileges
- Loss of computer use for designated length of time
- Tribe intervention
- Restorative Justice Council referral
- Parent or family notification
- Parent or family conference with school leader

Category C Missteps

- Bullying*
- Leaving the school building without supervision or permission
- Use of profanity, racial, ethnic, religious, or sexually derogatory language to harass or threaten someone
- Aggressive behavior that causes harm (including physical fighting, hitting, spitting)
- Making threatening or illegal phone calls or terrorist threats to the school
- Unauthorized use of the fire alarm equipment
- Cause significant vandalism to school or personal property
- Theft or misuse of school or personal property that causes financial hardship, sadness, or grief
- Intentionally cause injury to another person
- Sexual harassment of anyone (e.g., inappropriate touching or groping, unwanted or unsolicited advances)
- Make threats towards someone or group of people using the words, "bomb", "kill", "shoot"
- Possess or use tobacco products, including vaping devices, e-cigarettes, on school grounds or at school events offsite

- Possess or use controlled or illegal substances, alcohol or drugs on school grounds or at school events offsite
- Possess or use any weapon, object that could be used as a weapon (such as kitchen knife, or pocket knife) on school grounds or at school events offsite
- Perform or attempt to perform arson
- Lewd or indecent exposure (e.g. intentionally urinating in a public space)

Logical Responses for Category C Missteps

(One or more of the following)

- Restitution (e.g., repair school or personal property after school or on weekend)
- Reparations (layered repair, combination of responses)
 - Verbal apology
 - Written apology letter
 - Assist the person harmed in receiving treatment
 - Educational service - read, write, draw, or perform apology
 - Community service - (e.g., repairing computer during Me Time or after school)
 - Restitution - A kind gesture to repair relationship or replace property
 - Self sanction - learner negotiates with adult what can be done to prepare harm
 - PK3 - K learners receive list of a few options for self sanction
- Loss of privileges
- Referral to Mental Health support (in-school or community service provider)
- Conference with Principal or designated school leader and family
- Immediate, temporary removal from school community to designated alternate space in school with adult supervision (in-school suspension)
- Immediate, temporary removal from school community to family for designated period of time, for less than 5 consecutive days (out-of-school suspension). A re-entry conference with the learner, family, and designated school community members will take place before or after the learner's return to the school community.
- Illegal activity reported to law enforcement (after family notification)
- Permanent removal from the school community (expulsion)

Bullying

According to DC Bullying Prevention Act, bullying is defined 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 or 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. Can reasonably be predicted to:
 - a. Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to their 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.

Any form of bullying is explicitly prohibited and will be regulated in all school-sponsored events, on school grounds and immediately adjacent property, on transportation to and from school or school-sponsored events, through the use of electronic devices that are the property of the school, and at any location/function not school-related and through personal electronic devices if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim of witnesses or that materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

Other forms of bullying:

Cyber Bullying – Bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, and Internet postings.

Electronic communication – The use of the Internet and mobile technology such as web pages, discussion groups such as instant messaging, SMS text, Instagram, or Facebook with the intent of intimidating, harassing, or harming another person.

Manifestation Determination Review

When a learner with a disability makes a misstep and the school is considering temporary or permanent removal of the learner from the school community, the school will hold a Manifestation Determination Review to examine the relationship between the learner's disability and the misstep.

Learners with disabilities includes learners with Individualized Education Plans, 504 Plans and learners who are in the process of being evaluated for Special Education. If a learner has been temporarily removed from the school community for more than 10 school days in a school year, a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) that includes the learner's family, will review all relevant educational records contained in the learner's file or in possession of the school to determine whether the learner's violation of the Community Code of Conduct was a manifestation of the learner's disability. The MDT will meet within 10 days of the date the consideration to remove the learner from the school community was made.

- a. If it is determined that the learner's misstep was a manifestation of the learner's disability, the circumstance will be reviewed with consideration for the learner's disability and the misstep warranting the review.
- b) If it is determined that the learner's misstep was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the learner's file will be reviewed to determine the logical response to the misstep in accordance with the Community Code of Conduct.

Temporary Removal from School Community

Temporary removal from the school community is a logical response to a misstep during which the learner has willfully caused bodily injury or emotional distress to another person or persons.

Appeals Process for Temporary Removal from School Community

If a learner is temporarily removed from school community (in-school or out of school), the family will be contacted immediately and receive details of the removal in writing within 24 hours. The family will be given the contact information of the designated school community member to discuss and/or appeal the removal with the Principal or Executive Director.

The learner will receive class assignments and appropriate support from school staff, in-person, virtually, or by phone, to ensure that the learner does not fall behind academically while temporarily removed from the school community. Learners with disabilities or English learners may receive individualized education plan or individualized learning plan services while temporarily removed from the school community. The learner can make up any assignments missed during the temporary removal upon his/her return to the school community.

A family may appeal the temporary removal through an appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee consisting of the Executive Director, the Principal, and other members of the school's team as deemed appropriate. The appeal must be made in writing within 24 hours of notification of temporary removal from the school community and be delivered by email, or by hand to the Executive Director or designee. A hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible after the Executive Director receives notice of the appeal from the family.

The learner will receive class assignments and appropriate support from school staff, in the home, virtually, or by phone, to ensure that the learner does not fall behind academically while the appeal is in process and until it is complete. Learners with disabilities or English learners may receive individualized education plan or individualized learning plan services while the appeal is in process.

At the appeals hearing,

- The Principal will present the information supporting the recommendation for the temporary removal from the school community.
- The family will present oral and or written statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal.
- Learners (age nine and older) may have the option to attend and present an oral or written statement.
- The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a decision within 24 hours of the hearing; ideally the decision will be made the same day.
- The decision of the appeals committee in affirming OR reversing the temporary removal decision is final.

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

Permanent Removal from School Community

Permanent removal from the school community is an action taken only as a last resort, and only in accordance with Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act of 2018. It is a logical response to a misstep during which the learner has willfully caused bodily injury or emotional distress to another person or persons, and it is the school's reasonable belief that the learner's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to other learners or school staff.

- If a learner is under consideration for permanent removal, the Principal will notify the family via phone and in writing of the recommendation within 24 hours. The learner will be temporarily removed from the school community (out of school) until the permanent removal is final.

- Once the learner is placed under consideration for permanent removal, the family is asked to pick up their learner from school. The learner is not allowed to return to the school grounds or participate in any school-sponsored activities, fieldwork, or programs.
- The Principal determines when to recommend permanent removal. The recommendation will then be sent to the Executive Director and a meeting will be held with the family to confirm the circumstances and the reason for the recommendation.
- The Executive Director will make a final decision on the permanent removal. The family will be notified by phone and mail of the decision within 48 hours.

Appeals Process for Permanent Removal from School Community

Families may appeal the decision of permanent removal of a learner from the school community through a formal appeals process that includes a hearing before an appeals committee consisting of the Executive Director, the Principal, and other members of the school's team as deemed appropriate. The appeal must be made in writing within 48 hours of notification of the permanent removal and be delivered by email, or by hand to the Executive Director. Once the appeal is received, a hearing is scheduled no more than three (3) business days after the Executive Director receives notice of the appeal from the family.

The learner will receive class assignments and appropriate support from school staff, in the home, virtually, or by phone, to ensure that the learner does not fall behind academically while the appeal is in process and until it is complete. Learners with disabilities or English learners may receive individualized education plan or individualized learning plan services while temporarily removed from the school community and until the decision for permanent removal is final.

At the appeals hearing,

- The Principal will present written and oral statements as well as documentation supporting the recommendation to permanently remove the learner from the school community.
- The parent/guardian will present oral and or written statements as well as documentation supporting the appeal.
- Learners (age nine and older) may have the option to attend and present an oral or written statement.
- The appeals committee will consider the testimony of all participants and render a written decision within 48 hours of the hearing.
- The decision of the appeals committee in affirming OR reversing the Executive Director's decision is final.

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

Attendance Policy

I Dream PCS recognizes that attendance is an important factor in educational success. Research has also shown that one of the key factors in determining if a learner is on track to graduate from high school is attendance throughout the child's education. In order to learn the skills and concepts they need, learners must be in school. Even missing one or two days every few weeks can lead to chronic absenteeism and stifle a learner's progress. Since I Dream PCS opened its doors (both virtually and in-person), we have seen that **learners who attend school regularly have shown to achieve at higher levels than learners who do not have regular attendance.**

The purpose of this policy is to institute a comprehensive approach to improving attendance for all learners and to identify and address attendance challenges in order to remove those barriers.

SCHOOL HOURS AND ATTENDANCE OVERVIEW

Pre-K & PK/K (PK A and B):

- Breakfast begins at 8:30 AM
- Instructional day begins at 8:45 AM

Elementary (Elem A, B, C):

- Breakfast begins at 8:00 AM
- Instructional Day begins at 8:30 AM

Tardy: All learners are tardy after 8:45 AM (please see below for more information on tardies).

Dismissal: 4:25 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and 1 PM on Wednesday.

- There is NO early dismissal from 4:00 - 4:25 PM (M,T,Th,F) or from 12:30 - 1:00 PM (W)

If a learner is going to be absent, arrive late, or leave early, the family must notify the office in advance at (202) 922-7221. A pattern of excessive absences, tardies, or trancies will result in various levels of intervention (please see the section below for more on attendance interventions).

I DREAM ATTENDANCE DETAILS

The school will maintain a day-by-day record of each learner's attendance and tardies.

Learners must bring in a note after each instance they are absent and must include all absent days within that instance. The note may be written or emailed (attendance@idreampcs.org) but NOT by text message. If sent by text, we will ask that you submit a formal note. The note must include the following:

- Name of the learner
- Date(s) absent
- Reason for the absence
- Phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached, and
- The parent or guardian's signature

Parents/guardians must submit a written explanation (note or email) for your child's absence within 5 school days of that child's absence. A list of excused absences is highlighted below. If your child is absent for more than five (5) consecutive days, you must submit a note from a doctor or other acceptable documentation explaining the absence.

If a note is provided after five (5) days of an absence, it will be considered unexcused, even if it would have been excused in the accepted time period. Unexcused absences will be changed to excused

absences only if there is a reasonable explanation for why the documentation was not submitted within the 5 days.

Upon returning to school after being absent, the learner shall be permitted to return to class.

Tardies- arriving late or dismissing early

All families arriving after 8:45 AM or picking up early must enter through the main entrance (where security sits).

- Late Arrivals complete the [Late Arrival form](#). Security or an I Dream PCS staff member will then escort the learner up to their class.
- Early Dismissals complete the [Early Dismissal Form](#)

Tardies	I Dream PCS Reponse
Each Unexcused Absence	Robo message from I Dream PCS
5 Tardies	Meeting with Learner Success Team

Excused Absences

- Learners with COVID-19 or with a family member who has COVID-19 and cannot take the learner to school will be marked as excused.
 - Please see I Dream PCS’s [Building Entry guidelines](#) for COVID-19. Quarantine and testing timeframes are included in this document, as well as when a learner will be dismissed and not allowed in school due to COVID-19-related symptoms or test result.
- An illness or injury that prevents the learner from attending school.
 - If the illness or injury results in absence of five or more consecutive days, a note from a health care provider documenting the health problem or hospitalization should be attached to the parents’ note. Parents are not expected to have a note from a health care provider for an illness of fewer than five days.
 - Siblings of sick learners must still attend school and will be marked unexcused if they are absent, unless the parent/guardian can provide valid reasoning the sibling did not attend.
- A death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- Medical or psychological tests during the school day: The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school.
- 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;
- Religious observance or cultural holidays: To accommodate learners’ cultural and religious observances on days when schools are in session, such absences will be marked excused upon submitting a valid note signed by a parent or guardian and approved by the Principal.
- Virtual Learning

- If I Dream PCS is conducting virtual learning, lack of access to the necessary technology, inability to use working technology, or malfunction of technology qualify as excused absences.
- Court appearance or judicial proceeding: learners should present evidence of the requirement of the court appearance.
- An emergency or other circumstance approved by the Principal or Executive Director.
- Suspension from school is not an absence and will be coded differently than an absence in our system. In cases of suspension, the school will provide an opportunity for the learner to receive educational services for the duration of the disciplinary action. Parents/guardians may accept or decline this offer.

If a learner will be absent for an extended period due to an extraordinary circumstance, the family should contact the Principal to explain the reason for the absence and the amount of time away from learning. The Principal and/or the Executive Director will determine if the absence will be excused. The Principal will notify the family of the decision.

Unexcused Absences

- Family vacations: School vacations and holiday periods allow time for family vacations. Each day of absence, for this reason, is unexcused.
- Other situations: From time to time, situations such as “illness of members of an extended family,” or “conflicts with parents’ work schedule” may develop. These should be viewed as unacceptable excuses for absences.
- Virtual learning
 - If a learner does not log into virtual classrooms at any point during the scheduled day or does not submit any work to or show activity on one of I Dream PCS’s virtual platforms (Seesaw, Dreambox, Lexia).
- Didn’t feel like bringing a child to school.

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

Response to escalating unexcused absences

Unexcused Absence	I Dream PCS Reponse
Each Unexcused Absence	Robo message from I Dream PCS
2 Days of Unexcused Absence	Parents / guardians will be contacted by the learner’s coach by phone the day following an unexcused absence.
3 Days of Unexcused Absences	Parents/guardians will receive a wellness check phone call from the Support Specialist to check in on the learner.

4 Days of Unexcused Absence	A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian.
5 Days of Unexcused Absence (In total)	Parents will be invited to meet in person with the Support Specialist and administration to create an action plan and address barriers
7 Days of Unexcused Absence	A Partner Visit will be conducted by the Support Specialist.
10 Days of Unexcused Absence	Referral to OSSE. DC law requires educational institutions to notify OSSE, within two business days, of the 10th unexcused absence of learners in grades K-5. OSSE is then required to provide the learner's parent with a truancy prevention resource guide that covers certain topics
20 Days of consecutive unexcused absences	Learner will be unenrolled from I Dream PCS if they reach 20 consecutive unexcused absences.

Truancy

A truant learner is defined as a school-aged student (ages 5-17) with an unexcused absence. A learner is considered chronically truant when they have logged 10 unexcused absences. Once a learner is considered truant, the school will submit a referral to OSSE. The school will also initiate various forms of intervention to help improve attendance and remove barriers to missing school. Please see the section on attendance interventions below.

Chronic Absenteeism

A learner who misses 10% or more of school days, **regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused, or if the learner is suspended**, is considered chronically absent. Chronic absenteeism is linked with poor learner performance, low academic engagement, and increased risk of high school dropout. Many families are surprised to learn that **missing just two days of school per month can lead to a learner becoming chronically absent!** Over the course of the school year (180 days), a learner cannot miss more than 18 total days in order to not be chronically absent. We are committed to partnering with families to prevent chronic absenteeism. When a learner becomes, or is at risk of becoming, chronically absent, we will initiate various forms of intervention to help improve attendance and remove barriers to missing school. Please see the section on attendance interventions below.

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD REPORTING POLICY

The DC Public Charter School Board requires I Dream to report all attendance, explain any truant and chronically absent statuses, and take action on improving the attendance for those learners. [See the PCSB Attendance and Truancy Policy here.](#)

OSSE REQUIRED ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Compulsory School Attendance Requirements

The Compulsory School Attendance Law states that all children who reach five (5) years of age on or before September 30th of the current school year are considered school-aged and must attend school on time every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18th birthday.

Attendance and truancy-related regulations are found in Chapter 21 of Title 5-A of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, "Compulsory Education and School Attendance" (5-A DCMR § 2100 *et seq.*). The DCMR is available online at: <http://www.dcregs.dc.gov>. Please [click here to read details about OSSE's Notice of Attendance and Reporting Requirements](#). OSSE attendance metrics:

- Chronic Absenteeism: when a learner is absent – either excused or unexcused – for 10 percent or more of instructional days a learner was enrolled across all schools and sectors in a given school year. This equals 18 absent school days within a given school year.
- Truancy: the accumulation of 10 or more unexcused absences across all schools and sectors in a given school year.
- In-Seat Attendance: percentage of the cumulative sum of instructional days on which enrolled learners are present in school during a given school year.
- Attendance Growth: Score Calculated for individual learners by taking the change in a learner's attendance rate and subtracting the median change in attendance rate for learners in the same age group

OSSE Requirement

- A valid excuse for an absence must be provided **within five school days**. All absences must be recorded as unexcused unless the parent, guardian, or other person who has custody or control of a minor learner provides the school with a valid excuse for the minor's absence within five school days of returning to school. See § 38-203(c)(2).
- No student may be expelled or receive an out-of-school suspension due to attendance. See § 38-236.04.
- No student may be unenrolled from an LEA due to attendance unless 20 consecutive full school day unexcused absences are accumulated. See § 38-236.04
- DC law requires educational institutions to notify OSSE, within two business days, of the 10th unexcused absence of any minor student. OSSE is then required to provide the student's parent with a truancy prevention resource guide that covers certain topic
- **Report the accrual of 10 full school day unexcused absences to child welfare and juvenile justice.** Only the accrual of 10 (ages 5-13) full school day unexcused absences are required to be counted for the purposes of making referrals to child welfare and juvenile justice. See § 38-201(2B) and § 38-208(c)(1)
- **Report to OSSE and publicly share a required summary of annual attendance data.** Educational institutions must send the report required by § 38-203(i) to OSSE within 60 days of the end of each school year and must make the report readily available.

SAFETY CONCERNS RELATED TO ATTENDANCE

There are times when a parent has wrongly assumed a child has reached school, such as when a learner misses a bus and returns home unsupervised. Given this situation, strangers, child-abuse offenders, and motor vehicles present a potential danger, particularly for our young learners. Parents/guardians who send their children to school have no way of knowing that their son/daughter is not in school unless the school notifies them.

In order to maximize protection and safety under the circumstances noted above, schools should take the following measures:

1. (if the learner is traveling on their own) Emphasize to the parents/guardians that they should make arrangements to be sure that their children reach the bus stop on time every morning and that they actually board the bus.
2. Inform parents/guardians that they should notify the school by telephone each day that their children will be absent due to illness, etc.
3. Inform parents/guardians as soon as possible, including through the School Messenger system, that their child is absent.
4. Ensure that the parents/guardians supply the school with accurate and up-to-date home and emergency telephone numbers and indicate the place their children should go if they miss the bus, i.e., the home of a relative, friend, neighbor, etc. These emergency numbers should be updated as necessary.
5. Confirm anyone who is authorized to pick up the learner with all parents/guardians twice/year.

BACKGROUND

On December 10, 2015, the Every learner Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law, reauthorizing the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and replacing the most recent reauthorization of ESSA, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). With a few exceptions, ESSA will first take effect at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. The law includes provisions to help ensure improved outcomes for all learners receiving elementary and secondary education, including the following:

- States must establish high academic content standards, and schools must teach all learners those standards to help prepare them for college and careers
- States, districts, and schools must share information with families, learners, and communities regarding annual statewide assessments that measure learners' progress toward these high standards
- States and districts must establish systems of accountability and support for all schools, and provide particular support to the lowest-performing schools, schools with low-performing subgroups, and schools with low graduation rates

Under ESSA, each state must develop a consolidated state plan that documents a comprehensive approach to improving outcomes for all learners. The Compulsory School Attendance Law states that all children who reach five (5) years of age on or before September 30th of the current school year are considered school-aged and must attend school on time every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18th birthday.

Grievance Procedures

Parents and families with complaints or concerns should first bring it directly to the attention of the child's coach or our Support Specialist depending on the situation. In the event that this does not yield a solution, families should then bring the issue to the attention of the Principal. Your concern will be responded to within a reasonable period of time, usually 5 business days. If you are unsatisfied with the response, you may make a formal complaint in writing following the procedures below.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, you must do so in writing to the Executive Director. All complaints will be adequately, reliably, and objectively investigated, and any evidence or witnesses presented by the person(s) making the complaint will be considered. Your concern will be responded to in writing within a reasonable period of time, usually 10 business days. The response will summarize the concern(s) raised and the course and outcome of the investigation, and will identify an appropriate resolution. If your concern is still not resolved, you must contact the Chair of the Board of Directors (boardchair@idreampcs.org) in writing within 5 business days. The Chair of the Board of Directors, or his/her designee, will consider all information presented and respond in writing to your grievance, summarizing the outcome of the appeal, within 30 calendar days of receiving your written grievance. These grievance procedures apply to any concerns that may arise, including but not limited to concerns about discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or otherwise. All information presented and discovered during the course of an investigation will remain confidential. I Dream will not retaliate against any person who raises a concern using the procedures outlined above or otherwise participates in the investigation of such concerns. If, during the course of the investigation, it is determined that corrective or remedial action is necessary, such action will be taken in a prompt and reasonable manner.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the DC Human Rights Act of 1977, I Dream Public Charter School does not discriminate (including employment therein or admission thereto) on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, disability, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense, or place of residence. Sexual harassment, sexual violence and gender identity are all forms of sex discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is prohibited.

Discrimination in a violation of the aforementioned laws will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

FERPA Notice

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and learners over 18 years of age ("eligible learners") 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/guardians or eligible learners should submit to the school principal or Director of Operations a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent /guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents/guardians or eligible learners may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal or Director of Operations, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian 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/ guardian 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/guardian 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. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- The right to opt out of school designated directory information. Generally education records can not be disclosed without consent from the parent, legal guardian, or eligible student. FERPA permits the disclosure of a certain category of information called "directory information" without permission from the parent, legal guardian or eligible student. Directory information is defined as the information in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory Information category examples can include name, age, address, phone number, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, awards received, the most recent previous educational agency attended by the student. While permission is not required, the school will notify parents, legal guardians, and eligible students about directory information. The school will give parents, legal guardians, or eligible students the opportunity to opt out or object to the disclosure by submitting a Notice of Intent to Disclose Director Information form.
- 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

- Any requests, questions, and concerns to inspect or review records are sent to:
Front Office
I Dream Public Charter School
contactus@idreampcs.org

Right to Know

Parents/guardians of all children who attend Title I Schools have the right to request information about the qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Open Meetings Policy

Meetings of the I Dream PCS Board of Trustees are open to the public under the District of Columbia's [Open Meetings Act](#) ("OMA"). Under OMA, the I Dream PCS Board must notify the public when it will hold a meeting where a quorum of the board will be present. Members of the public or press must be allowed to attend or view the meeting and the public must be able to access the meeting agenda, minutes, and recording. The I Dream Board can close meetings or parts of meetings for several specific reasons, although notice must be provided to the public when it will do so. For an overview of the OMA, [click here](#). For more information about open meetings at I Dream PCS, please contact the Board Secretary, boardsecretary@idreampcs.org. To view Board member profiles, previous meeting minutes, and a calendar of Board meetings, please [visit our website here](#).

Admission Preference Policy

I Dream PCS is open and free to all children who are residents of the District of Columbia. I Dream PCS does not ever limit enrollment on the basis of a student's race, color, religion, national origin, languages spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a student with special needs, sexual orientation, or gender identification.

I Dream PCS participates in the [MySchool DC lottery process](#). All learners admitted or offered a seat at I Dream PCS must first apply through MySchool DC. If the school receives more applicants than the number of seats available, I Dream will create a waitlist for those applicants.

The school does implement a preference for admission based on the criteria below. These preferences are taken into account within the MySchool DC lottery process.

- Siblings of current learners and siblings of offered learners
- Children of staff- so long as enrollment of children of staff is limited to no more than 10% of the school's total enrollment or to 20 students, whichever is less.
- Children of founders- so long as enrollment of children of founders is limited to no more than 10% of the school's total enrollment or to 20 students, whichever is less.