



## Northside Charter High School Discipline Policy

### Administrative Discretion

The School is committed to applying this Discipline Policy in a fair, consistent, and developmentally appropriate manner. While this Policy provides guidance regarding behavioral expectations, disciplinary responses, and restorative practices, it is not intended to create inflexible rules or mandatory disciplinary outcomes for every situation. School administrators and designated staff retain the authority to exercise professional judgment in interpreting and applying this Policy based upon the unique facts and circumstances of each incident.

In determining the appropriate disciplinary, restorative, supportive, or corrective response, the School may consider a variety of factors, including, but not limited to: the nature and severity of the conduct; the student's age, grade level, maturity, and disciplinary history; the impact of the conduct on students, staff, and the school community; the presence of mitigating or aggravating circumstances; applicable legal requirements; safety considerations; and any other relevant information known to the School at the time of the decision. Accordingly, the interventions, disciplinary responses, and progressive measures described in this Policy are intended as guidelines and examples rather than mandatory prerequisites to a particular consequence. The School reserves the right to deviate from, accelerate, modify, or combine disciplinary and restorative responses when, in its judgment, doing so is appropriate to address the conduct at issue, protect the safety and welfare of the school community, comply with applicable law, or further the educational mission of the School.

### Discipline Philosophy

At Northside Charter High School, our approach to discipline is rooted in **restorative justice** practices that prioritize accountability, community, and personal growth. Rather than focusing solely on consequences, we aim to address the root causes of conflict and misbehavior through meaningful dialogue, mutual understanding, and collaborative problem-solving. Our discipline policy is designed to support a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where students are empowered to take responsibility for their actions, repair harm, and rebuild trust within the school community.

*Note:*

*Restorative justice is an approach to discipline that emphasizes repairing harm, restoring relationships, and building a stronger, more connected community. At Northside Charter High School, we use restorative justice as the foundation of our discipline policy. This means that when conflicts or behavioral issues arise, our focus is not on punishment, but*



*on understanding the impact of one's actions, taking responsibility, and actively working to make things right. Through structured conversations, mediation, and restorative circles, students have the opportunity to reflect, learn from their mistakes, and contribute to a healthier and more respectful school environment.*

### Students' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at a school function. Nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual identity, gender, or sex by School employees or students on School property or at a School function.

In addition, the School reserves the right to discipline students, consistent with our Discipline Policy, who engage in harassment of students off School property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct: 1) affects the educative process; 2) actually endangers the health and safety of School students within the educational system; or 3) is reasonably believed to pose a danger to the health, welfare, and safety of our students. This includes written and/or verbal harassment which materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the School and/or which School officials reasonably forecast as being likely to materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the School and/or community.

### **Student Rights**

1. Learn in a safe, supportive, bias-free environment.
2. Receive clear behavioral expectations and consistent enforcement.
3. Due-process protections before suspension or expulsion.
4. Access to alternative instruction during removals.
5. Reasonable privacy in personal effects, subject to lawful search standards.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Demonstrate **Knight Code** core values: Commitment, Accountability, Integrity, and Respect.
2. Attend school prepared and participate in restorative processes.
3. Refrain from conduct that disrupts teaching, learning, or safety.

### **In-School Disciplinary Responses**

Our approach to addressing inappropriate behavior, without removing students from the classroom, school, or assigning them elsewhere, is to implement a tiered support system.



## Progressive Discipline Overview

The chart below summarizes how infractions escalate from Level A (minor disruption) to Level E (extreme endangerment) and the **first recommended response tier** for each level. Administrators may apply additional or more intensive interventions based on context, prior history, and safety needs.

**Progression Principle:** If a student repeats an infraction at the same level after a restorative response, or if the severity of harm increases, the school moves to the next response tier to ensure accountability and community safety.

## RESTORATIVE ALTERNATIVES

NCHS strives to be a restorative school, in which students and staff are given the opportunity to repair any harm they have caused. Restorative Justice is a method of disciplining students that seeks to provide a balanced process that allows for coming to a solution rather than being punitive. In doing so, schools will employ effective statements, restorative questions, informal conversations, proactive and restorative circles (staff-led), and formal conferences.

In addition, other recommendations can include, but are not limited to community service, written letters of apology, or any other repair to the harm caused. The following community service alternatives are listed below:

1. **Campus beautification project** – Lunchroom or hallway beautification project.
2. **Event Support Volunteer** – Set up chairs, greet families, or manage sign-in at caregiver-conferences or Knightfest celebrations.
3. **Peer Tutoring** – Provide at least two after-school sessions assisting a younger student in a subject of strength.
4. **School Newsletter Spotlight** – Write a 250-word reflection on the incident and the restoration process for publication (optional, with caregiver consent).

All community-service tasks must:

- Be supervised by a staff member. Additionally, deans must document and supervise community service opportunities.
- Occur outside instructional time, unless tied to course credit, and
- Connect directly to repairing the harm (e.g., cleaning graffiti if property was defaced).



## Infraction Levels & Aligned Interventions

Lvl	Illustrative Behavior	Aligned Interventions
1	Unexcused absence from school Failure to wear required school uniform Cutting class Excessive lateness Unauthorized use of electronic devices Failure to remain in assigned areas Minor classroom disruption Verbally rude or disrespectful behavior Posting/distributing unauthorized materials Failure to provide identification	Student/teacher conference Guidance conference Parent outreach Restorative conversation Mentoring SEL support PBIS interventions Reflection/detention
2	Profane, vulgar, or abusive language Providing false information to staff Inappropriate physical contact Gambling Unauthorized use of school property Academic dishonesty/plagiarism Leaving class or campus without permission Disruptive behavior on transportation Repeated Level 1 behaviors	Restorative conference Conflict resolution Individual/group counseling Behavioral contract Community service ISS Out of School Suspension (1–5 days)
3	Defiance substantially disrupting instruction Unauthorized entry into school Bias-based slurs Minor physical altercations Bringing unauthorized individuals to campus Tobacco/vaping violations Tampering with records Possession of stolen property	FBA/BIP Mental health referral Counseling referral Individualized Support Plan (ISP) Restorative circles Mentoring ISS OSS Superintendent suspension where applicable



Possession of unauthorized  
controlled substances  
Vandalism/graffiti  
Bullying/cyberbullying  
Harassment/intimidation

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>4. Sexual misconduct<br/>Threatening or obscene materials<br/>Physically aggressive conduct<br/>causing injury risk<br/>Threats/coercion<br/>Severe bullying or harassment<br/>Bias-based intimidation<br/>Drug/alcohol possession<br/>False fire alarms<br/>Bomb threats<br/>Theft<br/>Reckless conduct causing injury risk<br/>Riot behavior<br/>Category II weapon possession<br/>Substance use</p> | <p>Community-based referrals<br/>Crisis response<br/>Counseling services<br/>Mental health supports<br/>Restorative reentry conference<br/>SAPIS referral<br/>OSS<br/>CEO/Board suspension</p>  |
| <p>5 Arson<br/>Robbery using force<br/>Serious assault against staff or<br/>students<br/>Group violence<br/>Gang-related violence<br/>Sexual assault<br/>Drug distribution<br/>Category I weapon possession or<br/>sale</p>   | <p>Immediate removal from school environment<br/>Crisis intervention<br/>Law enforcement notification where required<br/>Alternative instruction<br/>Superintendent suspension<br/>Expulsion hearing<br/>Reentry planning if applicable</p> |

**Note:** If a student is showing signs of being under the influence (stumbling, incoherent, mentally/physically impaired, etc.), NCHs has the right to search. If a student is found with any illegal substance (i.e. marijuana, etc), EMS will be called to conduct medical protocol to ensure the safety of the student. The student will be escorted to the emergency room based on the recommendation of EMS.

### Uniform Infraction Levels and Aligned Intervention



Lvl	Illustrative Behavior	Primary Response
<b>A</b>	First Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home
<b>B</b>	Second Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after the second offense.)
<b>C</b>	Third Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Double Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after a third offense.)
<b>D</b>	Fourth Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Double Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after the fourth offense.) Caregiver Meeting
<b>E</b>	Fifth Offense	In-School Suspension (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after the fifth offense.)

*Alternative instruction (≥ 3 hrs/day) begins within 24 hrs for any ISS/OSS.*

**Note:**

Reflection (Detention) - Reflection is a before/after-school disciplinary measure used in schools to address inappropriate behavior by requiring students to spend time in a supervised setting. It aims to encourage accountability, provide an opportunity for self-reflection, and reinforce expectations for positive behavior.

- Single Reflection (Detention) - 45 minutes - A Single before/After-sSchool reflection in a 45-minute session where students are assigned to reflect on their behavior through a guided activity or written assignment. This process helps students identify the impact of their actions, understand school expectations, and develop strategies for making better choices in the future.



- Double Reflection (Detention) - 90 minutes (students who skip single detention) - A student may receive double reflection as a consequence for more severe or repeated infractions of school policies. The student has committed the same infraction multiple times after already receiving a warning or a single reflection.

An In-School Suspension suspension (ISS) may be issued when a student commits a serious offense that significantly disrupts the school environment, endangers others, or involves repeated harmful behavior that has not been resolved through restorative measures.

Offenses that may warrant an In-School Suspension include, but are not limited to the actions listed below and any repeated and chronic harm-causing behaviors for which a restorative response has not resulted in a change in behavior. Following any suspension, students will participate in a restorative process with caregivers and staff involved in the removal.

Examples:

- Endangering the physical safety of another by the use of force or threats of force that place the victim in fear of bodily injury
- Conduct which disrupts school or classroom activity or endangers or threatens to endanger the health, safety, or welfare of others
- Verbal or physical harassment based on race, color, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex, gender identity and expression, family composition, economic circumstance, physical characteristic, medical condition, school performance or any other lawfully protected characteristic that is substantiated following an investigation
- Verbal or physical harassment that is substantiated following an investigation
- Making a material false statement – i.e., lying -- to a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel that results in significant harm to the school community or others.
- Any repeated and chronic harm-causing behaviors for which a restorative response has not resulted in a change in behavior. Alternative Instruction will be provided during any period of suspension. Alternative Instruction may be provided during any short-term in school suspension (ISS). Following any suspension, students will participate in a restorative process with any students or staff involved in the removal.



Out-of-School Suspension [OSS] may include serious acts of misconduct that create a major disruption in the learning environment or cause harm to others. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- o Violations of Dignity for All Students Act (DASA Act) policy, including using biased speech, that do not meet the criteria for bullying or harassment, but cause harm to community members or disrupt learning.
- o Leaving school premises without permission of supervising school personnel
- o Violating the Computer Use Policy (e.g., use of the internet for non-educational purposes, security/privacy violations, etc.).
- o Engaging in non-violent or non-threatening behavior that relates to gang affiliations (this includes, but is not limited to, wearing or displaying gang apparel and/or accessories, making gestures or signs, writing graffiti associated with gangs, identifying yourself as a member of a gang, or recruiting or soliciting membership for a gang).
- o Engaging in a pattern of persistent Level 1 or 2 behavior in the same school year.

### **Out-of-School Suspension [OSS] (> 5 days) & Expulsion**

*Expulsions and Out-of-School Suspensions are reserved for the most serious violations of this Discipline Policy and must follow a strict due-process protocol that protects students' constitutional rights while ensuring the safety of the school community.* The following steps **MUST** occur in the order listed—no step may be skipped or combined.

1. **Written Notice to Caregiver (within 24 hours).** The Chief Student Services (CSSO) or the Director of Student Experience and Community Engagement (DSECE) send a translated letter and email that includes:
  - a. Date, time, and place of the proposed hearing.
  - b. A clear *description of the incident* and the specific Code sections allegedly violated.
  - c. A statement of the *maximum possible penalty* (e.g., length of removal).
  - d. The student's and caregiver's *rights at the hearing* (see Step 4).
2. **Provision of Evidence.** Upon request—and no later than **48 hours** before the hearing—the school provides copies of all records that will be introduced (incident reports, witness statements, video footage, Individualized Education Program (IEP)/Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) if applicable).
3. **Appointment of an Impartial Hearing Officer.** The Director of Student Experience & Community Engagement—or another administrator *not involved* in the incident—serves as hearing officer. If a conflict exists, the Board Chair designates an alternate.
4. **Rights at Hearing.** The student may be represented by counsel (at caregiver expense), present evidence, call witnesses, and question the school's witnesses. Electronic recording of the hearing is permitted.



5. **Hearing Timeline.** The hearing convenes **within 5 school days** of the student's removal unless the caregiver requests an extension (*in writing*) for good cause. All testimony is given under oath or affirmation.
6. **Deliberation & Standard of Proof.** The hearing officer decides *by a preponderance of evidence* whether the student committed the charged infraction and whether the proposed penalty is appropriate.
7. **Decision Letter (within 5 days of hearing).** The written decision summarizes findings of fact and lists the duration of removal, conditions for early return, and the student's appeal rights.
8. **Alternative Instruction.** If removal is upheld, the student begins or continues receiving at least **3 hours per day** of alternative instruction (in-person or virtual) until reinstated.
9. **Appeal Process.** The caregiver may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees ([board@northsidechs.org](mailto:board@northsidechs.org)) within **10 business days** of the decision letter; the Board issues a written ruling within **10 business days** of receipt. A final appeal may be filed with the NYSED Commissioner by contacting the NYSED Charter Schools Office by phone at (518) 474-1762, by email at [CharterSchools@nysed.gov](mailto:CharterSchools@nysed.gov), or by mail at:

Charter School Office  
Education Building 5N Mezzanine  
New York State Education Department  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 122344.

## Appointment of an Impartial Hearing Officer

For any long-term suspension, expulsion proceeding, or other disciplinary hearing requiring formal due process, the School shall designate an impartial hearing officer to preside over the matter. The hearing officer shall be an administrator, employee, Board designee, or other qualified individual who was not directly involved in the underlying incident, investigation, disciplinary recommendation, or decision giving rise to the hearing. The hearing officer shall be responsible for conducting the hearing in a fair and orderly manner, receiving and considering relevant evidence, making findings of fact, and issuing a written recommendation or decision consistent with applicable law and School policy. In the event of an actual or perceived conflict of interest, the School shall appoint an alternate hearing officer to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the disciplinary process.

## Due Process for Students with Disabilities

Discipline follows **IDEA Part 201 & 34 CFR §§ 300.530-537**:

- **Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)** after 10 cumulative suspension days.
- If behavior **is** a manifestation → return to placement; review IEP/BIP.



- If **not** a manifestation → same discipline as peers; Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in Interim Alternative Educational Settings (IAES).
- 45-day IAES for weapon, drug, or serious bodily injury cases.
- Written records of suspensions kept; referrals to CSE for repeated removals > 8 days .

### **Provision of Services During Removal:**

The School will engage with the CSE to place students in an interim alternative educational setting as appropriate and mandated by 34 C.F.R. § 300. 531.

Students removed for a period of fewer than ten cumulative days during the school year will receive alternative instruction and classroom assignments with a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of their suspension. The School shall also provide additional alternative instruction to assist the student, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum, including additional instructions, phone assistance, virtual instruction, and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals, equals ten or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and achieve the goals of their Individualized Education Program (IEP). In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of their IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

During any removal for drug, weapon, controlled substance, and/or serious bodily injury offenses pursuant to 34 CFR §300.530(g), services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the child to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of their IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence.

### **Due Process for Students Without Disabilities**



All members of the school community must maintain a school environment free of weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, and alcohol. If a removal calls for fewer than ten days, the student is afforded the due process rights required by *Goss v. Lopez* (419 U.S. 565, 1975). Such students are subject to the following actions:

- The student is entitled to respond to the charges against them and give their version of what happened.
- The student is immediately removed from the class and/or school.
- In consultation with the Chief Student Services Officer, a school administrator or their designee addresses the conduct and assigns an appropriate consequence.
- The caregiver is notified by the Chief Student Services Officer or their designee via phone and written notification.
- A parent or guardian may choose to or be required to meet with a school administrator, including the Chief Executive Officer or their designee(s), regarding the infraction.

**Due Process for Students with Disabilities – Manifestation Determination Review (MDR):**

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement for more than ten days in a school year is contemplated for any student with a disability, the following steps will be taken:

- Not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the caregiver of the student with a disability will be notified by the School of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and
- Immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten days after the date on which such decision is made, the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action (subject to the CSE's availability).

If, upon review, it is determined by the CSE that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of their disability, then the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal. If the behavior is found to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be permitted to return to the school immediately.

A student's caregivers may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the student will remain in their current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing officer.

If a caregiver requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to dangerousness, weapons or drugs, or serious bodily injury, the



student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period (no longer than 45 days) provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the caregiver and School agree otherwise.

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with an IEP, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the caregivers of the student with a disability shall be notified by the School of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and
2. The CSE and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action (subject to the CSE's availability).

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal. Caregivers may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided above, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

### **Provision of Instruction During Removal:**

In all cases of suspension or expulsion, NCHS will provide alternative instruction. Alternative instruction will consist of at least 3 hours of actual instruction for the duration of the suspension and for a reasonable period after expulsion (until the student is enrolled in a new school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first, pursuant to compulsory education laws).

NCHS will contact caregivers to arrange the time and location for alternative instruction. NCHS will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or expelled to help that student progress in the general curriculum of the School. Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration (a minimum of three hours per day) to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. All suspended students are entitled to receive alternative instruction commencing within twenty-four hours of the suspension or expulsion. Alternative instruction dates and times will be listed on the student's suspension letter. All students will be provided with a



minimum of three hours per day of alternative instruction. Caregivers are responsible for arranging pick-up post alternative instruction.

Instruction will take place in one of the following locations: Virtual classroom or suspension room inside of the home school (424 Leonard Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222) the student's home, a contracted facility (within the school district), or a suspension room or other room at the school. An appointed educator will be hired for this purpose. Please note that whoever administers this instruction will meet all certification requirements as stipulated in Section 2854(3)(a-1) of the New York State Education Law.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

### **Yondr Cell Phone Policy**

- All students are required to store their cellphones in Yondr pouches at the beginning of the school day. These pouches will be locked and kept with the student, ensuring that phones are not accessible until the end of the school day.

### **How Yondr Works**

- Arrival: Upon entry to school, scholars will have their phones placed in their assigned Yondr pouch as well as locked by a dean, culture associate, or director.
- During School Hours: The pouch will remain locked, and students will carry it with them throughout the course of the school day.
- End of Day: At the end of the school day, students will have their pouches unlocked by a staff member, retrieve their cellphones, and take their assigned pouch home. Students must return with the pouch each school day.

\*\*This process will be continuous throughout their academic school years.

### **Compliance Guidelines:**

- If a student enters the school and expresses that they do not have a phone, another staff member will communicate with a caregiver to verify whether or not the student has a phone on their person. If the student has been found to be dishonest, the following escalating consequences will occur:



- **Cell-Phone / Yondr Policy**

Offense	Response
1st	Verbal warning; phone secured until dismissal and documented in the NCHS infraction tracker and Student Information System (SIS); caregiver notified.
2nd	Phone secured until dismissal and documented in the NCHS infraction tracker and Student Information System (SIS); caregiver notified; Single Reflection (Detention).
3rd	Phone secured until caregiver pick-up and documented in the NCHS infraction tracker and Student Information System (SIS); phone contract; Double Reflection (Detention).
4th+	Documented in the NCHS infraction tracker and Student Information System (SIS); parent-admin meeting; extended contract.

- **Damaged Yondr Pouch** – \$50 first, \$75 second; Reflection & parent conference .

Please refer to “Yondr Caregiver Letter”

**Facility Security:**

- Students are permitted to utilize NCHS spaces at 424 Leonard Street, including portions of the first, third, and fourth floors, and all campus shared spaces during school hours and for afterschool activities. Deans will lead the monitoring and supervision efforts in this domain.
- Students who pose an immediate danger to the school community will be removed from the classroom or school grounds according to the severity and specifics of the infraction.

Actions may be taken with or without warning. (Note: This policy does not preempt a student’s right to a hearing, appeal, or any other element of due process). Deans will lead the monitoring and supervision efforts in this domain.

**Off-Campus & Digital Conduct**



NCHS holds students accountable for serious misconduct that occurs beyond the school's physical boundaries when there is a **clear nexus** to the school community and/or school operations. Discipline may be imposed for acts that:

- **Materially and substantially disrupt** the learning environment (e.g., organizing a fight on social media that later occurs on campus).
- **Threaten or endanger** the safety of a student, staff member, or school property (e.g., online bomb threat).
- **Infringe on the civil rights** of another student through harassment, bullying, or discrimination under **DASA**.

#### Jurisdictional Guidelines

- **Digital Misconduct** – Cyberbullying, harassment, or the unauthorized sharing of intimate images may be disciplined if the content targets an NCHS student or staff member and is reasonably foreseeable to reach school grounds.
- **Off-Campus Incidents** – Physical fights, vandalism, or weapon possession occurring off school property may trigger school discipline when the behavior is connected to a school relationship or activity.
- **Law Enforcement Coordination** – The CSSO or DSECE liaises with NYPD's School Safety Division for off-campus incidents involving criminal conduct.

#### Investigation & Response

- **Intake** – Dean of Student Services will monitor all reports made in person, via email, or anonymously through the school's online reporting form.
- **Preliminary Review (1 school day)** – Dean of Student Experience screens the report for jurisdiction; if criteria above are met, an investigation is opened.
- **Full Investigation (5 school days)** – Collect statements, screenshots, and other evidence. Digital forensics support may be requested from the DOE IT Security Office.
- **Progressive Discipline** – Consequences mirror in-school infraction levels (see § 6) and always include a restorative component.

#### Search and Seizure:

- Desks, lockers and other school fixtures to which students are given access remain property of NCHS and students have no reasonable expectation of privacy relating to them. A student and/or the student's belongings may be searched by a school administrator and/or school safety officer if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of an item(s) which would violate school policy and/or the law. Please be advised that



caregivers **do not** have to be contacted prior to the search, but will be notified after the search is conducted.

- Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be confiscated by school authorities inclusive of Deans.
- The school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in closets, desks, or any location on or off school grounds.

**Student Safety and Accommodations:**

The Board of Trustees acknowledges that, notwithstanding actions taken by NCHS, intervention might require a specific, coordinated approach if a student does not feel safe at school. Students who do not feel safe at school are limited in their capacity to learn and reach their academic potential. Staff, when aware of incidents of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, should determine whether accommodations are needed to help ensure the student's safety and bring this to the attention of the Chief Student Services Officer, their designee, Deans, or other staff as determined by the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Student Services Officer or designated staff, the student, and the caregiver of the student shall work together to define and implement any needed accommodations.

NCHS recognizes that there is a need to balance accommodations that enhance student safety against the potential of further stigmatizing the targeted student. Therefore, each case shall be handled individually, and the student, person in parental relation, and school administration shall collaborate to establish safety provisions that best meet the needs of the student. Follow-up discussions and/or meetings will be scheduled, as needed, to ensure that safety concerns have been adequately addressed and to determine when and if accommodations need to be added, changed, or discontinued.

**Training:**

The Board of Trustees recognizes that professional development is needed to implement an effective harassment, bullying, and discrimination prevention and intervention program. The Chiefs, Directors, and staff shall incorporate training to support this program in the annual professional development plan and provide additional training as needed. Training opportunities shall be provided to all employees, including, but not limited to, deans, teachers, administrators, culture associates, athletic coaches, and any employees hired by Northside Charter High School.



Such training shall:

- Raise awareness of and sensitivity to potential acts of harassment, bullying, and discrimination directed at students.
- Address the social patterns of harassment, bullying, and discrimination, the identification and mitigation of such acts, and strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias, and aggression in educational settings.
- Enable employees to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.
- Make school employees aware of the effects of harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, and/or discrimination of students.
- Ensure the effective implementation of school policies on conduct and discipline.
- Include safe and supportive school climate concepts in curriculum and classroom management.

## **Training, Implementation & SSEC Readiness**

### **Annual Professional Development**

1. **August Summer Institute (8 hours)**
  - a. Restorative practices & de-escalation
  - b. DASA & Title IX compliance
  - c. Implicit bias & culturally responsive teaching
  - d. SSEC code definitions & data entry protocol.
2. **Mid-Year Refresh (January, 3 hours)** – Case studies on progressive discipline, MDR scenarios, and SSEC data quality audit.
3. **Quarterly Data Clinics (1 hour each)** – Deans and Data Manager review disproportionality dashboards, correct miscoding, and prepare for NYSED IDEx certification



In compliance with Education Law §13(3), at least one licensed and/or certified staff member at NCHS is thoroughly trained in human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (which includes a person's actual or perceived sex, gender identity, and expression), and sex. This staff member is referred to as the Dignity Act Coordinator ("DAC") or the Dignity for All Students Act Coordinator ("DASA Coordinator").

#### Dignity Act Coordinator

The School designates the Director of Student Experience and Community Engagement (DSECE) as the Dignity Act Coordinator ("DAC"). The DAC is trained and supported by the Chief Student Services Officer to use best practices to promote an inclusive and safe learning environment. Following the organization's procedures, the Dignity Act Coordinators respond to reported incidents of bullying, bias, harassment and/or discrimination with effective intervention, data management, use of restorative practices, and disciplinary recommendations. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be accessible to students, families and other employees for consultation and advice in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. The DAC also serves as their school's Title IX Coordinator.

#### Title IX – Sexual Harassment

The federal law Title IX, which prohibits gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in schools, is included in our DASA policies and practices. Northside Charter High School does not tolerate sexual harassment by any of its students or staff, either in school or online. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior that significantly interferes with a student's access to educational opportunities.

#### Student Disciplinary Consequences/Remediation

While the primary focus of this policy is on prevention, acts of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination may still occur. When such acts occur, student offenders will be given a clear message that their actions are inappropriate, will not be tolerated, and are inconsistent with the concepts of tolerance, respect for others, and the fostering of civility in public schools in order to provide a safe and supportive school environment for all students. In accordance with a progressive model of discipline embodied in the disciplinary rules and procedures, student offenders shall further be advised that their behavior must improve. Student offenders will receive in-school guidance on making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action shall be taken by the administration in accordance with NCHS's disciplinary rules and procedures. If the behavior rises to the level of a criminal act, law enforcement shall be contacted promptly by the Chief Student Services Officer or their designee.

This policy is meant to promote progressive discipline and intervention, as opposed to a "zero tolerance" approach. The response to a student's violations of the policy shall be age-appropriate and include both consequences and appropriate restorative responses. Consequences for a student who commits an act or acts of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination shall be unique to the individual incident and shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, the student's previous disciplinary record, *and* other extenuating circumstances and must be consistent with



NCHS's disciplinary rules and procedures.

Investigating and Responding to Allegations of Staff-to-Student Harassment, Bullying, and/or Discrimination

In the case of a report of alleged staff-to-student bullying, reporting, investigation, and response will follow all applicable NCHS policies and procedures, including contractual provisions and due process obligations related to staff-to-student misconduct.

Non-Retaliation

Any person having reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been subjected to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination by a student and/or an employee who, acting reasonably and in good faith, either reports such information to Deans and then the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC), also known as the DASA Coordinator, or to law enforcement authorities or otherwise initiates, testifies, participates, or assists in any formal or informal proceedings, will have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from the making of such a report or from initiating, testifying, participating, or assisting in such formal or informal proceedings.

Districts, BOCES, and charter schools and their respective employees are prohibited from taking, requesting, or causing a retaliatory action against any such person, who, acting reasonably and in good faith, either makes such a report or initiates, testifies, participates, or assists in such formal or informal proceedings (Education Law §16).

**DASA Complaint Process and Investigation**

In addition to tracking harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination incidents for purposes of district-wide analysis and annual statewide reporting, the DAC will report incident data to the CSSO and CEO periodically throughout the school year, on a schedule to be determined by the CEO.

The Board of Trustees shall receive the annual School Safety and the Educational Climate (SSEC), as well as other relevant data, for each school and for the district as a whole, with particular attention to the trends in incidents of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. Based on the review of the data, the Board of Trustees may consider further action, including, but not limited to, modification of this policy and additional training. The School must ensure that they report such information to the public in a manner that complies with student privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA")



## Reporting and Investigating

Personnel at all levels are responsible for reporting harassment of which they have been made aware to their immediate supervisors. Any students who believe they are being subjected to harassment, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of harassment, shall report the harassment to any staff member or to the CSSO and/or CAO. A staff member who witnesses harassment or who receives a report of harassment shall inform the CSSO and/or CAO. The CSSO/CAO shall promptly investigate the complaint and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority and/or other official designated by the school to investigate allegations of harassment. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged harasser and victim shall be made to ensure that harassment has not resumed and that those involved in the investigation of allegations of harassment have not suffered retaliation. Material incidents of discrimination and harassment on school grounds or at a school function will be reported to the State Education Department as required by law.

### Mandated Reporting

NCHS cares deeply about the health, safety, and well-being of our students, caregivers, and community. Under New York law, all School employees are required to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect when they have a reasonable belief that such abuse is occurring or has occurred.

### **Mandated Reporting of Abuse & Neglect**

Under **NY Soc. Serv. Law § 413**, all staff are “Mandated Reporters.”

1. **Reasonable Cause Standard** – If a staff member has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, they must immediately call the **Statewide Central Register (SCR) at 1-800-635-1522**.
2. **Immediate Internal Notice** – After the SCR call, the reporter informs the CSSO, DSECE, or Chief Academic Officer (CAO), completes the *LDSS-2221A* form within **48 hours**.
3. **Confidentiality** – The identity of the reporter is kept confidential except as required by law.
4. **Protections** – Mandated reporters are immune from civil liability when acting in good faith and are protected from retaliatory personnel action.
5. **Training** – Annual NYSED-approved Child Abuse Identification & Reporting training is required for all school employees.

### **Caregiver/Parent Engagement:**

As with all college preparatory high schools, Northside Charter High School requires students to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zones and the status quo; therefore, a lot is required of both students and caregivers. The homework load is high, and the content is challenging; the tradeoff is that students will develop the necessary skills required to excel in college and beyond. We ask that both students and their caregivers commit to this academic investment and to the long-term goal of college completion in four years. We depend on caregivers to



diligently do their part. We know that without full caregiver investment, full effort, and communication with teachers and leadership, this goal will be difficult to reach.

## Parent / Caregiver Partnership

NCHS believes discipline is most effective when families and schools collaborate.

1. **Communication Expectations** – Parents/guardians respond to school outreach (calls, emails, Jupiter messages) within **72 hours**.
2. **Restorative Participation** – Caregivers attend restorative conferences when requested by school administration.
3. **Attendance & Uniform** – Ensure daily on-time attendance and adherence to the uniform; request planned absences in writing.
4. **Feedback Loop** – Biannual family survey on school climate and discipline; results shared at the November and April Family Council meetings.

Our expectations for caregivers include the following:

- **Discipline Policy Code of Conduct Acknowledgement** – Families review and sign the digital acknowledgment form each September.
- **Student Behavior and Accountability:** Ensure that students uphold NCHS's Discipline Policy.
- **School Culture:** Ensure that students are ready to learn each school day, including being on time and in full uniform.
- **Independent Work:** Encourage students to complete all nightly and weekly assignments, as well as study for all exams.
- **Read and Respond:** Engage with all NCHS communications within a reasonable amount of time.
- **Meetings:** Meet with teachers on a needs basis, when possible.