NORTHSIDE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
BROOKLYN



Family Life Guide

School Year 2026-2027

Table of Contents

Purpose of this Guide	4
NCHS's Vision, Mission, and Idea Statements	5
NCHS's Core Values	5
Basic Rights of all Caregivers	5
Basic Rights of all Students	6
Records	6
Freedom of Expression	6
Fire Alarm Behavioral Expectations	6
Textbooks, Electronic Devices, and School Materials	7
Academic Policies	8
Grading Policies	9
NCHS Credit Requirements for Graduation	13
Special Education	14
Attendance, Lateness, And Absence Policy	16
Uniform Policy	24
Personal Property Policy	26
Discipline Philosophy	26
Restorative Alternative	29
Cell Phone Policy	38
Compliance Guidelines	39

Training, Implementation & SSEC Readiness	42
DASA Complaint Process and Investigation	44
Gun-Free School Act	46
Mckinney-Vento Act	47
Social Media/Online Use Policy	48
Immunizations, Forms, and Ongoing Medical Concerns	49
FERPA	50
Complaint Policy and Procedures	51
Signature Requirement	54

WELCOME TO NORTHSIDE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This Family Life Guide is meant to provide students and their caregivers with an understanding of the goals and expectations we have for our students at Northside Charter High School (“NCHS” or the “School”). We endeavor to create an educational experience and environment that encourages students to grow mentally, physically, and emotionally and excel at the highest level. Throughout the following pages, we will provide information that will provide each student with a clear understanding of how to be successful at NCHS and beyond. Rules and policies create an environment where learning can happen and prepares you for the world beyond NCHS as well. Make this your time. If you ever feel you need help, ask!

INTERPRETATION OF THIS GUIDE

The School reserves the right to interpret the provisions of this Guide. The final authority for the interpretation and application of the policies contained herein rests with the School’s Administration.

Please be advised that the policies, procedures, and expectations outlined in this document are subject to revision at any time during the school year, with or without prior notice. The School will make reasonable efforts to communicate significant changes to students and families; however, it is the responsibility of all members of the School community to remain informed of current policies including but not limited to those in this Guide.

Northside Charter High School is committed to administering this Family Life Guide in a fair, reasonable, and educationally sound manner. While this Guide establishes the School's expectations, policies, procedures, and general practices, it is not intended to create inflexible rules or mandatory outcomes applicable to every situation. The School reserves the right to exercise professional judgment and discretion in interpreting, applying, and enforcing the provisions of this Guide consistent with applicable law, the School's educational mission, and the best interests of students and the school community.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the School may consider all relevant facts and circumstances, including but not limited to a student's age, maturity, educational needs, disciplinary and attendance history, academic performance, safety considerations, disability-related needs, mitigating or aggravating circumstances, and the impact of a decision on the broader school community. Accordingly, examples, procedures, interventions, timelines, and consequences described in this Guide are intended to provide general guidance and do not limit the School's authority to modify, accelerate, defer, combine, or otherwise adjust its response when warranted by the circumstances. The School reserves the right to make individualized determinations and to interpret and apply this Guide in a manner that promotes student growth, school safety, operational effectiveness, and compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

NCHS'S VISION, MISSION, IDEA STATEMENTS

Vision:

To be a college preparatory organization for all students where postsecondary education attainment is the expectation and reality.

Mission:

To provide an enriching and innovative learning environment where students achieve postsecondary readiness.

NCHS's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Statement:

Northside Charter High School is committed to building diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environments. Northside Charter High School is committed to dismantling racist barriers within school structures and systems. We embrace and protect our community members' multiple identities, as they are essential assets through which we structure policies and manage resources, build access and opportunity for our students, as well as calibrate our strategic approach to achieve our mission.

NCHS'S CORE VALUES

Commitment, Accountability, Respect, and Integrity are NCHS's core values. These values represent the fundamental beliefs of the school and are principles by which we govern ourselves. These values help guide how the school makes decisions, views changes in our programming, and sets expectations of members within our community. We expect all members of our community to understand and abide by our values. This includes staff, students, caregivers, consultants/vendors, higher education partners, or any individual or organization that enters our community.

As the 2025-2026 school year develops we will continue to develop our understanding of our core values as a community.

Basic Privileges of All Caregivers

Northside Charter High School upholds the following for all students and their caregivers without exception:

- Clear Communication: Caregivers have the right to have school rules explained in their preferred language.
- Regular Updates: Caregivers will receive quarterly updates..
- Explanation of Disciplinary Measures: All disciplinary actions will be explained to caregivers in their preferred language.
- Right to Appeal: Caregivers can appeal any disciplinary actions taken by the school administration.

- Board Appeals: Caregivers can appeal disciplinary actions imposed by the School Leader to the School's Board of Trustees (the "Board").

Basic Rights of All Students

All students have the following rights:

- Equal Participation: Every student has the right to take part in all school activities equally, regardless of race, gender, sex, sexual identity, national origin, worldview, or disability.
- Equal Treatment: All students have the right to address the school on the same terms as any other student. Similarly, all students are subject to the same rules regarding exclusion from school activities and public address.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by symbolic speech. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, interfere with School operations, or be otherwise inappropriate. Any form of expression that involves libel, slander, the use of purposeless obscenity, or personal attacks, or that otherwise disrupts the educational process, is prohibited. All forms of expression also must be in compliance with the Disciplinary Code and the school dress code, violations of which are punishable as appropriate according to our implementation of restorative practices.

Student participation in the publication of school-sponsored student newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines and similar publications is strongly encouraged. These publications, if any, shall be supervised by qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high standards of journalism. In order to maintain consistency with the school's basic educational mission, the content of such publications is controlled largely by student editors. However, final content decisions remain in the hands of journalism advisors and school authorities.

No person shall distribute or post any printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the School Management Team (comprised of the Chief Executive Officer or "CEO", Chief Academic Officer or "CAO", Chief Student Services Officer or "CSSO", Chief Financial and Operations Officer or "CFOO", and Special Projects Coordinator), which may regulate the content of materials to be distributed or posted on school property to the extent necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the School. The School Management Team may also regulate the time, place, manner and duration of such materials.

Fire Alarm Behavioral Expectations

To ensure everyone's safety, please follow these guidelines:

- Pay Attention: Carefully listen when Safety and Fire Alarm procedures are reviewed each Fall in accordance with FDNY policies and procedures.

- Follow Security Procedures: Adhere to all building security procedures, including safety and fire alarm procedures. Stay only on the designated school floors: 1st floor, 3rd floor, and 4th floor. The safety and fire alarm procedures are outlined in the building safety plan, available in the School's CFO office and posted in each classroom.
- During a Fire Alarm:
    - Listen: Pay attention to the fire alarm.
    - Follow Directions: Listen and follow the instructions of the nearest instructor or staff member.
    - Line Up: Line up immediately and remain silent.
    - Exit Quietly: Walk silently to the designated exit and line up outside with your class. Refer to the signage in every classroom for exact exits and meeting places.

Textbooks, Electronic Devices, and School Materials

Textbooks and School Materials:

- All students and caregivers must sign and return the technology agreement/use form.
- The School will loan students the necessary books and materials for academic and extracurricular activities. To ensure everyone can learn, these items must be returned in the same condition they were received. Students can use book covers to prevent damage and are not responsible for normal wear and tear.
- Students must return all textbooks and school materials. If an item is damaged through no fault of their own, the student must notify Operations staff.
    - Students will receive an invoice for any items that are not returned or are damaged or destroyed.

Use of School Electronic Devices:

- Students will be provided with school computers, laptops, or tablets for school and research use only. Please refer to the Social Media and Use Policy for more information.
- School administration may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure responsible use.
- ID cards will be distributed to students during the first week of school.
- Students and caregivers are responsible for returning school-issued textbooks and technology hardware (e.g., Chromebooks, laptops, power cords, Hotspots) in the same condition as they were received. All students and caregivers should have received, read, and signed the NCHS Laptop Checkout Contract upon receiving any school-issued technology hardware. This contract outlines the use and responsibilities of school-issued devices (please see the Appendix of this document for an example of our NCHS Laptop Checkout Contract).

Acceptable Use Rules

Chromebook Usage:

- The Chromebook is an educational tool and should be used only for educational purposes.
- NCHS students are responsible for their Chromebook at all times. The school is not responsible for any Chromebook left in classrooms, hallways, or off-campus.
- Do not copy, download, upload, or share copyrighted materials without legal permission. This includes software applications.
- Only NCHS students are authorized to use their school-issued devices. Do not share or swap your Chromebook with another student. Keep your password confidential.
- Bring your Chromebook to school fully charged with power cords daily.
- Do not eat or drink near your Chromebook.
- Do not mark the Chromebook with markers, stickers, etc.
- Do not remove NCHS labels or asset tags.
- Do not insert foreign objects into the openings of the Chromebook.

Internet Use Rules:

- Students must adhere to the NCHS Internet Usage Policy signed at the beginning of the school year (Student Handbook Guide).
- The Chromebook is NCHS property, and all content (software, email, Internet usage) will be monitored at all times. Content related to illegal or unethical activities will be reported to the authorities.
- Administrative staff have the right to spot-check any student's school-issued device at any time.

Off-Campus Use Rules:

- Students are responsible for the care of their Chromebook.
- Each Chromebook must be secured in a backpack while in transit.
- Do not leave the Chromebook unattended in vehicles.
- If a Chromebook is lost or stolen, report the incident to your local police precinct and notify the school as soon as possible by emailing it_helpdesk@northsidechs.org.
- Chromebooks will be replaced after the first incident. Students will be responsible for the replacement cost of the Chromebook and its power cords after a second documented incident of lost school equipment.
- Caregivers are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the laptop at home. School policies continue to apply when using the computer online at home.

Extreme Weather Conditions:

- In extreme weather conditions such as flooding or blizzards, the Northside IT Department will notify students to leave their Chromebooks with the IT Office to prevent damage. If a student chooses not to leave their Chromebook with the IT Office, they will be responsible for any damage that occurs outside the school building.

The replacement cost for the Chromebook is $200.00. Violation of these policies will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined in the Internet Usage Policy.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Values:

Northside Charter High School (NCHS) is firmly committed to equitable grading practices that are accurate, resist bias, and motivate students. Grading at NCHS is based on calculations that are mathematically sound, easy to understand, and accurately describe a student's level of academic performance in relation to national standards of proficiency. Grades are based on valid evidence of a student's content knowledge, not on factors likely to be influenced by implicit bias or environmental conditions. Additionally, grades should motivate students to achieve academic success, support a growth mindset, and provide opportunities for improvement.

Grading Policy

NCHS uses a uniform four-point grading scale for all standard classes and coursework. Final scores of 2 and above indicate earned credit, while final scores of 1 and 0 indicate no credit for the course.

GPA	Letter Grade	Range
4.00	A+	97-100
3.75	A	93-96
3.50	A-	90-92
3.25	B+	87-89
3.00	B	84-86
2.75	B-	80-83
2.50	C+	77-79
2.25	C	74-76
2.00	C-	70-73
1.75	D+	65-69
1.50	D	55-64
0	F	0-54

Grading Scale for Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment College Courses:

For courses with standards above the high school level, separate grading scales are used.

- AP Courses: Students who pass an AP course will receive an additional point on their final transcript grades. For example, a student earning a 4 on the standard scale would receive a 5 on their transcript.
- If a student wishes to drop an AP course, they must do so within the first two weeks of a semester. The school reserves the right to remove a student from an AP course for reasons related to behavior or lack of effort.

Major Assessments:

Assessments for courses culminating in Regents Examinations closely resemble the format and content of the Regents Exams. For courses that do not end with a Regents Exam, major assessments are designed to measure the cumulative standards addressed in the course. These assessments are among the best indicators of student progress and anticipated growth throughout the year.

Every class will take a midterm exam prior to the end of Semester 1 which will count towards their final S1 grade.

Avoiding Bias:

To prevent implicit bias in grading practices, NCHS has implemented the following policies related to extra credit, lateness, academic dishonesty, behavior, and homework.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit assignments, which go beyond the course requirements, often require additional resources, time, or adult support. Therefore, extra credit is not assigned without prior approval from the Chief Academic Officer .

Assignment Lateness Policy

At NCHS, the primary focus is ensuring students learn the material thoroughly. Meeting a deadline is not itself an academic standard. Deadlines are set by teachers to provide structure and help students develop time management skills, and students are encouraged to meet them.

When students miss a deadline, the following applies:

Excused absence: Students have one week from the date they return to school to submit any missing assignment. Review the attendance/lateness/absence section of the Family life guide to understand what an excused absence is defined as.

Unexcused absence or general lateness: Late work may be accepted at the teacher's discretion. Teachers will weigh the nature of the assignment, the student's circumstances, and the remaining instructional time in the quarter when deciding. Students or caregivers who disagree with a teacher's decision may request a review by the Chief Academic Officer.

Test corrections or revisions on summative assessments (which show up as a 15 point assignment on Powerschool): Students may complete test corrections one time after receiving their graded work back. Specific procedures,

including format, weight, and submission window, are determined by the teacher and communicated through the course syllabus.
End-of-quarter situations: If the one-week window following an excused absence extends past the end of a quarter, the student will receive an "NX" (incomplete) for the affected assignment(s). The grade will be updated once the work is submitted within the one-week window.

AP and Early College courses follow the lateness and reassessment policies of their affiliated higher education institutions.

Breakdown of Assignment Type:

To ensure consistency across classrooms and to reflect NCHS's commitment to grades that measure mastery, all courses use a three-tier weighting system. Each assignment is assigned a weight of 1, 5, or 15 based on its scope and the depth of learning it measures.

Weight	Category	Examples
15	Major Assessments	Unit projects, performance tasks, midterm and final examinations, Regents-aligned assessments
5	Minor Assessments	Quizzes, larger in-class assignments, lab reports, essay drafts, presentations
1	Practice and Engagement	Homework, Do Nows, Exit Tickets, classwork checks, daily participation tasks

Teachers will identify the weight of each assignment in the gradebook and in the course syllabus. This system ensures that a student's grade primarily reflects their demonstrated mastery of substantive work, while still recognizing the role of consistent practice and engagement in the learning process.

AP and Early College courses may follow the weighting policies of their affiliated higher education institutions.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity means honestly representing your own learning. At Northside Charter High School, we value integrity and work to build an environment where students develop the habits and skills to do their own work, cite their sources, and ask for help when they need it. Most academic dishonesty reflects a skills gap, a time crunch,

or unclear expectations rather than a character flaw, and our response is designed to address the underlying cause.

Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Copying another student's work or allowing your work to be copied
- Submitting work from any outside source (online, AI-generated, or otherwise) as your own
- Failing to cite ideas, language, or data drawn from outside sources
- Sharing or receiving answers on tests, quizzes, or graded assignments
- Using AI tools in ways not permitted by the teacher for that specific assignment (see AI Use section below)
- Falsifying data, signatures, or documentation
- Submitting the same work for credit in more than one class without prior teacher approval

AI Use:

Generative AI tools are a part of modern academic and professional work, and NCHS is committed to teaching students to use them thoughtfully and honestly. Each teacher will state in the course syllabus and on individual assignments how AI tools may or may not be used. When in doubt, students must ask before using AI on an assignment. Using AI in a way the teacher has not permitted, or failing to disclose AI use when it was permitted, is considered academic dishonesty.

Response to Academic Dishonesty:

NCHS uses a restorative approach. The goal is for students to complete the work honestly and learn from the incident.

- **First incident:** The teacher meets with the student, documents the conversation, and the student completes the assignment honestly. The teacher notifies the caregiver. ,
- **Second incident in the same course or school year:** The teacher meets with the student and a school administrator. The student completes the assignment honestly, and the caregiver is contacted directly by the administrator. The student may be required to complete future major assignments under direct supervision.
- **Third or further incidents:** The Chief Academic Officer is involved. Consequences may include loss of credit on the affected assignment, a behavioral contract, or other interventions determined in conference with the student, caregiver, and CAO.

Patterns of academic dishonesty in AP, Early College, or other higher-stakes courses may carry additional consequences set by the affiliated higher education institution. Refer to discipline policy for more information.

Participation and Homework:

Semester System:

NCHS uses a semester system for reporting grades for units of credit. Units of credit are issued at the conclusion of each semester. Each academic year is divided into two semesters, each composed of two quarters. The grades from these quarters are averaged to determine the final semester grade.

Final Grades:

At the end of each semester, grades of 2 or higher will be awarded credit. Grades below 2 result in a failing grade. Grades requiring a code of “NX” (incomplete), “NL” (transferring student), and “NS” (no show) must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer.

Syllabus:

All classes will have a Syllabus that will be required to be signed by a caregiver.

NCHS Credit Requirements for Graduation

Northside Charter High School (NCHS) is dedicated to fostering academic excellence and supporting every student in surpassing the minimum standards established by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). At NCHS, students work closely with teachers and staff to build strong academic foundations and pursue higher levels of achievement.

To graduate, students must meet the requirements for a New York State Regents Diploma, which include coursework and Regents examinations in core subjects. Beyond these requirements, students are encouraged to complete additional credits in mathematics, science, and foreign language to deepen their content knowledge and strengthen college and career readiness. NCHS also offers Advanced Placement (AP) and early college courses to provide motivated students with opportunities to challenge themselves academically, earn college credit, and prepare for future success.

Transfer Credit and Programming Procedures:

NCHS will make every effort to accommodate transfer student needs. If a student transfers to NCHS at the beginning of Semester 1 or Semester 2, all approved credits from their previous school(s), as documented on their official transcript, will be accepted and entered on their NCHS transcript. If NCHS does not offer a comparable course, the school will schedule the student for the most appropriate course offered in accordance with NYSED graduation requirements. If a student transfers into NCHS after the 1st quarter of either Semester, they are ineligible for credits for that semester.

Calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA):

GPA will be determined by averaging all full-credit course grades (Math, Science, English, Social Studies). Core subjects are subject to change at the discretion of the School in accordance with New York State Standards.

Student Ranking:

- Valedictorian: The student with the highest cumulative GPA from 9th grade through 12th grade.
- Salutatorian: The student with the second highest cumulative GPA from 9th grade through 12th grade.
- For transfer students, all core grades and credits from previous institutions will be included in the cumulative GPA calculation.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

- Report Cards: Available to students and caregivers on our Student Information System (SIS) and via mailing at the end of each semester.
- Progress Reports: Distributed at the midpoint of each semester and always available on our SIS.

Advisory Program:

Students are assigned an advisor who serves as their guide, mentor, and facilitator at NCHS. Advisors provide information regarding academic performance, behavior, attendance, and upcoming school events and activities.

Summer School & Summer Bridge:

Depending on the needs of the School and students, NCHS may offer summer school for core courses, prioritizing Regents-based core courses. Students will be advised of the minimum attendance hours required to receive credit. Not all subjects may be offered. Summer Bridge is a required program for rising 9th graders to help them acclimate to high school.

Multilingual Learners (MLL):

MLLs are entitled to support to meet all graduation requirements, such as instructional modifications and extended time for school and state assessments. Content area Regents exams are offered in multiple languages. The NYSESLAT is a mandated test for all English language learners to measure progress towards English proficiency. MLLs must take the NYSESLAT annually until they reach the “Commanding” level.

Special Education & Section 504 Accommodations

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE), individualized special education services through an IEP, and specific protections for themselves and their families, including participation rights and procedural safeguards provided by the school and the Committee of Special Education. (CSE).

If you think your child may need special education programming or services, you can request an evaluation at any time by contacting the Special Education Teacher and/or Liaison. You can make this request in writing to the school as the written consent before evaluations take place.

Access to Curriculum: Students with disabilities access the general education curriculum through integrated co-teaching (ICT) and specially designed instruction to meet all diploma requirements.

Special Education Programs/Services: Students with an Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) receive support through ICT and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). Our school is committed to an inclusive educational model in which students with disabilities learn alongside their peers to the fullest extent appropriate, with special education support and related services provided in general education settings.

Counseling Services: On-site mandated and at-risk counseling is provided by school counselors and social workers.

Related Services: The school works with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and the Department of Education to offer related services such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and paraprofessionals.

Testing Accommodations: Students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan receive accommodations for class and statewide tests, which may include extended time, assistive technology, separate testing locations, use of a calculator, breaks, and having directions or tests read aloud according to State regulations and IEP recommendations.

IEP Meetings: IEP Initial and Reviews are completed on an annual basis and scheduled by the CSE before the school year starts, these meetings can be held at the school or another location as directed by the CSE. Students and caregivers are notified in advance. Any postponements are documented and rescheduled.

Declassified Students: Students who no longer need Special Education services but have been declassified will still receive any testing accommodations and/or safety net eligibility listed in their declassified IEP where permitted.

Section 504 Plans: If a child has a disability but does not need specially designed instruction under an IEP, they may be eligible for support under Section 504, such as but not limited to classroom accommodations. To learn more or request a 504 review, contact our 504 coordinator. A student qualifies for a 504 Plan if they have a physical or mental impairment that significantly affects a major life activity and are otherwise qualified to participate. Students with documented temporary impairments (e.g., concussion or broken limb) may also receive short-term accommodations under Section 504.

Each school year, NCHS recommends students to be evaluated for accommodations under Section 504 to participate equally in school programs.(See Subpart D, 34 C.F.R. §§ 104.31-104.39.)
The designated 504 Coordinator may be contacted at rotero@northsidechs.org. If approved by the caregiver, the student receives a written 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan) that lists the specific accommodations.

The 504 team implements the necessary accommodations that are needed for the student to participate equally. 504 Plans are reviewed annually to ensure they still meet the student's needs.

Safety Net Requirement: The safety net pathway in our school exists to ensure that students with disabilities and other eligible students have multiple ways to demonstrate what they know and can do, while still meeting New York State graduation standards. These pathways allow the IEP team and school staff to match assessments and diploma options to each student's strengths, needs, and postsecondary plans. The school will explain which safety net options apply to their child and why.

Transition & Vocational Planning**:** Beginning in high school, every student with an IEP participates in transition planning to help prepare for life after graduation. This planning looks at the student's interests, strengths, and needs, and it addresses education, employment, and independent living goals. The school may use vocational and interest assessments, work-based learning, and community experiences to help students explore careers and build real-world skills. Families are invited to share input and collaborate with the CSE team so that the transition plan reflects the student's goals and culture.

Exit Summaries**:** When a student with an IEP graduates with a regular diploma or ages out of eligibility (at 21 years old), the school provides a written exit summary which describes the student's academic achievement, functional performance, and the supports and accommodations that have helped them succeed. The exit summary is meant to help the student and family share important information with colleges, training programs, or adult service agencies (ie: BOCES, ACCESS-VR), and to support a smooth transition into adult life. Families will receive a copy of this summary and have the chance to ask questions about how to use it.

Attendance, Lateness, and Absence Policies

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to academic success at NCHS. Classroom instruction, discussion, assessments, collaborative activities, and guided practice are critical components of the educational experience and cannot always be replicated outside of class. Students are expected to attend school daily, arrive on time, remain in school for the full instructional day, and actively participate in all scheduled classes.

The school will work collaboratively with students and families to support consistent attendance through communication, intervention, counseling, and attendance monitoring when appropriate.

Daily Attendance Expectations:

Students are expected to:

- Arrive to school and all scheduled classes on time;

- Attend all assigned classes each day;
- Remain in school for the full instructional day unless properly dismissed;
- Follow all attendance and sign-in/sign-out procedures.

School doors open at 8:00 AM. Instruction begins promptly at 8:30 AM.

Students arriving after 8:30 AM must report to the main entrance to sign in and receive a pass before reporting to class.

Classroom Attendance

Attendance is taken each class period by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to be seated and prepared for instruction at the start of each class period indicated by the bell.

If a student believes attendance was recorded incorrectly, the student or caregiver should contact the classroom teacher directly. Any corrections to attendance records must be submitted by the teacher to the Main Office.

Lateness and Tardiness

Lateness is defined as arriving at school or class after the scheduled start time without approved documentation.

Repeated lateness results in loss of instructional time and may impact a student's academic progress and eligibility for course credit.

Excessive Tardiness

A tardy exceeding ten (10) minutes will be considered an **Excessive Tardy**.

Four (4) excessive tardies accumulated within a semester may be recorded as the equivalent of one (1) absence for purposes of attendance review and course credit eligibility.

The school reserves the right to review patterns of repeated lateness, including excessive short-duration tardiness, when determining attendance interventions and attendance status.

Transportation delays, oversleeping, rideshare issues, traffic, personal scheduling conflicts, and non-emergency appointments are not considered excusable reasons for lateness or absence.

Cutting Class / Unauthorized Absences

Cutting class is defined as failing to report to an assigned class or leaving a scheduled class without permission from authorized school personnel.

Permission to be absent from class must be documented through a pass, note, or administrative authorization.

Students found cutting class will be referred for disciplinary action and may be marked absent for the affected class period(s).

Absences

All absences, whether “Excused” or “Unexcused”, are considered absences and constitute missed instructional time. Missing 10% of the regular scheduled school days is considered **chronically absent;** and may result in additional interventions and attendance review.

Families are expected to notify the school as soon as possible regarding a student absence

Documentated Excused Absences

The following may be considered excused absences when appropriate documentation is provided:

- Personal illness with medical documentation;
- Medical appointments;
- Religious observances;
- Court appearances or legal obligations;
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family;Other extraordinary circumstances approved by administration.

In cases involving prolonged or repeated absences of two (2) or more consecutive school days, the school may require documentation from a licensed medical provider. The school reserves the right to verify the authenticity of submitted documentation.

Documentation for absences should generally be submitted within three (3) school days of the student’s return to school.

If a student is absent **for a single school day** due to illness and does not receive medical attention, a caregiver may submit a written note explaining the absence.

Caregiver notes may be accepted for limited single-day illness absences; however:

- caregiver notes do not exempt students from attendance thresholds or course credit review;

- repeated caregiver-reported absences may require medical documentation;
- the school reserves the right to request additional documentation when attendance concerns arise.

Unexcused / Unverified Absences

Absences may be considered unexcused or unverified when:

- No documentation is submitted;
- Documentation is determined to be invalid or insufficient;
- The absence occurs for non-approved discretionary reasons.

Examples of unexcused absences may include:

- family vacations during scheduled school days;
- oversleeping;
- transportation or rideshare issues;
- entertainment events;
- non-school related activities not approved by administration.

Students remain responsible for all missed assignments, assessments, and coursework resulting from absences.

Early Dismissal

Students are expected to remain in school for the entirety of the instructional day. Early dismissals should be limited to necessary circumstances such as illness, medical appointments, family emergencies, court appearances, or other approved reasons.

All individuals picking up a student(s) must:

- Enter the building at 424 Leonard Street
- Present a valid government-issued photo identification.
- Be listed as an approved person in NCHS records, PowerSchool, or emergency contact documentation.

The school cannot release students to persons without valid photo identification. Credit cards, library cards, medical insurance cards and employment identification are not considered valid forms of identification and will not be accepted.

Students who are under the age of eighteen(18) cannot sign themselves out of school. Additionally, Caregivers cannot give verbal, written, or telephone authorization for a student(s) to leave school unaccompanied if they are underage or be released to an individual who is not listed as an approved contact in school records.

Whenever possible, families should notify the school in advance of an early dismissal request. To minimize disturbance to instruction, pickups should be scheduled in alignment with the school bell schedule whenever possible.

Families requesting early dismissal may be asked to submit identification and supporting documentation to familyfeedback@northsidechs.org.

Students who leave school early without documentation or for non-approved reasons may be marked with an unexcused absence for any missed class periods. Early dismissal does not exempt a student from attendance requirements, missed instructional time, or course attendance thresholds outlined in this policy.

For questions regarding dismissal procedures, families may contact the school at (347) 390-1273 or familyfeedback@northsidechs.org.

Attendance Review and Course Credit Eligibility

Students are expected to maintain sufficient attendance to successfully complete course requirements and demonstrate mastery of course standards. Because excessive absences interfere with instructional participation, students who accumulate more than nine (9) absences in a semester course may become ineligible to receive academic credit for that course, regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused.

Accumulated excessive tardiness may also contribute toward attendance thresholds as outlined in this policy.

The school recognizes that exceptional circumstances may warrant administrative review and possible exemption from attendance thresholds. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- hospitalization or serious medical conditions;
- documented family emergencies;
- death in the immediate family;
- temporary housing situations;
- protected circumstances under applicable law;
- or other extraordinary situations approved by administration.

Attendance Action Charts

Attendance Intervention by Class Period	
Tier 0: Base Expectations	***Attendance will be logged in the school SIS*** ***Teachers will check-in with students who are late or***

	have missed a day of class
Tier 1: Classroom Intervention ***Four (4) total absences in a single class during a semester, or a recognizable pattern of absences/tardies.***	***Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include:*** ● ***Caregiver Phone-Call*** ● ***Student Check-in*** ● ***Attendance monitoring and agreement***
Tier 2: Administrative Intervention ***Seven (7) total absences in a single class during a semester, repeated unverified absences, or continued excessive lateness.***	***Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include:*** ● ***Tier 1 Classroom Interventions Again*** ● ***Mandatory Attendance Conferences*** ○ ***Include teacher, student, parent, and administrator.*** ● ***Counseling Referral***
Tier 3: Credit Risk Intervention ***Nine (9) total absences in a single class during a semester, or equivalent accumulated absence time through excessive tardiness.***	***Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include:*** ● ***Certified Mail containing Written Notification*** ● ***Administrative attendance review*** ● ***Additional documentation may be requested from caregivers.***
Tier 4: Administrative Credit Review ***Ten (10) or more total absences in a single class during a semester, or equivalent accumulated absence time through excessive tardiness.***	***At this point students are placed under Administrative Review for Chronic Absenteeism, during the review the administration may request:*** ● ***Documentation surrounding absences*** ● ***Evidence of academic performance and demonstrated mastery*** ● ***Evidence of participation in interventions*** ● ***Documented communication with the school*** ● ***Evidence of completed coursework;*** ● ***Documented overall attendance patterns.*** ● ***Explanation of any extenuating or extraordinary circumstances that may have contributed to the student's attendance record.*** ***After accumulating the information mentioned above, the administration may:*** ● ***Award course credit;*** ● ***Require participation in make-up instructional sessions equivalent to a portion or all of the missed instructional time;*** ● ***Require participation in a credit recovery***

	program; ● ***Assign an Incomplete pending completion of attendance-related requirements;*** ● ***Deny course credit due to insufficient participation in the instructional program.***

Appeals Process

Students and caregivers may appeal the outcome of an Administrative Credit Review if they believe relevant information was not considered or if they wish to present additional documentation regarding the student's attendance record.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Chief Academic Officer within five (5) school days of receiving the Administrative Credit Review determination.

The written appeal should include:

- The reason for the appeal;
- Any supporting documentation not previously submitted;
- Any additional information the student or caregiver wishes the school to consider.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the school will conduct a secondary review of the student's attendance record, academic performance, intervention history, and any newly submitted documentation. The school may request a meeting with the student and caregiver as part of the appeals process.

A written decision will be issued within ten (10) school days of receipt of the appeal whenever practicable.

Attendance Intervention by Consecutive Days	
Tier 1: One (1) - Four (4) Days	Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include: ● Phone call ● Email/Text Via Student Information System
Tier 2: Five (5) - Nine (9) Days	Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include: ● Phone Call ● Email/Text Via Student Information System ● Certified Letter Home

Tier 3: Ten (10) - Nineteen (19) Days	Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include: ● Phone Call ● Email/Text Via Student Information System ● Certified Letter Home ● Mandatory School Planning Meeting ● Home Visit (15 consecutive day or more)
Tier 4: Twenty (20) or More Days	Interventions will be logged into powerschool and will include: Email/Text Via Student Information System Certified Letter Home Mandatory School Planning Meeting ACS Notified*

Note: After 20 consecutive unexcused absences, the school is required to initiate the removal of the student from the school roster. The ACS notification is for unexplained absences. It is not considered Educational Neglect if a student has a prolonged illness or extraordinary circumstance.

See chart above.

Withdrawal Procedures:

At NCHS, we aim to support successful outcomes for all students and their caregivers. We value our partnerships and hope they are lasting and fruitful. However, we understand that sometimes withdrawal from the school is necessary.

If you wish to withdraw your student from NCHS during the current school year, please visit the office and complete a discharge form. Please note that withdrawal from NCHS will result in the loss of the student's seat, and re-enrollment will require a new application and admission through the standard process.

The compulsory school attendance law in New York State requires that all children between the ages of six and sixteen attend a program of instruction, either at a public school or elsewhere. Therefore, students withdrawing from Northside Charter High School in order to attend a NYC DOE Public School will need to have their new institution submit a request for transfer through the New York Department of Education Student Information System as well as a request for documentation via email at guidance@northsidechs.org . In the circumstance of a student seeking enrollment at a NYC DOE Private School, any school outside of NYC (but within NYS), or any school outside of NYS, the family will be needed to complete a Planning Interview where the family will be asked to provide supporting documentation:

- For transfers to NYC Private Schools families will need to provide a letter of enrollment.
- For transfers to NYS Schools families will need to provide an updated home address as well as a letter of

enrollment.
- For transfers to schools outside of NYS families will need to provide an updated home address in their new state.

It is recommended that families wishing to withdraw their student from NCHS reach out to their School Counselor for support in getting the right information and support.
.

Uniform Policy/Dress Code

NCHS believes that all clothing worn in school must support a culture of learning and community. Clothing and accessories that disrupt the educational process are prohibited. NCHS is committed to fostering an inclusive learning environment and will consider reasonable accommodations to the uniform policy when requested due to sincerely held religious beliefs, medical conditions, or other legally protected characteristics. Families seeking a uniform accommodation should contact the school administration to initiate a confidential review process. All requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws and other School policies.

The following attire regulations apply to all NCHS students:

Uniforms:
Northside Charter High School strives to offer a learning environment based on high expectations and inclusion of cultural and socio-economic diversity. This includes setting guidelines for how students dress and present themselves at school.

- Students may not wear hats or headgear of any type in the building. Headphones (including earbuds) should not be worn in the hallways or classrooms (unless school-issued and permitted in a classroom by a teacher). Headgear worn for religious observance or health-related reasons is exempt.
- Tops must conceal midriff, shoulders, and underarms.
- If students choose to layer, the Northside logo must be the outermost layer at all times.
- Students may wear jeans or skirts. Cargo pants, jeans, slacks, and sweatpants are permitted. Skirts and shorts must be knee-length or longer.
    - Condition: A strict *no-rip* policy is enforced; all clothing must be free of rips, tears, or holes, including manufactured or distressed styles.
- Flynn O'Hara is the official uniform provider for Northside Charter High School. All required clothing can be purchased through their website (flynnohara.com) or at 6719 18th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11204. However, any shirt or sweater (polo, t-shirt, sweatshirt, or cardigan) bearing the Northside Logo is acceptable so long as it adheres to the school dress code outlined above and further below. Northside logo patches must be permanently attached (sewn or ironed on) to the garment to meet compliance. For convenience, Northside T-shirts ($10.00) and logo patches ($3.00) are available to purchase in the main office.
- We encourage caregivers to order uniforms and/or Northside logo iron ons as soon as possible to allow for lead times during busy seasons. Reordering mid-year may be necessary as students grow and uniforms

and/or iron ons become worn or damaged.

All students are required to arrive at school wearing attire that easily identifies them as part of the Northside community and wear said attire respectfully throughout the school day. The final decision concerning the appropriateness of clothing will be made by the school administration. Caregivers of students who arrive out of uniform will be contacted and the student will be given a temporary change of clothes to wear when they return to classroom learning. At the end of the day, students must return their loaner clothing.

Separate attire is required for Physical Education (PE) and other school sports:

- Required for physical education classes:
  - Shirt (no visible undergarments, undershirts, or tank tops) or sweatshirt
  - Shorts or sweatpants
- Sneakers are mandatory
- Although NCHS-branded physical education uniforms are encouraged, they are not mandatory. Physical education uniforms (NCHS-branded or otherwise) are not acceptable classroom attire (except during remote learning).

Inappropriate Apparel:

- Non-medical and non-religious headgear (including hats,sunglasses, durags, ski masks, bandana, head-scarves, skull masks, and all similar headgear.)
- Hooded clothing
- Clothing with brand logos or offensive language or images
- Sheer or transparent clothing
- Crop tops, tank tops, and low-tops
- Sleeveless tops
- Spandex, leggings, jeggings, yoga pants, and biker shorts
-

Note: NCHS encourages students to embody its core values. Every attempt will be made to ensure compliance with the school's Uniform Policy. Repeated non-compliance will result in a meeting with the family of the student and administration and/or result in revocation of after school activities participation.

NCHS will:

1. Provide uniforms at no cost to students and caregivers who cannot afford them or allow reasonable substitutions.
2. Have required uniform components available for students to borrow.
3. Follow the NYSED-approved student discipline policy, including providing notice, due process, and alternative instruction.

Financial Assistance

We are committed to ensuring every student has the gear they need to succeed. If your family requires financial assistance regarding uniform costs, contact **ablackman@northsidechs.org**.

Personal Property Policy

Students are discouraged from bringing valuable belongings to school. These include, but are not limited to: cash, valuable bags, jewelry, electronic or digital equipment (e.g., cell phones, electronic games, musical equipment, cameras, computers, headphones, AirPods), skateboards, athletic equipment, and valuable clothing.

Students, not the school, are responsible for ensuring their belongings are secured. Bringing valuable items to school is at the student's own risk. The school holds no responsibility and is not liable for any damage, theft, or loss of personal property. The school will not refund, replace, or reimburse any student for any personal property damaged, stolen, or lost on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event. When appropriate, the school will report to the authorities any theft, damage, loss, or vandalism of property.

Caregivers are encouraged to take steps to ensure valuable items are appropriately insured. The school may, with or without announcement, perform bag and clothing searches to ensure there are no weapons or contraband brought onto the campus. Such searches will be conducted only when school officials have reasonable suspicion that a student possesses prohibited items, and the search will be limited in scope to address the immediate concern. Bag searches may be conducted by a school personnel or school safety office. Wanding may be conducted by a school personnel or school safety officer. Physical (body) searches will only be conducted by a school safety officer. The school reserves the right to collect mobile/cell phones or other electronic devices daily or under special circumstances, especially if used inappropriately. Devices disruptive to the educational process will be appropriately labeled, stored, and returned to the student at the end of the school day or event as determined by school administration. Students are required to comply with these provisions. Actions not in accordance with the school's Personal Property Policy or core values will be handled within the school's Discipline Policy.

Discipline Philosophy

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.

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.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 School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students. To that end, the School utilizes a progressive discipline approach that is intended to address behavioral issues with appropriate interventions and consequences. While the progressive discipline process typically follows a series of escalating steps, the School Administration reserves the right to interpret and apply the policy as they deem appropriate, based on the nature and circumstances of each situation. This means that in certain cases, the School may initiate discipline at a different step in the progression if warranted by the severity or context of the behavior.

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.

Infraction Level	Descriptor (first occurrence)	Primary Response Tier

—	No infraction – students are meeting **Knight Code** expectations	**Tier 0** – Proactive Community Supports (expectation lessons, community circles, positive recognition)
A	Minor Disruption	**Tier 1** – Classroom Tools
B	Persistent Disruption	**Tier 2** – Dean-Led Restorative
C	Aggressive / Harmful	**Tier 3** – Intensive Plan (detention or community service)
D	Dangerous / Illegal	**Tier 4** – In School Suspension [ISS] / Out of School Suspension [OSS] ≤ 5 days
E	Extreme Endangerment	**Tier 5** – OSS > 5 days / Expulsion

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

Note: The following lists and categories are not exhaustive.

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/exit from school Bias-based slurs Minor physical altercations Bringing unauthorized individuals to campus Tobacco/vaping violations Tampering with records Possession of stolen property Possession of unauthorized controlled substances Vandalism/graffiti Bullying/cyberbulling Harassment/intimidation	Family Circle ISS (1-3 days) OSS (1 day)
4	Sexual misconduct Threatening or obscene materials Physically aggressive conduct causing injury risk Threats/coercion Severe bullying or harassment Bias-based intimidation Drug/alcohol possession False fire alarms Bomb threats Theft Reckless conduct causing injury risk Riot behavior Category II weapon possession Substance use	Community-based referrals Crisis response Counseling services Mental health supports Restorative reentry conference SAPIS referral OSS CEO/Board suspension
5	Arson Robbery using force Serious assault against staff or students Group violence Gang-related violence Sexual assault	Immediate removal from school environment Crisis intervention Law enforcement notification where required Alternative instruction Superintendent suspension Expulsion hearing Reentry planning if applicable

Drug distribution
Category I weapon possession or sale

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
A	First Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home
B	Second Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after the second offense.)
C	Third Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Double Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after a third offense.)
D	Fourth Offense	Loaner Attire Phone Call Home Double Detention (If a student refuses to wear loaner attire after the fourth offense.) Caregiver Meeting
E	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-School 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 (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 or school performance 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, admin, or other school personnel that results in significant harm to the school community.
- 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:

- 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.
- Leaving school premises without permission of supervising school personnel
- Violating the Computer Use Policy (e.g., use of the internet for non-educational purposes, security/privacy violations, etc.).
- 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).
- 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)/Behavior 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) 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 Charter Schools Office by phone at (518) 474-1762, by email at 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 Discipline 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 an IEP

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:

a. The student is entitled to respond to the charges against them and give their version of what happened.
b. The student is immediately removed from the class and/or school.
c. In consultation with the Chief Student Services Officer, a school administrator or their designee addresses the conduct and assigns an appropriate consequence.
d. The caregiver is notified by the Chief Student Services Officer or their designee via phone and written notification.
e. 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:

1. 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
2. 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+	In-School Suspension (ISS) and 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” (link)

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 and/or substantial disruption** 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 Director of Student Experience and Community Engagement (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 and School issued property (i.e., electronic devices) 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 theDignity Act Coordinator (DAC), 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." A

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.

Employees who suspect or have reason to believe that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect are required by law to report their concerns immediately. If an employee is ever uncertain about whether a report should be made, they are encouraged to consult with the School Administration for guidance. It is important to note that employees are protected under the law and are not committing any offense by making a report in good faith, even if the report is later found to be unfounded or unsubstantiated. The priority is always the safety and well-being of the child, and reporting in good faith helps ensure that appropriate steps can be taken to investigate any concerns.

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.

6. **Communication Expectations** – Parents/guardians respond to school outreach (calls, emails, PowerSchool messages) within **72 hours**.
7. **Restorative Participation** – Caregivers attend restorative conferences when requested by school administration.
8. **Attendance & Uniform** – Ensure daily on-time attendance and adherence to the uniform; request planned absences in writing.
9. **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 PolicyCode 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.

GUN-FREE SCHOOL ACT

Federal and State law require the expulsion from School for a period of not less than one year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the School, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Student Services Officer may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended).

Any such expulsion must be consistent with the requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Act and its implementing regulations, for a student with or presumed to have disabilities. “Firearm,” as used in this law, is defined by 18 USC § 921, and includes firearms and explosives.

The definition of “firearm” includes but is not limited to:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.
- The frame or receiver of any weapon described above.
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
- Any destructible device, which is defined as any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or other similar device.
- Any weapon which will, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and that has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
- Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled

A school administrator shall refer to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to the school. “Weapon” as used in this context shall mean any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than two and a half inches in length.

MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT

New York's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program provides support to ensure that homeless children and youth who live in temporary housing have equal access to the same free, appropriate, public education - including public preschool - provided to other New York children, with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and student performance standards. Some examples of temporary housing include:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other similar reasons.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping.

- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory living in circumstances described above.

Every school district, BOCES and charter school is required to have an LEA liaison whose duties include the removal of barriers to the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth in school. Reach out to your student's School Social Worker to be connected with the McKinney Vento liaison for your school.

SOCIAL MEDIA/ONLINE USE POLICY

- Student behavior via social media, online or by other means that negatively impacts the School's functioning and violates its Discipline Policy are subject to discipline under it.
- As defined by the NYC DOE, "social media is any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including social networks, blogs, photo sharing platforms, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis."
- Social Media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, X, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, or other online communication tool/application.
- Online use refers to any electronic access to the internet or communication via email, chat, text, Google classroom, or other media that students may use to create work or communicate while a student at NCHS.
- For the protection of everyone, there is no right to privacy when using school-related social media or online tools provided at NCHS.
- Transmission of certain content such as pornography, hate speech, or other content may lead to disciplinary actions.
- As with the NYC DOE, if you are using the school's device or network, the school may review what you post. The (IAUSP – website: http://tinyurl.com/IAUSP) defines prohibited actions related to online communication that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
    - Causing harm to others or damaging technology-related property;
    - Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to school systems;
    - Using school technology and/or systems for financial gain or business activities; or
    - Engaging in criminal or unlawful activities online.
- No harassment of any kind will be tolerated. NCHS will pursue disciplinary measures for

students found to be participating in, perpetuating, or sharing such harassment.

- Should any media include pornography of children under 18, NYPD will be notified.
- NCHS recognizes that blogging or participating in online forums outside of school is a personal activity, and therefore only seeks to regulate such activity when it impacts the School and/or students or employees of the School.

IMMUNIZATIONS, FORMS, AND ONGOING MEDICAL CONCERNS

An updated immunization and physical form (including up-to-date shots) is due at the beginning of each school year.

NCHS will immediately notify you if your child becomes sick or has an accident that requires medical attention. If your child is sent to the school nurse and it is determined that they have a fever, is contagious, or otherwise cannot remain in school for the remainder of the day, you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. If your child is injured during the school day, a supervising staff member will complete a Student Injury Report that will be kept on file at school. You may also request a copy of the report for your records.

It is important for NCHS staff to know if your child has an ongoing medical issue that requires special attention. Please make sure that you notify NCHS if your child has any allergies or requires medication to be administered on a regular basis or in the event of an emergency. This information will be relayed to your child's teachers as well as the school nurse.

NCHS is committed to providing the support necessary to students with asthma to ensure optimal health and safety during the school day and after school hours. NCHS requires all caregivers, staff and students to comply with the following asthma administration procedures.

1) Any NCHS family that has a child with diagnosed asthma must submit an updated Medication Administration Form at the start of each school year. This form must indicate whether or not a child may self-administer asthma medication and must be signed by a medical professional. The Medication Administration Form will be kept on file in the nurse's office.

2) Any NCHS family that has a child with diagnosed asthma must provide NCHS with an asthma pump in its original packaging. NCHS requests that caregivers also provide a spacer and mask.

Asthma pumps, spacers and masks will be stored in the nurse's office. NCHS requires expired medication to be replaced immediately and for all medication to be labeled with the child's name and date prescribed.

In the case that a student has lice or other similar issues, the family affected will be notified immediately. Students found to have live head lice will be excluded from school and not allowed to return until they are lice-free. Students will be reexamined in 14 days to confirm that they have remained lice-free. Students with nits and no evidence of live head lice will not be excluded from school. If other caregivers have the possibility of being affected, then NCHS will send notification home. NCHS takes every effort to ensure the health and safety of all students.

NCHS provides a school nurse to our students. We follow all regulations and procedures of the Department of Health.

NCHS is subject to DOH regulations, that all students must be up to date with their immunizations. It is mandated that each student renew their physical and immunizations before the beginning of each school year and upon their birthdays.

The School respects and recognizes the rights of families in making decisions concerning immunizations and other health-related matters. We are committed to working collaboratively with parents and guardians to ensure the health and safety of all students while honoring individual circumstances and beliefs. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's immunization status or any other health issue, please contact the School Administration promptly to discuss the appropriate next steps.

Any questions or concerns about the school nurse should be directed to the Chief Student Services Officer.

FERPA RECORDS

Charter Schools are subject to the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and implementing regulations ("FERPA") which requires a school to protect a student's privacy. The school will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records except as authorized pursuant to FERPA, or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The caregiver(s) or guardian(s) of a student under 18 years of age, or a student 18 years of age or older, is entitled to access to the student's school records by submitting a written request to the Chief Finance and Operations Officer ("CFOO").

Caregivers have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning any alleged failures by Northside Charter High School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605. Further information concerning the disclosure of student information

and limitations on such disclosure may be found in our FERPA policy. Data collected for the purposes of IEP development and progress monitoring is considered an education record.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives caregivers certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18 or attend a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for caregivers or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the caregiver or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the caregiver or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the caregiver or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31): School officials with legitimate educational interest; Other schools to which a student is transferring; Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;Accrediting organizations; To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issue.

Complaint Policy and Procedures

Introduction to NCHS Complaint Procedures

Any individual or group may bring complaints to the NCHS Board of Trustees (the “Board”) alleging a violation of a term of NCHS’s charter, a provision of the NYS Charter Schools Act, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the school. This policy describes both the formal and informal complaint processes, corresponding to different types of alleged violations. While anyone may submit a formal complaint, NCHS encourages the use of its informal complaint process for timely and collaborative resolution of less serious

concerns. Complaints that do not involve an alleged violation of NCHS's charter or state or federal law should be addressed through the informal process described below.

Informal Complaint Process
Informal complaints are those such as problems with assigned teachers or classes, or issues with grades, promotion, or retention. Where appropriate, you may wish to use the informal approach, which may result in a more timely resolution and is suited to issues that do not involve a violation of the charter or law. Even issues involving a violation of the charter or law may be resolved informally, and you may wish to use this avenue before making a formal complaint. Using the informal process does not prevent you from using the formal complaint process later. Employee HR related complaints should be directed to ADP, NCHS's Professional Employer Organization ("PEO").

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to contact the student's advisor, classroom teacher, Chief Academic Officer (CAO), or another school administrator. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to parent/guardian/caregiver concerns. If an issue is not resolved promptly or satisfactorily, please contact the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to discuss further.

Parents/guardians/caregivers may also file a complaint in writing directly to the CEO who has been appointed by the Board of Trustees to review complaints. After reviewing the complaint, the CEO will respond in writing and may additionally respond in person or via telephone when appropriate based on the circumstances. If the issue is regarding the CEO, please submit all complaints to the Board of Trustees.

If after working with the CEO, the issue is still unresolved, you may send your concern in writing to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will then investigate the concern and provide a written response within thirty (30) days. If you determine that the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint,you may escalate your complaint to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), which will forward it to the New York State Board of Regents for investigation and response.

Formal Complaint Process
The manner in which the NCHS Board of Trustees documents, manages, and responds to formal complaints is determined by the *NYS Charter School Act§ 2855(4)*, which established a three-phase complaint process., First, if an individual or group has a complaint concerning the management or operation of NCHS, or an alleged violation of NCHS's charter or the NYS Charter Schools Act, the complainant may present the complaint in writing to the NCHS Board by letter or via email to board@northsidechs.org. Complaints may be submitted to the Board at least one week prior to the regular Board meeting during which the Board will officially review the complaint. A calendar of Board meetings can be found on the School's website. Complaints submitted less than one week prior to the next regular Board meeting will be addressed at the subsequent Board meeting.

The Board will address emergency issues as they arise and will respond no later than its next regular meeting.. Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter in a fair and timely manner. The Board, as necessary, may order the CEO, CAO, CSSO, or other school administrator to investigate and/or act upon the complaint and submit a written report to the Board. The Board shall provide a written response, with appropriate determinations and rationales, to every complaint submitted in writing.

Second, if the complainant believes the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, the complainant may then appeal to the charter entity, the Board of Regents, using the process described below:

Bringing a Complaint to the Board of Regents

The Board of Regents has delegated the authority to the Commissioner of Education to handle complaints brought to the Regents concerning charter schools. All complaints brought to the Board of Regents/Commissioner concerning charter schools must be submitted in writing to the State Education Department's Charter School Office, either via mail at:

Charter School Office, NYS Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234, or via email to: charterschools@nysed.gov. The subject line of the email should read: Complaint: [Name of School].

The contents of the letter/email should include:

- A detailed statement of the complaint including the provision of the School's charter or law that you allege has been violated.
- What, if any, response you received from the School's board of trustees (and the School's Charter Entity in the case of schools not authorized by the Board of Regents).
- Copies of all relevant correspondence between you and the School and you and the Charter Entity if applicable. (You should maintain copies of all correspondence and materials for your own files.) What specific action or relief you are seeking.
- Contact information for you – name, address, email address, telephone number.

Investigation of a Complaint brought to the Board of Regents

The Charter School Office, on behalf of the Commissioner and the Board of Regents, will conduct any investigation that it determines necessary and appropriate regarding complaints that have been appropriately filed concerning charter schools.

This investigation may include contacting the School concerning the complaint, providing a copy of the complaint to the School, and requesting additional information or materials from you and/or the School. Upon completion of the investigation of a complaint brought to the Board of Regents, a decision will be issued by the Commissioner, which may include a remedial order as appropriate. A copy of the Commissioner's decision will be provided to you, the School and the Charter Entity as applicable.

Signature requirement

Parent / Caregiver Partnership

NCHS believes discipline is most effective when families and schools collaborate. Our expectations include the following:

1. **Discipline Policy Acknowledgement** – Caregivers and students review and sign the digital acknowledgment form each September.

2. Student Behavior and Accountability – Caregivers ensure that students uphold NCHS's Discipline Policy.

3. School Culture: Caregivers ensure that students are ready to learn each school day.
4. **Communication Expectations** – Caregivers respond to school outreach (calls, messages, emails, SIS messages) within **72 hours**. Caregivers are expected to attend caregiver conferences and meet with teachers and administrative staff as necessary and when requested.
5. **Restorative Participation** – Caregivers attend restorative conferences when requested by school administration.
6. **Attendance & Uniform** – Caregivers ensure their child's daily on-time attendance and adherence to the dress code; caregivers request planned absences in writing and submit documentation for excused absences within 24 hours of a student missing a school day.
    - **Feedback Loop** – Caregivers provide ongoing feedback on family surveys on school climate and discipline; results shared at subsequent Caregiver Webinars.

_____ _____

Caregiver Signature Date

_____ _____

Student Signature Date