



# **Policy Handbook**

**for**

# **Student**

**and**

# **Parent/Guardian**

**2021-2022**

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*Atlantis Charter School ("District") does not discriminate against students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age. Additionally, Atlantis Charter School does not discriminate against the individuals on the basis of homelessness in a manner consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act.*

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## PREFACE

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The policies and procedures provided in this handbook are designed to help the school run smoothly so that you will have a successful year at Atlantis Charter School. This information should be used as a guideline for rights, responsibilities and acceptable standards of behavior.

Please read this guide carefully and contact school administration or teachers for further information. Please keep in mind that this guide does not list every policy, law, regulation, etc. That the school adheres to, but is limited intended to be a general overview.

All rules, regulations, requirements and policies are written in compliance with federal, state, and local education authorities. Recent changes and updates may supersede statements in this guide. In such cases the rulings of the higher authority will prevail. Best wishes for a positive and productive school year!

Robert L. Beatty  
Executive Director

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## MISSION STATEMENT

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The mission of the Atlantis Charter School is to provide an education second to none yielding academic excellence and life-long learning skills.

Atlantis Charter School, an independent public school, provides an educational choice to the families of Greater Fall River by offering a solid academic foundation on which our students build a successful future. We expect an equal partnership among parents, community, faculty, staff and students to create a safe, caring, innovative and progressive learning environment. Atlantis incorporates the best methods in our curriculum to meet the needs of our student population. It is our intent to become a model of educational excellence.

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## ATLANTIS CHARTER SCHOOL CORE VALUES

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**Atlantis Charter School is UNITED.** Through these values and beliefs, students develop both a sense of humanity and civil responsibility.

<b>Unwavering</b>	We will persevere against all adversity
<b>Noble</b>	We have honor and respect for all
<b>Integrity</b>	We adhere to ACS values at all times
<b>Trustworthy</b>	We are responsible and accountable for our actions
<b>Excellence</b>	We always strive to do our best
<b>Daring</b>	We dare ourselves to be great and powerful beyond measure

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## CHARTER APPROVAL

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The Charter for Atlantis Charter School was approved in 1995 and has been reviewed and approved in 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020 by the Charter School Office at the Massachusetts Department of Education.

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## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

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Program applicants, participants, members of the general public, employees, job applicants and others are entitled to participate in and benefit from all Atlantis Charter School programs, activities, and services without regard to disability. Copies of this notice are available, upon request, in alternative print formats (large print, electronic file, etc.) Our grievance procedure and practices are also available. Inquiries, requests, and complaints should be directed to: Title IX Coordinator for Atlantis Charter School, 991 Jefferson Street, Fall River, MA 02721, 508-646-6410 (voice), 508-672-3489 (Fax).

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## EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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In recognition of the diverse characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the Board of Trustees and the Atlantis Charter School faculty and staff will comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts Equal Educational Opportunities Law (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971), which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. Atlantis Charter School's Nondiscrimination Policy Statement reads:

*Atlantis Charter School ("District") does not discriminate against students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age. Additionally, Atlantis Charter School does not discriminate against the individuals on the basis of homelessness in a manner consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act.*

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## PREGNANCY POLICY

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Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex- including pregnancy and parental status- in educational programs and activities.

All public and private schools, school districts, colleges, and universities receiving any federal funds must comply with Title IX. Title IX prohibits schools from excluding a pregnant student from participating in any part of an educational program. This prohibition applies to specific classes such as advanced placement of honors classes, extracurricular programs, interscholastic sports, honor societies, and opportunities for student leadership, among other activities. Schools may implement special instructional programs or classes for a pregnant student, but participation must be completely voluntary on the part of the student, and the classes must be comparable to those offered to other students.

Title IX requires schools to excuse a student's absences due to pregnancy or related conditions, including recovery from childbirth, with appropriate medical documentation from the school's physician for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences to be medically necessary. When a student returns to school, they must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before the medical leave began. In addition, a school must provide special services to a pregnant student that is also provided to other students with temporary medical conditions, including home tutoring.

To ensure a pregnant student's access to the educational program, Atlantis, when necessary, will make adjustments to the regular program that are reasonable and responsive to the student's temporary pregnancy status, such as a larger desk, frequent trips to the bathroom, or elevator access.

Atlantis is committed to working with and supporting pregnant and parenting students, and when appropriate, their families, so that students can remain successfully in school and graduate.

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## TRANSGENDER AND/OR GENDER NONCONFORMING STUDENTS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

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Atlantis Charter School is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students by ensuring all classrooms, programs, and activities are free from bias and discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity. This document outlines Massachusetts law and Atlantis Charter School policy as it relates to supporting transgender and gender nonconforming students.

### **Definitions:**

Understanding the terminology associated with gender identity is important to providing a safe and supportive school environment for all students. The definitions provided below are not intended to label or limit students' individual identities or experiences, but rather to assist in building understanding and the district's legal obligations. Although these are the most commonly used terms, students may or may not choose to use these terms to describe their gender identity, appearance, or behavior.

- **Gender Identity:** Defined under Massachusetts law as "a person's gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth."
- **Gender Expression:** The manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- **Transgender:** A person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth.
- **Gender Nonconforming:** People whose gender identity and/or gender expression do not conform to traditional

societal expectations or norms.

- **Sex Assigned at Birth:** The female or male label that is assigned by a doctor at birth based on the genitals a person is born with.
- **Queer:** While historically and sometimes currently considered an offensive term, “queer” has been reclaimed by many members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community as a term of empowerment. The term generally refers to a member of the LGBT and/or gender nonconforming community. This term may be used by someone who identifies as a member of the LGBT community, but who does not specifically consider themselves to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Since this term has a negative history, it should only be used to describe individuals who identify themselves as queer and give permission for others to use that term to describe them.
- **Transition:** The process by which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another. Transitions may include physical, social, and/or medical processes. Not all transgender or gender-nonconforming people transition or desire to transition in the same way. Transitions are private, and personal information about a transition should not be discussed unless the conversation is initiated and led by the transgender or gender-nonconforming student.

### **Massachusetts Law and Regulations**

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. It is the responsibility of all Atlantis Charter School administrators, faculty, staff, and students to create and sustain an environment free from bias-based conduct, discrimination, or harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression and to ensure equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study.

### **Names, Pronouns, and Student Records**

Transgender and/or gender nonconforming students sometimes choose to change the name assigned to them at birth to a name that is associated with their gender identity. In order to create a safe and supportive environment for transgender students, the school will engage with the student to create a plan to initiate that name and pronoun use within the school, including communication to peers, parents/guardians, and school records.

If a transgender and/or gender nonconforming student wishes to be referred to their chosen name and pronouns that reflect their gender identity, it is Atlantis Charter School’s expectation that all staff does so. If staff or students demonstrate an unwillingness or challenge with referring to transgender and/or gender nonconforming students by their chosen name and pronouns, the school administration team will intervene to address the issue.

It is important for the school to follow the student’s lead in what information is shared and with whom, including parents/guardians. There are a variety of reasons a student may not want to or feel safe sharing gender transition information with family members. If the student does not wish for their parents/guardians to know they are going by their chosen name and pronouns at school, staff members will respect the student’s wishes and adapt accordingly in communicating home. This may mean referring to the student by their birth name and pronouns associated with their sex assigned at birth when communicating with parents/guardians.

Atlantis Charter School recognizes that a transition is an ongoing process and frequent check-ins with the student are essential in ensuring the school remains a safe learning environment and the staff are up to date on relevant information. Staff members that work regularly with a transgender or gender nonconforming student will receive updates through the grade level Student Adjustment Counselor or another identified point person. These updates may include information about name changes, pronoun changes, and updates on family partnership.

Massachusetts’ law recognizes common law name changes, and an individual may adopt a name that is different from the name that appears on their birth certificate, provided the change of name has no fraudulent reason. When the school receives a request to change records for a student’s name and gender, the school should accurately record the student’s chosen name and gender on all school-based records. A court-ordered name or gender change is not required. For transgender students, a documented gender marker should reflect the student’s gender identity, not the student’s sex assigned at birth.

Transgender students that transition after having transferred or graduated from the school may ask to amend school records, diploma, and/or transcripts that include the student’s birth name and sex assigned at birth.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality of Student Records**

Under Massachusetts law, information about a student’s assigned sex at birth, gender transition, name change associated with transition, medical or mental health treatment related to gender identity, or any other related information is part of the individual’s student record (for more information, see the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00). Student records are confidential and must be kept private and secure, except in limited circumstances, such as when

authorized school personnel require the information to provide administrative, teaching, counseling, nursing, or other services to the student in the performance of their official duties. Authorized personnel may include, but are not limited to, individuals such as the principal, school nurse, classroom teacher(s), social worker, and/or guidance counselor.

When a student new to a school is using a chosen name, the birth name is considered private information and may be disclosed only with authorization as provided under the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations. If the student has previously been known at school and/or in school records by their birth name, school personnel must use the student's chosen name. School personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status or gender nonconforming presentation to others, including other parents and other school personnel, unless legally required to do so, for safety reasons, or if the student and/or guardian has authorized such disclosure.

Every effort should be made to update student records with the student's chosen name and gender identity, and records with the student's birth name and sex assigned at birth should not be circulated. Records with the student's birth name and sex assigned at birth should be kept in a separate, confidential file.

Transgender and gender non-conforming students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much information to share. A student who is 14 years of age or older, or who has entered the ninth grade, may consent to disclosure of information from their student record. If a student is under 14, and is not yet in the ninth grade, the student's parent/guardian alone has the authority to decide on disclosures.

At Atlantis Charter School, upon receiving a request for changes in a student's school records as it pertains to gender identity and name change associated with transition, the school will take the following steps:

- Obtain the student's request in writing, if possible, although this is not required to change student records. If a written request is received, the documentation is to be given to the Principal (or designee), to be kept secure and confidential. The school will work to engage with the student's parent/guardian as much as possible in order to ultimately support the student. However, the decision and power to change a transgender and/or gender nonconforming student's name and gender identity lies solely with the student.
- The Principal (or designee), will contact the relevant people to change the student's name and gender on the records and documents below:
  - **PowerSchool:** The Executive Assistant will change the student's name and gender
  - **Student Record Files:** The Student Records Clerk will create a new file for the student with the chosen name. Student file with the student's birth name will be separated and given to the Principal (or designee).
  - **IEP, 504, ELL Records:** If the student is receiving special education services, the Special Education Records Clerk, or the 504 Coordinator, will create a new file for the student with the chosen name and edit the student records on ESped. If the student is an English Language Learner, the ELL Coordinator will create a new file for the student with the chosen name. Student files with the student's birth name will be separated and given to the Principal (or designee).
  - **Academic Files/Trackers:** Any documents or files, including internal assessment trackers, RTI files, attendance trackers, will be changed to reflect the student's chosen name. Any physical documents will be separated and given to the Principal (or designee).
  - **Technology Accounts:** The Technology Integration Specialist will change existing accounts to reflect the student's chosen name and gender identity. Any documents or reports with their birth name and sex assigned at birth will be confidential.
  - **Health Documents:** The School Nurse will create a new folder for the student's medical files with the chosen name and gender identity. Medical files with the student's birth name and sex assigned at birth will be separated and kept in the Health Office
  - **Classroom Documents:** Teachers will change any documents, signs, student accounts, or trackers used in their classroom to reflect the student's chosen name and gender identity. Any materials with the student's birth name and sex assigned at birth should be destroyed or given to the Principal (or designee).
  - **SAC Records:** Student Adjustment Counselors will create a new notes document and/or folder for the student with the chosen name. Any documents with the student's birth name will be separated and given to the Principal (or designee).
  - **College Board** (high school only): College Board profiles can be changed by the student by directly contacting College Board
  - **Naviance** (high school only): Naviance student records update with PowerSchool
- The Principal (or designee) will oversee the records change process and check in with the appropriate people to ensure follow through. All documents with the student's birth name and sex assigned at birth is to be given to the principal (or designee). The Principal (or designee) will compile all documents and keep in a locked file



cabinet in the Student Records office apart from general student records.

### **Restrooms, Locker Rooms, and Changing Facilities**

In accordance with Massachusetts law, all students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities consistent with the student's gender identity. In meeting with the student and parent/guardian, when applicable, the school and student will address the student's access to the restrooms, locker room, and changing facilities.

Each situation must be reviewed and addressed based on the particular circumstances of the student and the school facilities. In all cases, the student has the right to access the restroom, locker room, and changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity. While some transgender and/or gender nonconforming students may want that arrangement, others may not be comfortable with it. Transgender and/or gender non-conforming students that prefer not to use a sex-segregated restroom should be provided with a safe and adequate alternative, such as a single "unisex" restroom or the nurse's restroom. The single-user facility, however, may not be given as the only option for transgender and/or gender nonconforming students.

Some students may feel uncomfortable with a transgender and/or gender nonconforming student using the same sex-segregated restroom, locker room, or changing facility. This discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the transgender and/or gender nonconforming students. School administrators, teachers, and counseling staff will work with students to address the discomfort, foster understanding, and create a school culture that respects and values all students.

### **Physical Education Classes and Athletic Activities**

Where there are sex-segregated classes or athletic activities, including intramural and interscholastic athletics, all students must be allowed to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association will rely on the gender determination made by the student's district; it will not make separate gender identity determinations.

### **Dress Codes and Uniforms**

Transgender and/or gender nonconforming students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity and/or expression. The Atlantis Charter School dress code is not gender specific, and students have the choice to choose and wear uniform items consistent with their gender identity and/or expression. School staff must not enforce the dress code more strictly against transgender and/or gender nonconforming students than other students nor make inappropriate comments regarding a student's choice in clothing.

### **Notification**

If students share information with a staff member regarding their gender identity and/or expression, it is important to keep this information confidential and ensure that the student is in control of creating the transition plan at school. It is also important for the student to know their rights and all of the ways that the school can support in the transition. When a student discloses information, Atlantis will consider the following:

- Invite the student's Student Adjustment Counselor (SAC) into the conversation with the student's permission. SACs can be a valuable support for the student, as well as serve as experts on both the policies and school procedures.
- With the student's permission, disclose information to the Principal. The Principal can be the primary administrator to oversee any changes to student records and any issues that may arise with other students and/or staff members.
- Gather information about chosen name and pronouns
- Identify who the student feels safe sharing with (family, peers, teachers, admin, whole school, etc.) and what/how much they feel safe sharing
- Make student aware of their rights at school and the policies and procedures outlined above
- Create a plan for:
  - Change in student records, if applicable
  - Restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities
  - Uniform changes
  - Extracurricular activities and/or athletics, if applicable
  - Regular check-ins with a SAC or identified staff member to ensure that the student feels supported and there are opportunities to adapt the student support plan as needed

### **Gender-Based Activities, Rules, Policies, and Practices**

School should evaluate all gender-based policies, rules, and practices, and maintain only those with a clear and sound pedagogical purpose. Gender-based policies, rules, and practices can have the effect of marginalizing, stigmatizing, and excluding students, including gender nonconforming students.

Whenever students are separated by gender in school activities or are subject to an otherwise lawful gender-specific rule, policy, or practices, students must be permitted to participate in such activities or conform to such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity.

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## **MILITARY CONNECTED STUDENTS POLICY**

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As a result of the passage of the Valor Act of 2012, Massachusetts became a member of the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission or MIC3. In accordance with the Valor Act and MIC3, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to provide support and assistance to the students of active duty military families. We work to ensure the timely enrollment and graduation of this mobile population. The Atlantis Charter School Military Connected Students Policy addresses the following components.

### **Eligible Students:**

A student qualifies under the Act if, the child is school aged and his or her parent(s) is:

- i. An active duty member of the uniformed services ;(An individual with full time duty status in the active uniformed services of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty; The Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Public Health Services)
- ii. Member or veteran of the uniformed services who are severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of 1 (ONE) year after medical discharge or retirement; and
- iii. Member of the uniformed services who died on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of 1 (ONE) year after death.

### **Student Transferring Out of Atlantis:**

#### **1. Transfer of academic records**

- Atlantis will send the records within 10 (ten) days upon request from the school in the receiving state.

#### **2. Transfer of immunization records**

- Atlantis will transfer immunization records within 30 (thirty) days from the date of enrollment.

#### **3. Official education records unavailable at the time of transfer**

- If official education records cannot be released to the parents for the purpose of the transfer, the Atlantis Records Clerk shall prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of unofficial education records containing uniform information as required by the Interstate Commission. The receiving state school shall enroll and place the student based on information in the unofficial records, pending the official records.

### **Student Transferring into Atlantis:**

#### **1. Student Enrollment and Placement**

- Students should be allowed to continue enrollment in the grade level from the local education agency in the sending state at the time of transition, regardless of age. If the student transfers between school years and has met the prerequisites in the sending school for advancement, he or she shall be placed in the next highest-grade level of the receiving school.
- Atlantis should initially honor placement of the student into educational courses based on the student's enrollment in the sending school or educational assessments conducted at the sending school if courses are offered and space is available. These courses include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Honors;
  - ii. International Baccalaureate;
  - iii. Advanced Placement; and
  - iv. Vocational, Technical, and Career Pathway Courses.
- The school must also initially honor placement of like programs to those of the student in the sending state, including, but not limited to:
  - i. Gifted and Talented Programs; and
  - ii. English as a Second Language Programs.
- Atlantis is not precluded from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.

- Students who transfer with special needs must be accommodated within the federal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under the federal statute, Atlantis must provide comparable services to the student based on:
  - i. Student’s current Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
  - ii. Requirements of § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
  - iii. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Atlantis shall make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of the incoming student with disabilities to provide equal access to education.
- Atlantis is not precluded from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure special needs placements are appropriate.
- Extracurricular activities
  - i. State and local education agencies shall facilitate inclusion in extra- curricular activities regardless of deadlines; to extent the students are otherwise qualified.

**Enrolled Student:**

**1. Role in course/program placement**

- Atlantis administrative officials shall have flexibility in waiving course or program prerequisites or other preconditions for placement to ensure continuity.

**2. Prolonged Student absences**

- Atlantis may grant additional excused absences at the discretion of the District Leader or designee for the student to visit with a parent or legal guardian on leave, preparing for, or returning from deployment.

**3. Facilitating on-time graduation**

- Atlantis administrative officials shall waive specific courses required for graduation if similar course work has been satisfactorily completed in another local education agency.
- If an Atlantis administrative official denies the waiver, they must provide reasonable justification for denial.
  - i. Should a waiver not be granted to a student who would otherwise graduate from the sending school, Atlantis shall provide an alternative means of acquiring required coursework so that graduation may occur on time.

**4. Graduation standards (cannot be met in receiving school)**

- If the student transfers in grade 12, the receiving school should ensure the receipt of a diploma from the sending LEA if the student has met those graduation requirements.
- If the sending state is not a member of the interstate compact, best efforts must be used to facilitate graduation.
- If a high school student in a military family **moves from another state** and enrolls in a Massachusetts high school in grade 11 or later, Atlantis may, in lieu of having the student participate in MCAS retests, submit to the Department **alternative evidence** or information that demonstrates that the student has met the Massachusetts CD graduation standard in each required content area—English language arts, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering.

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**FOSTER CARE TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

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In an effort to provide greater educational stability for Foster Care students, the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) clearly state that a child in Foster Care may remain in his or her school of origin if that is determined to be in the child’s best interest. However, if it is determined to be in the child’s best interest to be enrolled in a new school, the child must be immediately enrolled, and the new school will promptly contact the school of origin to obtain necessary records. Additionally, the local education agencies (LEAs), the state education agencies (SEAs), and the child welfare agencies must collaborate to develop and implement clearly written procedures for how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of a child’s time in Foster Care.

Atlantis Charter School has developed the following procedure for offering transportation to Foster Care students who move from their school of origin to another school/district:

- Designated school personnel have been trained in the district’s Foster Care protocols. Appropriate personnel have been given contact information for the Foster Care Liaison. The parent may contact school district personnel or the Foster Care Liaison to inquire about transportation opportunities.

- ESSA ensures that collaborative efforts must be implemented to determine what is best for the Foster student. Ensuring that providing transportation to the Foster student’s school of origin is in the *best interest* of the student should be determined by these *best interest* considerations:
  - Time of placement change
  - Type of transportation options available
  - Flexibility in school schedule
  - Impact of extracurricular activities on transportation options
  - Maturity and behavioral capacity of the Foster student

Additional factors when deciding on an appropriate mode of transportation:

- The child’s safety
  - The length and distance of the commute
  - All available transportation options
  - Community resources
- After a request for transportation is submitted to the Foster Care Liaison, a committee consisting of appropriate personnel will determine if transportation is in the best interest of the Foster Care student. The committee may consist of, but not limited to, the Foster Care Liaison, a school counselor, a school administrator, and the caseworker or DCS personnel, as deemed appropriate.
  - After transportation requests have been processed, the Foster Care District Liaison will report the decision to the Foster parent. If it is determined by the committee that transportation is in the best interest of the student then the Foster Care District Liaison will put in a transportation request to the Director of Transportation. The Director of Transportation will contact Transportation Department and set up the transportation by providing them with the necessary information for the student. The Transportation Department will contact the guardian to set up the pickup and drop off times and location.

The Atlantis Charter School’s Foster Care District Liaison is Jessica Boucher and she can be reached at 508-672-1821, extension 1591.

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## HOMELESS EDUCATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES

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The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) ensures homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. To the extent practical, and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable Pre-School programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. It has most recently been reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). The Atlantis Charter School’s Homeless Education Policy addresses the following key components of the McKinney-Vento Act:

### **Definition of Homeless Children and Youth**

The term “homeless children and youth” are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This definition shall include:

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

## **Designation of a Homeless Education Liaison**

(A current list of Liaisons is available on the Department of Education (DOE) web site: [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu))

1. The Atlantis Charter School will designate a staff person whose role will be in part to ensure that homeless students enroll in school and that they receive the educational and other services for which they are eligible and ensure that:
2. homeless students are identified by school personnel and through coordination with other agencies;
3. homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school and to meet the same challenging state academic standards as other students, and receive educational services for which they are eligible;
4. homeless families, children and youth have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the local educational agency;
5. homeless families, children and youth receive information and referrals for health care, dental services, mental health and other appropriate services in the community;
6. parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities, such as access to school nutrition programs, available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
7. public notice of the educational rights of homeless students and the district's adopted Homeless Education Policy are disseminated where children and youth receive services such as schools, family shelters, food pantries, health clinics and where families, children, and youth are ordinarily informed of school policies such as student handbooks, school newsletters or school websites;
8. enrollment disputes are mediated and resolved;
9. parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing needed transportation services;
10. district staff providing services to homeless students receive professional development and other support;
11. unaccompanied homeless youth are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academics standards as other students, are informed of their status as independent students, and are provided with verification of that status for the Free
12. Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA);
13. there is coordination and collaboration with the office of the state coordinator, the local community, service providers and school personnel providing education and related services to homeless families, children and youth;
14. reliable, valid, and comprehensive data is collected and reported to the state coordinator; and
15. upon receiving appropriate training, will provide homeless families, children, and youth who meet eligibility requirements for services from the Department of Housing and Community Development, verification of homelessness.

The Atlantis Charter School's Homeless Education Liaison is Jessica Boucher and can be contacted at 508-646-6410.

## **School Placement**

### **In determining the best interest of the child or youth Atlantis shall:**

- Presume keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth; and
- Consider student-centered factors related to the student's best interest including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students, school placement of siblings, giving priority to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth

Atlantis' Homeless Liaison considers the student's best interest in all meetings that it is involved with.

### **According to the best interest of the homeless student, the district either**

- Continues the student's education in Atlantis Charter School for the duration of homelessness in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of that academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- If it is decided that student will not remain in the Atlantis Charter School, then the Homeless Liaison or designee will assist in enrolling the student in the district in which the student is residing

- In the case of unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Liaison or designee will assist in placement or enrollment decisions considering the requests of such unaccompanied youth.

Atlantis will continue the education of any student who is deemed in his/her best interest to attend Atlantis Charter School according to the regulations.

### **Transportation**

Homeless students are entitled to transportation at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison) to their school of origin or the school where they are enrolled.

Also, transportation will be provided:

- if the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the district in which the school of origin is located, that district must provide or arrange transportation if needed;
- if the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin; and
- if the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

If the request for transportation is made the Homeless Education Liaison will put in a transportation request to the Director of Transportation. The Director of Transportation will contact the Transportation Department and provide them with the necessary information for the student. The Transportation Department will contact the parent/guardian to set up the pickup and drop off times and locations.

The Homeless Education Liaison will ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless student, and any unaccompanied homeless youth, is fully informed, in the language of the home, of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin, and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school selected.

### **Enrollment**

A homeless student is considered eligible to apply regardless of residency documentation. Based on the charter school enrollment policies if there is an available seat then the school must immediately enroll homeless students in school to provide educational stability and avoid separation from school for days or weeks while documents are located. Therefore, homeless education liaisons must ensure that:

- students who chose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them;
- if a homeless student arrives without records, the previously attended school district is contacted and the required records requested;
- that homeless students are attending school while the records are being requested;
- districts remove barriers to homeless students receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school; and
- information about a homeless student's living situation shall be treated as a student education record and not be deemed to be directory information and therefore cannot be shared with the public including landlords.

### **Disputes**

If there is a school selection or enrollment dispute, the student shall immediately be enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The Atlantis Charter School District's Homeless Liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule.

**Resources:**

More information regarding the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act can be found at:

- Department of Education (DOE) website: [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)
- National Coalition for the Homeless website: [www.nationlhomeless.org](http://www.nationlhomeless.org)
- United States Department of Education website:  
[www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pd](http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pd)

## SCHOOL INFORMATION IN PARENTS’/GUARDIANS’ FIRST LANGUAGE

School information is available in the parents’/guardians’ first language upon request. Please contact the Records Clerk at 508-646-6410.

## GRADING

A student at Atlantis needs a minimum grade average of 70 [C-] to pass each class. The following scales are used for grading at ACS.

### Kindergarten and Grades 1-2 Readiness

Score	Descriptor
4	Student is exceeding the standard. Student demonstrates in-depth understanding of the material by completing advanced applications of the material.
3	Student is meeting the standard. Student shows independent understanding of the standard.
2	Student is making progress towards the standard but is not yet meeting the standard. Student shows partial understanding of the standard.
1	Student is not yet meeting the standard and struggles to show independent understanding of the standard.

### Grades 3 - 12

Score	Descriptor
A+ 100-98	Demonstrates comprehensive and in-depth understanding of rigorous subject matter
A 97-94 A- 93-90	Demonstrates an excellent understanding of rigorous subject matter.

<b>B+ 89-88</b> <b>B 87-84</b> <b>B- 83-80</b>	Demonstrates a solid understanding of challenging subject matter.
<b>C+ 79-78</b> <b>C 77-74</b> <b>C- 73-70</b>	Demonstrates average understanding of subject matter.
<b>F 0-69</b>	Does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of subject matter.

For information regarding grade point average, course weighting, class rank, transfer credits and/or credits earned at colleges and universities, please refer to the 2019-2020 Program of Studies.

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### **HONOR ROLL (PER QUARTER)**

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**Highest Honors:** 95 or above in all subjects including specials.

**High Honors:** 90 or above in all subjects including specials.

**Honors:** 85 or above in all subjects including specials.

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### **PRESIDENT’S EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAM**

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Membership in the President’s Education Awards Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a student. It was developed to help school leaders recognize and honor students who have shown outstanding educational growth and improvement in their academic subjects. The Atlantis Charter School participates in recognizing students in Grades 4-6 as well as Grade 9 who have attained exemplary academic accomplishments along with good citizenship.

The Presidential Award for Achievement (Grades 4-6) and Excellence (Grade 9) have the following criterion; students must attain a year to date grade of 90 in every subject (including specials, e.g. gym, art, computer classes, etc.) with no grade less than 80 for the first three quarters; students are permitted one administrative detention for the academic year and no instances of an in-school or out-of-school suspension for the entire school year. Please note that the awards ceremony will take place prior to the end of the school year, as such, students are required to adhere to all criterion listed above for the remainder of the school year (including Quarter 4) in order to keep Presidential Award status. Should a student fail to maintain the academic and citizenship standards set forth above, after the awards ceremony takes place, they will be removed from Presidential Award status.

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### **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

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The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is duly chartered nationally as a prestigious society to recognize students in Grades 7-8 who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. Ten (10) hours of community service is required. Community service hours must be completed by the designated date set forth by the Chapter Adviser. This information will be provided to parents and students upon notification of eligibility. Students not meeting the community service requirements by the deadline will not be inducted.

For entry into the Society, students must attain a scholastic grade of 90 in every subject (including specials, e.g. gym, art, computer classes, etc.) with no grade less than 80 for the first three quarters; students are permitted one administrative detention for the academic year and no instances of an in-school or out-of-school suspension for the entire school year. Qualified candidates will be formally invited to a formal NJHS induction ceremony in their honor; in subsequent years members of NJHS will be participants in this ceremony but will not be inducted once more. For continued participation in NJHS in subsequent years, students must meet all of the stringent requirements for academics and behavior. Please note that the awards ceremony will take place prior to the end of the school year, as such, students are required to adhere to all criterion listed above for the remainder of the school year (including Quarter four) in order to keep NJHS status. Should a student fail to maintain the academic and citizenship standards set forth above, after the awards ceremony takes place, they will be removed from NJHS status.



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## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

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The National Honor Society (NHS) is duly chartered nationally as a prestigious society to recognize students in Grades 10-12 who meet the required standards in four areas of evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Ten (10) hours of community service is required. Community service hours must be completed by the designated date set forth by the Chapter Adviser. This information will be provided to parents and students upon notification of eligibility. Students not meeting the community service requirements by the deadline will not be inducted.

For entry into the Society, students must have a scholastic grade point average of no less than 3.5 on a 4.0 scale with no grade less than 80 for the first three quarters; as well as having only one instance of an administrative detention for the academic year and no instances of an in-school or out-of-school suspension for the entire school year. Qualified candidates will be formally invited to a NHS induction ceremony in their honor; in subsequent years members of NHS will be participants in this ceremony but will not be inducted once more. For continued participation in NHS in subsequent years, students must meet all of the stringent requirements for academics and behavior. Please note that the awards ceremony will take place prior to the end of the school year, as such, students are required to adhere to all criterion listed above for the remainder of the school year (including Quarter 4) in order to keep NHS status. Should a student fail to maintain the academic and citizenship standards set forth above, after the awards ceremony takes place, they will be removed from NHS status.

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## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

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Conferences are an important part of communicating about a student's progress. One conference is required after the second quarter marking period. Additional conferences with administrative staff or faculty may be arranged at any time. Please call the school to set up an appointment. A teacher or parent may request that the Principal or designee attend a conference.

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## PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

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In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the following requirements for their grade level. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a student being retained in the grade level.

### Lower School:

- Grade K - 1: Students receiving a total of four or more 1s in Reading and Writing, four or more 1s in Mathematics, and/or are reading below level C at the end of the academic school year will be considered for retention.
- Grades 2: Passing grade in Readers' Workshop and in a minimum of three out of the other four core academic subjects (Writers' Workshop, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies).
- Grades 3 - 6: Passing grade in ELA and in a minimum of two out of the other three core academic subjects (Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies)

### Upper School:

- Grades 7 - 8: Passing grade in ELA and in a minimum of two out of the other three core academic subjects (Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies)
- Grades 9 - 12: Promotion to the next grade level is determined by the credits received in the previous academic year. Students are placed in the homeroom that is aligned with their status.
  - ❖ Students must have a minimum of 16 credits to achieve sophomore status
  - ❖ Students must have a minimum of 32 credits to achieve junior status
  - ❖ Students must have a minimum of 48 credits to achieve senior status
  - ❖ Students must have a minimum of 64 credits to be eligible for graduation

Please refer to the 2020-21 Program of Studies for further information on high school course offerings and specific graduation requirements.

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## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

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Students in grades 3-12 will receive electronic progress reports every five weeks at the mid-quarter mark. These reports will indicate whether your child is in danger of failing a course (grade less than 70). It is important that the school have a correct e-mail address on file for each student's parent.

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## **REPORT CARDS**

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Report Cards are issued four times per year at the end of each Quarter. Parents/guardians will receive their child's Report Card electronically. It is important that the school have a correct e-mail address on file for each student's parent.

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## **STUDENT RECORDS POLICIES**

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Students who have reached their fourteenth (14th) birthday or entered the 9th grade, whichever comes first, may see their student records. The Principal or his/her designee must let such students see their entire student records within two (2) days of the request.

Students who have reached the age of majority (18+) are able to sign all student records on their behalf, including, transferring themselves out of school.

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## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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It is the policy of Atlantis Charter School and its staff that regular attendance in all classes is essential to the learning process and establishes good work habits. Therefore, parents/guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child or children are in attendance and on time every day of the school year.

### **ABSENCES:**

The parent/guardian should call ACS between 6:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. In the event that the secretary is not available to take the call, parents/guardians should leave a detailed message stating the child's name, the date, and a valid reason for the absence.

Any student missing 5 consecutive scheduled school days will be required to obtain documentation from a physician before returning to school.

Proper documentation from a physician must be submitted to the school nurse within 5 school days from the last day a student is absent and upon the students return to excuse any absences. Students will not be penalized for excused absences.

Excused absences include:

- A. Illness- verified with physician's documentation.
- B. Mandated Court Appearances- verified with copy of summons
- C. Religious Holidays – verified in writing by clergy
- D. Death in the family- note from parent/ guardian along with an obituary notice or funeral card

It is the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed due to any type of absence per above make-up work policy. In the event of a prolonged absence, parents/guardians are required to contact the school, so that an appropriate academic plan can be discussed.

Under M.G.L. c. 119, § 21, , a child may be eligible for "Child Requiring Assistance" services through the juvenile court system if the child: repeatedly runs away from the home of a parent or legal guardian; repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of a parent or legal guardian, thereby interfering with the parent's or legal guardian's ability to adequately care for and protect the child; repeatedly fails to obey lawful and reasonable school regulations; or is "habitually truant." A school aged child is "habitually truant" when not otherwise excused from attendance in accordance with lawful and reasonable school regulations, willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter. The school can file a CRA in accordance with M.G.L. c. 119, § 21 and/or assist parents with pursuing "CRA" services and

supports. Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis. This report of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, commonly referred to as a 51A, is filed with the Department of Children and Family Services. By law, school personnel are mandated reporters.

Attendance shall be taken in every class and each absence shall be recorded by teachers. It is the responsibility of the student to make up classwork missed during any absence. Excessive absences which have a negative effect on test scores, class participation, or other criteria used by the class-room teacher to establish satisfactory performance often jeopardize a student's promotion, graduation and/or successful course completion.

Parents will be notified of student absences in the Quarterly Report Cards. Parents are always welcome to contact the school for an attendance update.

Students who are absent from school will not be allowed to participate in any after school activities, sports, or after school sponsored events on the day of the absence (students absent on Fridays will not participate in any event until being present in school the following week). In extenuating circumstances, the administration has the discretion to override this provision of the policy.

Perfect attendance criteria for awards, or other school related events or matters, refers to a student being in school on time, without dismissals, each day that school is in session. A student will not receive perfect attendance if there has been an absence, dismissal, or tardy, even if it is excused.

#### **TARDINESS:**

Students who arrive late to school or classes are marked tardy. Proper documentation from a physician must be submitted to the school nurse within 5 school days of the initial tardy to be considered excused. Students arriving to school after the following times: **K-6: 11:38 a.m.; 7-12 11:00 a.m.** will be considered absent for the purposes of the attendance policy. Disciplinary action will be taken in the cases of repeated tardiness. See attendance interventions below.

**Students are expected to enter school by 8:30 a.m. at the Lower School (K-6). K-6 students will be issued a tardy slip starting at 8:31 a.m. Upper school (7-12) students are expected to enter school by 7:30 a.m. Students in grades 7-12 will be issued a tardy slip starting at 7:31 a.m.** Students who are in the building but who are lingering in the Student Center or hallway may be issued a tardy slip at the discretion of administration. Consistent tardiness results in the loss of valuable class time. Punctuality is an important part of education and a valuable life skill.

Other excused tardiness is constituted by:

- A. Doctor's appointments- verified with physician documentation.
- B. Mandated Court Appearances- verified with copy of summons
- C. Religious Holidays – verified in writing by clergy

It is the responsibility of the student to make-up work missed due to tardiness. Please see make-up policy above.

#### **EARLY DISMISSALS BY PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

Parents agree not to request that their child be dismissed from school except in an extreme emergency. It is requested that doctor or dentist appointments be scheduled after school if possible. Permission for dismissal is granted when a note, stating the reason for the request and signed by the parent or guardian, is presented to the office no later than the end of homeroom. If a student needs to leave school because of illness, he/she must have the permission of the nurse and his/her parent/guardian. Dismissals for religious purposes also require a note.

No student under the age of 18 years of age may leave school before the end of scheduled classes for any reason without the express consent of his/her parent or guardian and a school official. Students under the age of 18 who drive themselves to school may be dismissed without a parent or guardian physically coming into the building by providing the school with appropriate documentation (i.e. written note, phone call to the main office, or email from a parent/guardian). As needed, a school administrator may verify proof of the dismissal request. Students under the age of 18 cannot early dismiss their younger siblings. For students 18 years of age and older who are dismissing themselves refer to the Age of Majority section of the Student/Parent Handbook.

If a student is dismissed from school he/she will be considered absent for that day if they are dismissed prior to the following times: **K-6 11:38 a.m.; Grades 7-12 11:00 a.m.** Students will be responsible to make-up work any missed work due to an early dismissal.

We request that you do not early dismiss your student after 2:15pm as it interferes with other dismissal times. Office staff needs to be alerted to emergency dismissals via telephone call or email prior to parent pick-up. Failure to comply with this protocol may result in delaying student dismissal. The receptionist may ask for photo identification from the individual picking up the student. This individual must be listed on the student enrollment form as an approved contact by the child's parents.

#### **FAMILY VACATION:**

Family vacations scheduled during the school year are strongly discouraged and are considered unexcused absences which may result in a consequence. Please see the attendance policy and interventions below. School days missed as a result of a family vacation cannot be appealed.

Any student who is absent from school due to a scheduled family vacation during school time, will have one day for each day absent to make up work not exceeding 5 days.

Students who are determined to be cutting class or missing school on their own accord will not be given an opportunity to make up any tests or other assignments given on the day in question. The student will receive a zero (0) for any assignments or assessments that were missed during the time of the truancy.

**ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PROCESS FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

**GRADES K-12**

*All attendance infractions are included in students' permanent record*

	<b>School Responsibility</b>	<b>Family Responsibility</b>
<b>Daily Absences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily automated phone call to inform family of every absence</li> <li>• If possible, teachers will share work that can be completed independently at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Secretary to report absence</li> <li>• Share Information with School Nurse regarding any illness/symptoms</li> <li>• Share relevant medical documentation (i.e. COVID Test, Physician's recommendation) with School Nurse</li> <li>• Share relevant documentation (death in the family, court appointment, religious holiday) with Attendance Officer</li> <li>• Ensure students are completing make up work at home as needed</li> </ul>
<b>5-9 Unexcused Absences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Above</li> <li>• Parent/Guardian will receive written notification of attendance status</li> <li>• Homeroom/Advisory teacher (or designee) will contact family via email, text, or phone call to determine what supports are needed</li> <li>• Teachers will share work that can be completed independently at home/offer academic supports to make up missing work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Above</li> <li>• Communicate regular updates as needed with Teachers/Staff</li> <li>• Inform Attendance Officer of any obstacles related to student attendance</li> </ul>
<b>10+ Unexcused Absences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Above</li> <li>• Intense monitoring by Attendance Intervention Team (AIT), which may include Dean of Students, Attendance Officer, Principals, Student Adjustment Counselors, ACS Family and Community Resource Center, Teacher(s), School Nurse, Director of Special Education, and Guidance Counselors</li> <li>• Parent Communication by Attendance Officer or Dean of Students</li> <li>• Possible Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP) implemented. AIPs can include, but are not limited to:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Above</li> <li>• Pursue recommended referrals, explore resources to improve attendance situation if applicable</li> <li>• Attend regular Attendance Meetings if applicable</li> <li>• Communicate regular updates with Attendance Officer if applicable</li> </ul>

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|--|---|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ School Adjustment Counselor referral</li><li>○ Fall River Family Resource Center Referral if needed</li><li>○ Lunch/Recess or Afterschool Turn Around Session – Dean's Discretion</li><li>○ Restorative actions</li><li>○ Possible Retention letter</li><li>○ Possible/Regular, Home Visit(s) by Attendance Officer</li><li>○ Wellness Check by School Resource Officer as needed</li><li>○ Possible court referral (CRA)</li><li>○ Possible DCF referral</li><li>● Attendance infractions will be included with student's permanent record</li></ul> |  |
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**ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PROCESS FOR UNEXCUSED TARDIES/FREQUENT DISMISSALS**

**Grades K-12**

*All attendance infractions are included in students' permanent record*

	<b>School Responsibility</b>	<b>Family Responsibility</b>
<b>12 Unexcused Tardies/dismissals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent/Guardian(s) notified of attendance status in writing</li> <li>● Attendance infractions will be included with student's permanent record</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact Secretary to report late arrival or early dismissal as needed</li> <li>● Share relevant medical documentation (i.e. Doctor's Appointments, Notes) with School Nurse</li> <li>● Share relevant documentation (death in the family, court appointment, religious holiday) with Attendance Officer</li> <li>● Ensure students are completing make up work at home as needed</li> <li>● Communicate regular updates as needed with Teachers/Staff</li> <li>● Inform Attendance Officer of any obstacles related to student arrival and/or dismissal</li> </ul>
<b>16+ Unexcused Tardies/dismissals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intense monitoring by Attendance Intervention Team (AIT), which may include Dean of Students, Attendance Officer, Principals, Student Adjustment Counselors, ACS Family and Community Resource Center, Teacher(s), School Nurse, Director of Special Education, and Guidance Counselors</li> <li>● Parent Communication by Attendance Officer</li> <li>● Possible, Home Visit by Attendance Officer</li> <li>● Possible Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP) implemented. AIPs can include, but are not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School Adjustment Counselor referral</li> <li>○ ACS FRC Referral</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See Above</li> <li>● Pursue recommended referrals, explore resources to improve tardiness and/or frequent dismissals situation if applicable</li> <li>● Attend regular Attendance Meetings if applicable</li> <li>● Communicate regular updates with Attendance Officer if applicable</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lunch/Recess or Afterschool Turn Around Session – Dean's Discretion</li> <li>○ Restorative actions</li> <li>○ Possible, Home Visit by Attendance Officer</li> <li>○ Possible DCF Referral</li> <li>● Attendance infractions will be included with student's permanent record</li> </ul> |  |
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## HEALTH OFFICE GUIDELINES

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### EXCLUSION AND DISMISSAL CRITERIA FOR HEALTH OFFICE

The following is a list of criteria used to determine dismissal and exclusion from school for medical issues. Dismissals and exclusions of a medical nature are decided by the school nurse based on nursing judgment and assessment; and in accordance with The Comprehensive School Health Manual, The Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Massachusetts General Law governing School Health. Students are assessed on a case by case basis.

A student will be excluded if:

- 1) Immunization requirements are not met
- 2) Not in compliance with the physical examination policy
- 3) Pose a risk to the public health due to a communicable disease
- 4) Pose a health risk to themselves or others
- 5) Have a fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit

A student will be dismissed from school for any of the above reasons and for:

- 1) Injuries that occur in school that require medical assessment and intervention
- 2) Severe illnesses that may include vomiting & diarrhea

Any student out of school for five consecutively scheduled school days must have a physician's note to return to school.

### PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Physical Exams:

A periodic physical examination is critically important for all children and adolescents. Massachusetts General Law c. 71 s. 57 and related amendments and regulations (105 CMR 200.00-200.920) requires physical examinations of school children within six months before entry into school or during the first year after entrance.

- Atlantis Charter School requires physical examinations for Kindergarten entry as well as for third and seventh grades as mandated by the state due to immunization requirements. Yearly physical examinations should be forwarded to school health offices for student health files.
- Physical examinations are required for students who participate in after school sports. Physicals are to be dated within 13 months of start of sports season and have clear documentation that student is cleared for participation in sports.
- Students out of compliance with this policy will be excluded from school and/or sports at the discretion of the school nurse and Principal.



## **SPORTS EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS**

As noted above, physical examinations with clear documentation of student's ability to participate in sports is required by Atlantis Charter School. These must be dated within 13 months of start of particular sports season. It is the responsibility of parent/guardian to obtain and forward physical examination copies to health office.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Massachusetts immunization regulations specify minimum immunization requirements for enrollment in school (105 CMR 220.00). These regulations are revised periodically to incorporate any changes in requirements. Some required immunizations may be added to, or eliminated accordingly. The law and regulations provide for exclusion of students from school if immunizations are not up to date, but do permit for exemptions for medical and religious reasons.

Atlantis Charter School will follow the Massachusetts regulations as noted above, including excluding students from school. Required immunizations for entry to school may be found on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website.

## **PHYSICIAN NOTES**

### **ABSENCE AND TARDY EXCUSES:**

In accordance with the Atlantis Charter School attendance policy, physician documentation is required to verify absences and/or tardiness. All documentation must be received within five (5) school days of the last day of the absence.

Any student who is absent for five consecutive scheduled school days, is required to provide documentation from a physician, concerning an illness, before returning to school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXCUSES**

Medical excuses are required for those students who cannot participate in physical education classes. A note from the physician, with documentation specifying the diagnosis, length and extent of the excused absence must be submitted to the health office.

## **STUDENTS REQUIRING ASSISTIVE DEVICES AT SCHOOL**

Any student arriving to school with an assistive or immobilizing device, such as crutches, slings, braces, air casts and etc., should have a doctor's note accompanying them specifying diagnosis, activity restrictions and duration of need for assistive device. The doctor's note must be submitted to the health office. If the student does not have a doctor's note, the parent/guardian will be contacted to obtain the doctor's note or to pick up student until doctor's note is received. This is keeping with the health office's prerogative to exclude a student for the safety of themselves and others. Atlantis Charter School needs to limit liability in these cases and assure that students are being seen and properly treated.

## **ILLNESS AND INJURIES AT SCHOOL**

In case of an injury, the school nurse will administer first aid. It is the parents' responsibility to pick up their child at school and transport him/her to an appropriate facility, if medical attention is indicated. IF EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE is summoned, every effort will be made to contact parent/guardian. Students are not to leave the school building for reasons of illness or injury unless dismissed by the nurse or by an administrator. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up to date emergency information to the school. Emergency contact persons must be accessible and able to provide transportation for the student.

Students who leave school because of illness or injury without following this dismissal procedure, will be marked as unexcused from all missed classes. Parents should not remove students from school for reasons of illness or injury unless the nurse or his/her designee has dismissed the student. NO student should appear at the health office without a pass from his/her period teacher unless it is an EMERGENCY.

In the case of suspected or actual head injuries, the Atlantis Charter School Head Injury Policy will be followed.

## MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

It is extremely important for you to know that **NO medication** will be administered to any student **unless both forms are completed** - Parent/Guardian Authorization for Prescription Medication Administration and the Medication Order Form (completed by a licensed prescriber).

Students, who must receive medication during the school day, are required to have the following forms on file before the medication can be administered at school:

- 1) Signed consent by the parent or guardian.
- 2) Signed licensed provider medication form.

The parent/guardian or responsible designated adult must deliver the medications to the school's nurse in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Medication must be in a stapled pharmacy bag. Please ask your pharmacist to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medication should be delivered to the school.

**NO** over-the-counter-medication or prescription medication will be given without all required forms being completed. No students should be carrying over the counter medications on their person.

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY:** The only two medications that students are allowed to carry in school are Epi-Pens and inhalers, provided the nurse has doctor's orders and parental permission forms updated each year.

*Students in violation of the medication policy are subject to disciplinary action.*

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## ACS HEAD INJURY POLICY

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**Purpose:** The policy applies to all elementary, middle and high school students who attend Atlantis Charter School with a documented head injury that occurred either at or from a school sanctioned activity. This policy provides the procedures and protocols for Atlantis Charter School in the management of head injuries within the school setting.

**Training:** School Nurses and Physical Education teachers will complete the head injury safety training programs provided by the Massachusetts Department of Health. Training should be completed annually.

**Procedure:**

- Any student who sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion or loss of consciousness even briefly shall be removed from the activity/situation immediately and may not return to activity for the day.
- The student will be assessed by School Nurse/PE teacher for signs and symptoms of a possible concussion.
- Parents/guardians of the student will be notified that the child has had an injury to their head.
- If symptoms of possible concussion are present, the student should be referred to health care provider with a copy of concussion signs/symptoms checklist to be sent with child.
- The student's parent/guardian is required to bring them to either the pediatrician or a medical doctor at a hospital emergency room before the student returns to school.
- If the student is referred to MD or Emergency Department, the Principal will be notified verbally and in writing, in the form of the Student Accident report,
- If symptoms are not present upon assessment and observation, the child may return to class, but is to refrain from sports/activities for the day.
- The School Nurse will consult with the classroom teacher about any precautions or advisories about symptoms.
- Parents are to receive a copy of signs & symptoms checklist and are to be asked to continue to observe the child at home, as signs & symptoms may develop later.

Please note: Principals are notified as soon as possible if there is a "serious" (i.e. hospitalization/MD referral involved) injury, by the nurse and/or PE teacher; an accident report will be completed within one school day, by the nurse and the teacher, who witnessed or was in charge when the injury occurred and given to the Principal for signature.

All other injuries are documented by the nurse in PowerSchool, by the end of day or if not possible, by the end of the next school day.

### **Return to School:**

- If concussion has been diagnosed by a health care professional, then student will require written medical clearance by a M.D prior to return to school.
- Upon return to school, School Nurse is to review medical clearance documentation and assess any physical/academic accommodations recommended by health care professional.
- If physical and/or academic accommodations are recommended then 504 meeting is to be scheduled to implement accommodations.
- School nurse notifies the Principal and the teacher of the student's medical status and recommendations before the student returns to class.
- Updated medical follow-up and clearance are to be provided by parents/guardians to school for clearance to participate in physical activity and for return to previous academic participation.

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## **DRUG, ALCOHOL, & TOBACCO POLICY**

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### **Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Opioids, and Steroids**

It is the responsibility of the Atlantis Charter School (ACS) to safeguard the health, character, citizenship, and personality development of the students in its school. As such, ACS must maintain that the use of drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful and that the misuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, opioids, or steroids threatens the positive development of the student and the welfare of the entire school community. ACS is committed to the prevention of drug, alcohol, tobacco, opioid, and anabolic steroid abuse, and the rehabilitation of identified abusers.

ACS prohibits the use, possession and/or distribution of any drug, alcohol, tobacco, opioids, or anabolic steroids on school premises, and at any event away from the school sponsored by the ACS. Compliance with a drug-free standard of conduct at all schools and school functions is mandatory for all students. A student who uses, possesses, or distributes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, opioids, or anabolic steroids on school premises, or while attending a school-sponsored activity, will be subject to discipline that may include suspension or expulsion, and may be reported to appropriate law enforcement personnel.

ACS shall prepare a comprehensive curriculum on the topics of drug, alcohol, and tobacco which shall be integrated and implemented within the ACS Health Curriculum.

ACS shall annually review the effectiveness of its alcohol and other drug policies and shall solicit community input as well as consult with local agencies recommended by the state department of health in the review process. Alcohol and other drug policies and procedures for discipline, evaluation, and treatment of students shall be made available annually to all school staff, students and parents/guardians.

Any staff member who reports a student to the Principal and/or District Leader or his/her designee in compliance with the provisions of this subsection shall not be liable for civil damages as a result of making such a report as provided for under St. 2016, c. 52, s. 15. All policies and procedures must comply with the confidentiality requirements established in federal regulations found at 42 CFR Part II.

Substance abuse in ACS is considered a health risk. It is the expressed position of ACS that when school rules have been violated and when a student's health is at risk, we must notify the student's parents/guardians and attempt to involve family in the rehabilitation plan subject to the confidentiality restrictions per federal regulations 42 CFR Part II. Refusal or failure by a parent/guardian to comply with the provisions of St. 2016, c. 52, s. 15 shall be deemed a violation of the compulsory education and/or child neglect laws per Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, s. 96.

### **Enforcement of Drug-Free School Zones**

ACS recognizes its responsibility to ensure continuing cooperation between school staff and law enforcement authorities in all matters relating to the use, possession, and distribution of controlled dangerous substances and drug paraphernalia on school property. ACS further recognizes its responsibility to cooperate with law enforcement authorities in planning and conducting law enforcement activities and operations on school property. ACS will record and maintain formal Memorandum of Agreement with the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **Undercover Operations**

ACS is authorized to request that law enforcement authorities conduct an undercover operation in the school if he/she has reason to believe that drug use and/or drug trafficking is occurring in the school and that a less intrusive means of law enforcement intervention would be ineffective.

ACS recognizes that law enforcement authorities may contact the Executive Director/designee to request that an undercover operation be established in ACS schools.

The Executive Director/designee, District Leader, and/or Principals shall cooperate with law enforcement authorities in the planning and conduct of undercover school operations. The Executive Director/designee, District Leader, Principals, or any other school staff or district board member who may have been informed about the undercover operation is required to immediately communicate information to law enforcement or designee if the integrity of the undercover school operation has been compromised in any way.

### **Summoning Law Enforcement Authorities onto School Property for the Purpose of Conducting Investigations, Searches, Seizures and Arrests**

Any school employee who has reason to believe a student or a staff member is using or distributing controlled dangerous substances, including opioids, anabolic steroids, or drug paraphernalia on school premises, shall bring that information to the school Principals and/or District Leader. This information will be immediately reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. If, after consultation with the law enforcement official, it is determined that further investigation is necessary, ACS will cooperate with the law enforcement authorities in accordance with the law and administrative code. He/she will provide the officials with an area away from the general student population in which to conduct their law enforcement duties. If law enforcement officials do not choose to investigate the incident, the Executive Director/designee may continue the investigation to determine if any school rules have been broken and whether any school discipline is appropriate.

If an arrest is necessary, and no urgent circumstances exist, the Executive Director/designee, District Leader, and/or Principals and staff will cooperate with the law enforcement officials. Every effort shall be made to enable law enforcement personnel to carry out the arrest in a manner that is least disruptive to the educational environment. The Executive Director/designee, District Leader, and/or Principals shall immediately notify the student's parent/guardian whenever a student is arrested for violating any laws prohibiting the possession, use, sale, or distribution of any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.

### **Student Searches and Securing Physical Evidence**

The Dean of Students, Principals, District Leader or his/her designee may conduct a search of a student's person or belongings if school officials have reasonable suspicion that the student is concealing contraband and/or in possession or under the influence of illegal or controlled substances. All searches and seizures conducted by designated school officials shall comply with the standards prescribed by the United States Supreme Court in and covered by the protections of the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article 14 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights which includes all public schools.

If, as a result of the search, a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia is found, or if a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia is by any means found on school property, school officials shall then notify the appropriate law enforcement agency. School officials shall ensure that the controlled or dangerous substance and/or drug paraphernalia is labeled and held in a secure location until law enforcement officials retrieve it. School officials shall then contact the student's parents/guardians to inform them of the occurrence.

If, and when, law enforcement officials are called into the school, and a search of a student's person or belongings is necessary, or an interrogation is to be conducted, school officials may request that law enforcement officials participate in conducting the search, seizure or interrogation. ACS continues to reserve the right to search school property in cases where there is reason to believe that a student may have violated the substance abuse policy through consumption, possession, and/or distribution prior to law enforcement notification.

### **Police Presence at Extracurricular Activities**

School officials may contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and arrange for the presence of an officer(s) in the event of an emergency or when school officials believe that uniformed police presence is necessary to deter illegal drug use or trafficking or to maintain order or crowd traffic control at a school function.

### **Confidentiality of Student Involvement in Intervention and Treatment Programs**

Nothing in this policy shall be construed in any way to authorize or require the transmittal of any information or records that are in the possession of a substance-abuse counseling or treatment program. All information concerning a student's involvement in a treatment program shall be kept strictly confidential. See 42 CFR Part II and St. 2016, c. 52, s. 15.

### **Availability of Policy**

The policies and procedures contained herein shall be made available to all staff, students, and parents/guardians on an annual basis on the ACS Website.

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## **SCHOOL INSURANCE FOR STUDENTS**

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Atlantis provides a free school insurance plan for all students. In the event of an accident in school, or on the way from school, the student must report the accident to the school nurse who will report it to the Business Office staff who handles all insurance claims. The school insurance plan will supplement the family's primary insurance plan coverage according to the terms of the contract. This plan is not designed to serve as a primary source of insurance.

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## **ACCIDENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF**

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Each time a student, parent, or teacher is injured in the school building or at a school-sponsored function on or off school property, an accident report must be filed in the office no later than 24 hours after the incident. All questions concerning insurance should be referred to the Business Office. This includes members of intramural athletic teams.

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## **STUDENT CRISIS PROTOCOL**

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The goal of the Atlantis Charter School is to create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment for all students and staff. The following protocol will be adhered to when any staff member at ACS has a concern that a student may be at risk to harm him/herself or others.

The school adjustment counselor assessing the student at risk is responsible for ensuring that the protocol is followed, and coordination with the Student Crisis Team, (SCT), is carried through.

1. Upon observation of at-risk behaviors or suspicion of risk for self-injury or injury or safety of others, the school staff member will immediately contact the school adjustment counselor in person or through a direct phone call whenever possible (avoid e-mail or voice message).
2. The identified student will be accompanied by an adult to the office of the School Adjustment Counselor. A member of administration will be contacted immediately. The student will then be interviewed by the School Adjustment Counselor and the student's level of risk will be assessed. When necessary, a second member of the Student Crisis Team will be asked to join the interview. Whenever possible, this second SCT member should be someone the student is familiar with and will not increase the student's anxiety. If a student is deemed to be at risk and needing further assessment for safety, the School Adjustment Counselor will contact the student's parent/guardian and make them aware of the following:
  - The circumstances surrounding their child's situation.
  - The parent/guardian will be asked to immediately pick up their child and bring them directly to an appropriate licensed medical or mental health professional, outside of the school setting, for further evaluation and intervention. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the SCT will determine appropriate next steps.
  - The School Adjustment Counselor will review the options available for their child to be appropriately evaluated. If the student is insured by Mass Health, or is receiving services from Mass Health, the parent will have the option of having the Mobile Crisis Unit come to the school to assess the student.
  - The parent is requested to provide the school documentation that states that the student is safe to return to school.

- A signed Release of Information Form will be obtained for the professional/agency conducting the crisis evaluation.

3. The school may inform the School Resource Officer, (SRO), of a student safety concern if the SCT feels it is appropriate. Once the SRO is made aware, the SRO will then make a determination as to whether a Section 12, or involuntary safety evaluation, is needed for the student. If this occurs, the SRO will notify the parent or guardian of this decision and an ambulance will automatically be called to transfer the student to the hospital. The SRO will ride with the student to the hospital. Parents are still asked to provide the school with documentation that the student has been evaluated and is safe to return to the school setting.

4. In the event that the at-risk student is experiencing a medical emergency, 911 will be called and the nurse and SRO will be contacted immediately. The SCT will follow the school's medical emergency policy. In the event the student is taken by ambulance, the SRO, or other member of the SCT, shall accompany the student and remain with them in the Emergency Room until a parent or guardian arrives. If a member of the SCT is told by an EMT that they cannot physically go in the back of the ambulance, the SCT will follow the ambulance by car.

5. The at-risk student will be directly supervised by a member of the SCT at all times in school until the parent has arrived to take responsibility for ensuring the student's safety.

6. A Student Crisis Intervention Form will be completed by the School Adjustment Counselor and parent/guardian's signature will be obtained.

7. If a student presents with a potential safety concern after school hours which includes athletic events, school dances, clubs, etc., the following will occur:

- The staff member should alert their immediate supervisor of the situation. The staff member or supervisor will immediately contact a Principal or K-12 District Leader (if supervisor is different) to make them aware of the current student concern.
- If there is a concern for a student's immediate safety, the Principal or K-12 District Leader will contact the police for further intervention.
- After assessing the student concern, the police may decide that a Section 12 is needed and will follow procedures under a Section 12.
- If the police feel that a Section 12 is not needed, the police will review an immediate plan with the parent/guardian. The Principal or K-12 District Leader will communicate with the appropriate school adjustment counselor the next school day and the school adjustment counselor will follow up on the matter.

In the event a parent/guardian fails to follow through with the school's Student Crisis Protocol, the SCT may consider the following actions:

- Filing a 51A with the Department of Children and Families
- Notification to the local police authorities
- Referral to Juvenile/Family Court for a Child in Need of Services (CRA)

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## **DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW AND GUIDELINES**

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### **Philosophy of Discipline**

Atlantis Charter School strives to make the school a safe, peaceful, secure and orderly environment in which to learn. Every student has the responsibility to respect one another's person, property, space and opinions. Self-development, self-expression and self-discipline are major themes expressed in the Atlantis Charter School core values. The philosophy of discipline is, therefore, based on the same principles. The attainment of this goal requires the full cooperation of the administration, the faculty, the student body and the parents.

### **Code of Conduct**

The Atlantis Charter School Discipline System is designed to promote a safe and orderly environment for learning to take place. Any member of the faculty observing a student committing an act contrary to good order will take action and follow the ACS progression of discipline. Administration has the authority to suspend a student either externally or internally, for disciplinary reasons.

### **Discipline Procedure**

School officials have the authority to handle all disruptive behavior in a developmentally appropriate manner. If a student does not accept his/her responsibilities to respect the rights of others in our school community and commits an infraction of the discipline code, he or she will be assigned with consequences as listed below. School officials reserve the right to contact the appropriate authorities when deemed necessary. It should be noted that it is impossible to list all infractions; therefore, the administration retains the right to impose consequences for all acts contrary to proper behavior not expressly stated within.

### **Restorative Practice Procedure**

Atlantis Charter School is committed to cultivating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive school community. We are U.N.I.T.E.D in creating a welcoming learning environment for students, staff, and families of all races, genders, ethnicities, religions, abilities, sexual orientation, and nationalities. ACS is dedicated to continuous growth in pursuit of fulfilling this vision.

Atlantis Charter School aims at building a strong sense of community and belonging through the use of restorative practices.

Restorative Practices within the Atlantis Charter School Community will encompass all but not limited to:

Teachers and students will be able to generate and conduct both community and harm circles by incorporating the following:

1. Relationship building within all members of the community.
2. Respecting all members of the community
3. Responsibility to uphold all standards of the community
4. Understanding and repairing harm within the community
5. Reintegrating members within the classroom community.

### **Possible Range of RP Interventions:**

1. Verbal Warning
2. Parent/Guardian Contact
3. One-on-one conversations between teacher and student
4. Classroom harm circles and small group harm circles
5. Social probation, i.e. loss of privileges
6. Administrative harm circles
7. In-School Suspension (Triton Zone)
8. Out-of-School Suspension
9. Reintegration Circles upon entering school community
10. Court referral
11. Expulsion

## DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

The following guidelines apply for grades K-12. These guidelines also apply to in-school and extracurricular activities, field trips, and home and away athletic events. As noted above, these are general guidelines. The length of disciplinary action can be adjusted based upon the discretion of the school administration.

OFFENSE	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
Abusive Language Profanity/ Obscenities	Directed to an individual to bring ridicule or any comment from a student that the teacher finds disruptive or inappropriate.	Consequences can range from detention/turn around session(s) to suspension from school. Parental contact. Student to process with teacher/staff member harm of language offense.
Accidental Damage	Unintentional damage to school property.	Restitution will be required. Other consequences may be imposed if damage was caused by reckless or otherwise unacceptable behavior.
Alcohol-Possession or use of alcohol	Where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood or threatening the health, safety, or welfare of school property, individuals, thereon, and/or the educational process	Possible research on minor use of alcohol and presented in a written essay. SAC check in with support of psychoeducation around substance-ranging from one time weekly to a month check in - possible outside referrals to be made. Up to ten (10) days suspension from school. Possible referral to police.
Arson	A student sets fire to any part of the school building or grounds.	Support of SAC check ins with outside resources to be made.  Up to ten (10) days suspension from school. Referral to police.
Assault	A defendant commits assault by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● attempting to use physical force against another, or</li> <li>● demonstrating an intention to use immediate force against another.</li> </ul> A person does not need to inflict injury or even make physical contact with another to commit an assault.	Student to engage in research and written document of the education around assault and consequences of actions.  Support of SAC check-ins to process assault and harm.  Up to ten (10) days suspension from school with possible referral to police and long-term suspension
Assault and Battery	A defendant commits assault and battery by deliberately touching the victim: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● in a way that is likely to cause bodily harm, or</li> <li>● without the victim's consent.</li> </ul>	Student to engage in research and written document of the education around assault and consequences of actions. SAC to support with appropriate referrals.  Up to ten (10) days suspension from school with possible referral to police and long-term suspension.  Potential expulsion in cases of assault and battery on a staff member and/or felony conviction.



Bullying/ Cyberbullying	Any overt acts by a student or a group of student directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other students while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or over social media which impacts the school environment and is repeated against student(s) over time.	Engage in psycho education on bullying and harm caused. Restorative circle (both parties comfortable)  Scheduled check-ins with SAC  Refer to Disciplinary Actions in Bullying Prevention and Intervention Section of Student/Parent Handbook
Cheating/ Plagiarism	Student copying another student's work or using cheat sheets or an electronic device to get answers.	Document to be rewritten to reflect student's own words. Informative essay to be written on harm of plagiarism.  Grade of zero (0). Consequences can range from detention/turn around session(s) to suspension from school. Parental contact.
Cutting Class	Student is absent from any class without authorization from a staff member.	<b>First Offense:</b> One (1) Administrative Detention/Turn Around Session. A grade of '0' on all assignments/assessments. No makeup work allowed. <b>Subsequent Offenses:</b> Additional detention/turn around session(s) and possible in-school or out-of-school suspension(s).
*Detention: Cutting Administrator's Office Detention	Failing to attend detention/turn around as assigned by administrator.	<b>First Offense:</b> Two (2) administrative detentions/turn around sessions. <b>Second Offense:</b> Student assigned one (1) day of in-school suspension. <b>Subsequent Offenses:</b> Student assigned up to three (3) days suspension (in-school or out-of-school).
Discriminatory Language	Written/verbal comments and gestures directed at an individual or group of individuals that can be considered offensive or inappropriate to a person's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identify, sexual orientation or disability.	Activity assignment from <b>Learning from Justice</b> .  Consequences can range from administrative detention/turn around session(s) to in-school or out-of-school suspension(s).
Disrespectful Behavior/ Noncompliance	Rude, impolite, discourteous, and/or non-compliant behavior (gestures, tone, language, actions) that displays a lack of regard for others.	Student and the whole class participate in a peacemaking circle.  Depending on the severity of the incident and frequency of this type of behavior, up to ten (10) day suspension from school.
Disruptive Behavior	Student acting in a manner that is detrimental to the school environment.	Administrative detention/turn around session(s). Possible suspension.
Dress Code Violation	Student exhibits repeated disregard for the ACS dress code, by wearing unprofessional and/or inappropriate clothing and does not adhere to the ACS Dress Code on Dress Down Days.	Parent contacted to bring in appropriate clothing. Consequences can range from loss of privileges to detention/turn around session(s) and suspension(s).

Drugs: Possession or Use of Drugs	Where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals, thereon, and/or the educational process.	Up to ten (10) day suspension from school. Potential for expulsion. Possible referral to the police.
Electronic Devices— Inappropriate Use	Use or possession of a cellular phone, headphones, or electronic device without specific medical or other authorized permission is prohibited during the school day for Grades K-6. Grade 7-12 students should review separate Cell Phone policy for this Grade span. Violation of ACS electronics Device Policy.	<b>First Offense:</b> Staff/Administrator will confiscate devices to be returned to the student at the end of that school day. An administrative detention/turn around session will be given. <b>Subsequent Offenses:</b> Parents will be contacted to pick up the electronic device. Up to three (3) Administrative Detention/Turn Around Session(s) assigned. <b>Note: Grades 7-12</b> consequences are as defined in the separate Cell Phone policy.
Elopement	Leaving a supervised area without permission.	Up to three (3) days suspension (in-school or out-of-school).
False Alarm or False 911 call	Student sets off the fire alarm system or makes a 911 call without probable cause or collaborates with other student(s) in setting a false alarm.	Up to five (5) days suspension (in-school or out-of-school). Possible referral to the police
Fighting	Escalation of a verbal encounter that results in aggressive physical contact with the intent to do bodily harm.	Students will participate in a restorative circle. <b>First Offense:</b> Up to three (3) days suspension from school. Possible referral to the police <b>Second Offense:</b> Up to five (5) days suspension from school. Possible referral to the police <b>Subsequent Offenses:</b> Up to ten (10) days suspension from school. Possible referral to police and/or courts.
Fireworks –Possession, Use, or Distribution of Fireworks or Explosives	Students may not have in their possession any types of explosives including fireworks. Students will not sell explosives or fireworks to other students.	Student will participate in a reintegration process following their return to school. <b>First Offense:</b> A student in possession of fireworks or explosives will receive up to five (5) days suspension from school. Referral to police. <b>Second Offense:</b> A student selling fireworks/explosives will receive a minimum of five (5) days suspension, potential for expulsion. Referral to police.
Forgery, Alteration or Misuse of Official School Documents or Parental Communication Forgery	The falsification of written information, the changing of information or use of such documents beyond defined purpose of documents would include but not be limited to: Building passes, parental notes for early dismissal, parental notes for tardiness or absence, academic documents, and discipline forms.	<b>First Offense:</b> Administrative detention/turn around session <b>Second Offense:</b> One (1) day in-school suspension. <b>Third and Subsequent Offenses:</b> Up to three (3) days suspension (in-school or out –of-school).

Hazing	<p>“Hazing” shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.</p>	Up to ten (10) days suspension from school. Possible referral to police and/or courts.
Hitting/Pushing/ Kicking/Biting	Hitting, pushing, kicking, or hitting another person.	<p>Students participate in a restorative session that involves a peace circle.</p> <p><b>First Offense:</b> Administrative detention/turn around session. Up to one (1) day suspension (in-school or out-of-school).</p> <p><b>Second Offense:</b> Up to three (3) days in-school or out-of-school suspension.</p> <p><b>Third and Subsequent Offenses:</b> Up to five (5) days suspension (in-school or out –of-school).</p>
Inciting/ Attempting to Incite Other Students to Create Disturbance	Encouraging other students to participate in unacceptable behavior either through verbal comments or physical actions (e.g. group fighting, throwing food, or yelling loudly to encourage others).	<p>Consequences will be based on frequency and severity.</p> <p>Out-of-school suspension of up to ten (10) days.</p> <p>Consideration of long-term suspension from school.</p> <p>Possible referral to police.</p>
Leaving School Property Without Permission Prior to Dismissal	Students may not exit school grounds prior to their authorized dismissal time without permission from an administrator, school nurse, or an approved note from a parent.	<p>Possible community service around the building.</p> <p>Administrative detention/turn around sessions(s), or up to three (3) days in-school suspension, depending on circumstances. Police will be notified for safety.</p>
Misuses of 1:1 Chromebook		
Sexual Harassment	Any unwelcome sexual advances, comments, touching or other inappropriate verbal or physical gestures made to any member of the faculty, staff, student body or groups thereof. It includes, but not limited to, pressure for sexual activity or remarks with sexual or demeaning implications.	Up to ten (10) days out-of-school suspension. Possible referral to police.

Smoking/Chewing Tobacco/" Vaping"/ Electronic cigarettes	Student smoking, using or possessing chewing tobacco or other tobacco products inside the school building, on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity at any time.	<b>First Offense:</b> Up to three (3) days out-of-school suspension. <b>Second Offense:</b> Up to five (5) days out-of-school suspension. <b>Third and Subsequent Offenses:</b> Up to five (5) days out-of-school suspension. Possible referral to police.
SRTA Bus Line Violation (7-12 Bus)	Student uses disrespectful language in bus line, does not listen to staff instructions, or causes the bus line to be unsafe.	Consequences can range from an alternative waiting location or administrative detention to loss of school-supplied Charlie Card and loss of privilege for waiting for the bus on school property.
Technology Usage Violation	Student not complying with ACS Acceptable Use Policy.	Removal from opportunities to access computers. Consequences can range from an Administrative Detention/Turn Around Session up to five (5) days Out-of-School suspension.
Theft, Petty Theft, or Violation of Personal Property	Theft of any material owned by another student, staff member, or the school system or looking through someone's personal belongings.	Up to ten (10) days suspension. Possible referral to police.
Threatening Staff or Student(s)	Written or verbal expression of intent to harm or otherwise cause injury to another person or his/her possessions.	Up to ten (10) days suspension. Possible referral to police.
Transportation (K-6 Bus)	Violation of K-6 bus expectations.	Consequences for student behavior will follow disciplinary guidelines. Possible suspension/expulsion from the bus.
Vandalism	Intentionally damaging, in any way, property belonging to the school system and/or others during school hours, e.g. field trips, gym classes, recess.	Up to ten (10) days suspension from school. Possible police referral. Restitution, which may be financial, will be required.
Violation of school or court issued Safety/Separation Plan	Student violates or attempts to violate a school or court issued safety/separation plan.	Consequences can range from targeted education, community service, or loss of privileges to up to three (3) days in-school suspension depending on the severity of the incident.
Weapons—Use of/Possession of	Students using or possessing any instrument, article or substance, or facsimile of, which is capable of causing death or bodily injury.	Up to ten (10) days out-of-school suspension. Possible referral to police. Potential for expulsion.

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## STUDENT CONDUCT

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### **MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, CH. 71, S. 37H:**

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, a Principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine-readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

### **MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, CH. 71, S. 37H<sup>1/2</sup>:**

***Felony Complaint or Conviction of Student; Suspension; Expulsion; Right to Appeal Notwithstanding the provisions of Section eighty-four and Sections sixteen and seventeen of Chapter seventy-six:***

(a) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal or Headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said Principal or Headmaster if said Principal or Headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reason for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal or Headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(b) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal or Headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such Principal or Headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal or Headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, CH. 71, S. 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>: *Suspension or expulsion on grounds other than those set forth in Secs. 37H or 37H<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>***

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.

(b) Any Principal, Headmaster, Executive Director or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the Principal or Headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the Principal or Headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The Principal or Headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the Principal or Headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a Principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the Principal or Headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the

suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The Principal or Headmaster, or a designee, shall notify the Executive Director in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reason for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the Executive Director. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The Executive Director, or a designee, shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the Executive Director, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the Executive Director, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district from a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

#### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS RIGHTS:**

Consistent with the Massachusetts student discipline law (Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012) and the student discipline regulations (603 CMR 53.00), Atlantis Charter School's student discipline policy includes specific procedures related to student suspensions and expulsions and is designed to provide students who are suspended or expelled the opportunity to make academic progress. Our goals are:

- (a) To keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices;
- (b) To promote engagement of a student and a student's parent or guardian in discussion of the student's misconduct, and the options for responding to it;
- (c) To assure that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason for suspension or expulsion, has the opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; and
- (d) To limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate.

##### **1. Due Process**

Except in cases of emergency or when the student's continued presence poses a danger to person or property, the Principal may not impose a suspension without first providing the student and the parent or guardian oral and written notice of the offense, the basis for the charge and the potential consequences, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the alleged offense and the parent or guardian an opportunity to participate in the hearing. The Principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent or guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. A hearing may be conducted without the parent or guardian present if, after reasonable, good faith efforts to include the parent or guardian, the Principal is unable to secure their participation. This section does not apply to the suspension of a student for: (a) possession of a dangerous weapon; (b) possession of a controlled substance; (c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½.

### Principal's Hearing

The Principal shall determine the extent of the rights afforded to a student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the offense. Students facing a long-term suspension will be afforded greater minimum rights than students facing a short-term suspension. For additional information refer to 603 CMR 53.08.

- a. **Short-term Suspension**: At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies or consequences (other than suspension) may be sufficient and appropriate. If present, the parent or guardian shall be provided an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and other information, including mitigating circumstances that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Following the hearing, the Principal shall notify the student and parent or guardian of the determination, the reasons for the determination, and length of any suspension being imposed. The determination shall be in writing. Students shall be provided with the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

### **603 CMR 53.10: In-School Suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾**

(1) The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

(2) The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through (5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).

(3) The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

(4) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

(5) The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

- b. **Long-term Suspension**: At a minimum, a student facing a long-term suspension shall be afforded all of the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing. In addition, a student facing a long-term suspension shall have the following additional rights:
- (i) In advance of hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making his/her determination;
  - (ii) The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person at the student's choice and at the student's/parent's or guardian's expense;



- (iii) The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf;
- (iv) The right to cross examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
- (v) The right to request that the hearing be recorded, a copy of which shall be provided to the student and parent upon request and the right of all parties to be informed before the hearing that an audio copy will be made of the hearing. The Principal's determination shall be in writing and sent to the student and parent or guardian. If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
  - (vi) Identify the offense, the date on which the hearing took place and the participants at the hearing;
  - (vii) Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal;
  - (viii) Identify the length and effective date of suspension;
  - (ix) Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the suspension;
  - (x) Inform the student of the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director (or designee). Appeal to the Executive Director is only provided in those cases where the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. In every case of misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense.

#### Executive Director's Hearing

A student placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Executive Director. The appeal must be filed within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension. If the student's or parent's notice of appeal is not timely the Executive Director may deny the appeal or allow the appeal at his or her discretion. The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent or guardian request an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension. A good faith effort will be made to include the parent or guardian in the hearing.

The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent or guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Executive Director shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parents or guardian upon request and the right of all parties to be informed before the hearing that an audio copy will be made of the hearing. The student shall have all of the rights afforded at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. While the Executive Director may modify the Principal's decision to reduce the suspension or consequence imposed on the student, under no circumstances may the Executive Director impose a suspension which is greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school district.

#### Emergency Removal

Nothing in these rules and regulations shall prevent the Principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially alters and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal shall immediately notify the Executive Director in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall:

- (xi) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to notify the student and the student's parent or guardian of the emergency removal, the reason(s) for the removal and other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (xii) Provide written notice to the student and parent or guardian pursuant to 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (xiii) Provide the student with an opportunity for a hearing and the parent or guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for the hearing is agreed to by the Principal, student and parent or guardian and

(xiv) A decision must be rendered (orally) on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. A student may not be removed from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

### **Expulsion**

Although suspension is limited to no more than 90 school days in a school year under M.G.L. c. 71 s. 37H<sup>3/4</sup>, Principals continue to have discretion under M.G.L. c. 71, sections 37H and 37H<sup>1/2</sup> to impose a longer suspension or expulsion on a student for one of the statutory offenses, such as possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school grounds, or assault on school staff.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his or her right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

### **Education Services and Academic Progress under M.G.L. c.71 § § 37H, 37H <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, and 37H <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>**

1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

The student's Principal is the parent's contact person to provide detailed information and answer questions pertaining to a student's Education Service Plan. The student's team, which may consist of teachers, parents, administrators, counselors, nurses, and outside providers when appropriate, will work together to develop an individualized plan that allows the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements. The specific education services that are available to your child include tutoring services, alternative placement, or online and distance learning.

### **DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. However, students eligible for Special Education are entitled to certain additional protections under state and federal law. Specifically, these laws include M.G.L. c. 71B and its implementing regulations (603 CMR 28.00) and 20 USC 1401 et.seq. ("the IDEA") and its implementing regulations (34 CFR 300 et. seq.).

Students eligible for Special Education who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten school days per school year, to the extent that such removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability.

Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten school days in a school year, this constitutes a "change of placement" and invokes certain procedural rights including, but not limited to, a review by the IEP Team of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is referred to as a Manifestation Determination.

If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student's Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior intervention plan, provided that such an assessment was not already conducted before the behavior occurred. In the situation where an assessment was already conducted and a behavior intervention plan is already in place, the Team will review the plan and revise it accordingly. The student will also be returned to his/her educational placement unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be removed from his/her educational placement to the same extent that a regular education student would be removed, provided that the special education student must continue to receive appropriate educational services set out in the student's IEP. Additionally, the student should receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan to prevent the behavior from happening again.

When appropriate, the Principal, or designee, may seek an order from the Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) placing a student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. An interim alternative educational setting is a program identified by the team that allows a child access to the general curriculum, provides IEP services, and addresses the behavior involved in the incident.

The Principal, or designee, may unilaterally order a change in educational placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five school days if the student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; or
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs at school, a school function, or school sponsored event; or
- Sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, a school function, or school sponsored event.

For a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education brochure on Special Education Parents' Rights, available in many languages, visit [www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents) or can be requested from the Special Education Director at (508) 646-6410.

### **Discipline of Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education:**

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for Special Education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for Special Education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if, before the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent/guardian of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the student's school or to a teacher of the student that the student is in need of Special Education and related services; or
- The parent/guardian requested an evaluation of the student; or
- District staff expressed, directly to the Special Education director or other supervisory personnel, specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be deemed to have had knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused Special Education services, or if an evaluation of the student was completed and resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

If the district had no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities. However, if an evaluation is requested during the time period in which the student is subjected to these disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner.

**Discipline of Students on 504 Plans:**

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten consecutive school days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for eligible 504 students are the same as those afforded to special education students. Please contact the Student Services Coordinator/Principal of the High School.

For the purpose of Atlantis Charter School and following Massachusetts General Law, "Principal" refers to Principal or District Leader and "Superintendent" refers to Executive Director.

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## **PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL**

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Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, § 18, No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which the student last attended has sent notice within a period of 5 days from the student's tenth consecutive absence to the student and the parent or guardian of that student in both the primary language of the parent or guardian, to the extent practicable, and English. The notice shall initially offer at least 2 dates and times for an exit interview between the superintendent, or a designee, and the student and the parent or guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving school and shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within 10 days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and no extension shall be for longer than 14 days. The Executive Director, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent or guardian if the Executive Director, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. The exit interview shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and to consider alternative education or other placements. M.G.L. c. 76, § 18

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## **ANTI-HAZING POLICY**

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Atlantis Charter School abides by the laws and regulations set forth in MGL Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18, and 19 in regards to Anti-Hazing.

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized

by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

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## **AGE OF MAJORITY**

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Any student reaching the age of 18 has age of majority status. Age of majority allows the student to be recognized by the school as an adult so that he/she may be accorded the privileges of an adult signing attendance records to include dismissal notes, requesting records, and/or other similar type activities. However, the student must have any dismissals, tardies, and absences approved by administration. A student with age of majority must call himself/herself out sick between the hours of 6:00 and 8:30. In the event that the secretary is not available to take the call, the student should leave a detailed message stating his/her name, the date, and a valid reason for the absence. As stated, students will have one day for each absence not exceeding five days to make up any missed work. Work not completed within the allotted time frame will result in a zero. Any student missing 5 consecutive scheduled school days will be required to obtain documentation from a physician before returning to school. Students will not be penalized for excused absences.

The administration will, however, take corrective measures if the age of majority student is using this status to abuse the rules and regulations of the school, including requiring the parent/custodian to sign any needed consent forms. Age of majority status may be revoked if the student abuses this right. The school reserves the right to inform parent/guardian of the use of age of majority by the students for each tardy, dismissal, absence or any other school related activity. The school also reserves the right to contact parent/guardian regarding academic and behavioral issues. Students with age of majority are required to abide by all ACS policies and procedures.

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## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

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### **I. Leadership**

Atlantis Charter School ("ACS") implements a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan that promotes a positive school climate through in-school, out-of-school and community-wide efforts. ACS leadership has a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. ACS leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying and to continually involve representatives from the greater school and local communities in developing and implementing the Atlantis Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

## **II. Priority Statements**

Atlantis Charter School complies with all current anti-bullying legislation (as required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and amended on April 24, 2014). The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has been developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The plan shall apply to students and members of school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extra-curricular activity and paraprofessionals. The consultation shall include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period; provided, however, that a non-public school shall only be required to give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school. The plan shall be updated at least biennially.

Atlantis Charter School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying (including cyber bullying), and to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying and retaliation. The K-12 District Leader, Principals and the Dean of Students are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan.

ACS will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. ACS will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. ACS will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

ACS recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has a or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

ACS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

ACS is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

## **III. Definition of Bullying**

Atlantis Charter School recognizes the following definition of bullying as defined in M.G. L. c.71 § 37O:

**The repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:**

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;**
- (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;**
- (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target;**
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or**
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school**

**For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include "cyber-bullying." Cyber-bullying, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.**

**Cyber-bullying shall also include:**

- (i) **the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or**
- (ii) **the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.**

**Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.**

Please see **APPENDIX A** for a more complete and detailed list of definitions pertaining to bullying and retaliation.

#### **IV. ACS Procedure for Reporting Suspected Bullying Harassment or Retaliation**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing (**Please see APPENDIX B**). When a witness becomes aware of bullying, harassment, or retaliation, he or she is required to report immediately to the Principal or designee the details of the incident witnessed. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, which will be available in the schools' main offices, Dean of Students office, school adjustment counselor offices, and in each Principal's office, the school's main telephone lines and voicemail, and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Team member emails (found on the school's web site).

The requirement to report to the Principal or designee does not limit the authority of a staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

If the Principal is not available, you may contact any member of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Team (BPIT):

#### **Bullying Prevention Intervention Team Members**

K-12 District Leader  
Principals  
Dean of Students  
Student Adjustment Counselor

BPIT members will meet to determine the appropriate action. A full investigation report will be documented through interviews with all students involved including the suspected target and/or aggressor. Not all team members need to be present before a decision is reached.

Confidentiality is an absolute priority. ACS requires that all parties involved in an investigation remember the following important points:

- This information is highly confidential.
- No discussion about the student should take place with anyone else other than the BPIT Members and in a secure location.

Please refer to **APPENDIX B** to view the ACS bullying incident report form and follow up procedure. (The incident report form will be available on the ACS website, in the main offices, and in the student adjustment counselor offices.)

#### **A. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation: Procedure for Atlantis Charter School staff members once a report is made:**

- 1.) Responding to the report

After the Principal has determined a formal investigation will be conducted, they will promptly forward the report to the Dean of Students. Before fully investigating an allegation of bullying or retaliation, the Dean of Students or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include (but are not limited to) creating a personal safety plan (within 24 hours, but typically before the end of the day); pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The Dean of Students or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

## 2.) Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Prior to conducting interviews, the Dean of Students or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target. The aggressor’s parents or guardians are promptly notified after he/she has been interviewed. There may be circumstances in which the Dean of Students or designee contacts the aggressor’s parents or guardians prior to an investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulation 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. Notice to another school or district. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Dean of Students or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the District Leader or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, including 603 CMR 49.00.

## 3.) Investigation

The Dean of Students or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. During the investigation, the Dean of Students or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Dean of Students or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witness(es) that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

If there is clear and sufficient evidence of physical assault, the school will address the student committing the violation in accordance with its practice regarding physical altercations, including, but not limited to, suspending the student once a suspension hearing is held.

Parents/guardians are assured that staff will proceed with a fair and equitable process. In order to accomplish this, students will have an opportunity to have their statements and/or complaints heard by the Dean of Students or designee who has been trained in this process. Students will also be asked to put their statements in writing.

The Dean of Students or designee assigned by the Principal will interview the students involved.

- a. The Dean of Students interviews individuals involved in an effort to document statements, gather information, and report findings to the Bullying Prevention Intervention Team. Students meet individually with the Dean of Students.
- b. The BPIT reviews the documents from the Dean of Students or designee investigating the report.
- c. A determination is then made.

## **B. Determinations**

Upon a determination by the BPIT, the Dean of Students or designee will notify parents or guardians to review the findings and recommendations. Each student’s confidentiality will be of paramount concern. Documentation is maintained in the student’s discipline file and monitored.

The BPIT will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the BPIT will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The BPIT will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.



Depending upon the circumstances, the BPIT may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The Dean of Students or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about any actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents will comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Dean of Students or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

### **1.) Disciplinary Actions**

If the BPIT decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the BPIT, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with this plan and with the ACS code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which will be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline. Please see APPENDIX E

If the BPIT determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

A range of possible disciplinary actions may be taken against an aggressor for bullying or retaliation OR someone who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, including, but not limited to:

- An in-school or out-of-school suspension
- An apology of action
- Community work related to the action
- Research paper related to the action to be presented on the topic to increase awareness
- Detention
- Suspension
- Social contract
- Mediation
- Referral to local law enforcement (to be made by the Principal if deemed necessary)
- Behavior management plan and monitoring

### **2.) Promoting Safety for the Target and Others**

The BPIT will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the BPIT may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Dean of Students or designee will follow up with the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, Dean of Students or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. Dean of Students will also follow up with the aggressor to review any expectations moving forward.

### **3.) Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

ACS expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. It should also be noted that anonymous reports may hinder the school's ability to obtain the information needed to appropriately investigate the concern. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a

staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the Principal or designee.

#### **4.) Notice to Law Enforcement.**

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Principal/Principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal/Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21, the Principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the Principal will, consistent with this plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the Dean of Students, if any, and other individuals the Principal or designee deems appropriate.

#### **5.) Notice to Parents or Guardians**

At the beginning of each school year, ACS will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the K-12 District Leader, Principals, Dean of Students, or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about this plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

#### **6.) Legal Counsel**

If necessary, the K-12 District Leader, Principal, Dean of Students, or designee will consult with legal counsel about an investigation.

#### **7.) Problem Resolution System**

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at [www.doe.mass.edu/pgqa](http://www.doe.mass.edu/pgqa), e-mails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available through the Executive Director's Office.

### **V. Professional Development**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of Atlantis Charter School's professional development will be informed by research and will include the following:

In August, before each school year begins, Atlantis Charter School conducts annual training for all school staff (teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, custodians, administrative staff, school nurses, counselors, athletic coaches, etc.). Each year, this will include training on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan that consists of:

- A review of staff responsibilities;
- A step by step overview of the process that the Principals and the BPIT will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation;
- An overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the district.
- A hardcopy of the full Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

Ongoing district-wide professional development includes but is not limited to:

1. **Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategy.** Positive behavioral intervention strategies; applying constructive disciplinary practices; engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making and communicating with families constructively; which includes responsive classroom and developmental designs to prevent bullying by focusing on fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference; building relationships and managing classroom behaviors.
2. **Ongoing staff needs assessment.** The school will conduct ongoing needs assessments to gauge teacher and support staff professional development needs around preventing and responding to bullying.

## **VI. Access to Resources and Services**

Although Atlantis Charter School is committed to bullying prevention, early intervention and building capacity to utilize the available supports such as those cited above, assertive steps are taken to understand the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors.

Counseling and/or appropriate referral to services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students assists in ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed.

### **A. Identifying Resources**

#### **1. Counseling and other sources**

Student Adjustment Counselors are a critical part of our Bullying Prevention Intervention Team to ensure counseling support can focus on prevention and early intervention, including intensive services for families. When a report of bullying is made, a referral to counseling support services may be initiated from the Principal, Dean of Students, or designee for the student adjustment counselors to carry out.

Resources include appropriate referrals to:

- a. Clinicians, psychologists, therapists, or counselors in the area
- b. Community Service Agencies (CSAs) for Medicaid eligible students provides assistance with medical support; referral to pediatricians' offices or specialists in the area;
- c. In school counseling support (group or individual counseling on social skills to prevent or address bullying for both the target and aggressor);
- d. Family therapy;
- e. Psychological, emotional assessments and/or testing;
- f. Court interventions for truancy or parent support;
- g. Parent Partner Program –teachers work in the home with parents to provide behavioral and academic support;
- h. Peer Mentor Program – offers target and/or aggressor support with a peer mentor who is trained in the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan;
- i. Adult Mentor – offers target and/or aggressor support by providing weekly meetings with adult mentors to work on building strengths and positive relationships;
- j. Behavior Management Plans – development of plans to establish behavioral goals and a system of monitoring;
- k. In School Monitoring support – designs and develops a system of monitoring students through daily/weekly check-ins, support groups, behavior or safety plans.
- l. Anti-Bullying Student Contract;
- m. Other resources: *Bullying At School and Online* presented by education.com;

#### **2. Students with Disabilities**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team

will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

During the IEP Team meeting if a student is identified as being on the Autism spectrum or has reported being a target or aggressor, the team is notified by the student adjustment counselor or other appropriate staff member.

The team may choose to utilize the following resources in addition to those listed above:

- a. Mentor for Community Outreach Program - Students with transition goals can be referred to this program, which provides them with a mentor (teacher) who will work with the student towards their transition goals. Referrals to community-based programs such as hospitals, tutoring experiences, animal shelters etc. engage the students in experiences designed to help them explore meaningful community services and positive self-worth.
- b. Social Skills Groups – Students are included in groups that teach social skills to students with pragmatic social language deficits, difficulty reading social cues or body language, or other social deficits that may cause them to become a target for bullying and harassment.
- c. Safety Plans – the IEP team will develop a safety plan for the student that will include both in and out of school plans to insure the student’s safety beyond the school day.
- d. Individually Focused Curricula – based on the students’ disability the IEP team will insure that any of the Second Step curricula or Responsive Classroom or Development Design is meeting the student’s individual level of needs.

## **B. Curricular and Instructional Resources**

Atlantis Charter School provides age-appropriate instruction on bullying informed by the following programs and initiatives.

- a. Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports (PBIS) - The main focus is to provide a clear system of behavioral supports at ACS. This system includes a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for important school wide academic and behavioral outcomes to maintain a positive and safe environment for ALL ACS community members. Responsive classroom and developmental designs are also implemented to prevent bullying by focusing on fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference; building relationships and managing classroom behaviors.
- b. Mentor Program- The Atlantis Charter School Mentoring program’s major goal is to pinpoint high-risk students and make them feel important by providing a safe harbor. The program is designed to increase the academic performance of marginal learners through affective means. The mentor will use encouragement to assist in building self-esteem and to help the marginal student set attainable short/long term goals. The mentor will monitor the mentee’s progress and provide continued support and motivation. The end result is that the student will see the connection between
- c. The Second Step Program focuses on strategies such as using scripts and role plays to develop skills, empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged—or are engaged themselves—in acts of bullying or retaliation. This program helps students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber bullying, emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies.
- d. ISAFE Program: Sponsored by, The Bristol County Sheriff’s Department provides instruction and information to students on complex issues pertaining to Cyber Bullying and Internet Safety.
- e. CHOICES Program: Sponsored by, The Bristol County Sheriff’s Department presented by: Minimum security Inmates from the Bristol County House of Correction. Inmates share the consequences of their own bad decisions and the difficulties they face in jail, and upon their eventual release. The importance of education is emphasized as a major player in enabling young people to make good, healthy choices.

- f. SLAM Program: Sponsored by The Bristol County Sheriff's Department presented by: Minimum security inmates at the Bristol County House of Corrections. Students learn about inmate living conditions and experience first-hand what it's like being locked up in a jail cell. The tour wraps up with a presentation from inmates to discuss their own life of crime.
- g. Bullying Prevention Program Sponsored by The Bristol County Sheriff's office. All parents and guardians are welcome to attend. This program is offered in the evening at a parent group meeting during the school year. Topics discussed are: internet safety, bullying, and cyber bullying.

The Atlantis Charter School strongly believes in the educational value of Internet resources. Our goal in providing this access is to support administration, enhance instruction and promote student learning. ACS has an Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students, Faculty & Staff users. **Please refer to internet user policy above.**

## **VII. General Teaching Approaches, Academic and non-academic Activities that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts**

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- Using positive behavioral supports;
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- Providing diversity training to all students through multiple instructional resources;
- Using the Internet safely; and
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

## **VIII. Planning and Oversight**

Atlantis Charter School's Bullying Prevention Intervention Team (BPIT) includes, the Dean of Students, Student Adjustment Counselors, Principals, and K-12 District Leader. The BPIT is responsible for:

- Review reports on bullying;
- Collect and analyze building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes;
- Utilize a data sheet to record and track incident reports
- Access information related to targets and aggressors;
- Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law;
- Plan supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors on an ongoing basis;
- Review curricula that the school or district will use;
- Develop new or revise current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy,
- Designate key staff to be in charge of implementation of them;
- Amend student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct;
- Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and 1
- Review and update the Plan each year, or more frequently.

Atlantis Charter School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying (including cyber bullying), and affords all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law, and will continue working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence.

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## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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**Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972**  
**Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**  
**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Any person believing that the Atlantis Charter School or any part of the school's organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (3) Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, may bring forward a complaint, which has been referred to as a grievance, to the Atlantis Charter School Civil Rights Coordinator at the following address:

ACS Civil Rights Coordinator, Section 504, and Title II- Jessica Lee  
Title IX- Gabriela Birmingham & Kristi Oliveira  
Atlantis Charter School  
991 Jefferson St., Fall River, MA 02721

The person who believes s/he has a valid basis for grievance shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the Atlantis Charter School Title IX, Section 504, and Title II Coordinator who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complainant. She/he may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

**Step 1:** A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the Atlantis Charter School Title IX, Section 504, and Title II Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

**Step 2:** If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the local Atlantis Charter School Title IX, Section 504, and Title II Coordinator, she/he may submit a signed statement of appeal to the District Leader at Atlantis Charter School within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The District Leader shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

**Step 3:** If the complainant remains unsatisfied, she/he may appeal through a signed written statement to the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the District Leader's response in step two. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Trustees shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of the Board meeting during which the appeal was deliberated.

**Step 4:** If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactory settled, further appeal may be made to the US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921.

Inquiries concerning the nondiscriminatory policy may be directed to Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20201.

*Atlantis Charter School ("District") does not discriminate against students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age. Additionally, Atlantis Charter School does not discriminate against the individuals on the basis of homelessness in a manner consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act.*

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## PROCEDURE FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN GRIEVANCES

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Atlantis faculty and administration encourages parents or guardians to freely communicate with the school about important matters. You may do so by bringing information, issues, or complaints forward within a reasonable time period so that they can be handled in an efficient and timely manner. Whenever possible, parents/guardians should communicate with the staff person most directly involved or responsible for the situation in question. If an understanding or resolution is not reached, the parent/guardian is encouraged to meet with the Principal of the appropriate grade level. If necessary, the Principal will schedule a meeting with the parties involved and gather information, including conducting interviews, in order to resolve the situation. If the action(s) taken by the Principal does not result in a clear resolution, the parent/guardian may contact the District Leader within five (5) business days of said resolution for further investigation. Should the parent/guardian remain unsatisfied with the school's findings, the parent/guardian may submit a formal complaint in writing within ten (10) business days to the Executive Director and Board of Trustees.

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## LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

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### Code Yellow Lockdown

A Code Yellow Lockdown will be announced when:

- A potential threat inside or outside of the building
- An emergency situation within the school is occurring which requires adherence to Code Yellow procedures

How to implement a Code Yellow Lockdown:

- Security is increased in around the building
- No visitors are allowed access in the building
- Lock all interior doors
- Shades on the windows should be closed
- Students and staff remain in current designated area/ No passing of classes/No bathroom
- Classroom instruction and work continue within current location
- Site Emergency Team (SET) will communicate updates to staff as needed

Outside Procedures during a Code Yellow Lockdown:

- Member of SET will communicate if it is safe to enter the building
- If access to the building is compromised, seek shelter at Spectrum Lighting (primary designated location) or Market Basket (alternate)

### Code Red Lockdown

A Code Red Lockdown will be announced when:

- An immediate threat is inside or outside of the building

How to implement a Code Red Lockdown:

- No access allowed into the building
- Staff will quickly sweep hallway in immediate surrounding area for students
- Staff with rooms/offices across from bathrooms will quickly check and bring all students into classrooms/offices
- Lock all interior doors
- Close shades
- NO ONE is allowed access into or out of classrooms/offices

To the Greatest Extent Possible:

- Stay out of sight away from windows and doors
- Site Emergency Team (SET ) will clear halls, direct students/staff to a secure location, and communicate updates to staff
- Classroom teachers will communicate classroom status via cell phone text to grade level/content team leads; Leads will text team's status to SL's
- Be silent, remain calm, and wait for further direction

Outside Procedures during a Code Red Lockdown:

- Stay OUTSIDE; do not attempt to enter the building
- Seek shelter at Spectrum Lighting (primary designated location) or Market Basket (alternate)
- Communicate location to SL via cell phone text

### Code Green 991 – All Clear

A Code Green 991 – All Clear will be announced when:

- The building is safe and clear of danger
- Do not come out of lockdown status until you hear an announcement stating Code Green 991-All Clear

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## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - SCHOOL ISSUED DEVICES TO STUDENTS

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Please read and review the following Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). When signed, **it becomes a legally binding contract. All students and parents must sign the AUP in order to be assigned a personal Chromebook/Tablet to be used for educational purposes.**

### Introduction

The Atlantis Charter School (ACS) believes in the educational value of students having access to technology. Our goal in providing technology resources is to support instruction and promote student learning.

It is important for students and parents to note that all Chromebooks, Tablets, and associated power cords and accessories that are distributed to students are the exclusive property owned by Atlantis Charter School. Chromebooks/Tablets are not, at any point, to be considered student property.

### User Responsibility

Students are responsible for the care of the loaned device they have been issued by the school. The use of school technology is a privilege and should be treated as such. All students are expected to follow the Acceptable and Unacceptable Use policies identified below. Loss or damage to a device or its accompanied accessories, as a result of failing to abide by all the policies listed below, will result in the student, and his or her family, being financially responsible for the full repair or replacement cost of the device. This includes loss or damage to a device that has occurred while left unattended, unlocked, or while someone else is using your device. Students are not to allow other students to use or borrow their school issued device at any time.

### Acceptable Use Policies

- I am expected to bring the device that has been assigned to me to class fully charged each day with my battery charger.
- I will carry my device carefully at all times throughout the school day.
- I will keep my device with me or in a secure location at all times.
- I will keep the device in its protective case at all times.
- I will take care to remove all objects before closing the device lid.
- I will keep my device away from all food or drinks.
- I will use my device for school related assignments or activities only and during appropriate times in approved locations.
- I will only participate in and encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- I will cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- I will back up important data accordingly so that it is not stored on just my device.
- I will keep all personal passwords confidential and not share with other students.
- I will always engage school technologies in a manner that is safe and respectful for myself and others.
- I will alert a teacher, staff member or administrator immediately if I see inappropriate, threatening, or harmful content. This may include images, messages, posts, etc.
- I will report any problems with my device to the Atlantis Charter School's technology team via e-mail immediately at [techsupport@atlantiscs.org](mailto:techsupport@atlantiscs.org). If this is not possible, due to device damage, I will alert an administrator of damage before the end of the school day.

### Unacceptable Use Policies

- I will not allow others to use my school issued device at any time.
- I will not alter or remove any identification labels on school issued devices.
- I will not add stickers, decals, or any other personalized decorations to my school issued device.



- I will not expose my Chromebook to extreme cold or hot temperatures (do not leave near a heater or in a car overnight for example).
- I will not load, download, or alter any software or hardware on any school issued device.
- I will not use any school technology illegally in ways that violate federal, state, or local laws and statutes or to pursue information on such activities using any school technology.
- I will not attempt to bypass the school's filtering mechanisms.
- I will not damage, or do anything that may damage school technology devices, school networks, or school data.
- I will not attempt to buy, sell, or advertise anything using a school device.
- I will not violate copyright laws by posting or distributing unauthorized copyrighted material.
- I will not plagiarize content I find online.
- I will not share my password with others or ask others to share their passwords.
- I will not use school technology to send or receive spam or chain mail.
- I will not engage in any behavior using school technologies that could be construed as inappropriate, disrespectful, bullying, or harassment.
- I will not use inappropriate, obscene, or derogatory language on any school device.
- I will not attempt to access, send, or display any offensive or inappropriate images or content.
- I will not post personally identifying information about myself or others.
- I will not bring any school technology to an outside computer service for repair or replacement.

I understand that information accessed or stored on the network is NOT private. Network administrators or his/her designee has the right to access information stored in any user directory, hard drive, disk/flash memory, or electronic mail. Network management and monitoring software will be used for access to individual accounts to review educational progress and for security purposes. Students should always remember that the school has the right to access content at any time on any school device or technologies.

### **Returning Chromebooks**

Students will be expected to turn in their school issued device and battery charger at a designated time towards the end of the school year. Failure to turn in a device will result in the student and family being financially charged the full replacement cost of the device. ACS may also file a report of stolen property with the Fall River Police Department for equipment not returned.

### **Transferring/Withdrawing Students**

Students that transfer or withdraw from ACS must turn in all school issued devices and battery chargers prior to leaving. All school transcripts will be withheld for students who fail to turn in all school issued equipment, or who fail to provide full replacement compensation for the device and equipment, prior to leaving.

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## **CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC POLICY**

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### **K-6 Cell Phone Policy**

- Students are not allowed to have cell phones on them during the school day. If a student brings a cell phone to school, it will be collected during homeroom and returned at the end of the day

### **7/8 Cell Phone Policy**

- Students are not allowed to have cell phones on them during the school day. Cell phones are collected in homeroom on a daily basis and will be returned during end of day homeroom

### **HS Cell Phone Policy**

- All cell phones are to be silenced and put away within the classroom setting.
- Cell phones should not be visible within the classroom setting.

- Cell phones must be put away within the student’s pencil case, purse, pocket or locker.
- Headphones/AirPods
  - Students should not have AirPods or headphones in during class time.
  - All headphones and Airpods should be put in student’s pocket, pencil case, purse, lockers etc.
- **Cell Phones/Headphones During Passing Periods and Transition Times:**
  - Students should not have airpods/ headphones in during the passing period.
  - All cell phones should be put away during passing period times.
  - If you see a student using a cell phone during the transition time period please remind the student to put the cell phone away.
  - If you see a student habitually using a cell phone and/or airpods during transition time period and/or if it is causing a student to be late to class, please write a referral in DeansList.
- **Lunch Cell Phone/ Headphone Policy:**
  - Students will be allowed to utilize their personal cell phones/ headphones/ AirPods during lunch periods.
  - Student should not be capturing photos or recording other staff, students or personnel without consent.
  - Students are to remain off cell phones and airpods in transitions to and from lunch periods.
- **Violation of Cell Phone Policy**
  - If a 7th or 8th grader is found in possession of their phone, it will be confiscated by an administrator for the remainder of the day and may result in a consequence, depending on the severity and frequency of the violation.
  - If a high schooler has a phone out when they shouldn’t in class, the teacher will confiscate the phone for the remainder of the period.
    - If the problem is habitual, a referral will be written and/or administration will become involved.
    - If a student is unable to responsibly use their phone, they may be required to turn it in for the entirety of the school day for the rest of the school year.

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## PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

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Students should not bring large sums of money or valuable personal belongings to school. The school is not responsible should money or other personal belongings be stolen from lockers or classrooms, or articles of clothing taken that have been left in any area of the school. No book bags/backpacks or large hand bags are allowed in the classroom. However, small handheld purses, which do not disrupt instruction, are permitted in the classroom setting.

Any student who knowingly violates the ACS Cell Phone/Electronic Device Use Policy will have his/her cell phone or electronic device privileges revoked and his/her cell phone/electronic device confiscated and securely stored by the building administrator. On the first violation of this policy, the return of the device will take place at the end of that school day. On the second or subsequent violations, the parent or guardian will be informed of the violation and must arrange to meet with the building administrator for the device’s return at the end of the school day.

In the event the policy infraction occurs on a Friday, and either ACS or the parent/guardian are unable to schedule a mutually agreed upon meeting prior to the end of that school day, the device will be securely stored by the building administrator until such time that a meeting can be scheduled.

A student’s person, or personal belongings, may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

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## TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER SCHOOL PROPERTY

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ACS takes pride in its academic resources, and buildings and grounds. We possess many textbooks, trade book literature, technical and electronic equipment. We must demonstrate pride and care in their use. Funds are not available to repair or replace equipment damaged by vandalism. Writing on or, in any way, destroying walls, bathrooms, ceilings, woodwork, furniture, windows, textbooks or any other school property will not be tolerated. Consequences for vandalism will follow the discipline policy. Atlantis reserves the right to contact law enforcement for vandalism.

The student's parents/guardians are financially responsible for the full cost of all repairs and/or replacement of damaged or destroyed school property.

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## FAMILY COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

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The Atlantis Family and Community Resource Center (FCRC) provides ongoing support to ACS families and faculty as well as promotes activities/events to build a solid educational foundation for all ACS students. FCRC framework is a road map for progress in achieving the kinds of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children, families and the community. When parent, family, and community engagement activities are systemic and integrated across program foundations and program impact areas, family engagement outcomes are achieved, resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school. Parent and family engagement activities are grounded in positive, ongoing, and goal-oriented relationships with families. Because parent, family, and community engagement practices cross into different service areas, FCRC goals, plans and community activities are systemic, integrated, and comprehensive across the entire Atlantis organization.

The FCRC framework was developed in partnership with programs, families, experts, and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. It is a research-based approach to program change that shows how Atlantis can work together as a whole—across systems and service areas—to promote parent family, and community engagement and children's learning and development.

*FCRC Coordinator: Donalda A. Silva Ext. 1281*

*Families/Events Liaison: Edymariel Cortes Ext. 1283*

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## JUNIOR TRITONS EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

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**Description of Program:** Atlantis Charter School offers after school child care to K-6 students. The Junior Triton program will focus on providing each student a safe, well-structured, educational environment that will help develop and strengthen their academic, physical, and social/emotional well-being through individual and team building activities, interactive social groups, and enrichment programs. The Program will also provide each child with a snack each day.

**Hours:** The Junior Tritons Program will run Monday-Friday from 2:45PM-5:30PM. The program will only run on full school days. Junior Tritons will not run on early dismissal days.

**Cost:** The extended day program will cost \$10 per day, per child. Payment must be made in advance every Friday, the week before the child attends the program, for the exact days the child is signed up to be in attendance. Refunds will not be given for day(s) the child is not in attendance, including days the child is out sick. Payment can be made in cash, money order, or check payable to Atlantis Charter School. Please put Junior Tritons in the memo line. Vouchers are accepted through PACE Childcare Works. It is the responsibility of the parent to submit PACE application forms to the school. They will be completed and returned to the parent. It is the responsibility of the parent to submit the completed PACE application, along with any other necessary personal documentation, to the Department of Early Education and Care.

**Child Pick-Up:** Each child will be picked up from the Lower Site Main Office. All adults authorized for pick up will need to show a photo ID at the time of pick-up. The Junior Tritons Program will use the in-school emergency contact list

as the authorized pick-up list for the extended day program. For the child's safety, absolutely no exceptions will be made. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the emergency contact list up to date. If a parent wishes to add or change the emergency contact list for a child, they should call the Lower Site Main Office at 508-646-6410. All students must be picked up by 5:30 pm.

**Student Behavior:** All students are expected to demonstrate respect and kindness towards Junior Tritons staff and students at all times. Student behavioral concerns will be proactively addressed with the parent/guardian. Repeated student behavior issues may result in a suspension from the Junior Tritons Program or loss of placement in the program.

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## **AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

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1. Students will be reminded regularly that they must leave the premises each day at the official dismissal time unless they have an appointment with a teacher or are engaged in an extra-curricular activity.
2. Advisors and coaches are responsible for those students involved in their specific activity. They are required to supervise their team members at all times. Students have a responsibility to follow all imposed after-school rules. Students will be held responsible for any school property damage that results in failing to abide by school rules including failure to be at designated supervised locations.
3. All afterschool activities and approved rentals will be restricted to the area of the building designated for the activity.
4. In cases of damage, school administration will submit all charges to the offending party in order to recoup cost(s) incurred by Atlantis Charter School to repair said damages.

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## **CAFETERIA-LUNCH PERIOD**

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Each student has a daily lunch period. Students are escorted and monitored by school staff to the cafeteria at their assigned lunch periods. Students are to enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner and are expected to stay in their assigned seats during this time. Students may not leave the cafeteria without permission of the teacher or staff member, and all food/drink must remain in the cafeteria. Students are responsible to discard any waste in the appropriate receptacles upon completion of lunch.

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## **FREE/REDUCED LUNCH**

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According to the policy set forth by the U.S. Government, students whose family income falls between certain established guidelines may qualify for free or reduced-price lunch providing they complete an application. These guidelines change from year to year and will be processed as soon as they are received. In addition, Atlantis Charter School directly certifies students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch for the duration of the school year. The direct certification process is completed a minimum of three times a year.

Payment for meals is expected at the time of purchase. Atlantis Charter School uses an automated system - NutriKids, a technology that allows us to provide individual debit accounts for food purchases. This system also eliminates the overt identification of students who receive free or reduced meal benefits.

Families may pre-fund these debit accounts at any time through cash, check or MySchoolBucks- an online payment system. Over-spent accounts of \$15 or more will be notified on a weekly basis.

We reserve the right to offer an alternative meal - a cheese sandwich, fruit, vegetable and a milk which will be charged at the standard rate to any student who owes \$15 or more until the deficit is cleared.

The outstanding balance can be paid using cash, a check – made payable to Atlantis Charter School or the online payment system available at “MySchoolBucks.com”. A payment plan can be arranged by calling Brenda Reback at 508-646-6410.

Proper behavior in the cafeteria is essential. While lunch is a time for students to relax and socialize, it is primarily a time for students to get the proper nutrition they need to be healthy and to succeed in the classroom. Students may not, under

any circumstances, purchase other students' food using a reduced-price privilege. Students must make sure to clean their lunch area before leaving and maintain good lunchroom behavior. Students who consistently disturb others or refuse to follow the directions of the school staff during lunch will be referred to the administration for possible disciplinary action.

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages others than English.*

*To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

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## FIELD TRIPS

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All school rules apply on field trips. Field trips are to be approved by the Principal. Student participation on field trips is at the discretion of administrators.

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## LOCKERS

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Lockers are provided to the students by Atlantis Charter School, and are the sole property of Atlantis Charter School, and are to be utilized by Students for the purpose of storage, books, school-related equipment and personal belongings. Contraband items (including weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, stolen property, etc.) shall not be stored in school lockers and are subject to confiscation by school officials. Students are expected to keep the lockers locked and in good orderly condition. Lockers are not to be shared by students unless otherwise directed by staff or administration. For security, locker combinations are not divulged to any other student.

It is important to note that unannounced or announced locker inspections or searches may be conducted at any time, for any reason without notice, by a school administrator or his or her designee. Students shall not have any expectation of privacy with regard to school lockers.

Atlantis Charter School reserves the right to contact the Fall River Police Department to coordinate the use of canine units to assist in addressing potential illegal activity.

Students are expected to empty lockers of all personal belongings on the last day of school.

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## LOST AND FOUND

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Any items that are found by students should be brought to the main office. Students seeking lost items should check with the secretary in the main office.

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## MENTOR PROGRAM

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The Mentor Program is an initiative at ACS that involves identifying students who could benefit from additional positive reinforcement and support in school. Once identified, students are then paired with an ACS staff member who will serve as a mentor to them. The goals of the program are to increase academic success, build on a student's ability to make positive choices, and foster a positive sense of self-worth within the student through a supportive and non-threatening mentor/mentee relationship. Mentors will focus on developing a connection and rapport with their mentee through discussions and interactions that focus on a student's interests, hobbies, talents, and goals. In addition, mentors meet with their respective mentees throughout the course of the week, during normal school hours, during times that cause minimal, if any, disruption to the student's academic day.

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## RESTRICTED AREAS OF THE BUILDING

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Students are not allowed in the Faculty Dining Areas or Faculty Rest Rooms. Students are not to enter custodial areas, storage rooms, or food preparation areas without direct staff supervision. Classroom areas are also restricted outside of normal class time. Students are NEVER to enter or ride in the elevator without adult supervision.

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## STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

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We respect the rights of freedom of speech, petition, and assembly as long as they do not interfere with the educational process. School newspapers, yearbooks, literary magazines, and other publications have the right of freedom of the press, subject to the existing laws of libel and obscenity. The K-12 District Leader has the right to view and review, reject any or all articles in any school publication.

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## CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL & EARLY DISMISSALS BY ACS

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School cancellation for severe weather or other emergencies will be announced on the following radio and television stations by 6:30 a.m. whenever possible:

**TV Stations:**

WLNE Channel 6            WJAR Channel 10            WPRI Channel 12            WFXT Channel 25            FOX Channel

**AM Radio:**

1480 WSAR    630 WPRO    920 WHJJ

**FM Radio:**

94.1 WHJY    101.5 WWBB    105.1 WWLI

Notification will also be sent via SchoolMessenger, the school's automated messaging system. In case of school cancellations or early dismissals, parents or guardians will receive notification through SchoolMessenger.

In order for you to receive this service, the school must always have your current telephone numbers: home, work, and cell. In addition, please also provide your main e-mail address.

If you have Internet access, you may wish to register at this website: <http://www.turnto10.com/closings> and you will also receive email alerts as soon as Atlantis cancels school.

**EARLY DISMISSAL:** In the event of an emergency situation, schools may be required to dismiss earlier than the regularly scheduled time. Announcements will be made on the stations listed above, as well as an automated notification through SchoolMessenger.

Please do not telephone the stations or school personnel. If a decision is made to cancel school it will be announced.

## DRESS CODE

	Lower School Grades K-6	Upper School Grades 7-12
Bottoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy and Khaki uniform style pants, shorts, skirts, and jumpers. Bottoms may have elastic waist.</li> <li>Plain, Uniform Style (no cargo, no joggers, no elastic at the bottom of the leg, graphics, stripes, etc)</li> <li>Belt optional</li> <li>Tucked shirts optional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gray, Navy, and Khaki uniform style pants, shorts, and skirts</li> <li>Plain Uniform Style (no cargo, no joggers, no elastic at the bottom of the leg, graphics, stripes, etc)</li> <li>Belt optional</li> <li>Tucked shirts optional</li> </ul>
Tops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White, powder blue, golden yellow short-sleeved and long-sleeved polo shirts</li> <li>Iron on logo provided by school or logo embroidered by local vendors (vendor list provided by ACS)</li> <li>Logo to be on the left-hand side over the heart.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White, powder blue, golden yellow, navy, and gray short-sleeved and long-sleeved polo shirts</li> <li>Iron on logo provided by school or logo embroidered by local vendors (vendor list provided by ACS)</li> <li>Logo to be on the left-hand side over the heart.</li> <li>ACS Spiritwear (ex: class t-shirts, UNITED t-shirts, extracurricular organizations, athletics)</li> </ul>
PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On physical education days only</li> <li>Navy blue shorts and sweatpants</li> <li>White, powder blue, and golden yellow t-shirts with school logo on left hand side over the heart and sweatshirts (optional)</li> <li>Sneakers</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>7th/8th:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On physical education days only</li> <li>Navy blue shorts and sweatpants</li> <li>White, powder blue, golden yellow, navy, and gray t-shirts with school logo on the left-hand side over the heart and sweatshirts (optional)</li> <li>Sneakers</li> </ul> <p><b><u>High School</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students change for PE</li> <li>Sneakers</li> <li>Gym clothing</li> </ul>
Footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoes must be enclosed, fastened/tied properly, and have rubber soles (ex: sneakers, boots, flats)</li> <li>Heels are to be no higher than 1".</li> <li>Shoes with wheels or lights are not permitted</li> <li>Any color socks and tights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoes must be enclosed, fastened/tied properly, and have rubber soles (ex: sneakers, boots, flats, Crocs)</li> <li>Heels are to be no higher than 1".</li> <li>Shoes with wheels or lights and slippers are not permitted</li> <li>Any color socks and tights</li> </ul>
Outerwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, and fleece jackets with ACS logo on the left-hand side over the heart. Solid Navy, no graphics or designs or stripes.</li> <li>Students can wear outerwear of choice if engaging in/transitioning to outdoor activities</li> <li>Hoods cannot be up during the school day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White, powder blue, golden yellow, navy, and gray sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, and fleece jackets with ACS logo on the left-hand side over the heart. Solid color no graphics or designs.</li> <li>Students can wear outerwear of choice if engaging in/transitioning to outdoor activities</li> <li>Hoods cannot be up during the school day</li> <li>ACS athletics outerwear</li> </ul>
Accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No hats, caps, sunglasses in the building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No hats, caps, sunglasses in the building. No bandanas.</li> </ul>
<b>Dress Down Days - Students Can Wear:</b>		<b>Dress Down Days - Students Can't Wear:</b>
Jeans/Sweatpants (no rips, tears, or holes) or uniform pants		Tank tops or crop tops
Skirts and shorts of appropriate length		Clothing with any cut outs
Relaxed tops that include appropriate t-shirts, long sleeve shirts or spirit wear		Clothing with any inappropriate graphics or text
Standard uniform shoes		See-through clothing
		Sweatshirts with hoods/hoodies
		Open-toed shoes, sandals, or slides

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## APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

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*Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.*

**Aggressor** is a student or member of a school who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

**Cyberbullying**, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include:

- (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or
- (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**School Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated





Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Investigation

Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Interviews:

Interviewed aggressor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed target Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed witnesses Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor?  Yes  No

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?  Yes  No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION  Yes  No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

III. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

YES  NO

Bullying  Incident documented as \_\_\_\_\_

Retaliation  Discipline referral only \_\_\_\_\_

2. Contacts:

Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

District Equity Coordinator (DEC) Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Law Enforcement Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Action Taken:

Loss of Privileges  Detention  STEP referral  Suspension

Community Service  Education  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe Safety Planning: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Target: scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ Initial and date when completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ Initial and date when completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Report forwarded to Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(If Principal was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPENDIX C: Forms Bullying May Take

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Actions meant to hurt another person's feelings or to put a person down are called **bullying/harassing** behaviors. Bullying is a form of harassment.

In this section, we will be using the words "bullying/harassment" for behaviors such as:

- saying hurtful things to someone about their appearance, their intelligence, or their abilities;
- posting hurtful comments about someone online;
- hurting someone by hitting, kicking, or pinching them, or in some other physical way;
- Leaving someone out or treating them badly because of who they are.

The same person or group of people is often bullied or harassed over and over again. This can happen on or off school grounds. Bullying/harassment is not an accident. Even though students may sometimes feel pressured by other students to bully or harass someone, they are still acting in a way that is meant to hurt or upset that person. And behavior that is hurtful to others is unacceptable behavior. Different forms and types of bullying/harassment are described on the following pages. The information provided there will help you answer the questions in this section.

### Forms That Bullying/Harassment Might Take:

#### Physical

- pushing, tripping, hitting
- taking or breaking someone's belongings on purpose
- making comments or jokes about someone's body
- touching, pinching, or grabbing part of someone's body in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable

#### Verbal

- calling someone names, teasing, or making fun of them
- insulting, humiliating, or threatening someone
- calling someone names in a way meant to upset them
- calling someone names because of their choice of activities, hobbies, or clothing
- making fun of someone who has parents who are of the same gender

#### Social

- leaving someone out of "the group" or refusing to play with them
- saying bad things about someone
- making someone look silly
- telling others not to talk to someone
- showing pictures or other things that are rude or insulting
- 

### Forms That Bullying/Harassment Might Take:

#### Electronic

- using the Internet or a cell phone to e-mail or send text messages or pictures in order to threaten someone, hurt their feelings, embarrass them or make them look bad, or spread rumors or tell secrets about them

#### Racial

- treating someone badly because of their race, culture, or skin color
- saying bad things about someone's race, culture, or skin color
- telling racist jokes

#### Gender Role-Based

- treating someone badly because they are a boy or a girl
- leaving someone out or treating them hurtfully – for example, telling a girl she cannot play a sport because she is a girl
- making hurtful comments about someone's hobby – for example, calling a boy a "sissy" because he likes a hobby you think only girls should like

**Religion-based**

- treating someone badly because of their religion or place of worship, example: church, mosque or temple
- saying bad things about someone's religion or place of worship, example; church, mosque or temple

**Disability-based**

- treating someone badly because of a disability they have – for example, making jokes about a person who uses a wheelchair (visible disability) or calling a person names because he or she learns in a different way than you do (invisible disability) – or spreading rumors about someone because of a disability you think that person may have
- making someone feel left out because of a disability they have (visible or invisible) or a disability you think they may have

**Income-based**

- treating someone badly because of the type of housing or the neighborhood they live in
- making jokes about someone because they do not appear to have a lot of money (e.g., because they may not have name-brand clothing, or because of where they live)

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**APPENDIX D: Example of Step by Step Reporting and Follow up Supports**

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1. The targeted student and/or witness(es) report bullying or harassment.
2. The Principal reviews initial report;
3. If the report meets the elements of bullying or harassment it will be promptly forwarded to the Dean of Students for a formal investigation;
4. Within 24 hours of receiving the report, the Dean of Students or designee will implement a safety plan. All staff that has contact with the involved students will be informed of the plan;
5. Dean of Students, or designee contacts the targeted students, parents, and/or guardians;
6. A formal investigation into the report is conducted by the Dean of Students or designee;
7. If needed, Student Adjustment Counselor will meet with the targeted student to ensure his/her safety, assess for follow up supports;
8. Interviews are typically completed in the following order:
  - a. Targeted Student
  - b. Witness(es)
  - c. Aggressor(s)
9. Upon completing the initial interview with the aggressor, the aggressor's parents and/or guardians are notified;
10. BPIT meets to review the bullying investigation summary and witness statements;
11. BPIT makes a determination and recommends disciplinary action, mediation and/or community service;
12. Principal assigns an appropriate disciplinary action and/or community service;
13. The Dean of Students or designee contacts the targeted student's and aggressor's parent(s), and/or guardians to inform them of the determination and next steps, which may include but is not limited to:
  - a. A documented monitoring plan in place with specific plan of action (identifies who and what will occur) to insure the bullying or harassment doesn't reoccur
  - b. Give the parent a resource list for supporting positive youth development;
  - c. Counseling referrals
  - d. Provide parent with notification of all steps taken



## APPENDIX E: Bullying of Students with Disabilities Letter

United States Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Aug. 20, 2013

Dear Colleague:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is committed to working with States to ensure that school districts provide all children with positive, safe, and nurturing school environments in which they can learn, develop, and participate. OSERS is issuing this letter to provide an overview of a school district's responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to address bullying of students with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

As discussed in this letter, and consistent with prior Dear Colleague Letters the Department has published, bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit constitutes a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the IDEA that must be remedied.<sup>2</sup> However, even when situations do not rise to a level that constitutes a denial of FAPE, bullying can undermine a student's ability to achieve his or her full academic potential. Attached to this letter are specific strategies that school districts and schools<sup>3</sup> can implement to effectively prevent and respond to bullying, and resources for obtaining additional information.

Bullying of any student by another student, for any reason, cannot be tolerated in our schools.<sup>4</sup> Bullying is no longer dismissed as an ordinary part of growing up, and every effort should be made to structure environments and provide supports to students and staff so that bullying does not occur. Teachers and adults should respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior and send a message that bullying is not acceptable. Intervening immediately to stop bullying on the spot can help ensure a safer school environment.

Bullying is characterized by aggression used within a relationship where the aggressor(s) has more real or perceived power than the target, and the aggression is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can involve overt physical behavior or verbal, emotional, or social behaviors (*e.g.*, excluding someone from social activities, making threats, withdrawing attention, destroying someone's reputation) and can range from blatant aggression to far more subtle and covert behaviors. Cyberbullying, or bullying through electronic technology (*e.g.*, cell phones, computers,

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<sup>1</sup> This letter is intended to supplement the July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter from OSERS and the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which addressed disability harassment under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II of the ADA), and the IDEA (available at: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html>).

<sup>2</sup> Some bullying of students with disabilities may also constitute discriminatory harassment and trigger additional responsibilities under the civil rights laws that OCR enforces, including Section 504, Title II of the ADA, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. See OCR's October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying (available at: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>).

<sup>3</sup> In the context of this letter "school" includes public preschools; elementary, middle, and high schools; and public agencies, including the State Educational Agency (SEA), Educational Service Agencies (ESA), Local Educational Agencies (LEA), nonprofit public charter schools that are not otherwise included as LEAs or ESAs and are not a school of an LEA or ESA, and any other political subdivisions of the State that are responsible for providing education to children with disabilities. See 34 C.F.R. §300.33.

<sup>4</sup> Although the focus of this letter is peer-to-peer bullying, it is important to acknowledge that it is also intolerable for teachers and school staff to be party to school bullying and disability harassment (*i.e.*, being active participants in bullying), or observers to school bullying without taking action to address the behavior. While teacher-student disability harassment also may constitute a denial of FAPE, those issues are beyond the scope of this letter. We recommend that States and school districts consult with legal counsel regarding their responsibilities and duties in cases of bullying that involve school personnel, including taking the matter seriously, and promptly addressing any problematic behaviors.

online/social media), can include offensive text messages or e-mails, rumors or embarrassing photos posted on social networking sites, or fake online profiles.

Addressing and reporting bullying is critical. Students who are targets of bullying behavior are more likely to experience lower academic achievement and aspirations, higher truancy rates, feelings of alienation from school, poor relationships with peers, loneliness, or depression.<sup>5</sup> Bystanders, or those who only see or hear about bullying, also may be negatively affected as bullying tends to have harmful effects on overall school climate. Bullying can foster fear and disrespect and negatively affect the school experience, norms, and relationships of all students, families, and school personnel.<sup>6</sup> The consequences may result in students changing their patterns of school participation or schools eliminating school activities (e.g., dances, sporting events) where bullying has occurred. Teachers, school personnel, parents, and students should report bullying when they become aware of it.

Students with disabilities are disproportionately affected by bullying.<sup>7</sup> For example, students with learning disabilities, attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder, and autism are more likely to be bullied than their peers.<sup>8</sup> Any number of factors -- physical characteristics, processing and social skills, or intolerant environments -- may increase the risk that students with disabilities will be bullied. Due to the characteristics of their disabilities, students with intellectual, communication, processing, or emotional disabilities may not understand the extent to which bullying behaviors are harmful, or may be unable to make the situation known to an adult who can help. In circumstances involving a student who has not previously been identified as a child with a disability under the IDEA, bullying may also trigger a school's child find obligations under the IDEA. 34 C.F.R. §§300.111, 300.201.

Whether or not the bullying is related to the student's disability, any bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit constitutes a denial of FAPE under the IDEA that must be remedied.<sup>9</sup> States and school districts have a responsibility under the IDEA, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, *et seq.*, to ensure that FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE) is made available to eligible students with disabilities. In order for a student to receive FAPE, the student's individualized education program (IEP) must be reasonably calculated to provide meaningful educational benefit.<sup>10</sup>

Schools have an obligation to ensure that a student with a disability who is the target of bullying behavior continues to receive FAPE in accordance with his or her IEP. The school should, as part of its appropriate response to the bullying, convene the IEP Team to determine whether, as a result of the effects of the bullying, the student's needs have changed such that the IEP is no longer designed to provide meaningful educational benefit. If the IEP is no longer designed to provide a meaningful educational benefit to the student, the IEP Team must then determine to what extent additional or different special education or related services are needed to address the student's individual needs; and revise the IEP accordingly. Additionally, parents have the right to request an IEP Team meeting at any time, and public agencies generally must grant a parental request for an IEP Team meeting where a student's needs may have changed as a result of bullying. The IDEA placement team (usually the same as the IEP Team) should exercise caution when considering a change in the placement or the location of services provided to the student with a disability who was the target of the bullying behavior and should keep the student in the original placement unless the student can no longer receive FAPE in

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<sup>5</sup> Gini G., & Pozzoli T. (2009). Association between bullying and psychosomatic problems: A meta-analysis. *Pediatrics*, 123(3):1059-1065.

<sup>6</sup> O'Brennan, L. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Sawyer, A. L. (2009). Examining developmental differences in the social-emotional problems among frequent bullies, victim, and bully/victims. *Psychology in the Schools*, 46(2), 100-115.

<sup>7</sup> Swearer, S. M., Wang, C., Maag, J. M., Siebecker, A., B., & Frerichs, L. J. (2012). Understanding the bullying dynamic among students in special and general education. *Journal of School Psychology*, 50, 503-520.

<sup>8</sup> Twyman, K. A., Saylor, C. F., Saia, D., Macias, M. M., Taylor, L. A., & Spratt, E. (2010). Bullying and ostracism experiences in children with special health care needs. *Journal of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics*, 31, 1-8.

<sup>9</sup> OCR also has authority to investigate complaints alleging denial of FAPE under Section 504 and Title II. See the July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter on Disability Harassment; (available at: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html>); and OCR's October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying (available at: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>).

<sup>10</sup> See *Hendrick Hudson Central Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ. v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 201 (1982).

the current LRE placement. While it may be appropriate to consider whether to change the placement of the child who was the target of the bullying behavior, placement teams should be aware that certain changes to the education program of a student with a disability (e.g., placement in a more restrictive “protected” setting to avoid bullying behavior) may constitute a denial of the IDEA’s requirement that the school provide FAPE in the LRE. Moreover, schools may not attempt to resolve the bullying situation by unilaterally changing the frequency, duration, intensity, placement, or location of the student’s special education and related services. These decisions must be made by the IEP Team and consistent with the IDEA provisions that address parental participation.

If the student who engaged in the bullying behavior is a student with a disability, the IEP Team should review the student’s IEP to determine if additional supports and services are needed to address the inappropriate behavior. In addition, the IEP Team and other school personnel should consider examining the environment in which the bullying occurred to determine if changes to the environment are warranted.

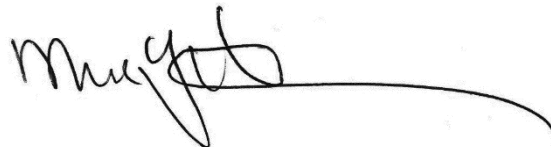
As discussed above, any bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit from the special education and related services provided by the school is a denial of FAPE. A student must feel safe in school in order to fulfill his or her full academic potential. We encourage States and school districts to alert Boards of Education, school administrators, teachers, and staff that bullying can result in a denial of FAPE for students with disabilities. We also encourage States and school districts to reevaluate their policies and practices addressing problematic behaviors, including bullying, in light of the information provided in this letter, as well as in OSERS’ July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter and OCR’s October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter. The enclosure to this letter, “Effective Evidence-based Practices for Preventing and Addressing Bullying,” includes practices for use as part of any bullying prevention and intervention program to help ensure that school and classroom settings are positive, safe, and nurturing environments for all children and adults.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that students with disabilities have access to high-quality services in positive, safe, and respectful school environments.

Sincerely,



Melody Musgrove, Ed. D.  
Director  
Office of Special Education Programs



Michael K. Yudin  
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure:      Effective Evidence-based Practices for  
                         Preventing and Addressing Bullying