Student and Family Handbook
2020-2021 School Year
IDEA Public Charter School
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Washington, DC 20019
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www.ideapcs.org

IDEA policies may be added or amended during the current school year. Any major policy changes will be communicated to students and their families in writing.
Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

Code of Conduct: Expectations for Student Behavior

Each student is an important and valued member of the IDEA Public Charter School community. In order to be a member in good standing, one must embody in word and action the following principles that guide who we are as a community:

- We are prepared to learn and do our best
- We respect ourselves, each other, and our community
- We take responsibility for our actions and learning
- We work together to resolve challenges in thoughtful and meaningful ways
- We celebrate our individual and collective successes

With that in mind, we have created these policies to ensure that the school functions in a manner that supports a superior learning environment and student achievement. The IDEA Code of Conduct is provided so that students and families understand our expectations and the consequences for failing to meet these expectations, both virtually and in person. Conduct must be consistent throughout the school day, during after school programs, at any school-sanctioned event on- or off-campus, and virtually. Students should also be aware that all Code of Conduct rules apply when they are travelling to and from school, when they are leaving the building, while they are on the school grounds, when a IDEA Scholar is in a capacity representing the school on or off campus and continue to apply until they have arrived at their home or other destination. Students who violate the Code of Conduct on their way to school or on their way home from school may receive disciplinary consequences based on circumstances around the infraction. Students and families are expected to review IDEA’s Letter of Acknowledgement of Receipt & Understanding Form within the first two weeks of school (copies will also be available in the main office and electronically).

At IDEA all staff, students, and community members will work to create an atmosphere of decency, trust, and respect in our school/virtual community. These behavioral expectations stem from our five guiding principles and the following violation levels give examples but not a complete list, of some of the possible violations and disciplinary action to the school’s expectations.
LEVELS OF CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS

LEVEL 1

Level 1 behaviors are defined as those behaviors that distract or disrupt staff members from teaching, supervising, or otherwise adequately performing their job. Level 1 violations may also be behaviors that distract or disrupt other students from learning and performing to the best of their abilities. Teachers are encouraged to implement a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies to address any behavior that does not facilitate a desirable learning environment. Many of the behaviors are often minor and are usually resolved quickly with an intervention administered by the classroom teacher or staff member who is supervising or witness to the student behavior at that time. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 1 violations include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to comply when being redirected the first time (includes health and safety measures as a result of COVID-19)
- Refusing to make timely transitions during the ringing of the bell or traveling from point A to point B during any part of the day
- Possession of or consuming food items outside of the cafeteria unless prior permission has been granted
- Leaving the building or class to pay for food delivery or pick up fast food that has been delivered (UBER eats, Grubhub, Door dash, parent or guardian delivery)
- Uniform violations
- Intentional off-task, disruptive behavior or excessive noise in the classroom/virtual class, hall or building that distracts from the learning environment
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices at any point during the school day or school sponsored event
- Use of profanity and failure to self correct or be redirected

If a student is found to have committed a Level 1 violation of IDEA’s Code of Conduct, the following corrective measures may be taken:

- Staff redirection
- Written or oral reflection in the moment
- Behavioral intervention strategies-verbal or written
- Conference (staff member and student)
- Before, during or after school detention
- Parent/legal guardian notification
- Confiscation of non-instructional item(s)
- Temporary removal from activity (with reviews for later reentry possibility)
- School/community work tasks
LEVEL 2

Level 2 behaviors are defined as those behaviors that create or contribute to a physically or emotionally unsafe learning environment for staff or students. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, and for student(s) to immediately stop and reflect on how their behaviors are impacting others. Many of these responses engage the student’s support system and are designed to alter conditions that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. These responses aim to correct behavior by stressing its severity and acknowledging potential implications for future harm, while keeping the student in school. These responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior so that students are respectful and can learn and contribute to a safe environment. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion. A teacher referral placed in Dean's List requesting follow up for administrative support is required for any serious incident or other incident that may impact or implicate the health or well-being of students. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 2 violations include, but are not limited to:

- Destruction of school or personal property valued at more than $50 but less than $500
- Using profanity or offensive words or gestures towards others (non-sexual or threatening) via any communication platform
- Disrespectful words, actions, or gestures towards other students
- Taunting, mocking, “teasing,” “just playing with,” “joking,” “dissing,” or making fun of others (in person or virtual)
- Roughhousing or play fighting, slap boxing, sparring
- Horseplay or running in the classroom, hall, or building
- Truancy/skipping class, being out of area
- Forgery (including hall passes) or lying or giving misleading information to staff
- Insubordination, or repeated refusal to follow instructions given by staff or arguing with a staff member
- Cheating or copying another student’s work on any assignment
- Inappropriate use of instructional technology (laptops, digital cameras, etc.) including use without permission or accessing inappropriate content
- Refusal to surrender electronic device to staff
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

If a student is found to have committed a Level 2 violation of the IDEA’s Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 1 disciplinary actions:

- Mediation
- Counseling/intervention
- Parent/guardian conference with staff or administrator
- Restorative Justice approach/Circle
- Removal from extracurricular school activities (during and after school)
- Loss of privileges for an extended period of time or criteria period
- In-school suspension (from a class period up to three days)
- Disciplinary probation
Level 3 Violations

Level 3 behaviors are defined as those behaviors that are dangerous, unsafe, and illegal in a school environment. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, student(s) to immediately stop the behaviors, the building administrator to conduct an investigation to determine whether the student(s) acted in a way that was dangerous or illegal, and to determine the appropriate disciplinary action. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 3 violations include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening words or offensive gestures (verbally, electronically, or written)
- Communicating slurs based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, income, or sexual orientation
- Engaging in behavior that demonstrates gang/neighborhood crew affiliation (displaying clothing or gestures associated with gangs)
- Possessing or distributing material or literature that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, obscene, or damaging to students or staff. This includes posting material on the Internet or sending material electronically
- Tampering with, pulling fire alarm, or using extinguishers in non-emergency situations
- Damaging or defacing school or private property valued at more than $500
- Stealing or attempting to steal school or private property, or knowingly receiving stolen or private property
- Leaving the school premises or school-sanctioned activity without permission; trespassing on school grounds after-hours, or during a suspension
- Instigating or encouraging (verbally or nonverbally) the aggressive or threatening behavior or actions of others
- Refusing to properly follow the security protocols (wanding, bag checks, etc.)
- Criminal act or any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other class that causes disruption to the academic environment, disruption to the school operation, destroys school property, or causes significant harm to self or others

If a student is found to have committed a Level 3 violation of the IDEA’s Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 2 disciplinary actions:

- Removal from extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year
- Restricted privileges for the remainder of the school year including virtual non academic activities
- Restrictions on in-person learning and banning for in-school activities (1-10 school days) and parent/legal guardian conference
- **Online access to learning will be provided.**
- Disciplinary probation
- Recommendation for disciplinary review session/hearing
Level 4 Violations

Level 4 behaviors are defined as those behaviors that are dangerous and pose a serious threat to the safety of staff and students. These behaviors require staff to immediately intervene, the building administrator to conduct an investigation to determine whether the student(s) acted in a way that was dangerous or illegal (which may include involving the police) and for a parent/legal guardian to immediately come to the school to meet with administration and pick up the child. These lists include in person and virtual environments.

Level 4 violations may include, but are not limited to the following behaviors:

- Repeated/multiple Level 3 behaviors
- Threatening actions or behavior (verbal and non-verbal), bullying or harassment of students or staff (physical, verbal, or electronically), hazing, extortion
- Fighting or showing physical aggression towards students or staff
- Assaulting, threatening, or attempting to cause physical harm to a staff member or school personnel, including making terrorist threats
- Possession, sale, distribution or use of drugs, alcohol, chemical or organic solvent used to induce euphoria or hallucinations, or other prohibited items, including over-the-counter or prescription medication
- Committing or attempting to commit sexual assault or battery
- Any behavior or other conduct not specifically enumerated in any other class that causes disruption to the academic environment, disruption to the school operation, destroys school property, or causes significant harm to self or others
- Possession or use of mace, pepper spray or any item that can be used as a concealed weapon
- Rioting, group disobedience or disturbance, fighting
- Planning a fight or assault (premeditated participation of self or others)

If a student is found to have committed a Level 4 violation of the IDEA’s Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary actions may be taken, in addition to all Level 3 disciplinary actions:

- Parent notification
- Administrative investigation
- Continued education virtually for designated period
- Wrap around supports continued if applicable
- Pre-expulsion behavior contract with improvement plan
- Expulsion/recommendation for dismissal
- Police notification
- Restrictions on in-person learning and banning for in-school activities (including long-term span of 6-10 days) **online access to learning will be provided.**
- Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities
- Restitution
- School-based or outside facilitated conflict resolution
- Recommend for further action
- Referral to alternative education
- Referral to Student Support Seam
- Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services
- Referral to health/mental health services
- Expulsion

**See consequence grid on IDEA’s website** [www.ideapcs.org](http://www.ideapcs.org)

### Consequences and Procedures

#### Academic and Discipline Meetings

A parent or guardian may be required to attend and participate in open houses, conferences, or meetings related to a student’s academic or disciplinary performance to determine the necessary next steps and/or consequences. These meetings may include the following participants: Administrator, Dean, Director of Student Service Support (designating representative) Director of Students with Disabilities and an academic representative.

#### Reflection (Teacher and Administration Issued)

Reflections are during lunch, after school or in the moment for a period of between 30 minutes to one hour depending on the length of time assigned by the teacher or the administrator. On the spot reflections will happen in the moment. A follow up will be done as a touch point for both the scholar and person implementing the reflection. Students must immediately report to the designated room within five minutes of the start time.

During virtual learning, reflections will be completed at the direction of the Teacher or Administrator involved.

Failure to serve a reflection (including being tardy), or does not follow the rules of reflection the first time will face further restorative action, which can include, but is not limited to, being reassigned to serve that reflection, serving an extended reflection, a mandatory parent/school discipline meeting, loss of privileges, reflection assignment or other forms of reprimand.

#### Out-of-School Restrictions (Tier 3 & 4 Violations)

Out-of-school restrictions involve separation from the school and all school activities for a specified period of time, which is determined by an administrator. The primary intent is to impress upon the student and parent or guardian that a serious behavior problem exists and that steps must be taken to ensure that the behavior is not repeated. A student who has earned out of school restriction will be required to complete a reflective assignment during their time away from the traditional classroom setting. Continued access to virtual learning will be supplied prior to a student re-entering classes in person evidence of completion must be presented at the student/family re-entry meeting. A student and parent or guardian will be strongly encouraged to attend and participate in a re-entry meeting prior to the student being allowed to resume their

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normal class schedule, in person. If the parent refuses/unable we will work to make arrangements for parental participation, the re-entry meeting may still be held with the student.

If a student is suspended, the following steps will be taken:

**Short-Term Restrictions (1-5 days)**

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, input from SST and SWD staff and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Principal McCrae for final recommendation for disciplinary action. If suspension is considered, Dean Briscoe and/or appointed staff member, Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story before a recommendation for suspension is made.

If the decision is made that results in a short term suspension, the student’s parent will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered and the reason for the suspension. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible.

In the event that a student is participating via virtual learning, a plan to continue education in-person will be outlined and adhered to until completion of the restorative action is completed.

When a student is serving an out of school restriction, he or she may not be on school grounds before school, during the school day, or after school, or attend any IDEA-sponsored event. Students who violate this policy will be considered trespassing and may face additional consequences.

**Long-Term Restrictions (6 to 10 days)**

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Principal McCrae and make a recommendation for restorative action. If suspension is considered, Dean Briscoe, the Director of Student Support Services /or Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story before a recommendation for suspension is made.

A student may be suspended for up to three days pending an investigation into the incident if the investigation cannot be completed on the same day as the incident. If a student’s presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the school environment, they may be immediately removed from school without a conference with Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae but will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the
story before the recommendation for long term suspension is made.

If Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae recommend a long term restriction, a disciplinary hearing will be held within five school days of the recommendation for suspension. The student’s parents will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered and the reason for the suspension. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible. The student will serve the first five days of the restriction pending the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, an impartial hearing officer will determine whether the student should serve the rest of their suspension. The student will continue to have access to virtual learning throughout this period of time.

Prior to the hearing, the student will be provided with all of the information that the school plans to present at the hearing. At the hearing, the student will be given an opportunity to respond to that information and to share any additional information they want the hearing officer to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney at the hearing. The hearing officer will issue a written decision within 24-48 hours of the hearing.

**Parent or guardian Shadowing**

As an intervention, the administration may invite a student’s parent or guardian to shadow his or her student during the school day to observe behaviors that the student displays throughout the course of the day, in person only. All parents/legal guardians must attend a visitor’s orientation prior to the observation. This visit has to be scheduled and approved by the teacher and IDEA staff.

**Reflection Assignment (Restorative Justice Intervention)**

Any student who earns a (RJI) detention, in-school reflection, or out-of-school restriction is expected to complete a reflection assignment. These assignments are written assignments that are designed to challenge students to continually reflect on their choices, particularly when they violate the school Code of Conduct. The assignment or reflective task or action will vary in length and theme, depending on the situation and is left to the discretion of the teacher or administrator.

Reflection assignments are mandatory and failure to complete them in the timeframe given may result in further corrective actions being taken.

**Restitution**

A method of holding students accountable for their behavior or inappropriate action. The school may require that a student makes a monetary or non-monetary repayment such as community service to the school or victim for the reasonable value of the property lost, damaged, broken, or destroyed as the result of student negligence or vandalism.
Parent or guardian Participation and Guiding Principles Conference

It is highly suggested that the parent or guardian of a student participate in an action taken by IDEA in connection with a student’s disruptive or inappropriate behavior, academic concerns or attendance concerns. If a student is disciplined and/or restricted for the remainder of a school day, one of the student’s parents/legal guardians must pick up their child at school in a timely manner as requested by the school, or grant the school permission to send the child home by telephone confirmation. Repeated non-compliance of a parent or guardian with this policy may be considered “educational neglect,” and the school may be required to contact Child and Family Services and/or local authorities.

Disciplinary Probation

A student who has committed repeated violations of the Code of Conduct and/or a major violation of the Code of Conduct may be placed on disciplinary probation. Prior to the imposition of disciplinary probation, IDEA Public Charter School will provide the student and his or her parents/legal guardians with an opportunity for an informal conference as in the case of suspension, above. If placed on disciplinary probation, the student and his or her parent or guardian will be notified in writing that the student has violated school policy and that future violations will incur more stringent disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from IDEA Public Charter School.

If, while on disciplinary probation, a student violates another major school policy, he or she may face additional consequences. Each violation is treated on a case-by-case basis.

A Dean will make reasonable attempts (phone calls or written communications or email or any other form of contact) to contact a parent or guardian regarding a student’s disciplinary probation status. These attempts will be entered into one of our data collection platforms (PowerShool, Dean’s List). If a parent or guardian fails to communicate and/or refuses to sign a contract, the contract shall be enacted. A final copy of the contract will be provided to the parent or guardian.

Steps in Disciplinary Probation:

1. After a student is placed on disciplinary probation, she will be required to attend a conference with the dean and/or another member of the administrative team and his or her parent or guardian.
2. During this conference a disciplinary probation contract will be signed stating behavioral goals, interventions, and supports IDEA will provide, and/or a timeline for meeting behavioral goals (e.g. no restrictions and fewer than three detentions).
3. If a student meets the stated expectations of the disciplinary probation, he or she will be reviewed by their dean and/or administration at which point he or she may be removed from disciplinary probation.
4. If a student fails to meet the stated goals of the disciplinary probation contract, the student would be subject to further disciplinary action, which may include a final probation contract or expulsion from IDEA Public Charter School.

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5. If the student violates disciplinary probation, he or she may be placed on a final probation contract, if the violation does not warrant expulsion. This contract is a serious document that makes clear that repeated minor or major violations of the Code of Conduct could result in a series of restrictions from IDEA Public Charter School.

6. If a student meets the stated expectations of the final probation contract, he or she will be reviewed by his or her dean and/or administration at which point he or she will be placed on disciplinary probation.

7. If a student fails to meet the stated goals of the final probation contract, a disciplinary hearing will be scheduled and the administration will review the student’s behavior to date and make necessary recommendations that could result in expulsion/dismissal from IDEA Public Charter School.

Expulsion

Students may be expelled for:

- Any Level 4 violation(s) and repeated Level 3 violation(s).
- Extreme violations of the Code of Conduct that significantly and demonstrably harm the educational environment of IDEA Public Charter School or harm the safety or security of IDEA students, staff, faculty, or others associated with IDEA.
- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct after appropriate remediation has been attempted.
- Violation of disciplinary probation or a final probation contract.

Due Process for Expulsion

When an incident occurs in violation of the code of conduct, a Dean will be assigned to investigate what happened. The Dean will collect all the available information which may include review of security camera footage or other available video evidence, interviews with students and staff, and review of other relevant information. The Dean will share the information with Dean Briscoe who will confer with Principal McCrae and make a recommendation for disciplinary action. If expulsion is considered, Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae will meet with the student to discuss the information that has been collected and give the student an opportunity to tell their side of the story virtually before a recommendation is made.

A student may be suspended for up to three days pending an investigation into the incident if the investigation cannot be completed on the same day as the incident. If a student’s presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the school environment, they may be immediately removed from school without a conference with Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae but will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story virtually before the recommendation for expulsion is made.

If Dean Briscoe and/or Principal McCrae recommend expulsion, an expulsion hearing will be held within ten school days of the recommendation. The student’s parents will be notified in writing and will be provided with an Incident Report that summarizes the information gathered.
and the reason for the suspension by mail/email. The parent will be contacted by an administrator or another representative of the school and will be asked to pick up the student as soon as possible. The student will be restricted pending the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, an impartial hearing officer will determine whether the student should be expelled.

Prior to the hearing, the student will be provided with all of the information that the school plans to present at the hearing. At the hearing, the student will be given an opportunity to respond to that information and to share any additional information they want the hearing officer to consider. The student may be represented by an attorney at the hearing. The hearing officer will issue a written decision within 24 hours of the hearing.

If a parent or guardian and/or scholar does not attend the expulsion hearing in person or virtually, a hearing will be held without them and they waive their right to appeal.

**Appeal of Expulsion Decision**

Students may appeal the independent hearing officer’s decision to expel by submitting a written appeal to IDEA’s Executive Director, Justin Rydstrom, within three (3) school days of the either in person days, virtual days or hybrid days issuance of the expulsion decision. The Executive Director will determine whether to hold another hearing or whether a decision can be made without a hearing. A decision will be made in writing within ten (10) school days of Mr. Rydstrom’s receipt of the appeal.

**Re-enrollment for Expelled or Withdrawn Students**

Students who are expelled are not permitted to re-enroll at IDEA regardless of whether they receive a lottery match or offer. Students who withdraw prior to expulsion due to disciplinary reasons will be treated as expelled for purposes of re-enrollment and will also not be eligible to reenroll at IDEA. Any other students that withdraw from IDEA prior to graduation will be considered for re-enrollment on a case-by-case basis by the Principal and/or Executive Director based on a written request from the parent, guardian, or student (if over 18 y.o.) and may be required to submit a lottery application.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Student Name: _____________________________________________

Grade Level: _____

I, as the parent or guardian of ___________________________, have received a copy of or have been given access to the IDEA PCS Student Handbook & Code of Conduct (the “Handbook”) for the 2020-2021 school year. I have read, understand, and agree that my child shall abide by the Handbook. I understand that my child will be held accountable for their behavior, and also required to comply with the expected standards of conduct set out in this Handbook and will be subject to restorative strategies if they fail to do so. I understand that the Handbook governs my child’s behavior while on school property and at school-sponsored or school-related activities whether on or off campus, including virtual learning or virtual school sponsored activities; and that my child may also be subject to restorative actions for certain conduct which occurs outside of school regardless of time or location, including any school-related misconduct. I understand that the school may contact outside community service partners for further investigation or support with any safety concerns or violations of law. I also understand that parental involvement and cooperation is vital in this process. By signing below, I acknowledge my understanding and commitment to ensure that my child understands and complies with the Handbook.

_________________________________       ___________________________________
Parent/Guardian Printed Name                             Student Printed Name

_________________________________        ___________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature /Date                           Student Signature/Date
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