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300 STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

These policies provide direction and information for members of Piedmont Community Charter School (PCCS). A healthy and effective school depends on established policies and procedures. More importantly, it requires members of the community to understand and implement the policies and procedures for everyone's success and well-being. All such policies are designed to support the school's mission.

The Mission of Piedmont Community Charter School, Inc. is:

Piedmont Community Charter School is a tuition free K-12 school that offers a superior college preparatory educational option for this community
and its families.

With everyone's cooperation, PCCS will be a thriving community where students succeed in a safe, supportive, and stimulating educational environment.

300.1 Parent-Student Commitment and Expectations

The school cannot succeed in its mission without commitment and effort from the parents/legal guardians who enroll their children. A strong partnership between parents and the school is essential.

Parents and families support the school's mission and fulfill their primary role as teachers of their children when they respect and support school efforts and staff, promote the desire for and pursuit of learning, and model ethical and relational integrity.

Respect for and support of the school's mission includes the following commitments on the part of every parent:

- to monitor and support school policies and procedures;
- to insure prompt arrival to school and promote their student's full attendance to the maximum extent feasible;
- to nourish their students' physical, and emotional health to promote learning;
- to help their students to complete assignments and other academic demands and to communicate with staff as necessary to address particular needs;
- to be willing to volunteer and financially support the school's work as feasible;
- to cooperate with school staff in providing needed information or other support when reasonably requested; and
- to participate responsibly in classroom and school meetings and functions.

300.2 School Calendar

Every year the school will publish a school calendar. The school calendar shall include the school year's beginning and ending dates, staff workday dates and holidays.The calendar shall include at least the minimum number of make-up days required by law.

300.3 Legal Compliance, School Charter, and Changes in Policy

The school, by law, is a North Carolina public school, operated by a private, tax-exempt non-profit corporation. As a charter school, it is exempt from most state education laws that apply to traditional public schools. The school shall comply with all remaining state laws and applicable federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, such laws and regulations governing employment, the environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The school shall also comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, whether federal, state, or local, which apply to traditional public school systems. The school shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations and shall not charge tuition or fees, except that it may charge fees that the local school district charges.

The school's state approved charter is like a contract. Therefore, the school shall also operate consistent with all provisions in its charter.

301 ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND PLACEMENT

301.1 Admission

As required by state law (G.S. 115C-218.459(a)), any child who qualifies for admission to a North Carolina public school, qualifies for admission to the school. Admission will not be determined according to the school attendance area in which a student resides.

The school shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the school as set out in the charter, the school shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

301.2 Admission Priority

By law (G.S. 115C-218.45(f)), the school may give enrollment priority to the following individuals:

(1) Siblings of currently enrolled students who were admitted to Piedmont Community Charter School in a previous year. For the purposes of this section, the term "siblings" includes any of the following who reside in the same household: half siblings, step siblings, and children residing in a family foster home;

(2) Siblings of students who have completed the highest grade level offered by that school and who were enrolled in at least four grade levels offered by the charter school or, if less than four grades are offered, in the maximum number of grades offered by the charter school;

(3) Limited to no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the school's total enrollment, unless granted a waiver by the State Board of Education, the following:

a. Children and grandchildren of the school's full-time employees;

b. Children of the charter school's board of directors;

(4) A student who was enrolled in the charter school within the two previous school years but left the school (i) to participate in an academic study abroad program or a competitive admission residential program or (ii) because of the vocational opportunities of the student's parents;

(5) A student who was enrolled in another charter school in the State in the previous school year that does not offer the student's next grade level;

(6) A student who was enrolled in another charter school in the State in the previous school year that does not offer the student's next grade level and both of the charter schools have an enrollment articulation agreement to accept students or are governed by the same board of directors.

301.3 Open Enrollment

PCCS will hold an annual open enrollment period. At the enrollment period's conclusion if the number of a particular grade's applicants does not exceed the number of available spaces for that grade level, all eligible students who have properly applied by the deadline will be accepted. At the enrollment period's closing, if the number of a particular grade's applicants exceeds available spaces for that grade level, a lottery system will determine admission eligibility.

Students who are not offered enrollment will be placed on a waitlist. After all grade level spaces are filled, the lottery will continue until all applying students have been assigned a priority number on the waitlist. The wait list will not carry into the next school year, but will remain and be used for admission should a space become available from the time of the lottery through the first 20 days of the school year for which it was conducted.

In the event a space becomes available during the first 20 days of school, the parent of a student who is first on the waitlist for that grade shall be notified and offered enrollment. The student's parent will have no more than 24 hours to accept admission by notifying the Registrar of the decision to accept the enrollment offer. If the position is declined or 24 hours have expired, the next person on the waitlist shall be contacted. This process will continue until the space is filled or the wait list is exhausted.

After admission and during the school year, serious and/or repeated deviations from the policies and procedures defined by the school will result in an evaluation of the student's placement in the school, as allowed by law.

301.4 Placement

The school reserves the right to place students in grade levels determined by competency tests, regardless of the grade level a student was in at a previous school. For example, if a student applying to enter the fourth grade tests more than one year below the fourth grade competency level, the school may offer admission to the lower and more appropriate grade. For entrance into Kindergarten, the student must be five years old on or before August 31 of a given school year.

301.5 Withdrawal

Parents choosing to withdraw a student from the school should contact the Registrar's Office and follow the procedures established by the school.

302 TRANSPORTATION AND ATTENDANCE

302.1 Transportation and Arrival

By state law, the school may, if it chooses, provide transportation for its students. Regardless, the school shall develop and maintain a transportation plan so that transportation is not a barrier to any student who resides in the local school administrative unit where the school is located.

Students are required to arrive at the school on time unless they have a legitimate excuse for being tardy or absent. Students and parents should allow adequate time for travel to the school, possible traffic problems or weather conditions, transition time, and other factors that may affect promptness.

302.2 Tardiness and Early Check-outs.

Tardiness. Students who are not in their classrooms at the time the school bell rings are considered tardy. Students who arrive late must obtain a tardy slip from the office. For an excused tardy, students are required to produce a note from their parent or a doctor indicating the reason for late arrival, or their parent must accompany the student to the school office. After receiving their tardy slip,

students shall proceed immediately to class, delivering the slip to the homeroom or other appropriate classroom teacher.

Early Checkouts. Students are discouraged from checking out of school to minimize disruptions to their educational progress and school operations. Early checkouts are permitted only for reasons that correspond to the list of excused absences by law. If a student must check out early, a parent must come to the office to initiate the check-out and provide a written excused reason for the check-out.

302.3 Attendance

Failure to attend school undermines a student's education and the school's academic success. As such, absences may subject a student to reports made to social services or juvenile justice officials investigating the student's parents, based on mandatory attendance and child neglect statutes.

Excused reasons for tardiness or absences may include the following:

- Illness or injury;
- Medical, dental, or other appointment with a health care provider;
- Necessary religious observances;
- Involvement in a traffic or other accident; and
- Participation in a valid and important educational opportunity that enhances the school's curricular objectives, but only with the School Director's prior written approval; (*A request form must be filled out and submitted 10 days prior to the travel date. A maximum of 5 days may be excused)*

302.4 Compulsory Attendance

The school directors shall oversee adherence to attendance rules and regulations and notify parents of their responsibility when repeated violations occur. Teachers will monitor and report student absences daily and follow all rules and regulations concerning attendance. To be counted present, a student must be in attendance at least one-half of the school day. This includes attending required School activities at any place other than the school.

302.5 Absences

To be excused for an absence a student shall submit, within three school days of the absence, when reasonably feasible, a note signed by the parent explaining the absence's reason(s). The note must be submitted to the school office and directed to the Elementary, Middle School, or High School Director (or designee). Failure to comply with these procedures may result in the absence being unexcused.

The following procedures shall apply in notifying parents after the respective number of unexcused absences:

1. Three Days: notify parents of the concerns;

2. Six Days: notify parents of a potential violation of compulsory attendance requirements and of the duty to report them to government officials if the absences cannot be reasonably explained or if they continue.
3. Ten Days: notify the parents by electronic communication pursuant to #2 above, plus require a conference with the parents to discuss the reasons for the absences, the corrective efforts being made, and reporting to legal authorities.

302.6 Academic Absence Policy

302.6.1 Academic Absence Policy for Grades K – 8

Attendance:

Only twenty (20) absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year, without academic penalty.

The attendance committee regarding promotion/retention will review students who exceed 20 absences.

Excuse Notes

Parents will have three (3) days to send in a note to have an absence excused. An email may be substituted for a handwritten note.

Parents may write an excuse note for illness up to 10 times during a single school year. After 10, a doctor's note is required or absences will remain unexcused.

Make-Up Work

Students will be given an opportunity to make up work or tests missed for those periods where an absence occurred. Upon the student's return to school, arrangements for make-up work shall be made within three (3) school days. Arrangements for make-up work are the responsibility of the student.

Reporting Absences

Daily absences – both excused and unexcused – will be reported to the parent by way of the NCSIS through the parent portal notification .

The School Director or his/her designee shall notify the parent/guardian by mail or electronic communication when cumulative unexcused absences reach 3, 6, and 10 days.

302.6.2 Academic Absence Policy for Grades 9 – 12

Attendance

Only ten (10) absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted in each semester class. Students who exceed ten (10) absences may lose credit for the affected course p. Keeping up with attendance and making up time is the student's responsibility.

Excuse Notes

Parents will have three (3) days to send in a note to have an absence excused. A phone call or email may be substituted for a hand written note.

Parents may write an excuse note for illness up to 10 times during a single school year. After 10, a doctor's note is required or absences will remain unexcused.

Make-Up Work

Students will be given an opportunity to make up work or tests missed for those periods where an absence occurred. Upon the student's return to school, arrangements for make-up

work shall be made within three (3) school days. Arrangements for make-up work are the responsibility of the student.

Reporting Absences

Daily Absences – both excused and unexcused – will be reported to the parent by the way of a computer generated message.
Class/course Absences will be recorded by each teacher in NCSIS and may be viewed through the Power School Parent Portal.

The School Director or their designee shall notify the parent/guardian by mail or electronic communication when cumulative absences reach 3, 6, and 10 days.

303 ACADEMICS AND INSTRUCTION

The school's academic program is designed to foster an excellent learning environment that meets and exceeds student performance standards that the State Board of Education adopts and those contained in its charter. By law, the school shall conduct, at a minimum, student assessments required by the State Board of Education.

303.1 Academic Expression

Controversial issues arising from classroom situations and subject matter may be discussed and explored in classrooms if handled with appropriate discretion and respect and without discriminating based on viewpoints. Students' age, intelligence, and experience are important considerations regarding the appropriateness of materials, ideas, and information presented. Teachers will take into account their students' relative maturity and the need for guidance in studying and discussing such issues.

Teachers are not permitted to advocate their own, or any other, particular viewpoint. Teachers will be careful to not inhibit or undermine students' dignity, personality, or intellectual expression.

Statements made or materials used in the classroom must serve a valid educational purpose, and be consistent with the School's curriculum and curricular goals.

303.2 Curriculum

303.2.1 Instructional Material Selection

The school strives to select the most educationally suitable instructional materials for each grade level based on various factors including academic content, cost, student maturity level and relation of the materials to the School's overall mission and grade-level objectives. The school's administration exercises its discretion, subject to Board supervision, in curricular decisions about grade-level goals, content, and delivery.

303.2.2 Parents Requesting to Review Curriculum Selection

If a parent objects to the use of specific instructional materials, the parent may file a written request with the School Director briefly stating the nature of the objection(s) and/or requesting that the material not be made available to the parent's child. The school may establish a Review Committee to address all such requests. The following steps apply to a parent request for review:

1. The parent must file all objections in writing. The Review Committee will review the challenged material. This review may involve any of the following:
    i. examining the request and pertinent material;
    ii. checking the material's general acceptance by reading reviews and consulting recommended lists;
    iii. considering any explanation contained in the request ;
    iv. determining the extent to which the material supports the curriculum; and
    v. considering the relevant information and attributes of the material including its overall quality, uniqueness, creativity, authorship, publisher, publication date, and its appropriateness for the age group concerned.
2. The Review Committee will make a decision regarding the material and prepare a written recommendation to the Head of School. The Head of School may approve, modify, or overrule the Review Committee's recommendation
3. Pending the review process's outcome, a parent may request from the Head of School that the material not be used by the parent's child pending a final determination. Such a request may be granted at the Head of School's discretion

303.3 Children with Special Needs

The school admits and serves special needs children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), state legislation (G.S. 115C-106 et seq.), and pursuant to the State Board of Education's rules and policies.

Students with special needs shall receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive and appropriate environment. The school will provide every student suspected of having special needs with a multidisciplinary diagnosis and evaluation.

For each student entitled to special education and services, the school will:

1. provide testing and evaluation in a nondiscriminatory manner, administered in the child's native language as necessary;
2. provide to the parent, in writing, the results, findings, and proposals based upon an evaluation;
3. develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for qualified students;
4. provide special education and related services in the least restrictive appropriate environment to each qualified student based upon the IEP, and pursuant to the parent's initial consent;
5. provide the parent written notice reasonably in advance of when the school proposes to initiate or change the student with special needs' identification, evaluation, or educational placement. The written notice will fully explain all of the procedural safeguards available to the parents.

A confidential folder shall be maintained for each child evaluated for and/or receiving exceptional student services. Access to such files shall be limited to appropriate personnel and parents in compliance with state and federal law. A handbook on special needs procedures and rights is provided to parents of children with current IEPs and to parents going through the referral process.

303.4 Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics

The school offers and encourages participation in extra-curricular activities as part of a complete education. Such participation, however, is a privilege, not a right. A student's behavior, attendance, and academic standing may determine eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. Any activity's advisor may set conduct or other academic or performance standards as a condition of initial or continued participation, provided such standards are clearly established and consistent with the school's mission.

If a student is disciplined for violating the student conduct code, his or her extracurricular activity participation may be affected, subject to the School Director's discretion. The staff activity director or head coach, in consultation with the School Director, is responsible for decisions relating to disciplinary action associated with the extracurricular activity.

303.5 Evaluation

All parents will be informed at regular intervals on their students' academic progress, based on procedures approved by the Head of School. The Board also encourages the administration and staff to work together to improve methods for evaluating students' progress and to develop meaningful ways to report their achievement to parents.

The academic year will consist of four nine-week grading periods. Report cards will be issued at the end of each grading period.

The following grading scale will be used for kindergarten:

M-Meets Expectations
P-Progressing
N-Not Progressing
NE-Not Evaluated

(Behavior)
S = Satisfactory
I = Improving
N=Needs Improvement

The school will use a ten (10) point grading scale for grades two (2) through twelve (12).

A=100 – 90
B =89 – 80
C=79 – 70
D=69 – 60
F=59 or Below

303.6 Promotion, Retention, and Graduation

The Board recognizes that some students may benefit by remaining in the same grade for an additional year. The Board supports students being placed at the grade level to which they are best suited and providing additional years of education at the same level as necessary. The School Director shall be responsible for the final decision regarding any student's promotion or retention. The School Director's decision will be based on the student's best interest.

Factors to be considered in promotion and retention decisions include, but are not limited to, achievement based on test results and informal assessments, physical, social, and emotional maturity, effort, ability, and parental attitude and responsibility.

If a student appears to be a candidate for retention, the student's teacher or team should, if feasible, notify the School Director and the student's parent by the end of the 3rd nine weeks of the academic year at the latest. Teachers are to provide additional attention to and remediation for the student to offer reasonable opportunities for the student to achieve promotion.

Minimum graduation requirements are established by the North Carolina Board of Education. The School will provide students and parents with specific information regarding the standards and credits applicable to graduation eligibility.

303.7 Field Trips

Field trips are part of the educational program to support and enhance the educational and community experience. School-sponsored field trips will be well planned and evaluated in terms of their educational and social appropriateness. Field trips will be reasonable in length, activity, and difficulty, considering the students' age and maturity and available resources. Overnight trips require special precautions to assure student wellbeing and to avoid or minimize, to the extent possible, interference with other class studies and attendance.

At the beginning of each academic year, parents must sign a waiver of liability and permission for their student to attend all field trips sponsored by the school.

303.7.1 Chaperones and Drivers

Chaperones and drivers who volunteer to transport students for field trips must sign and submit to the school any information required by the School Director in advance of a field trip. They must also submit a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of their automobile's current insurance. Each teacher must gather this information from drivers before leaving on the field trip. Those who cannot provide the information required may not transport students.

Every student being transported must have and use an appropriate seat belt and/or child safety seat. Students may not ride in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with air bags unless such students are of proper size, weight, and age. Drivers should arrive early, with their vehicles adequately fueled and in good and proper condition. Teachers will provide to each driver any necessary maps, directions and instructions, a roster of students being transported by the driver, and those students' emergency contact information.

303.7.2 Child Safety Seat Law

North Carolina law requires all children under eight years of age or weighing less than 80 lbs. to use an appropriate safety seat while riding in a motorized vehicle. Therefore, all students at the School who are under eight years of age or weigh less than 80 lbs. must be secured in a safety seat when attending school field trips. Parents should provide their child's safety seat on the day of a field trip. For questions please contact the School Director or visit the NC Child Passenger Safety Resource Website.

303.7.3 Guidelines

Appropriate instructional activities will precede and follow each field trip. Before each field trip, the teacher will submit to the School Director a written outline of the trip's instructional objectives. Procedures for requesting field-trip approval and other related activities may also be established by the school director. Guidelines include the following:

1. The teacher will send permission requests to parents at least five to ten days before the date of the trip, indicating the trip's date, time, and purpose.
2. Parents may be required to provide special additional written permission for their children to participate in a particular field trip. Parental approval forms must be filed with the teacher before the field trip. Copies of these forms are to be retained for at least the remainder of the school year and longer, as circumstances require.
3. All field trips will normally begin and end at the school. When a field trip is made to a place of business or industry, the teacher must be assured prior to beginning such a tour that an employee of the host company will serve as the guide.
4. A reasonable number of adult personnel and volunteers shall accompany and supervise students on all field trips.
5. The school, if feasible, will provide an appropriate educational experience and proper supervision for any students whose parents do not wish their children to participate in a field trip.

303.7.4 Activity Bus Policy

The school offers various curricular and extracurricular field trips and activities for student's educational, social, and physical development. Bus transportation is often necessary to transport students for such activities. This policy governs the use of any school activity bus owned or leased by the school for such purposes, to provide for orderly and safe transportation in such instances. The following procedures and rules shall apply:

1. Regular school policies and procedures shall apply during use of a school activity bus, including the student code of conduct, plus any other rules established by the school administration. Use of a school activity bus, even if occurring after regular school hours is a school sponsored event;
2. Activity bus drivers shall (a) be authorized by the Head of School (or designee to drive an activity bus, (b) be properly licensed and trained in its safe operation, (c) comply with all other applicable laws, rules and school policies pertaining to an activity bus and to supervising its riders, and (d) with any other designated supervisor or chaperone, have reasonable discretion to supervise and direct bus riders, and to take steps reasonably necessary to preserve order and safety;
3. Activity bus transportation is provided as a privilege, not a right, to students who benefit from its use. Such privilege may be suspended for one or more students when, in the reasonable discretion of the Head of School or his/her designee, such suspension is necessary for safe and orderly school operation;
4. A parent whose child rides an activity bus under approved circumstances impliedly consents to such use and accepts the normal risks associated therewith. A parent may, however, withdraw such implied consent by providing reasonable, advance written notice to the School Director of any objection the parent has to his/her child riding such bus on a particular occasion or any occasion. In such cases, the parent shall bear sole responsibility for providing alternate transportation for the child if the child is to participate in the respective activity;
5. If the school contracts for hire a commercial bus for similar purposes, riders shall comply with any additional rules imposed by the provider of such bus;
6. The Head of School or his/her designee may establish additional administrative procedures to govern activity bus use.

303.8 Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

As required by state law, The school shall (i) display the United States and North Carolina flags in each classroom when available, (ii) call for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance on a daily basis, and (iii) provide age-appropriate instruction on the flags' and the Pledge of Allegiance's meaning and historical origins. The school shall not compel any individual student to stand or to salute the flags, or to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. If flags are donated or are otherwise available, flags shall be displayed in each classroom.

A moment of silence at the beginning of each school day may be observed in classrooms upon the discretion of the classroom teacher. The moment of silence will normally not exceed one minute in length, will be unstructured, and free of influence from school staff, and no other activity will be allowed during that time.

303.9 Religion and Free Speech

As a public school, the school will remain neutral on matters of religion, politics, and other personal values and beliefs protected by the United States Constitution, while also protecting individual students' and staff members' right to exercise their religious and free speech rights. Consistent with the School's academic mission, the school shall promote respect for and civility regarding

individuals' personal beliefs, and will also strive to neutrally instruct students about the important role of religion and free expression as part of our heritage.

303.10 Testing

PCCS will conduct standardized testing as required by state and federal law and provide remediation and intervention for students not scoring at required levels. A testing coordinator will monitor compliance with this policy. All licensed testing personnel, teachers, and school administrators are subject to the state Testing Code of Ethics regarding the statewide testing program.

304 CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE, AND PROCEDURES

304.1 Code of Student Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct ("Student Code" or "Code") governs student behavior occurring on school property, at School-sponsored activities, and all off-campus activity that threatens school safety or property or that substantially disrupts, or is likely to disrupt, school operations.

304.2 Generally Prohibited Behavior

Students shall comply with all school and safety-related directions of school administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, student teachers, teacher aides, bus drivers, and all other school personnel who are authorized to give such directions. Inappropriate conduct includes but is not limited to verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct showing disrespect, repetitive tardiness, skipping class/school, leaving campus without permission, or being in an unauthorized area. Failure to comply may result in short-term suspension.

304.3 Class/Activity Disturbance

Any physical or verbal disturbance which occurs within the school environment and interrupts or interferes with teaching or orderly conduct of class/school activities/school transportation is prohibited.

304.4 Inappropriate Language

Cursing or using vulgar, profane, or obscene language is prohibited.

304.5 Dress Code and Improper Dress

Students are to be in dress code upon arrival until departure from school property unless otherwise approved by administration. The administration reserves the right to determine appropriateness of dress in cases not covered by the Dress Code or in other cases as they may arise. All clothing should be clean, neat and free of holes or stains with no cut or torn necklines, hemlines, sleeves, sides, etc.

Students shall dress in a way that is compatible with the school's mission and an effective learning environment. Students shall not wear clothing or other attire which is disruptive, provocative,

inappropriately revealing of their body, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers students' or others' health or safety. Prohibited attire includes, but is not limited to that which involves:

1. Exposed undergarments, buttocks, cleavage, or pubic areas (includes see-through clothing);
2. Excessively sagging or tight pants or other apparel;
3. Midriffs or strapless shirts or dresses;
4. Messages or illustrations that are lewd, indecent or vulgar or that advertise any product or service not permitted by law to minors;
5. Non-religious head coverings of any kind;
6. Chains, spikes, or other apparel reasonably perceived or used as a weapon:
7. Gang, or reasonably perceived gang, symbols or apparel; or
8. Other attire of which a student is reasonably notified as being improper under this policy by authorized school personnel.

The school will strive to reasonably accommodate dress that is necessary to satisfy a student's fundamental religious beliefs or a medical or physical need.

304.6 Inappropriate Literature and Illustrations

Creating, possessing, or distributing literature or illustrations which significantly disrupts the educational process is prohibited.

304.7 Tobacco

No student shall possess, display, or use any tobacco product. This restriction applies even when the student is on School system property or at any School-sponsored activity as a visitor or spectator. For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

> *Tobacco Product*: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing, or reasonably resembling, tobacco or tobacco products, including vaping.
>
> *Tobacco Use*: smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.
>
> *Display*: having any tobacco product in a location or position that is visible to students or School personnel. Displaying tobacco products does not extend to display that has a legitimate instructional or pedagogical purpose and is teacher or School Director approved.

The School Director may permit tobacco products to be included in instructional or research activities in the school building if an appropriate faculty member overseeing the instruction or research conducts or supervises the activity, and the activity does not involve smoking, chewing, or otherwise ingesting the tobacco product.

304.8 Controlled Substances and Alcohol

The school is committed to being a community free of unhealthy substances including illegal controlled substances, tobacco, and alcohol. Using illegal controlled substances or alcohol while

on School property, at any School-related activity, or in any other venue where the conduct in question is likely to substantially impact or undermine the operation or well-being of the school or its members, is prohibited.

304.9 Indecent Exposure/Sexual Behavior

No student shall engage in behavior which is indecent, involves excessive or inappropriate touching, or is otherwise of a sexual or sexually-suggestive nature.

304.10 Theft

No student shall steal, attempt to steal, aid in or conceal stealing, or knowingly possess stolen property if not attempting to return or turn in such property.

304.11 Unacceptable Use of Electronic Technology

Students shall comply with the school's Acceptable Use,The General Use, and Student Policies. These are found in Policy Section 500.

304.12 Weapons

The school strives to maintain an environment free of all weapons not legally possessed by law enforcement officials or otherwise authorized by the Head of School or the Board. No school student, employee or other agent shall carry or encourage another person to carry, whether openly or concealed, a weapon as defined below, onto school property at any time.

A "Weapon" includes: a gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind; any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, powerful explosive;: any knife, BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, sling shot, blackjack, metal knuckles, bludgeon, bowie knife, switchblade, dirk, dagger, leaded cane, stun gun or other electronic shock weapon,; or any sharp-pointed or edged instrument except for the following: instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparing food, instruction, and maintaining school property or otherwise authorized or necessary to support the school operations If an instrument resembling a weapon is used in a threatening way, it is considered a weapon.

Any staff person who is aware that an unauthorized weapon has been carried onto school property or possessed at a school function shall immediately notify a supervisory staff member, a teacher, or the School Director.

304.13 Harassment and Bullying

The school is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to learning and is free from harassment and bullying based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or any other illegal conduct. Other forms of harassment and bullying are also prohibited, including those based on other distinguishing characteristics such as, but not limited to, physical, social, academic, emotional, and socio-economic status, or simply based on personal differences or conflicts. All conduct prohibited by this policy includes behavior that occurs, directly or indirectly, by personal or electronic communication or action.

North Carolina law (G.S. 115C-218.75(c)) encourages charter schools to adopt a policy against bullying or harassing behavior, including cyber bullying. Charter schools that do so shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide the policy to staff, students, and parents as defined in G.S. 115C-390.1(b)(8).

Harassment is an unwelcome, offensive verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to significantly affect one's employment or a student's learning conditions. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, abusive jokes, insults, slurs, name-calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcome sexual advances, or the exchanging of benefits for performing sexual or other favors.

Harassment is prohibited at all levels—between students, employees and students, co-workers, supervisors and subordinates, non-employees and employees and/or students, and any other school representatives or members of the school community while at the school or involved in school activities.

In addition, no student or staff member shall retaliate against anyone who reports or seeks remedies against harassment or bullying or otherwise aids or supports someone who aids in enforcing this policy.

All staff members must report to a supervisor instances or reasonable suspicions of harassment and bullying and aid in investigations carrying out this policy. Appropriate school staff shall take any alleged harassment or bullying report seriously and respond to it fully and promptly. Students are also urged to report and assist in carrying out this policy.

304.14 Sexual Harassment

Of the various types of harassment under the school's General Harassment Policy, sexual harassment is worthy of special consideration. This includes sexual harassment between any member of the school community including student-to-student, employee-to-student, student-to-employee, and employee-to-employee, or harassment in any other school-related relationship. Simply put, no person shall engage in sexual harassment against any student, other employee, or another person in the school community, and having found to do so, shall be appropriately and promptly dealt with in terms of penalties, prohibitions, suspension or employment termination as the case may require.

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advance, request forsexual favors, or sexually suggestive comments when:

- An individual's employment or education is either explicitly or implicitly conditioned upon submitting to the conduct;
- An individual submitting to or rejecting such conduct is used as a basis for student or employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises or

threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used toward, or in the presence of, an individual or to describe an individual; or the display of sexually suggestive objects, signals, or pictures.

A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or if it creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment.

School employees making romantic or sexual advances toward or engaging in sexual relationships with students is always prohibited in all circumstances. School employees are prohibited from engaging in inappropriate relationships with students and are required to report such relationships or reasonable suspicions thereof, to the Head of School or other appropriate supervisory official. Procedures for reporting suspected harassment or sexual harassment are outlined in the school's Personnel Policies.

304.15 Student Searches

To promote safe and orderly operations, school officials may reasonably search a student's person and materials as necessary, in accordance with students' constitutional rights. A student may be subject to a search based on reasonable suspicion that the student has violated law or policy, or as a result of reasonable, random searches not requiring individualized suspicion. Reasonable suspicion to search an individual student is not required when a student voluntarily and knowingly consents to such search.

If an authorized school official reasonably suspects that the student has any item or material on his or her person, or in his possession, that risks serious harm to persons or property, an authorized school official may perform a more intrusive search of a student's person, as necessary, to avoid a threat of imminent and serious harm or damage. In such instances, any bodily invasive search shall, to the extent feasible, be conducted in private by an authorized school official of the same sex, with an adult witness of the same sex present.

304.15.1 Locker Searches

Student lockers are school property. Therefore, students have no enforceable right to privacy against the school's right to open and view those lockers contents. Students may not use their lockers to hold any illegal or unauthorized materials. School officials may inspect any student's locker without a search warrant, for any reason deemed reasonable to maintain safe and orderly operations. A student's personal items found in a locker, such as clothing, backpacks, gym bags or purses, may be searched based on reasonable suspicion.

304.15.2 Student Automobiles

Any opportunity for students to drive and park on school grounds is a privilege, not a right. The school may patrol school parking lots at any time and may search a student's motor vehicle based on reasonable suspicion that such vehicle contains materials in violation of law or policy.

304.15.3 Use of Dogs to Aid in Searches

School officials may use trained dogs to aid in inspections for materials that may be in violation of law or policy. Thus, without notice, the school may use trained dogs to sniff lockers, student motor vehicles and other objects. Dogs will not be used, however, in random searches of individual students.

304.16 Disciplinary Policies and Procedures for Serious Offenses

Article 27 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, requires the school to follow specific rules and due process relating to serious disciplinary matters, including the use of reasonable force, short- and long-term suspensions, and expulsions. The school will follow those rules in such instances, and are incorporated herein, by reference.

At the date of adoption of these policies, Article 27 was available online at https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByArticle/Chapter_115C/Article_27.html

304.16.1 Exclusion

The school may exclude a student for just cause, if otherwise legally permissible, and as defined by school policy. Exclusion may involve refusing to enroll an applicant or removing a currently enrolled student. Just cause shall involve grounds that reasonably indicate that the child poses a threat of harm to him/herself or others, or poses a threat of substantial disruption or material interference with the school's operations. Any child who is to be excluded is entitled to due process, as defined by school policy, before a final exclusion decision. Any exclusion decision shall be permanent unless otherwise retracted or modified by the board, in its sole discretion.

305 EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

305.1 Building and Grounds

Maintaining safe and attractive school grounds and facilities requires everyone's support. All students, staff and parents should make every reasonable effort to preserve and protect school property.

305.2 Delayed Openings

The Head of School may delay opening or may close the school when inclement weather, mechanical failure, or other circumstance creates an actual or potential safety threat. In such instances, the school will notify members of the school community as promptly as possible via local news media, electronic mail, school voice message system, or other reasonable means.

305.3 Fire Drills

The School Directors will conduct a fire drill during the school year's first week and at least one fire drill each month thereafter. The route of egress and alternate routes will be posted in each classroom in each building. Evacuation, tornado, and lock-down drills will also be conducted routinely.

Students and staff will be instructed on the procedures to follow.

306 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

306.1 Communicable Diseases

The school aims to provide a safe and secure environment free of infection from communicable disease for all students and employees. To balance the need to protect students' and employees' privacy rights and to control the spread of communicable diseases and conditions, decisions concerning necessary action shall be made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy, sound judgment, and applicable legal requirements.

A communicable disease or condition is defined as an illness due to an infectious agent, or its toxic products, which an infected person or animal transmits directly or indirectly to a person.

This policy applies to all legally reportable communicable diseases, including HIV and AIDS, as set forth in state regulations.

1. To prevent the spread of communicable diseases, the School Director or his or her designee shall distribute universal health and safety precautions, which include regulations regarding the cleanup of all bodily fluids (including blood). All school employees shall follow these precautions.
2. In accordance with state law, the Head of School or his or her designee shall report suspected cases of reportable communicable diseases or conditions to the county health director for investigation and shall provide available factual information to substantiate the report. Such reports shall remain strictly confidential and may be shared only with other staff members as necessary to prepare and file a report. All staff members who are made aware of any such report shall keep such information confidential. Without releasing any information that would identify the affected student when not required, Head of School or supervisor shall report suspected cases of reportable communicable diseases or conditions to the Board President.
3. Any student suffering from a communicable disease or condition shall follow all control measures issued by the county health director and shall take all necessary precautions to prevent transmitting the disease or condition. Any school employees who have reason to believe that a student is suffering from a reportable communicable disease and is failing to follow safe practices shall report this to the School Director, their supervisor, or health director. Failure to follow control measures may result in disciplinary action. The parent(s) of a student suffering from a communicable disease should inform the School Director so that appropriate accommodations and precautions may be put in place.
4. If the county health director notifies the Head of School or School Director that a student with a communicable disease or condition may pose a threat to public health, the student and his/her parents shall cooperate with the health director to eliminate the threat. The health director is responsible for determining when the school community must be notified of a contagious disease's outbreak. School officials shall cooperate with the health director in issuing such notification.
5. The county health director is responsible for notifying the school if a student infected with the HIV virus is enrolled at or scheduled for admission to the school, and if there

is a serious risk of the student transmitting the virus.

306.2 Head Lice: "No Live Nit" Policy

The school will take prompt action to eliminate the threat of head lice and live nits. Head lice represents a parasitic skin infection and can be readily treated. Because lice and live nits are transmittable, any student the school officials suspect of having head lice or live nits will be sent home promptly for treatment.

The student may not return to the school until treatment has been received and the school nurse or other designated school official has determined that no head lice or live nits are present. The school provides assistive information to parents about head lice. Any member of the school community who knows of a manifestation of head lice should report this to a responsible staff member.

306.3 Illness and Injury

Sick children should not attend school to protect their own health and the health of other members of the school community. A student with the following symptoms should remain home and not return to school until he or she is symptom-free for 24 hours: vomiting, diarrhea, or a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above without the use of fever reducing medication.

Any student with any contagious symptoms – such as frequent coughing or sneezing, eye discharge, or cloudy nasal discharge, all of which may involve the spread of illness – should not attend school. If a student with a contagious illness has attended classes, parents should notify the teacher immediately.

When a student is injured or becomes ill at school, the student will normally be sent to the main office to be assessed by the proper school employee. The student will be treated in the office and sent back to class if appropriate and the student does not pose a threat to others or classroom order. Any student a school nurse or other caregiver sees may be given documentation explaining the problem's nature and measures taken. The school office will notify the parent(s) if the child needs further assistance or must leave the school.No underage student may leave the school unsupervised. Any significant injury or accident occurring during the school day or during a school activity will be reported to a parent. The school will treat minor injuries or contact a parent to take the student for medical attention.

306.4 Immunizations

No child may attend school without an immunization certificate indicating that the child has received the immunizations required by state law. If, on the first day of attendance, the child does not present such a certificate, the child's parent shall be notified. The parent shall normally have thirty calendar days from the date of first attendance to obtain the required immunizations for the child. If a vaccine reasonably requires more than thirty calendar days to complete, and a suitable physician reliably verifies this fact, a reasonable time extension may be granted. At the end of the thirty calendar days or extended period, if the student has not received the required immunizations, or an up to date immunization certificate has not been received the School shall release the student from the school. Exemptions to providing such certificates of immunization apply only in instances of bona fide medical or religious exemptions under state

law (G.S. 130A-152 and 157).

The school shall maintain, in a separate medical file for each student, the student's immunization records. County or State Health Department officials may inspect these records upon request and without notifying parents. When a child transfers from or to another school, arrangements will be made to transfer the immunization records. The school will file an immunization report with the NC Department of Health and Human services within sixty calendar days after a new school year begins.

306.5 Medications

If a child must be medicated (including over-the-counter and prescribed medication) during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the School Director's designee may administer the medication in compliance with a doctor's written, signed, and dated instructions. The School Director or his or her designee reserves the right to require medical certification by a suitable doctor to determine the appropriateness of administering any medicine. No teacher may be required to administer medication against his or her wishes.

The doctor's medication instructions must include at least the following:

1. Child's name;
2. Name of medication;
3. Purpose of medication;
4. Time and Dosage to be administered;
5. Possible side effects and related treatment;
6. Termination date for administering the medication;
7. Special information about the medication (i.e., storage requirements);
8. The doctor's signature and parent/guardian signature.;
9. A parent/guardian is required to provide the medication to the school by bringing it to the school nurse.

Authorization forms to give medication on campus and medication records must be retained in the student's confidential medical file.

306.5.1 Exceptions to Medication Administration

Middle school and high school students may upon proper written authorization and approval by the School Director or his or her designee, self-medicate with medications that are labeled and packaged in the original container and are required for a medical condition. Students with diabetes or asthma, or a student subject to anaphylactic (life threatening) reactions will be allowed to carry and self- administer their medication if the parent and physician sign a completed medication request form and the student demonstrates appropriate proficiency in delivering the medication.

Self-administering privileges will be withdrawn if the student exhibits a lack of responsibility towards self or others in regards to his/her medication. Any student who abuses the privileges described in this section may be subject to discipline.

306.6 Diabetes Plans and Compliance Reports

The school shall implement rules and procedures for diabetic students in accordance with State Board of Education requirements and G.S. 115C-375.3. This compliance includes making available necessary information and staff development to teachers and school personnel to appropriately support and assist diabetic students in accordance with their individual diabetes care plans.

306.7 Annual Information for Students and Parents

The school shall provide health information at the beginning of each school year regarding the following:

- To parents regarding meningococcal meningitis and influenza (and their vaccines). Such information shall include their causes, symptoms, how they spread, and the places where parents may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children;
- To parents regarding cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, human papillomavirus (and the vaccines available to prevent these diseases). This information shall be provided to parents of children entering grades five through twelve. It shall include these diseases' causes and symptoms, how they are transmitted, how diseases may be prevented, including vaccinations' benefits and possible side effects, and the places where parents may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children;
- To students (in grades five through twelve) regarding lawful abandonment of a child. This information shall include the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500.

306.8 Compliance with Other Health Requirements

The school shall regularly determine and comply with any federal, state and local requirements pertaining to other safety threats such as dangerous chemicals and blood-borne pathogens. It shall also comply with all requirements as to food inspections and safety.

307 PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

307.1 Open Communications

PCCS recognizes the need for clear and open communication between the Board, staff and parents concerning issues of mutual interest. Parental suggestions, concerns, and questions regarding school policies and practices are encouraged and are most effectively and efficiently channeled directly through a teacher, the School Director or his or her designee, or any other person or group assigned to receive such information. Parents are urged not to communicate directly with board members on such matters to preserve the integrity of their policy-making role, administrative response's proper channels, and Board neutrality.

307.2 Parent Organizations

The Parent-Teacher Organization and other board approved parent organizations perform a valuable service to the School. The Board supports these organizations and expects and encourages cooperation from the whole school community, including students and employees.

The Board shall approve all school-affiliated organizations. The Board, or by delegation, the Head of School, may establish additional rules governing such organizations. The Head of School or his or her designee shall be an *ex officio* member of any such organization.

Each parent organization affiliated with the school must establish bylaws setting forth the purpose and its operating rules and procedures. A copy of the bylaws, and any subsequent revisions, shall be given to the Head of School and a copy shall be kept on file in the school office.

Parent organizations shall secure the School Director's advice and approval prior to planning any function or activity in which students are to participate while under School supervision.

Unless otherwise determined by the Board, any item purchased by a parent organization for the School or a school activity becomes the school's property.

307.3 Visitors

The Head of School or his or her designee will post instructions to parents and visitors, directing them to the school office to sign-in upon their arrival on campus.

All parents and visitors shall report to the school office upon arrival and are required to sign in using an sign-in system. They will receive a nametag. The system records the time of their arrival. Visitors, including parents,are required to wear a nametag identifying them. At their departure, visitors and parents are required to scan the nametag to sign out. All visitors are bound by the standards of conduct set forth by the school for school employees.

The School Director or his or her designee is authorized to

1. limit campus access to persons, including students and parents, who threaten the safety or well-being of the school community, or whose presence disrupts or likely disrupts the school environment;
2. determine if sales personnel may make sales visits to school administrators; and
3. call law enforcement personnel to protect against any threat posed by any person or to remove from the school property any person who refuses to leave after being directed to do so by authorized personnel.

307.4 Volunteers

The school's viability depends, in large part, on an effective volunteer program. Parents of students attending PCCS are encouraged to commit time to such volunteer work for the school. Parent volunteer help is especially needed to support field trips, special classroom events, and special school activities. The School Director or his or her designee is responsible for volunteer oversight, including selection, recruitment, screening, and assignment. Volunteer services may be controlled or terminated at the School Director's discretion. Volunteers are subject to applicable visitor policies, and must report to the school office upon their arrival on campus. Volunteers are bound by

the standards of conduct set forth by the school for school employees.

308 STUDENT RECORDS

308.1 Regulations

The federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students' parents and legal guardians and emancipated students the right to inspect their children's or their own records. Furthermore, FERPA prohibits, with limited exception, other persons from accessing such records without a parent's or emancipated student's prior consent. A parent or eligible student must normally submit a written notification at least five days in advance to the school records office to inspect the student's file.

The school may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or emancipated student has directed the school not to disclose such information. Such information allows the School to publish certain useful information such as an athletic roster, a program bulletin, a yearbook, honor rolls or other recognition lists or graduation programs. The school considers the following informationto be directory information: a student's name, address, phone number, activity or athletic photograph, dates of attendance, grade level, participation in activities and sports, and sports team members' weight and height.

In addition, the school is required to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories: names, addresses, and telephone listings of students, unless parents request that the school not provide information without their prior written consent. The school will also make parents aware of their rights to withhold this information from military recruiters upon written request.

The School Director or his or her designee shall compile and maintain an official record for each student which contains information including a birth certificate, dates of admission and departure, attendance data, standardized test results, and grading and promotion data. Each student's official record shall also include notice of any suspensions for more than a 10 day period or of any expulsion.

Official student records shall be permanently maintained. The Head of School is authorized to order the storage of official student records at a central location.

Student records do not include individual notes and records made by teachers and administrators that are in the sole possession of their maker and that are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute teacher or supervisor.

308.2 Student Record Confidentiality

Student educational records are confidential. Access to the official student record and any other student record shall be strictly limited in conformance with state and federal law and board policy. A confidential folder shall be maintained for each child evaluated for or receiving exceptional children's services.

Apart from directory information, personally identifiable student information shall not be released from a student's record without the parent's, legal guardian's, or emancipated student's prior

written consent, except to the following persons:

1. School employees when a legitimate educational purpose exists for accessing the information, including professionals contracted to provide a student services;
2. Authorized government or educational officials or others with legitimate reasons for reviewing a student's records;
3. Appropriate persons in connection with an emergency, if releasing the information is necessary to protect the student's or other persons' health or safety Authorized state and local officials with authority to review student information if the disclosure relates to the juvenile justice system's ability to serve, before adjudication, the student whose records are released. The official must certify in writing that the information will not be disclosed to any other party, except as provided by state law or with prior written consent of the student's parent or an emancipated student;
4. Other schools' officials, if the student has enrolled or plans to enroll there, unless the parent or an emancipated student has specifically requested in writing that the information not be released to the requesting institution;
5. Persons acting under court order or subpoena, as long as the parent or an emancipated student shall be notified of the request prior to its execution;
6. Accrediting organizations, to the extent necessary to enable them to carry out their functions; and
7. Financial aid organizations if related to a student's application for receipt of financial aid.

Prior written consent for any other release of personally identifiable information must be signed and dated by the parent, legal guardian, or an emancipated student and must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure, and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made.

308.3 Transcripts

Parents, a student who is eighteen years of age or older, and other K-12 schools where a former student has enrolled may request the student's record. The school may charge for copies of records, including certified transcript copies. No fees will be charged for copies of records to be mailed directly to a K-12 school that a student is subsequently applying to or attending.

309 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Students and parents are entitled to pursue their grievances according to the School's Grievance Process and Appeals of Administrative Decisions Policy.

ADDENDUM I: Grievance Process and Appeals of Administrative Decisions

A. Introduction and Objectives. The school seeks to provide a process by which students, parents, and staff can resolve concerns in a timely and effective manner while balancing this with the need for efficient and effective school operations. Toward this end, this policy establishes mechanisms by which grievances should be addressed through informal and, if appropriate, formal means. All references herein to the School Director include any person assigned as the School Director's designee.

B. Informal Grievance Procedure . All concerns should first be addressed directly and informally with the persons involved. This includes reasonably notifying those causing and involved in the grievance, allowing them to reasonably respond, and an opportunity to make good faith efforts toward resolution. If necessary, individuals involved are encouraged to seek the assistance of an objective party to assist with informal resolution.

C. Formal Grievance Procedure . Persons must seek informal, timely resolution before filing a formal grievance, unless doing so is not reasonably feasible, would be futile, or if formal grievance procedures are legally required. The grievant may then file a formal grievance with the Principal within ten school days after the last informal attempt at resolution; if informal resolution is not required, the grievant shall file the grievance within ten school days of the last instance causing the grievance.

The formal procedure shall be initiated by submitting to the School Director a written request for redress that succinctly states the specific grievance(s), the supporting facts, the basis in Board policy or law (citing specific policies or laws), the requested relief, and the efforts made to resolve the matter informally. The Principal may require submission of an approved form for such grievance filing.

The School Director shall determine whether informal resolution requirements have been satisfied or are not required. If the School Director determines that the grievant is entitled to a formal grievance process, he or she shall provide a copy of the formal grievance to all other persons implicated by the grievance. The School Director shall reasonably investigate and consider the matter (which may include meeting with the parties involved and holding an informal hearing) and issue a decision within ten school days from the date the grievance is filed; additional time for the School Director's decision shall be allowed when reasonably required by circumstances. All deliberations shall be held in confidence where feasible and involve only persons in a need-to-know position. A decision by the School Director under these grievance procedures shall be considered a "final administrative decision."

D. Appeals of Right to the School Board. A person has the right to appeal any final administrative decision affecting a constitutional or other legal interest, and/or an interest of the type listed below:

a. Suspension or expulsion of a student for more than 10 days (per school suspension and expulsion procedures required by Chapter 115C, Article 27 of the North Carolina General Statutes);

b. An alleged violation of a specified federal or state law or regulation;

c. The loss or reduction of salary of a school employee under a specific-term contract who is not employed at will; or
d. Any other decision that, by law, provides for a right of appeal to the school Board and for which there is no other statutory appeal procedure.

Any person seeking a hearing under this section, within 10 school days after the final administrative decision by the School Director, may request a Board hearing, by submitting to the Board Chairperson a request in writing by certified mail or personal delivery. The person(s) making such request shall also promptly deliver a copy of the hearing request to the School Director.

E. Discretionary Appeals to the Board. Any person aggrieved by a decision not involving a matter addressed in Section D, may, within 10 school days after the final administrative decision by the School Director, request a Board hearing, by submitting to the Board Chairperson a request in writing by certified mail or personal delivery. The person making such request shall also promptly deliver a copy of the hearing request to the Principal. In such cases, the Board has the discretion to deny or grant a hearing. The Board shall notify the person making the request and the Principal of its decision, and if a hearing is granted, the time, place, and manner of such hearing.

F. Board Hearing Procedures. In all appeals to the Board, the Board shall provide adequate notice of hearing rights and procedures to all parties concerned and keep a record of any hearing conducted. In the case of hearings required by right under Section D, all parties have the right to appear before the entire Board, to be represented by counsel or other representatives, to submit documentation, and to reasonably examine and cross-examine witnesses. Hearings involving student suspensions or expulsions shall conform to the requirements of Article 27 of the North Carolina General Statutes. In the case of an employee grievance concerning a loss or reduction of salary, the employee may request and shall be entitled to receive written notice as to the reasons for the final administrative decision; the notice shall be provided to the employee at a time reasonably in advance of any Board hearing.

For all discretionary hearings allowed under Section E, the hearing may be based on the written record or, instead, by personal appearance of the parties. The Board may designate a hearing officer or panel composed of one or more Board members to act upon such hearing requests on behalf of the Board. The Board reserves the discretion to determine the manner by which it shall conduct such a hearing. Board hearings (by right and by discretion under sections D and E, respectively) shall be conducted within ten school days from the date the hearing is requested, unless circumstances reasonably require additional time. A final Board decision shall be rendered and delivered in writing to the respective parties within five school days of concluding the hearing. The decision of the Board shall be final.