



# **Student & Parent Handbook**

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Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to New Horizon Academy. We are delighted to have you as part of our family.

We are dedicated to creating an atmosphere in which every student will feel important, successful and motivated to learn in order to reach his or her full potential. We see that occurring when parents, teachers and administrators work together in an atmosphere of caring, trust, cooperation and open communication. The faculty and administration are available to listen to your concerns as well as offer counsel and friendship.

Please take some time to read this Handbook, as it contains useful information and will answer questions regarding our procedures and expectations. We look forward to a wonderful year

With kind regards,



*Matt Marcus*

Matt Marcus  
President and Head of School

## **Purpose of this handbook**

This Handbook was developed to answer many questions commonly asked by students and parents. Because the Handbook contains information about student rights and responsibilities, parents and students are responsible for knowing its contents. Please take the time to become familiar with the following information and keep this Handbook available for your use. It can be a valuable reference and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstandings when questions arise.

New Horizon Academy reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the rules and regulations governing the academic and non-academic conduct of students. This Handbook is not a contract, nor is it intended to be so construed. We reserve the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the year. If any written modification or amendment is made to this Handbook, a copy of such modification or amendment will be distributed to students and parents.

If you have any questions about the Handbook or any of its policies, please contact the Head of School.

## **Terminology**

Throughout this handbook you will see references made to various people, positions, titles, and roles. These terms may be interchangeable. In general, please note the following:

"Parent(s)" or "parental" includes not just biological or adoptive parents but also legal guardians.

"Staff" means any employee of the School.

"Administration" generally refers to a member of the School's management staff. Managerial positions include President; Head, Headmaster or Head of School; Director; and on occasion may refer to a member of the teaching staff who has been designated to take a leadership role. Note that our current Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Serle, is a member of the management team.

"School" and "school" may mean the school building and the School as an organization, depending upon context.

"Teacher" and "teaching staff" usually refer to a classroom teacher or other person employed in an instructional position.

"He/his" or "she/hers" may refer to either sex.

"They" or "their" may be singular or plural.

# **About New Horizon Academy**

## ***Who we are***

New Horizon Academy is an alternative middle and high school in Boca Raton, Florida. We teach the traditional curricula, but do so in a non-traditional setting. Our students get ample personal attention and enjoy a relaxed, comfortable environment. We value each student as an individual, and we tailor our approach to fit the needs of each student.

## ***Our core beliefs***

We have three core beliefs.

- We believe that our students learn best when we balance ample personal attention with the dynamics of a traditional classroom.
- We believe that a comfortable environment supports learning and growth.
- We believe that students should be understood and respected as individuals.

## ***Our approach***

Our approach to educating children is simple; we provide ample personal attention to help children learn subject matter and critical thinking skills. Our students also learn that they are worthy of the investment that they, their families, and the School is making in them. Being armed with the self-worth that comes from those investments and from having earned a diploma will help our students be more successful at achieving their goals in life.

## ***Admissions philosophy***

In alignment with our mission and vision, our admissions philosophy is to admit those children who are struggling in larger classes where they do not get sufficient individual attention. We admit those children for whom small class sizes and ample personal attention can make a difference.

## ***Admissions criteria***

We have two admissions criteria. First, we have to be able to make a difference in the education and life of the student. Second, the student has to be a fit with our culture.

## ***History***

New Horizon Academy was founded in 1993 by Barbara Rackett and Mary Alice Pugh, two educators who believed that small class sizes and ample personal attention could change the lives of students who struggled in larger classes and schools. For 17 years under the direction of our founders, New Horizon Academy made a difference in the lives of hundreds of students and their families. In 2010 the leadership of the School was turned over to Matt Marcus and his management team. We are proud to continue the traditions of our founders and commit to the ongoing growth of our School family.

## ***Accreditations***

Accreditation is an acknowledgment that a school provides an education that is consistent with accepted standards of excellence and that the school is dedicated to continuous improvement. Coursework, grades, and diplomas from accredited schools are recognized by other accredited schools. Therefore, the credits and diplomas earned by students at New Horizon Academy will allow our students access to other schools as well as to federal loans, scholarships, postsecondary education, and military programs.

New Horizon Academy is accredited by three organizations; the Association of Independent Schools of Florida (AISF), AdvancEd, formerly known as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvements (SACS CASI), and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA).

AISF is recognized by the Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools (FAANS) as an accrediting agency for private schools in Florida. AISF is also a Charter Member of the National Council for Private Schools Accreditation (NCPSA), which serves as a national review panel for the standards and procedures of private school accrediting associations throughout the United States. AISF is also a member of the Commission on International and Transregional Accreditation (CITA). AISF has been assuring the quality of educational institutions since 1949. For more information, visit [www.aisfl.com](http://www.aisfl.com).

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and its Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) accredits over 13,000 schools and school systems throughout the United States and internationally. SACS was founded in 1895 and continues to accredit institutions of higher learning to this day. SACS CASI has recently merged with the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) to form Advance-Ed, which accredits over 27,000 schools in 69 countries, making it the global authority on school quality. For more information, please visit [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org).

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools was founded in 1887; it is one of the oldest and most respected accrediting bodies in the world. New Horizon Academy was accredited by the Middle States Association in 2010.

Why does accreditation matter? Accreditation is an acknowledgment that a school provides an education that is consistent with accepted standards of excellence and that the school is dedicated to continuous improvement. Coursework, grades, and diplomas from accredited schools are recognized by other accredited schools. Therefore, the credits and diplomas earned by students at New Horizon Academy will allow our students access to other schools as well as to federal loans, scholarships, postsecondary education, and military programs.

### ***Professional memberships***

New Horizon Academy is a Consortium Member of Independent School Management, which gives us access to a wealth of educational programs and other resources which are specifically designed for schools like ours.



We are also a member of the Coalition of McKay Scholarship Schools, an organization that lobbies for the rights of children with disabilities, including learning disabilities.



New Horizon Academy has recently joined the NASSP, an organization dedicated to the betterment of secondary schools.



# Discrimination and Disability Policies

## ***Non-Discrimination Policy***

Admission and participation in our educational programs is open to all eligible students who meet our qualification requirements regardless of race, color, ethnicity, disability, national origin, and genetic information, including sickle cell trait.

## ***Student disability accommodations***

We understand that there may be circumstances when a parent may request that the School provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. As the range of requests have grown over the years, the School believes that it is appropriate at this time to outline the School's policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

**General policy:** In general, it is our School's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in an unacceptable impairment to the rights of other students (or employees) or a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our School and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

**Request and documentation:** For any type of accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must contact the Head of School or a Director. The School will then advise the parent of the type of professional documentation needed, which generally will state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

**Release for communications with physician:** Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician or other professional may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. For that reason, the parent(s) must sign a Release of Information form, permitting the School to contact the professional when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost associated with the professional's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such process.

**Assessment of request:** Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the School, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the School will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special equipment needed, training for the School's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the School may advise the parent that the

School will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to be tested or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the School believe are beyond the scope of the School's responsibility, the School may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

**Limitations on requests:** Please understand that the School is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. Examples of accommodations made for students include appropriate classroom locations, extended time on tests, use of computers, and/or dispensing with medication.

# **Attendance Policies**

## ***General***

Students are expected to be at School every day and to report to their classes on time. Frequent absences and tardiness negatively impact academic progress and are disruptive to the teaching environment. The School requests that parents and students thoughtfully consider the effects of any absence other than those of a medical nature or family emergency. Students with excessive absences will be required to make up lost time; excessive amounts of lost time may result in mandatory attendance of summer school or other programs outside of regular School hours, and at added cost. Students who fail to make up lost time may be denied promotion or graduation.

Parents are encouraged to discuss absences as soon as possible; this will allow the School to support the student with their school work and other matters.

## ***Excused absences***

1. Illness validated by a parent or guardian. For an extensive illness involving several days of absence, the School may require a statement from a physician. When a student is unable to attend school because of health reasons or other emergencies, parents should call the School
2. School sponsored trips and activities.
3. Death in the immediate family.
4. Religious holidays subject to prior approval from the appropriate division head.

Students excused from classes for field trips or for special reasons are required to obtain assignments and be prepared for class, including tests, the next day.

## ***Student illness***

Students who are ill or who are suspected of having a communicable disease may be removed from the classroom according to School policy. To prevent the spread of infection through direct contamination (coughing, sneezing, talking, sharing articles, etc.) students should be asymptomatic before returning to school. In other words, students should have no fever, vomiting, etc. for 24 hours prior to their return to school, or have a physician's note stating that the student is not contagious and/or is under treatment.

Teachers will be informed of students dismissed for illness.

### ***Make-up work for excused absences***

It is the responsibility of the individual student to see his/her teacher(s) to make up any graded work missed because of an absence. Make-up tests, if applicable, will be scheduled at a time agreed to with the teacher. If a student fails to make up a test and makes no other arrangement within the allotted time, at the discretion of the administration, the student may not be given the test. Students or parents should request homework assignments for extended absences. A student returning to school during the school day is required to locate the teacher of each class missed to get any assignment(s) and/or take or arrange to take any test(s) missed.

### ***Unexcused absences***

Some absences from school may be considered unexcused, subject however to the review and discretion of a Director and/or Head of School. When an absence is considered unexcused, students may not be permitted to make up tests, examinations, or quizzes that are missed. These guidelines apply to all school days including those immediately before and after vacations.

### ***Tardies***

Students are to be in class by 8:00 a.m. Anyone who arrives after the bell has rung will be considered tardy. All students with excessive tardies will have a parent/teacher conference. Excessive tardiness may result in the requirement to make up time outside of regular school hours, and at additional cost to the parents.

### ***Re-enrollment***

A pattern of low grades, poor work habits, poor conduct, excessive absenteeism or tardiness, or the parents' failure to meet financial obligations can jeopardize a student's continued enrollment. Entrance into the next grade will be based on the classroom performance and behavior of the student and at the sole discretion of the School administration.

### ***Check-in and check-out procedures***

There are specific procedures for signing a student in and out of School. Children who arrive late to School must notify a member of the administrative staff.

Students who find it necessary to leave campus during the School day must notify and receive permission from the administration. They must obtain staff permission before leaving, and notify the staff when they return. A parent must be present when a student enters or leaves the School unless the student is permitted by law and with the permission of the parents to drive him or herself. The School will not allow a student to leave with another person unless authorized by the parent to do so.

### ***Dismissal***

Only members of the administration may excuse a child to any adult before the regular dismissal time. If a situation arises which necessitates taking a child out of School, the parent/guardian is required to inform a member of the administration. Students will not be allowed to leave the School grounds, except for an authorized School trip, or under the conditions described above. Students who remain after School for sports or other activities will not be allowed to leave the School grounds and then return for pick-up.

# Academics

## ***New Horizon Academy Honor Code***

New Horizon Academy students are expected to abide by an honor code, as follows:

"I will not lie, cheat, or steal; I will respect myself and others."

Students are expected to be honest in all their words and deeds and to respect the rights, property, and reputation of every member of the School community. Each student has a duty to accept individual responsibility in promoting the atmosphere of trust and community we cultivate at New Horizon Academy.

## ***Grading and Conduct Rating***

Report cards are issued every nine weeks to all students. Intra-term progress reports are issued to all students. Students are evaluated using the grading scale below. Teachers typically provide comments for all grade levels.

A	90-100	Outstanding work
B	80-89	Above average work
C	70-79	Satisfactory work
D	60-69	Passing but unsatisfactory – not eligible for high school credit
F	0-59	Unacceptable work – not eligible for high school credit
I	no score	Incomplete work

## ***Academics and Athletics***

Any students participating in a sport must maintain an academic average of "C" (70%) or above during the entire time that he/she is involved in the sport. If the student's academic average falls below a C, he/she will be required to stop participating in the sport in order to devote more time to School work and will not be allowed to attend practices or travel with the team to away games and events. Suspension from all sports activities will last until the student has raised his/her academic average to a C or above. This policy is not instituted to punish but to help students keep their academic work as a high priority and not neglect it while participating in sports.

## ***Plagiarism and Cheating***

All work that students complete for which they receive credit must be their own. A student who asks or allows another person to complete or submit the student's work is responsible for the actions of the other person.

*Plagiarism & Cheating:* Cheating and plagiarism are academic dishonesty. *Plagiarism* is the presentation of the words, ideas, concepts, images, or works of another as one's own. Material (in whole or paraphrased) taken from a primary or secondary source without following standards of conventional attribution, and/or without appropriate reference citation is considered to be plagiarized. *Cheating* is obtaining (or attempting to obtain) something by dishonest or deceptive means. A failing grade will be recorded for any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or, completed by means of academic dishonestly, or, deception.

Situations involving cheating or plagiarism on School work (tests, quizzes, homework) will result in a zero, and further disciplinary action. Lending homework to a fellow student to copy is considered cheating by both participants. Discussing the items on a test before all students have taken the test is also considered cheating by all participants.

The concept of plagiarism is explained and discussed in all grades, and thus, the student should be well qualified to make the necessary judgment to avoid erroneously representing someone else's work as his/her own.

## ***Homework***

Homework is an important part of the student's day as it is a time for the learner to review the day's lessons, master additional material, and prepare for class the following day. As both short and longer term assignments are given, it is necessary for students, with the assistance of faculty and parents, to budget their time wisely. Students are expected to complete assigned homework as directed and in the spirit in which it is assigned; to return homework assignments to the teacher by the designated time; and to submit homework assignments that reflect careful attention to detail and quality of work.

## ***Appropriateness of Schoolwork***

All student work must be School appropriate. When making videos, a power point presentation, or writing a report, students must refrain from making inappropriate sexual, drug, alcohol, violence, or cigarette references or innuendoes. Additionally, students must not ridicule others because of their disability, gender, religion, ethnic, or racial characteristics at any time.

## ***Standardized Testing***

Standardized tests are administered to students each year. Students are tested in several academic areas including English/language arts, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The purpose of the testing program is to monitor student achievement. The results of such tests are used to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in academic areas, and may be used to determine eligibility for promotion to the next grade or the need for Summer School. Test results are also used to determine the effectiveness of educational programs and how programs can be improved.

## ***Schedule and Teacher Changes***

Schedule and/or teacher changes will be initiated by the School when operational needs require or when the administration believes the change will be in the best interests of the student and/or institution. The School will not entertain requests for changes based on a parent or student's dislike of a particular teacher or to accommodate friendships. Please understand that the School and administration often place students in particular classes to ensure a quality mix of students and to enhance everyone's learning experiences.

## ***Parent/Teacher Conferences***

Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time by making arrangements in advance with the teacher or School office. In consideration of the great demands placed on teachers, the administration requests that you refrain from engaging teachers in a discussion at times when their attention needs to be on their class. Parents and students may not call teachers or the administrator at their home.

# Social Guidelines and Expectations

## ***Purpose and Goal***

Our goal is to maintain a secure, challenging, and nurturing School environment, where students develop a strong sense of integrity and respect for others. In order to promote this goal, students are expected to take care in the language they use, the attitudes they express, and the behaviors they exhibit.

The standards of student conduct are designed to provide students with guidance to help them meet the goals and expectations of our community. The list of rules and policies should be read carefully. Violations will result in serious consequences, up to and including suspension or dismissal from School. Students may also be held responsible for any damage or harm that they cause to individuals and/or the School community at large.

The policies and standards apply any time a student is on campus, any time a student is participating in or attending a School-sponsored event on or off campus; any time a student is officially representing the School; and any time a student is traveling on behalf of the School.

In addition, the School regards any behavior prejudicial to the best interests of the School, whether at School or elsewhere, as sufficient grounds for a disciplinary response.

While consistent application of disciplinary policies is sought, each situation is judged on its merits. Every effort will be made to ensure that decisions are not arbitrary.

The policies and rules outlined in this Handbook should not be read as an all-inclusive description of the School's standards, which are based on **honesty, respect, trust, and safety**. Any behavior that constitutes a breach of these School values may be treated as a major School rule violation. Students are expected to comply with School standards and rules, and they are also encouraged to discuss with their fellow students, teachers or administration any issues or infractions of School standards and rules toward the purpose of caring for one another in a spirit of kindness and of what is best for each person in the School community.

## ***Policies and Rules***

### **Animal Policy**

Due to concerns about the health, safety, and welfare of people in the School community, no animals are allowed on School property or at School-related events without the permission of the Head of School. Pet owners are liable for any and all damage to person or property caused by their animals even when the Head of School has permitted the animal's presence. Under no circumstances are dogs with a history of aggression or that are members of breeds known to be aggressive (including but not limited to Pit Bulls,

Chow Chows, or any other fighting or defensive dog) permitted on School property, even if in a vehicle and/or on a leash.

### **Behavior in Class/Halls/Walkways**

Students are to refrain from talking in class or other required gatherings except as permitted, are to use a reasonable tone of voice, and should exhibit orderly behavior at all times. Students must walk from place to place on campus. Students must exercise good judgment in traveling from place to place, which includes watching for obstacles, not walking with items in the student's mouth, not playing in the corridors, not blocking entrances or walkways, etc.

### **Cell Phones and Other Electronics**

Students may have cell phones, media players, and combination devices ("smart phones") on their possession at School, but must ensure that they are turned off during class. Students may use such devices only before School, during the morning break, lunch period, and after School hours. Whenever device use is permitted, students may not use them in any way that is harassing or disruptive to the educational environment, including making threats, using camera phones to take inappropriate pictures or to videotape classes, to send text messages to other students in class, or in ways that would otherwise violate a School rule.

Students who violate this policy will have their cell phones or electronics confiscated. Parents will be required to come to the School office to pick up confiscated items. Students will also be subject to disciplinary procedures for violation of this policy.

### **Computer and Systems Usage Policy**

All persons using the School's computers, the School's computer systems, or personal computers on School property or over the School's systems are required to abide by the following rules. This policy also applies to the use of any personal electronic devices (computers, cameras, "smart phones," Blackberries, video cameras, PDA, etc.) on School property or at a School related event. Failure to abide by these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action determined by the School administration. All computers should be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Violations of the following guidelines may result in the revocation of access privileges and possible disciplinary responses, including expulsion for serious offenses.

Purpose: The purpose of providing access to the Internet and the School's computer systems is to support research and provide unique educational opportunities. The use of such resources should be limited to those activities that support the School's educational objectives.

Privilege: The use of the School's systems is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate or illegal use of the School's systems or of the Internet will result in loss of the privilege and disciplinary action.

Internet access: The School community--students, faculty, administrators and staff--have the privilege of access to the Internet. The School encourages students and teachers to use the Internet to expand their knowledge. The Internet allows users to send and receive e-mail, to log onto remote computers, and to browse databases of information. It also lets users send and receive files and programs contained on other computers. Files may be downloaded only to personal disks. Files are not to be downloaded to the School's local or network hard drives.

Non-reliance on internet filtering systems. The School expects users to act responsibly in their use of the internet and to immediately disengage from any materials that are inappropriate and to report the situation to the faculty member or administrator in charge of the activity. Although the School cannot effectively restrict the content of information obtained by students via the Internet, obtaining material that is explicitly labeled as not intended for minors will be considered a violation of School rules. Furthermore, making public or passing on any material that is pornographic, violent in nature, or otherwise harassing is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately by the appropriate administrator.

Internet safety: Students should never give out personal information (address, telephone number, name of School, address of School, date of birth, Social Security Number, credit card number, etc.) over the Internet. Students also should not meet with someone that they have contacted on-line without prior parental approval. Safety is the responsibility of the parent and student. The School is not liable in any way for irresponsible acts on the part of the student.

Pirated Software and illegally acquired or shared media: Commercial software and media are legally protected, via means such as patents, copyrights, and other legal devices. Each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software or media. There is no justification for the use of illegally obtained software or media. The School will not, in any way, be held responsible for a student's use of, access to, or acquisition of illegally acquired or used software or media.

Software and media in general: We recognize that students may bring electronic devices that contain software and media acquired, whether legally or illegally, outside of School property and/or in manners unrelated to the functions of a School. The School will not, in any way, be held responsible for a student's use of, access to, or acquisition of software or media that is not directly approved by the Head of School.

Network access/passwords: Accessing the accounts and files of others is prohibited. Attempting to impair the network, to bypass restrictions set by the network administrator, or to create links to the School's web page is prohibited. Obtaining another's password or rights to another's directory or e-mail on the network is a violation of School rules as well as a form of theft. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is not appropriate. Using someone else's password or posting a message using another's log-in name is a form of dishonesty, just as is plagiarism or lying, and will be treated as a violation. Depending upon the content, such may also be defined as harassment. **No student may share a password with another student. Each student must guard his or her passwords and act to preserve secrecy. The student will be responsible for any activity done on the School's system under his or her password regardless of who performed the activity.**

School's right To inspect: The School reserves the right to inspect user directories for inappropriate files and to remove them if found and to take other appropriate action if deemed necessary, including notification of parents and law enforcement. The School also reserves the right to inspect any personal electronic devices brought onto campus. Do not assume that any messages or materials on your computer or the School's systems are private.

E-mail: E-mail, short for electronic mail, is any of the various systems that transmit some form of electronic representation of a page or message from one location to another. Electronic mail may not be used to harass or threaten others. The School reserves the right to randomly check e-mail or text messages. E-mail messages must not include personal attacks and should follow the normal rules of appropriate public language. They should not contain any language or content which the author would not be willing to share from the podium at a School meeting. Students should be made aware that deleted e-mails can be undeleted.

Any person who believes that they have been harassed or threatened by an email communication should immediately report the concern in accordance with the School's No Harassment/No Bullying policy.

Viruses: Every effort is made by the School to keep our system virus-free. Even with the best techniques, however, computer viruses and other malicious software can be transmitted to and from any computer, including those in the computer center. The School is not responsible for the transmission of any virus or for damage suffered from a virus or other malicious software.

Computer, technology, and expensive item care: Members of the School community will not abuse, tamper with, or willfully damage any computer or technology equipment or other expensive items, use the computer for other than appropriate work, bring food or drink into any computer area, sit on counters where computers and expensive items are housed, or engage in roughhousing or horseplay in the area where computers and other items of technology are stored or housed. Any intentional acts of vandalism or damage due to errors in judgment or violation of the above rules, whether intentional or unintentional, will be result in discipline and students will be held responsible for replacement or repairs.

Reporting requirements/discipline: Any student who accesses inappropriate material on the Internet, receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via e-mail or on the Internet, including wi-fi and other technology that allows for electronic communications, must immediately report the concern to the teacher who is supervising the activity or to a member of the School's administration so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately. Students who violate any aspect of this Computer and Systems Usage Policy will be subject to appropriate discipline and loss of computer or Internet privileges.

## **Child Abuse and Cooperation with Governmental Authorities**

We take our responsibilities to report suspected child abuse, neglect, and abandonment seriously and will cooperate with governmental authorities in connection with their investigations. If you have any questions regarding the School's reporting obligations, please consult with the administration.

School teachers and other personnel are mandatory reporters under the Florida child abuse reporting laws. Please understand that we must take our obligations seriously and if we assess that a situation requires it, we will make a report to child abuse authorities of situations that we reasonably suspect constitute abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Depending on the circumstances, we may not be able to communicate with parents about the report until authorized by child abuse authorities to do so. We ask for your understanding as do our best to protect the children under our care.

### **Communications from student to parent**

While discouraged, sometime students need to communicate directly with parents. Students are to inform a member of the staff of this need. The staff will regulate calls from students by requiring them to use the School's phone and make the call in the presence of the staff. Students are not to use their mobile devices to contact their parents, whether by voice or written modes, without the express permission of the staff, unless using their devices during the appropriate break times as outlined previously.

### **Computers and Media Device Security**

Student-owned computers and media or other electronic devices should not be left anywhere on campus unattended. The School does not assume or accept any responsibility for loss or damage to such devices.

### **Cooperation with School Staff**

Students are expected to be honest and cooperative with School staff at all times.

### **Criminal Activities**

A student engaging in conduct that is defined under law as a serious misdemeanor or felony (whether charged by law enforcement or not) is grounds for sanctions up to and including expulsion. Violations of law that occur off-campus during the school day will be subject to review under School rules. Violations of law that occur after the school day may also be subject to review under School rules. In the case of offenses that occur at the end of the school year, the School may require punishments to be served during the summer. Transcripts and other reports pertaining to the student's academic standing will be withheld until the completion of the assigned punishment. All decisions involving suspension or expulsion are subject to the final approval of, **and at the sole discretion of,** the Head of School.

## **Destructive Acts**

Students should govern their actions by the values of respect for self, person, and property. Thus, any destructive actions, including causing damage to property, stealing property, harming others, engaging in high-risk behaviors (including roughhousing and acts of carelessness), or similar conduct are prohibited.

## **Displays of Affection & Other Forms of Inappropriate Student Interaction**

Students are prohibited from inappropriate displays of affection on campus or any School-related events, such as kissing, hugging, or other such behavior. In addition, any type of sexual conduct anywhere on campus, on school buses, or at a School-related event is prohibited. In addition, any unwanted or offensive sexual conduct occurring on School property or a School event must be immediately reported in accordance with the Harassment and Bullying Policy.

## **Dress Code**

The primary purpose of the School is education, and all matters of dress and grooming must be weighed against that single objective. To that end, the Administration of the School wishes to maintain the standards of dress and appearance appropriate to academic pursuits. The Dress Code encourages modesty, respect for self, and respect for others. Students should avoid styles of dress and grooming (including hair styling and makeup) which are flamboyant, distract attention from the orderly pursuit of knowledge, disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to individual safety or the safety of the School community. In addition, students are expected to maintain high standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene by making sure they are neither offensive to others nor a threat to the health of the School community. In addition, jewelry should be conservative, appropriate for the School environment, and not attract undue attention.

The following guidelines are to be adhered to:

- Student should not wear any article of clothing that is distasteful by language or sign.
- Students should not wear clothing that is distracting.
- Students should not wear clothing or accessories that have pictures, logos, lettering, writing or other symbols that are vulgar, profane, offensive, suggestive, or disruptive, or that reflect sexual or obscene overtones or that advertise any alcohol, tobacco or drugs, or look-alike labels.
- Students must wear shoes to School and to class.
- Flip-flops or any other type of similar footwear, having a flat sole without a back strap, are prohibited for safety reasons.
- Student should wear clothing that is clean and not torn.
- Students are permitted to wear hats on campus, but teachers have the right to prohibit hats in their classroom or in meetings and assemblies.

- Shorts, skirts, culottes, split skirts, or dresses must be reasonable in length and appropriate for school. Garments must reach to mid-thigh or lower.
- Clothing must be modest, not skimpy or over-revealing, and must adequately cover the shoulders, back, midriff, and undergarments. See-through clothing, halters, and tank tops are prohibited.
- Tight-fitting clothing, such as spandex or bicycle-type clothing and/or any facsimile are prohibited.
- Students must wear clothing that fits properly and clothing must be of such a size and style that they will remain about the hips unassisted – no sagging.
- Clothing items or accessories which are representative of a gang or gang membership are not permitted.

The School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any student's appearance and grooming as a reflection of School standards. This dress code applies while on School grounds, while participating in School athletic events, while participating in School extracurricular activities, or while on any transportation vehicle owned or used by the School.

Students who report to School dressed inappropriately will be given sanctions as deemed appropriate by the administration. Repeated infractions or severe infractions may incur penalties up to and including expulsion.

While we expect students to exercise good judgment in selection of attire, we also expect the parents to monitor their children's attire. Parents may be required to bring appropriate attire to the School to correct a student's inappropriate attire.

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

General: Our students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling or purchasing any alcoholic beverages or other mind-altering substances on or near School property or at School-related activities. Off-premises possession, use, sale or purchase of mind-altering substances and off-premise alcohol abuse is also prohibited.

Testing: Students may be required to submit to urinalysis drug screens, blood alcohol tests, breathalyzer tests and medical examinations under the following circumstances: (a) when a student is suspected of attending School or School-related activities with intoxicants or mind-altering substances in his or her system; (b) when a student suffers an injury or is involved in an accident while at School; (c) on a periodic or random basis, including but not limited to, in connection with the student's participation in extracurricular activities; or (d) when a student is placed under disciplinary contract and such screenings or examinations are terms of the contract. The presence of 0.02% alcohol or the presence of any other intoxicants or mind-altering substances in the body is a violation of this policy. Refusal of a student (by the student or the student's parent) to undergo testing or to cooperate fully with any of these tests (including signing consent forms or providing testing results promptly to the School) is also a violation of our policy and will result in sanctions up to and including expulsion.

This policy does not prohibit the proper use of medication under the direction of a physician. However, the misuse or abuse of such drugs is prohibited. Students who are taking prescription or nonprescription drugs that could affect their ability to function in a safe and efficient manner must notify a School administrator of this fact when they report to School. Furthermore, students must abide by the various rules related to possessing or consuming medications of any kind while on School property.

**Consequences:** In addition to determining the appropriate disciplinary action pursuant to the School's Disciplinary Rules, the School reserves the right to impose the following additional or different requirements as appropriate for the circumstances: determination of possible legal action; required professional counseling approved by the Administration; removal from all elected or appointed positions of leadership in the School; required random and/or regularly scheduled drug and/or alcohol testing at a School-approved local clinic or doctor's office for a time period and at intervals to be determined by the School's Administration. Refusal of a student (directly or through a parent/guardian) to undergo testing or to cooperate fully with any of these tests is considered a positive result and will result in sanctions up to and including expulsion. In addition, the School may elect to or be required to report suspected drug or alcohol use/abuse to authorities.

### **Fights or Horseplay**

Fights and physical horseplay of any kind are prohibited and may lead to disciplinary consequences for all of the individuals.

### **Food, Drink, Gum**

Food and beverages will be consumed only in designated areas and at designated times. There will be no chewing of gum in the School.

Because of danger to health and well-being of students as well as because they may lead to disruptive behaviors, energy drinks (such as Monster and Red Bull) and relaxation drinks which contain herbal or chemical sedatives are **strictly prohibited**.

### **General Conduct**

Students and parents should be considerate and show respect toward other students, faculty, all guests and visitors. Students should respect School property and the personal property of other people. Students and parents, whether as participants or spectators, are required to show good sportsmanship and courtesy at all School-sponsored events (on and off campus). Any person showing unsportsmanlike conduct may be asked to leave the event and may not be allowed to attend future events.

## **Harassment/Bullying**

General: The School is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness and acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. Therefore, the School will not tolerate any type of harassment or bullying. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, comments, teasing, and other offensive conduct relating to race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, or disability. Harassment also includes unwanted, offensive sexual conduct. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal aggression (hitting, kicking, taunting, teasing, threatening, ridiculing, etc.), relational aggression (harming or threatening to harm relationships or acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion), and emotional aggression (teasing, threatening, intimidating others).

Bullying or harassment can occur through any type of communications method, including face-to-face communications, phone, text, email, postings on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), smart phones, or other forms of technology. The communications can be direct or indirect, such as through friends or others. Any type of offensive conduct, whether on or off campus, on a school bus, or at a School-related event, can create an uncomfortable School environment and may interfere with an individual's education.

All concerns relating to harassment or bullying should be reported immediately to a member of the School's administration. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses or has knowledge of an incident of bullying or harassment will report the incident to the Administration immediately. When the School administration becomes aware of harassment or bullying, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion for serious or repeated violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or bullying. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Authority to respond to off-campus activity: The School maintains the right to respond to bullying and harassment that occurs off-campus and after School hours. Bullying and harassment that occur outside of the School impact the well-being of students and the School community, and may interfere with an individual's educational experience. Therefore, the School maintains the right to address off-campus conduct to the extent it impacts the School and its students.

School's right to inspect: Pursuant to investigations of bullying, harassment, and other conduct violations, the School reserves the right to inspect communication devices, whether School or private property, to the extent those devices are on School grounds or at School activities. Similarly, the School reserves the right to view internet postings to the extent they are available in the public domain or voluntarily shared by a member of the School community, even if the volunteer is neither the originator or recipient, as long as the volunteer obtained the information by scrupulous means.

## **Hazing**

Although we encourage students to participate in School-related athletics, clubs, associations, organizations and other groups, the School prohibits all forms of hazing. Hazing refers to any activity expected of a student to join or to continue membership or participation in any group where the activity produces or could be expected to produce mental, emotional or physical discomfort, humiliation, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule to the student, regardless of the student's willingness to participate. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, acts of personal servitude (i.e., forced labor or service), sleep deprivation, restrictions on personal hygiene, yelling, swearing, insulting or demeaning verbal abuse, being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire, consumption of vile or other non-food substances, consumption of alcohol or drugs, smearing of skin with vile substances, brandings, writing or marking on one's skin or clothes, physical beatings, paddling or other physical abuse, performing sexual simulation or sexual acts, stunts or dares that could result in physical injury or harm to a person's mental, emotional or social well-being, any act in violation of the law or School policy, and any other activity that could fall within the definition of hazing. If you think a particular activity could possibly be hazing, then it probably is. If you are not sure, you are accountable to ask a member of the Administration.

A student violates this policy whenever he or she engages, assists, or attempts to engage or assist in the planning or committing of any hazing activity, whether on or off School property. Each student is also responsible for immediately reporting any hazing activity or plans for any hazing activity a member of the Administration. The failure to make such a report is also a violation of this policy.

When the School administration becomes aware of any actual or planned hazing activity, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the School for serious or repeated violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of hazing activity.

## **Honesty and Dishonesty**

Dishonesty in any form, including stealing, lying, cheating, falsifying notes, and/or academic dishonesty is inconsistent with School standards. Dishonesty is considered a fundamental breach of our community's expectations. A student's dishonesty in connection with an investigation of misconduct will compound the disciplinary response, regardless of the severity of the original violation.

## **Language**

Students and parents are prohibited from using profane, obscene, bigoted, or other type of offensive language or gestures on campus or at School-sponsored events.

## **Leaving School Property**

It is a serious infraction to leave campus without authorization. Students who do so can jeopardize the senior privilege, may be required to submit to a drug or alcohol test, and will be subject to sanctions up to and including expulsion.

## **Lockers**

Students are to keep their lockers clean. Lockers are not to be shared. Personal items should be taken home each evening. Lockers must be locked (with the School's lock). Lockers may be inspected periodically without prior notice or consent. An unauthorized lock will be removed with no notice to the student. Each student must provide the locker combination to the staff. If a change is made, the teacher must be notified. Lockers will be assigned during the first week of school.

All lockers are to be emptied by the last day of school. Any items or books left after that time will be given away or discarded as appropriate.

It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker combination secure and locker locked. The School assumes no financial responsibility for items taken from lockers. Administration reserves the right, in its discretion, to open and/or search lockers.

## **Lost and Found**

Books, clothing and other personal items which are left at the end of each day will be placed in the lost and found bench or on the kiosk countertop and may be claimed before or after school. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations or disposed of at regular intervals.

Labeling of all items helps prevent loss.

## **Medicines and Drugs - Use and Sharing Prohibited**

Unless otherwise specified in policies (see Health, Immunizations, and Medications), and approved by Administration,, no student is to have in their possession, consume, or share medicines or drugs, includes over the counter drugs and legally obtained prescription drugs. Unless otherwise specified in policies and approved by Administration, no one may take any medicine or drug and no one may offer or give to another student any medicine or drug at any time and for any reason. Failure to comply with this mandate may lead to sanctions up to and including expulsion.

## **Messages**

In order to maintain an appropriate classroom environment, classroom and school-day interruptions should be minimized. Please refrain from asking staff to relay messages to students unless absolutely necessary.

## **Off Campus Behaviors**

As stated elsewhere in this Handbook, the School does not wish to unnecessarily involve itself in a student's off campus behaviors. However, the School reserves the right to take action to the extent that off campus behaviors impact the individual's ability to continue at school or impact other students' or employees' ability to be comfortable at school. We expect students to avoid all types of behaviors, including behaviors that may be harmful to one's physical and/or emotional well-being. As examples, off campus Internet activity, criminal activity, sexual activity, use of drugs or alcohol, or engaging in dangerous behaviors, may result in a student receiving disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the School.

## **Pornography and sexually inappropriate content**

The possession, viewing, or distribution of pornography or other sexually inappropriate content on campus, in either electronic or hard copy form, is a violation of School rules. Students who violate this rule are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. The School reserves the right to determine what material is pornographic or inappropriate.

## **Prohibited Items**

Students are prohibited from possessing or having in their possession (locker, vehicle, backpack, purse, person, etc.), drugs (whether legal or illegal), alcohol, matches, flammable or explosive substances, and any other potentially dangerous item. Violations of this rule are subject to the regular disciplinary actions of the School. Any such items may be confiscated and, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement.

## Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of classrooms, restrooms, supplies and furniture. Students who disfigure property or otherwise damage School property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. For the protection of furniture and carpet, chewing gum is prohibited at all times. Library books, textbooks, and teaching materials are furnished by the School and loaned to the students for the purpose of study or enjoyment. Students will be required to pay for any lost or damaged materials checked out to them.

## Social Media and Social Networking Policies and Procedures

Social media encompasses a broad array of online activity including social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other similar online or Internet communications. Because this form of communication is vast and growing, it is important to communicate the School's position regarding a student's use of social media or networking.

Use at school or a School-related event: We do not permit students to access social media and/or social networking sites while on School property or at a School-related event. We have taken steps to block many of the social media/networking sites on our network, but technology will undoubtedly work faster than our IT Department. Therefore, even if you are able to access such sites on School property or at a School-related event, you should understand that your activities are in violation of School policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Use Away from School Property: It is not our goal to regulate a student's personal online activities when not on School property or at a School-related event. Please understand, however, that certain activities might impact a student's relationships with other students or School employees or School rights that we do reserve the right to regulate. All students should ensure that they are familiar with School's conduct policies to avoid any online communications that might violate those policies.

For example, you should ensure that your online activities do not violate a School policy regarding bullying or harassment, or other similar policies pertaining to how students interact with each other. If you post or say something online that makes another student feel uncomfortable, your activity may result in an investigation and discipline.

No expectation of privacy: Students should also be aware that teachers and administrators periodically check such sites and may determine that off campus behavior violates the School conduct code by making disparaging or negative comments about the School, administration, or faculty members in a manner that is disruptive to the School's educational mission or activities.

Interactions with adults: Students should not be "friends" with any faculty member or other adult member of our community (other than the Student's parent) on any of these social networking sites. Exceptions may be made if the faculty or School site is designed specifically for interactions with the

School community or community in general. Any violation of this prohibition must be reported to the Administration immediately.

Discretion: In addition, postings on social networking or other Internet sites of students engaging in inappropriate behavior (such as drinking, smoking, sexual actions, etc.) is prohibited. Students are expected to cooperate in investigations by providing access to such sites.

Respect for the School's intellectual property: Students are not permitted to use the School's name, logo, trademark, or service mark, or any names, logos, trademarks, and service marks belonging to the School or its parent company, in activities, including online activities. Students are not permitted to post photographs of the School, its locations, activities, students, parents, or employee-related activities on line. Students are not permitted to create websites or social networking profiles to rate teachers, discuss aspects of the School, or otherwise disclose information online that the School would find offensive or inappropriate if posted in the School's newspaper. Finally, students are not permitted to disclose any confidential information of the School, employees, students, parents, or activities online.

Your Identity Online: You are responsible for any of your online activity with a School email address, and/or which can be traced back to the School's domain, and/or which uses School assets.

What you publish on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the School and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the School. If the material was generated by the School and/or may be protected by copyright and other legal devices, it may not be used or shared without the express written permission of the Head of School.

**School's Right to Inspect**: The School reserves the right to inspect all electronic data and usage occurring over the School's network or on School property without prior notice. Similarly, the School reserves the right to inspect written documents, whether handwritten or typed, without prior notice. We also reserve the right to assess information in the public domain on the Internet and to discipline students for any violation of these guidelines.

## **Student/Adult Interaction and Communication**

Our students and adults (teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, and visitors) are expected to interact with each other in a professional and respectful manner. Although our adults can and should be friendly with the students, becoming too friendly with each other sometimes results in confusion and anxiety.

If a student or the student's parents become aware of any adult's communications or actions toward one or more students that seems unusual, overly friendly, or otherwise inappropriate, such information should immediately be reported to the School administration. Some examples of behaviors that should not occur and which should be reported include School employees:

- Calling students at home for a non-school matter;

- Touching students or their clothing in non-professional ways or inappropriate places, or touching a student with aggression or in frustration;
- Making comments that are too personal (about a student’s clothing, hair, personal habits, etc.)
- Sending e-mails, texts, or writing notes to students of a personal nature;
- Flirting or asking a student on a date;
- Visiting students to “hang out” in their hotel rooms when on field trips or sporting events or when the student’s parents are not at home;
- Asking students to sit on a teacher’s lap;
- Telling secrets or telling the student not to tell something that is a secret;
- Swearing, making inappropriate sexual, racial/or ethnic comments;
- Inviting students to visit the adult’s social networking profile or become a “friend” on a social network;
- Telling off-color jokes; and
- Dating or engaging in consensual relationships with students.

Similarly, we expect parents to behave in a mature and responsible matter with our staff and with other students and their families. Discussions between and among staff, students, and families must be civil and appropriate. Loud, angry, or aggressive language or actions will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in the removal from our School and community, either temporarily or permanently, and may also result in expulsion of a student. (Faculty and staff may be subject to sanctions as outlined in internal documents or reflective of professional practices.)

## **Tobacco Products**

The use or possession of tobacco products is not permitted on campus or at School-related events.

## **Truancy**

A student is truant if he/she is absent from School without the permission of a parent or guardian or leaves the School grounds once he/she has reported for classes without proper School personnel authorization. In case of truancy, the parent or guardian will be notified immediately. Concerns for the safety and well-being of truant students may be reported to appropriate authorities.

## **Visitors**

Outside visitors are not allowed to visit a student's class without prior permission from the Administration.

## **Weapons and Threats**

The School takes a zero tolerance position on threats and weapons, even when students make threats in jest. This pertains to threats made or reported verbally, in writing, via e-mail or other electronic media; on or off School property; and during or outside of School activities. Threats will be fully investigated and authorities may be notified.

Students are prohibited from bringing any type of weapon to School or School-sponsored events, including knives, guns, clubs, tasers or other electric devices (whether offensive or defensive in nature), explosives,, fireworks, other chemical substances, etc. Any such item may be confiscated and, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement. Any pictorial depictions of weapons or verbal or written comments that the administration determines at its sole discretion to be threatening in nature will be construed as threats. Violations of these policies may result in School sanctions up to and including expulsion.

## **Questions on Policies**

Please direct questions about School policies to the President or Head of School.

# Disciplinary Matters

## ***General Disciplinary Matters***

The teacher of each class is in charge of the ordinary discipline in the classroom. The student is expected to comply with whatever regulations or disciplinary measures the teacher may impose. Faculty and staff members should always be addressed in a polite and respectful manner. Confrontational behavior with the teacher is inappropriate. Each situation will be handled at the School's discretion in accordance with the School's rules, policies, and practices, as well as general common sense.

Disciplinary matters, or incidents in violation of School rules and regulations, will be handled initially at the most immediate level possible. Violations will subject the student to disciplinary consequences. The level of disciplinary response for any violation of School rules will depend on a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Whether any person was harmed;
- Whether there was property damage or other loss of property;
- The level of any class or School disruption caused by the student's behavior;
- The number, if any, of prior infractions of School rules and regulations;
- Whether the student has been previously disciplined (about specific behaviors or disruptive behavior in general);
- Whether illegal substances (for example, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, etc.) were involved;
- Whether the student had been earlier warned about the same or similar conduct;
- Whether there was a weapon or other dangerous item involved;
- Whether the conduct is of the kind also prohibited by criminal law; and/or
- Whether the student was honest and cooperative in connection with the investigation of the behavior.

## **Fairness and Individual Approach**

Consistent with our School's mission and guiding beliefs, The School and its leadership approach each disciplinary case individually and craft consequences that are likely, as determined solely by the staff, to result in the growth of an individual student and the management of negative behaviors. Different

students may receive different consequences for similar infractions. The Administration strives to treat every student fairly and will not discriminate based upon race, color, ethnicity, disability, national origin, and genetic information, including sickle cell trait. Our goal in assigning consequences for disciplinary infractions is to provide for the safety and well being of the students and the community and to encourage the growth of and adoption of appropriate behaviors by individuals. To that end, the School retains the right to craft consequences that take into consideration age, grade, conditions, circumstances, past behaviors, severity of infractions, learning styles and capacities of students, etc.

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

The range of possible disciplinary consequences includes one or more of the following, and may or may not appear in a sequence, consecutively, or concurrently:

Coaching and Counseling: Students are encouraged to learn and grow at all times, including times when discipline is necessary. Students are engaged in discussions of the importance of positive behaviors and the consequences on self, others, and community of negative behaviors.

Detention: The student must spend a period of time in a designated area of the School. Detained students may be asked to perform remedial activities, write apologies, engage in activities of learning and growth, whether personal or academic, or may be asked to help with activities such as cleaning the boards or helping with recycling. Detentions may be for one day or several days. If the student is late or absent from detention, an additional detention may be assigned.

Discharge for the day: Students are sent home for the remainder of a day; this sanction may be combined with further sanctions such as detentions and suspensions on other days.

Disciplinary Report: Written notice of the infraction may be added to the student's file or other record of disciplinary actions. These reports may require the signature of the Parents. Subsequent infractions may incur additional actions or sanctions. Parents may be brought to the School for conferences with Administration. Disciplinary reports are often used in conjunction with other sanctions, including detentions and suspensions

Disciplinary Warning Status: Students who have serious or repeat infractions may be placed on disciplinary warning status, which means that further infractions will result in probation, suspension, or expulsion. Note that this step may or may not precede Probationary status; all assignments of disciplinary consequences are at the sole discretion of the Administration.

Expulsion: Students may be expelled for serious first offenses; repeat infractions (even if not related); conduct resulting in harm, damage, or disruption to the educational environment; parent or family member causing disruption to the School or the School's educational mission; non-payment of tuition or fees; not meeting academic requirements; or not meeting attendance requirements. Any matter taken under consideration by the Administration directly or considered serious enough by the Administration severally or the Head of School individually may be grounds for expulsion. Because the severity of offenses may be subject to interpretation, **the School reserves the right to determine whether an offense is grounds for expulsion.**

In-School Suspension: Students required to be on campus at a designated area but are not allowed to attend class or events. Students still have the responsibility to complete and timely submit all class work and to arrange to make up examinations. Suspension usually becomes a permanent part of a student's record.

Loss of Privileges: Students may be prevented or precluded from participation in events, activities, and/or organizations.

Out of School Suspension: Students may be banned from all School activities, including classes, and are to remain at home. Students still have the responsibility to complete and timely submit all class work and to arrange to make up examinations. Where grades are given for class participation, suspended students will receive grades of zero. Suspensions usually become a permanent part of a student's record.

Probation: A student on probation is in jeopardy of being expelled if they commit a subsequent major or minor offense. Probation lasts for a period of time as determined by the School Administration and may be continued, renewed, or canceled at the sole determination of the Administration. Students on probation may lose privileges (such as participating in extracurricular activities, holding office, participating in student council, etc.) and/or be required to engage in additional activities outside of the normal academic coursework.

Removal from an event or location: Students may be removed from events, activities, or locations.

Verbal Reprimand: Students are spoken to in stronger terms with the intention of preventing future bad behavior.

Reporting to authorities: In addition to any of the above sanctions, the School may report to the appropriate authorities any actions that appear to violate the law or that may lead to harm to self or others.

## **Reporting of Infractions to Colleges/Universities and Schools**

If requested on the original application, students and parents are responsible for immediately reporting to colleges and other schools to which the student may be transferring (1) disciplinary matters for which a consequence has been given; and (2) circumstances under which a student was withdrawn from School to avoid the possibility of a disciplinary infraction. The student and/or parent must also provide the School with a copy of the letter or other information disclosed. It is important for the student and parent to realize that the School and/or the student's college counselor will also inform the school/college of such an incident.

In the case where a disciplinary action (or withdrawal) has occurred after the college or school transfer application has been sent, the same process must be followed. In other words, if the original application asked for information on disciplinary infractions, the student should update the information if it later

changes and provide the School with a copy of the update letter. Similarly, the School will update the information to the college or school. This reporting must take place in letter form to the college or school within 10 days after the consequence has been imposed or the withdrawal has occurred.

## **Student Services, Activities, and Resources**

### ***Conversations with staff***

The School's staff are available to help students with personal or social concerns that may affect the student's academic performance or social conduct. The enrollment of your child is consent to allow your child to engage in discussions with our staff. You also acknowledge that our staff are not health care professionals and are not licensed to practice medicine or give medical advice, and that our staff are not licensed psychotherapists.

Students and parents should be aware that our School's philosophy is that conversations with staff will not be treated as confidential. We promote a regard for privacy and sensitivity, but are first and foremost concerned with the well-being of our students, their families, and our staff. Out of that concern for students, their families, and our staff, we may take a variety of actions, including encouraging the student to communicate with the student's parents or other adults regarding the circumstances disclosed; directly informing the parents of the circumstances disclosed; informing other members of the Staff about the circumstances disclosed; and informing law enforcement or child abuse authorities about the circumstances disclosed when the nature of the communication reveals the risk of harm to the student or others, or a violation of the child abuse laws.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips are part of the educational process. It must be stressed, however, that only those students who, in the Administration's sole discretion, have demonstrated good conduct during their classes and on other trips will be permitted to attend.

Proper behavior during the trip continues to be of utmost importance. Parents of any student unable to follow the given guidelines will be notified. In severe cases, the parent will be requested to come and/or provide transportation home for the student.

A condition of a student's or parent's participation in any field trip is the execution of the School's standard Participation Release. For any students whose parents have not executed the release, the student will have the option of attending an alternative class for the period of the field trip or remaining at home.

### ***Library***

All library books, periodicals, or other cataloged materials which are checked out by students, must be returned and cleared by the School staff at a designated time. Students are responsible for taking care of

and returning any book checked out to them. If a book is lost or damaged while checked out to a student, that student will be expected to pay for it.

### ***Lunchroom and common areas***

Students are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen and to help make the common areas a pleasant place to eat and relax. Students are to clean up after themselves, not litter, put trash in trash bins and comply with the School's recycling program. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

### ***Organizations***

Our School offers a variety of activities and varied selection of clubs and organizations. Because school is more rewarding for those who participate, we encourage students to join a club or organization. Listen to the announcements or stop in the office to find out more about the activities program.

We require parents to provide appropriate insurance for athletes. The School assumes no responsibility for injury to students participating in athletics – or any other School activities.

Education is first - this is stressed at all times. All athletes must meet scholastic requirements as outlined in this Handbook. Discipline is a prime factor in any athletic success - off the field, on the field, in locker rooms, on trips, and in School. Athletes are to conduct themselves on the highest possible level, being sure that their actions and words are beyond reproach.

### ***Transportation***

#### **Bus and other transportation**

New Horizon Academy does not offer routine bus service for students. We may from time to time hire, direct to be hired, or otherwise acquire and use vehicles for transportation to and from School or School-sponsored events and activities, such as field trips and picnics. We may also from time to time allow students to ride in vehicles driven by our staff.

Students who are riding to and from School or School-sponsored events and activities on buses, cars, or other conveyances are required to follow some basic safety rules. The driver is responsible for student safety and may assign seating or direct the student in any reasonable manner to maintain that safety.

The following behaviors are expected of all students:

1. Be on time at the designated loading zone or bus stop.

2. Wait until the vehicle is completely stopped before moving forward to enter.
3. Refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe.
4. Go immediately to a seat and be seated.
5. Wear your seatbelt (if one is available).
6. Remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
7. Keep heads, hands, arms, and legs inside the vehicle at all times.
8. No littering in the vehicle or throwing anything from the vehicle.
9. No eating or drinking beverages on the vehicle.
10. Do not tamper with the vehicle or any of its equipment.
11. Remain seated until the vehicle is stopped.
12. Do not engage in any activity in the vehicle that would constitute a violation of the School rules.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than the destination of the function or at School unless they have proper authorization from the student's parents and the School's administration.

A student who becomes a behavior problem on a vehicle may be disciplined according to School disciplinary practices.

## **Carpools**

Parent(s) are expected to provide transportation for their children. While the School will help identify neighboring families in order to facilitate carpooling and ride-sharing, School personnel cannot be responsible for the formation of carpools. Students must go home with their own driver or carpool unless prior arrangements have been made and the School has been notified by the parents of the various students involved.

## **Student Drivers**

Students are expected to follow local ordinances in the operation of their motor vehicles. Students who are driving their own vehicle must complete vehicle identity forms and received signed parental permission. Forms can be obtained in the School office. Students are to park their cars in the parking area only. No student is to park his/her car in a manner that blocks another car from entering or exiting the

parking lot. Unless given express permission by a member of the Administration, students may not return to their cars for any reason other than to leave the School grounds for dismissal at the end of the School day. Students may not drive other students on behalf of the School to or from any School-related event or activity. Student drivers may not transport student passengers at any time without the express permission of the parents of both students. Students violating this policy or engaging in unsafe driving/parking practices will lose the privilege of driving to School and may be subject to other disciplinary measures.

### **Student Passengers**

Students may only ride with student drivers if both the driver and passenger have the express permission of the parents of both students. Permission forms are available in the School office. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures.

# Health, Immunizations and Medications

## Immunizations and Physical Exam

A physical examination must be completed for each student entering the School. In addition, immunizations or a certificate of waiver are required for all students. Immunizations must be kept current, and a Certificate of Immunization, signed by a physician or equivalent health care professional, or an immunization waiver must be kept on file in the School office. Students may not attend School without an appropriate immunization record.

## Illness

If a student is not feeling well, he should inform a teacher and/or a member of the Administration. Students will be released for medical reasons only with permission from the parent/guardian or from a person designated on the student's emergency information form.

## Necessary Medication

Some students must have medication available at School for certain illnesses and conditions. School personnel cannot administer medication without explicit written parental permission. A permission form completed by the parent/guardian is required in the event a student must receive medicine at School. The medicine, in its original container, labeled with the student's name, name of medicine, dose and time to be given, doctor's name (if prescribed) and possible side effects, must be given to the Administration together with a signed permission form.

## Return from Absence

Students who are absent from school for the following reasons require a physician's statement confirming the student's ability to return to school and any necessary limitations or restriction:

- Measles, mumps, chicken pox, ringworm, scarlet fever, Strep infections, mononucleosis, hepatitis, and infectious conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Absence due to an extended illness or surgery
- Students who may not participate in sports or gym classes following an extended illness or surgery

# **Evacuation and Emergency Procedures**

## ***Fire and emergency evacuation***

A map showing the quickest and safest route for leaving the building can be found in each room. Please familiarize yourself with these maps. Students may be appointed to turn off lights and air conditioners and to close the windows and doors during fire drills or an evacuation.

Students must comply with all fire drill instructions. Students should move quickly and quietly to the designated assembly area. Movement and noise during fire drills should be kept to a minimum.

## ***Non-evacuation emergencies***

When notified by sounding the emergency whistle or given verbal instruction by a member of the Staff, students are to sit along an inside wall and await further instruction. Students may be asked to perform tasks such as turning off lights and closing window blinds.

Students must comply with all non-evacuation emergency drill instructions. Students should move quickly and quietly to the designated sitting area. Movement and noise during drills should be kept to a minimum. Talking is not permitted.

## ***Inclement Weather Policy***

School closing or delays due to inclement weather will follow the decisions made by the public school system of Palm Beach County. Students should, however, tune into local radio or TV stations for additional information. In addition, students and/or parents may receive messages (via voice or in the form of electronic communications such as e-mails and text messages) from a member of the Staff. Parents are responsible for providing the School with their contact information. When in doubt or if you have any questions, please attempt to contact the School via telephone.

## Other Important Information and Policies

### ***Inspection Policy***

The School reserves the right to inspect and conduct a search of any place or item on School campus or at a School-related event including, but not limited to, a student's locker, book bag, backpack, vehicle, computer, or personal electronic devices. Inspections and searches may be conducted on a routine or random basis or as deemed necessary. Inspection of electronic devices includes laptops, phones, cameras, and any other electronics, including the contents of same (texts, emails, photos, images, address books, etc., whether such message or information was sent over the School's system or any personal account). Further, the School has the right to seize and permanently retain property disclosed by an inspection or search which is considered potentially harmful, dangerous, illegal, or inappropriate, the possession of which is a violation of the School's rules, community standards, and/or local and state law.

### ***Posters and Announcements***

All posters must be approved at the office before they are displayed in School. If a student wishes to put up a poster, he/she should bring it to the office first. General announcements are made in the morning. Any announcement originating from a student must be cleared by administration.

### ***Payment of Tuition and Fees***

The School strives to provide the highest quality education while maintaining affordable fees. **We depend on the timely payment of tuition and registration fees to cover our obligations. Enrolling your child requires a financial commitment much like any other major purchase. Please make School tuition a budget priority. Failure to make tuition/fee payments by the contractual dates may result in a child being removed from School or not being allowed to take examinations. Transcripts and student records cannot be forwarded to another School if there is an outstanding balance in his/her account, or if there are other outstanding debts.** Please see the enrollment agreement for a more detailed discussion of rights and obligations related to payment and enrollment matters.

### ***Recording Policies***

For reasons of safety and security, activities in the School and on campus are electronically monitored, and recordings are kept for a period of time.

### ***Student Records and Information***

Requests for student records and transcripts must be directed in writing to the School Office. The School reserves the right to withhold student transcripts and records for non-payment of tuition or fees.

The School makes reasonable efforts to ensure that both natural parents receive substantially the same information (transcripts, records, appointments, etc.). The School must rely upon the correctness and completeness of parental information when the student is enrolled. In situations of divorced or separated parents, if one parent believes that the other parent is not entitled to receive certain information, the parent wishing to restrict information provided by the School must provide the School with a court order that is still in effect that specifically restricts the other parent from receiving such information.

### ***Parent/Family Cooperation***

The School believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the School and parent is essential to the fulfillment of the School's educational purpose and responsibilities to its students. If the parent's or other family member's behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus (including during School-sponsored events) is disruptive, intimidating, or overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or serious disagreement with the School's policies, methods of instruction, or discipline, or otherwise seriously interferes with the School's safety procedures, responsibilities, or accomplishment of its educational purpose or program, the School reserves the right to dismiss the family from the community. In addition, the School reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members' involvement or activity at School, on School property, or at School-related events if the parent or other family member engages in behavior or has a status (such as a criminal conviction) that would reasonably suggest that such restrictions may be appropriate for the community. There will be no refund of tuition where such enforced withdrawal occurs and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of this Contract. If, for any reason, it is in the best interest of the School, the School also reserves the right to withdraw an offer of enrollment or re-enrollment at any time, and to nullify an executed Enrollment Contract.

### ***Child Safety from Sexual Offenders and Predators***

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), sexual predators are commonly people the parents/guardians or children know, and these people may be in a position of trust or responsibility to a child and family.

Because of our concern for student safety, all employees, volunteers, and those parents who volunteer for overnight field trips, are screened through the School's criminal background process.

To keep their children safer, parents should talk openly to their children about safety issues. Parents should know their children's friends and be clear with their children about the places and homes that their children visit. Children should be taught that they have the right to say no to any unwelcome, uncomfortable, or confusing touching or actions by others and to get out of those situations as quickly as possible.

Parents should regularly visit the public registry to check out individuals for prior criminal records and sex offenses. Information concerning registered sex offenders and predators in Florida may be obtained by

visiting <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us>, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders database. Information may also be obtained by contacting the FDLE's toll free telephone number: 1-888-FL-PREDATOR (1-888-357-7332). To view a map of registered sex offenders living within a five mile radius of any given address, parents should visit <http://www.familywatchdog.us>. To learn about additional child safety tips and links to child and internet safety sites and searches, parents should visit the Florida Attorney General website at <http://myfloridalegal.com>.

## ***Fund Raising***

No class, individual, or organization is to begin any money raising activity without permission from the School. No class, individual or organization may request money from any other class, individual, or organization within or outside the School without permission from the School administration. All extracurricular organizations should strive to be self-sufficient, raising money through approved concessions and approved service-type projects.

## ***School Business Office Hours***

The School's Business Office is generally open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We are usually open later than that and are available by appointment at mutually convenient times.

## ***Visitors***

Parents or guardians who need to visit campus during School hours are asked to follow these guidelines:

**Make an Appointment:** If you are coming to see an administrator or a faculty member, please call to make an appointment in advance.

**Notify Administration:** When you arrive on campus, please come through the front door and report directly to the central kiosk or, if unattended, to the office. Do not visit any other area of the School without a Staff escort.

**I.D. Check:** If you are asking to see your son or daughter, please do not be offended if you are asked to show identification. This is a safety measure intended to protect your children.

**Please Note:** For the safety and security of our students, anyone seen on campus during School hours who has not checked in with the staff will be reminded to check in or asked to leave campus.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

The registration of a student is considered an acceptance, on his/her part and on the part of his/her parents or guardians, of all rules and regulations of our School, including the judgment of School authorities on academic and disciplinary sanctions, suspension, or expulsion of a student.

The rules and regulations contained in this Handbook are not meant to be all comprehensive. Rather, they presuppose the good will and judgment of a student in all circumstances in which he/she may find himself/herself.

Parents/guardians are asked to familiarize themselves and to ensure that their child understands all of the information contained in this Student/Parent Handbook. Parents and students must sign the form below

We have read and understood all statements and provisions set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/guardian #1		
Relationship to student		
Signature		Date

Name of parent/guardian #2		
Relationship to student		
Signature		Date

