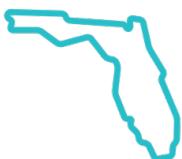




2025 - 2026

# Student Handbook



FLORIDA EDITION  
Board Approved: June 18, 2025



[ideapublicschools.org](http://ideapublicschools.org)

# CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT IDEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Mission .....</i>	10
<i>Vision.....</i>	10
<i>Key Tenets.....</i>	10
<i>History.....</i>	10
<i>Statement of Nondiscrimination.....</i>	10
<i>Homeless Liaison and Title I Participants.....</i>	10
<i>Teacher Qualification and Background Screening .....</i>	11
<i>Special Programs.....</i>	11
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Services .....	11
Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services .....	11
Exceptional Student Education Services .....	12
Section 504 Services .....	12
<b>ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>General Admissions and Enrollment Information .....</i>	12
<i>Admissions Application.....</i>	12
<i>Acceptance Procedures .....</i>	13
<i>Exceptions to Lottery Process .....</i>	13
<i>Student Information to Verify Enrollment Eligibility .....</i>	13
Establishing Identification .....	13
Residency Verification.....	14
<i>McKinney-Vento Act.....</i>	14
<i>Foster Care and Military Connected.....</i>	14
<i>Expulsions.....</i>	14
<i>Transfers .....</i>	14
<i>Withdrawals from School.....</i>	14
Voluntary Withdrawal.....	14
Involuntary Withdrawal .....	14
<b>ATTENDANCE AND TUITION.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Attendance and Tardiness.....</i>	15
<i>Florida Compulsory Attendance Law .....</i>	15
<i>Required Documentation of Absences.....</i>	15
Excused Absences .....	15
Unexcused Absences .....	16
<i>Leaving Campus During School Hours .....</i>	16
<i>Tuition .....</i>	17

**REQUIRED INSTRUCTION AND GRADUATION ..... 17**

- Required Curriculum* ..... 17
- Grading Scale and GPA*..... 17
- Academic Rank*..... 18
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian*..... 18
- Standardized Testing*..... 19
  - Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) ..... 19
  - Florida Alternative Assessment (FAA) ..... 19
  - ACCESS for ELLs & Alternate ACCESS for ELLs ..... 19
- Advanced Placement (AP)* ..... 19
- PreACT and ACT*..... 19
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)*..... 19
- Promotion and Retention Requirements* ..... 20
  - Kindergarten through Grade 5 Promotion ..... 20
  - Midyear Promotion for a Retained Student..... 20
  - Grade 3 Mandatory Retention ..... 20
  - Middle School Promotion ..... 20
  - High School Promotion ..... 21

**HEALTH & WELLNESS ..... 21**

- Healthy & Safe Physical Environments* ..... 21
  - Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health ..... 21
  - Alcohol-Free School Notice ..... 22
  - Tobacco-Free and E-Cigarettes Prohibited..... 22
  - Drug-Free School Notice ..... 22
  - Pest Control ..... 22
  - Asbestos Management Plan..... 22
  - Preparedness Training ..... 22
  - CPR Instruction ..... 22
  - Bleeding Control Instruction ..... 23
- Student Health* ..... 23
  - Mental Health Promotion and Intervention ..... 23
  - Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)..... 23
  - Food Allergy Information ..... 23
  - Communicable Diseases ..... 24
  - Head Lice..... 24
- Medical Treatment*..... 24
  - Emergency Medical Treatment..... 24
  - Medication Administration ..... 25
  - Telemedicine Services..... 25
  - Immunizations ..... 25
  - Exemption from Immunization Requirements..... 25
  - Health Screenings ..... 26
  - Exemption..... 26
  - Dyslexia and Related Disorders..... 26
  - Toileting & Extra Clothing ..... 27
- Restroom and Changing Facility Designation* ..... 27

**STUDENT SAFETY ..... 27**

- Student Code of Conduct* ..... 27
  - Students with disabilities ..... 27
- Mandatory Reporting Policy for Abuse and Neglect* ..... 27
  - Section 1: Background ..... 27
  - Section 2: Reporting Suspected Cases ..... 27
  - Section 3: Referral to Law Enforcement ..... 28
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation* ..... 28
  - Statement of Nondiscrimination ..... 28
  - Discrimination and Harassment (Prohibited Conduct) ..... 28
  - Retaliation ..... 29
  - Reporting Prohibited Conduct ..... 29
  - Investigation ..... 29
  - Appeal ..... 30
- Freedom from Sexual Harassment* ..... 30
  - General Definitions ..... 30
  - Reporting Sexual Harassment ..... 30
  - Notice of Allegations ..... 31
  - Grievance Process ..... 31
  - Consolidating Formal Complaints ..... 31
  - Dismissal of Formal Complaints ..... 31
  - Investigating Formal Complaints ..... 32
  - Determination Regarding Responsibility ..... 32
  - Appeals ..... 33
  - Emergency Removals ..... 33
  - Informal Resolution ..... 33
  - Retaliation Prohibited ..... 34
  - Confidentiality ..... 34
- Non-Sexual Harassment Sex Discrimination* ..... 34
- Freedom from Hazing and Bullying* ..... 34
- Interrogations and Searches* ..... 34
  - Desk and Locker Searches ..... 34
  - Vehicles on Campus ..... 34
- School Visitors* ..... 35
- Registered Sex Offenders* ..... 35
  - Exception ..... 35
- Weapon and Concealed Handgun Prohibition* ..... 35

**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENTS ..... 36**

- Religious Expression* ..... 36
- Moment of Silence* ..... 36
- Pledge of Allegiance* ..... 36
  - Civics Opt-Out Participation ..... 36
- School Calendar* ..... 36
- School Day* ..... 36
- Textbooks and Curriculum Materials* ..... 36

<i>Transcripts</i> .....	37
<i>Student Records</i> .....	37
Classification and Retention of Records.....	37
Deviation Form .....	37
<i>Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations</i> .....	37
<i>Legal Guardian Notification for School-Sponsored Events and Activities</i> .....	37
<i>Fees</i> .....	38
<i>Displaying a Student’s Artwork, Projects, Photos, and Other Original Work</i> .....	38
<i>Distribution of Materials or Documents</i> .....	38
School Materials .....	38
Non-School Materials .....	38
<i>Electronic Devices and Technology Resources</i> .....	39
Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices and Other Electronic Devices.....	39
Use of Campus Technology Resources.....	39
Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources.....	40
Consequences for Violations of the Student Acceptable Use Policy .....	40
<i>Change of Address or Telephone Number</i> .....	40
<i>Uniform Requirements</i> .....	40
IDEA Student Dress Code .....	41
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday Uniform .....	41
Friday Uniform.....	41
Head Coverings .....	41
<i>Child Nutrition Program</i> .....	41
<i>Transportation</i> .....	42
<i>Permission for Students to Walk or Bike to School</i> .....	42
<b>STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<i>Purpose of the Student Code of Conduct</i> .....	42
<i>Authority and Jurisdiction</i> .....	43
<i>Reporting Crimes</i> .....	43
<i>Standards for Student Conduct</i> .....	43
<i>Discipline Management Techniques</i> .....	43
Techniques.....	44
<i>Discipline Matrix</i> .....	44
BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL I .....	44
BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL II .....	45
BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL III .....	46
BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL IV .....	47
BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL V .....	48
GLOSSARY .....	50
<i>Corporal Punishment</i> .....	53
<i>Conferences, Hearings, and Appeals</i> .....	53
Process for Suspensions.....	53
Prerequisites to Suspension.....	54
Notification to Legal Guardians.....	54

Credit During Suspension.....	54
Process for Expulsion (extended suspension) & Notice .....	54
Emergency Placement .....	54
Mandatory Expulsion- zero tolerance offenses.....	54
<i>Mandatory Reporting of “Threats of Terrorism” or “Threats of Violence” .....</i>	<i>55</i>
Placement of Students with Disabilities.....	55
Suspension/Expulsion Requirement .....	55
<i>Gun-Free Schools Act.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>School Emergency Management Plan .....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Behavioral Threat Assessments.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<b>INFORMATION FOR LEGAL GUARDIANS AND IMPORTANT NOTICES .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<i>Accommodations for Children of Military Families.....</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>Student or Legal Guardian Complaints and Concerns.....</i>	<i>57</i>
Informal Conferences.....	57
Formal Grievance Process.....	57
Level One – Principal Review .....	58
Level Two – Superintendent Review.....	58
Board of Directors Meeting Dates .....	58
Additional Complaint Procedures .....	58
<i>Notice to Parents Required by Florida Statute 1001.42/ Complaint Process .....</i>	<i>59</i>
Complaint Policy .....	59
Complaint Procedures.....	60
<i>Notice of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) .....</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice).....</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Directory Information Notice.....</i>	<i>61</i>
Directory Information for School-Related Purposes .....	61
Directory Information Supplied to Military and College Recruiters (Secondary Students Only) .....	62
Directory Information Supplied to Law Enforcement Officials and Authorities .....	62
Guidelines for Release of Directory Information.....	62
Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) without Consent .....	62
<b>REQUIRED FORMS    63</b>	



Dear IDEA Students & Families,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year!

We look forward to working with you to help your child be a successful college-bound student. IDEA Public Schools (IDEA), strives to provide a safe learning environment for all children. We have high expectations of ourselves and want to ensure all our students have a fulfilling and successful experience at IDEA. Consequently, we expect students and their families to take an active role by reading and following the Student & Family Handbook requirements.

This handbook provides an overview of our school goals, services, and rules. It is an essential reference book describing what we expect from our students and legal guardians, what you can expect from us, and how we will achieve our educational mission. Please note that “legal guardian” is used to refer to the parent or any other individual who has legally assumed school-related responsibility for a student. The handbook includes general information regarding school policies and procedures, important health and safety information, information about academics and grading, information regarding legal guardian rights, and important notices regarding student information, computer resources, and electronic communication devices.

The handbook also includes the Student Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is required by state law and is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. Both students and legal guardians must be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct is available in each school principal’s office and IDEA’s website. This handbook is adopted by the IDEA Florida Board. Please be aware that the handbook and Student Code of Conduct may be amended or revised throughout the year. Changes in policy and procedure will be made available to legal guardians and students online, through newsletters, or other communications.

Finally, your acknowledgement and agreement to comply with the Student Handbook has been given through the student registration process in STREAM. Questions about the material in this handbook can be directed to your principal. On behalf of the entire IDEA Public Schools’ staff and community, best wishes for a great 2025-2026 school year!

Sincerely,



Simaran Bakshi  
Executive Director  
IDEA Jacksonville



James Hartman  
Executive Director  
IDEA Tampa

Scroll down for more information.

# ABOUT IDEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Mission

IDEA transforms education by preparing graduates to succeed in college and life.

## Vision

To serve as the nation’s leader in preparing students for success in college and beyond.

## Key Tenets

- High Expectations for Students and Staff
- College for All
- Culture First
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Commitment to People, Development and Retention
- Culture of Feedback, Coaching, and Development

## History

From the very beginning, IDEA has focused on raising the achievement levels and expectations of students who are underserved so they have an opportunity to attend and succeed in college.

Initially serving only 75 students in fourth and fifth grade in Donna, Texas, the IDEA program, which focused on hard work and commitment to excellence, was immediately successful. This led the Texas Education Agency to grant a charter to the IDEA Academy in the spring of 2000 to help establish the program as an independent, state-sponsored public school.

The IDEA Academy has since grown into the IDEA Public Schools system (IDEA Public Schools and its affiliates), which operates academy and college preparatory campuses in multiple locations around the Rio Grande Valley, El Paso, San Antonio, Austin, Tarrant County, the Permian Basin, Greater Houston, Tampa Bay, Jacksonville, and Cincinnati.

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

IDEA Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, disability, or age in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational and career technology programs. IDEA Public Schools complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”); Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and any other legally-protected classification or status protected by applicable law.

As required by Title IX, IDEA Public Schools does not (and is required not to) discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. This non-discrimination requirement applies to admission to and employment with IDEA Public Schools. Inquiries into issues related to Title IX may be referred to IDEA’s Title IX Coordinator (identified below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Any questions or concerns about IDEA’s compliance with these federal programs should be brought to the attention of the following persons designated as being responsible for coordinating compliance with these requirements:

- The Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex (including sexual harassment), is Jenessa Smith, Assistant General Counsel Title IX Coordinator, 2115 W. Pike Blvd., Weslaco, Texas 78596, (956) 377-8000, [jenessa.smith@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:jenessa.smith@ideapublicschools.org).
- The ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, is Tricia Lopez, Senior Vice President of Special Programs, 2115 W. Pike Blvd, Weslaco, Texas 78596, (956) 377-8000, [tricia.lopez@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:tricia.lopez@ideapublicschools.org).
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: Jose Rivera, Human Resources Director of Business Partnerships, 2115 W. Pike Blvd., Weslaco, Texas 78596, (956) 647-7026, [jose.rivera@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:jose.rivera@ideapublicschools.org).

## Homeless Liaison and Title I Participants

Homeless children and youth are ensured specific educational rights and protections under the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001. “Children and youth who are homeless,” as defined by this federal law, means and includes children who:

- Are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus, or train stations. The principal or their designee may refuse a visitor or terminate a visit in circumstances where the visit's duration or visit frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or in any other way disrupts the educational environment.
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations.
- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Children who are homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain policies and procedures, including proof of residency requirements; immunization requirements; educational program placement; award of credit; graduation requirements; continuing enrollment in the “school of origin” or enrollment in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing; and other related matters.

You are encouraged to inform IDEA if you or your child are experiencing homelessness. School staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family.

For more information on services for homeless students, please contact your school’s counselor, social worker, or IDEA’s Liaison for Homeless Children, Michelle Knapp, Florida Director of Compliance, at [michelle.knapp@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:michelle.knapp@ideapublicschools.org).

## Teacher Qualification and Background Screening

All teachers hired by IDEA undergo a Level II (state and federal) background check and are checked against Florida’s disqualification list ([link to policy](#)). All teachers employed by IDEA must have a college degree and meet all legal requirements related to licensure. All teachers must either have a current educator certificate, be working towards an educator certificate, or receive a waiver from the certification requirement.

## Special Programs

### English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Services

IDEA offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services for English language learners who have limited English proficiency. The program is designed to assist students with development in language – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The goal of the program is to provide additional English language assistance to students, enabling them to become academically successful in all classes. The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program provides English language development instruction for English Learners (ELs) in kindergarten through Grade 12. The ESOL program provides language services to students via the inclusion English and Inclusion Core Subjects models. Students are assessed with the WIDA Screener to qualify for placement in the program. If the test results indicate either limited oral or limited academic English ability, the student (with legal guardian approval) is provided additional English language support.

### Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education Services

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, the legal guardian may contact the Regional Director of Special Programs to learn about IDEA’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (“RtI”).

Legal guardians are entitled to request an evaluation for Exceptional Student Education services by presenting a written request to the principal. IDEA must, within 30 calendar days of receiving the request, either (1) give the legal guardian an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation or (2) refuse to provide the evaluation and provide the legal guardian with written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the legal guardians of their rights if they disagree with IDEA. Additionally, the legal guardian will receive a copy of the Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities. If consent for evaluation is obtained, IDEA must complete the evaluation and report within 60 calendar days of the date IDEA receives the written consent. IDEA must give a copy of the evaluation report to the legal guardian.

## Exceptional Student Education Services

IDEA has the responsibility of identifying, locating, and evaluating individuals with disabilities who are 5 to 21 years of age and who fall within the school's jurisdiction. If you know or suspect that your student has a disability, please contact the Exceptional Student Education department at your child's school for information about available programs, assessments, and services. Legal guardians of new students should advise the school of any previous IEPs or exceptional student services their child received in the past.

Exceptional student services are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each student who receives exceptional student services has an Individual Education Plan ("IEP"), which is developed by a team that includes but is not limited to a general educator, special educator, a school psychologist, a school administrator, and the child's legal guardian. The team considers the student's disability and determines appropriate accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that are necessary for the student to participate in the general curriculum.

All exceptional student education services are provided in the least restrictive environment, which may be exceptional student education settings, general education settings, or a combination of both. All students receiving exceptional student education services are educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers as well as participating in all school activities on the same basis as students who are not disabled.

## Section 504 Services

IDEA provides a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the student's disability. A "student with a disability" is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the student's major life activities, has a record of having such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. A student with a disability is "qualified" if he or she is between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive.

An appropriate education is the provision of regular or Exceptional Student Education services and related services that are (1) designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of students who do not have disabilities are met; and (2) satisfy federal requirements for educational setting, evaluation and placement, and procedural safeguards.

Qualified students with disabilities will be placed in the regular educational environment unless IDEA demonstrates that education in the regular environment with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Should an alternate educational environment be necessary, IDEA will comply with all legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment and comparable facilities for students with disabilities. In providing or arranging for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, IDEA will ensure that a qualified student with a disability participates with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

To be eligible for services and protections against discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a student must be determined, as a result of an evaluation, to have a "physical or mental impairment" that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If a student has or is suspected of having a disability, or requires special services, legal guardians or teachers should contact the principal for information concerning available programs, assessments, and services.

# ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

## General Admissions and Enrollment Information

In accordance with state law, IDEA does not discriminate in its admissions policy on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic or artistic or athletic ability.

## Admissions Application

Students wanting to attend IDEA must submit an application by the deadline set by IDEA's administration. Families may apply for either the current school year in session and/or a separate application for the following school year. Applicants placed on our waitlist must re-submit an admissions application each school year within the timeline set by IDEA.

## Acceptance Procedures

As a public charter school, enrollment is determined through a random lottery selection process. If our schools receive more applications than available seats, student names will be placed in a lottery and randomly selected.

As allowed by Florida law, students from persistently low-performing (PLP) public schools and opportunity zones will be given enrollment preference, as well as siblings of currently enrolled students.

Lottery priorities are listed below:

- Siblings of current IDEA students and children of IDEA employees/founding board members
- Students who attend or are zoned for a [Persistently Low Performing \(PLP\)](#) school or who reside within an [Opportunity Zone](#). Not sure if you live in an Opportunity Zone? [check your status with your home address](#).

If new applications are received after the lottery date, applicants will be placed on the waiting list on a “first- come, first-serve” order within their priority group.

Students offered enrollment will be sent a registration packet, via email or text, with instructions for completing the registration process. Legal guardians must complete and return the registration packet by the published deadline to secure their child’s enrollment. If an enrollment offer is declined or if you do not complete the registration packet by the established deadline, your child’s seat will be offered to the next potential applicant or student on the waiting list. Families that receive an offer to attend IDEA must accept or decline their offer within 14 days of issuance. After 14 days, the offer will be rescinded, and the space will be assigned to the next family on the waiting list.

IDEA will review the transcript of every student enrolling in an IDEA high school (10th, 11th, and 12th grades) and present to the student and legal guardian a path to graduation adapted to IDEA’s curriculum. Please note that, due to IDEA’s mission to prepare all students to attend and graduate college, many high school courses are offered only as Advanced Placement (“AP”) courses. These AP courses are more rigorous than many standard high school courses.

## Exceptions to Lottery Process

Pursuant to federal guidelines, the children of IDEA staff, current IDEA students, and siblings of current IDEA students will receive a priority application in the student lottery process. If IDEA receives more applications than it has available seats within these groups, it will conduct a random lottery and applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the random order in which they were drawn. Offers will be issued based on space availability. Students that fall under the provisions of the McKinney Vento Act are exempt from lottery and will be immediately enrolled based on space availability.

## Student Information to Verify Enrollment Eligibility

IDEA ensures that appropriate measures are taken to verify, on enrollment, that a student is entitled to enroll. Any student admitted to IDEA must have records such as report card(s) and/or transcript(s) from the previous school attended to verify his or her academic standing. Verification of residency and current immunization records are also required. Every student enrolling in IDEA for the first time must present documentation of immunizations or exemption from such a requirement. Any student without current immunization records on file at the campus will result in the student being excluded from attendance until records are received.

No later than 30 days after enrolling in IDEA, the legal guardian and public school in which the student was previously enrolled shall furnish records that verify the identity of the student. These records may include the student’s birth certificate, or a copy of the student’s school records from the most recently attended school. Children will not be denied enrollment because they failed to meet this requirement.

IDEA will forward a student’s records on request to the school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the necessity of the legal guardian’s consent.

### Establishing Identification

Any of the following documents are acceptable for proof of identification and age: birth certificate; driver’s license; passport; school ID card; records, or report card; military ID; hospital birth records; adoption records; church baptismal record; or any other legal document that establishes identity.

## Residency Verification

As part of the registration process, schools must obtain evidence that a person is eligible to attend public schools in the area. To be eligible for continued enrollment in IDEA, each student's legal guardian must show proof of residency at the time of enrollment. Residency may be verified through documentation and other means, including, but not limited to:

- A current lease agreement; the most recent tax receipt indicating home ownership; a current electric utility bill indicating the address and name of the residence occupiers

All custody or court orders pertaining to the family or student must be turned in when asked, or at the time of enrollment, to the extent that such orders pertain to school matters.

## McKinney-Vento Act

Students who are experiencing homelessness are to be enrolled immediately. IDEA cannot require students experiencing homelessness to provide proof of residency, immunizations, birth certificates, guardianship documents, or any other sort of required paperwork before enrolling. If your student may qualify for McKinney Vento Act provisions, please contact your school's SIS Coordinator for more information.

## Foster Care and Military Connected

For students who may be in foster care or be military connected, please contact your school's SIS Coordinator for more information.

## Expulsions

If a student commits an expellable offense, as outlined in the IDEA Student Code of Conduct, administrators may recommend expulsion to the Florida school district superintendent. The student may be expelled only after due process has been afforded the student, as otherwise provided by State law. All recommendations for expulsion shall be referred to the Florida school district superintendent and shall be conducted as the district has provided in accordance with State law.

## Transfers

Any student wishing to transfer to another IDEA school must submit a student application for the school to which they wish to transfer. Offers to attend will be issued based on the availability of open seats at the receiving school. For the current school year, offers to transfer will be issued from September 1st until the Friday before the last day of school for each region. In subsequent school years, student transfer applications will follow regular enrollment timelines. Exceptions apply to students with an IEP or specific safety issues. Transfer applications will follow the general population enrollment process and will go through the waitlist.

## Withdrawals from School

### Voluntary Withdrawal

A student under 18 years of age may be withdrawn from school only by a legal guardian. IDEA requests notice from the legal guardian at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Legal guardians may obtain a withdrawal form from the school front office. The legal guardians shall also provide the name of the new school in which the student will be enrolled and must sign the withdrawal request to document that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school or otherwise meet the requirements of compulsory attendance laws.

A student who is 18 years of age or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without their legal guardian's signature.

Withdrawing students and legal guardians are expected to:

- Have a meeting with a school administrator
- Return all textbooks and checked-out materials and equipment
- Complete any make-up work assigned
- Pay any unpaid balance for student fees, if any, and
- Sign a release of student records.

### Involuntary Withdrawal

A student may be involuntarily withdrawn when a student:

- Has enrolled in another school or education program
- Is recommended to the local school district superintendent for expulsion
- Truancy is defined as 10 unexcused absences in a calendar month; (1) If the school determines that a student subject to compulsory school attendance has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period pursuant to s. [1003.26\(1\)\(b\)](#), or has had more than 15 unexcused absences in a 90-calendar-day period, a truancy petition may be filed.
- Activities to determine the cause, and to attempt the remediation, of the child's truant behavior under Florida Statutes § 1003.26 and 1003.27(3), have been completed.
- Is not marked as present within the first 10 days of school.

## ATTENDANCE AND TUITION

### Attendance and Tardiness

Consistent school attendance is an essential component of each student's education. Absence from school will affect a student's ability to succeed in class; for this reason, students and legal guardians should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Additionally, state law mandates compulsory school attendance for children of a certain age.

Nearly all tardiness is avoidable and is excusable only in cases of illness or emergency. If a student arrives late to school, a legal guardian must report to the school front office to complete a tardy slip. Warning letters will be given for excessive tardies and absences. Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary consequences as allowed by the Student Code of Conduct. No student shall be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or truancy.

### Florida Compulsory Attendance Law

The state compulsory attendance law requires that a child between the ages of 6 and 16, or a student who will be 6 by February 1 of any school year, must attend school and school-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. IDEA staff must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission from any class, from required special programs, or from required tutorials will be considered "truant" and subject to disciplinary action.

Students may also be subject to additional penalties such as loss of driving privileges if they are habitually truant. See Florida Statutes §1003.27(b).

### Required Documentation of Absences

A student who has been absent from school, upon his or her return, must provide a written note to the school explaining the reason for the absence. The note must either be signed by a legal guardian or the student if the student is over the age of 17 or emancipated. The legal guardian has 10 days to submit written documentation of absences to school. Anything received after the 10 days will not be accepted and absences will remain unexcused.

### Excused Absences

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work assigned during the absence. These may include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days
- Required court appearances
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship
- Service as an election clerk
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student's arrival or return to campus.
- Extended leave related to physical or emotional illness, a hospital stay, recuperation from an accident, or a contagious disease in the family

- A death in the family (not to exceed one week)
- Prior school-approved travel for education
- Natural catastrophe and/or disaster
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state
- Mental health or therapy appointments
- Temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Principal or Superintendent or
- Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

Students may be excused up to two absences in their junior year and two absences in their senior year when visiting an accredited institution of higher education for the purpose of determining their interest in attending that institution. Upon return to school, a student shall provide a written note to the school that explains the absence, along with documentation indicating that the student indeed visited the institution.

Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for a student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the student notifies his or her teachers and receives approval from the principal prior to the absence.

Absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a legal guardian, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments.

For religious holy days, required court appearances, activities related to obtaining citizenship, and serving as an election clerk, one day of travel to the site and one day of travel from the site shall also be excused by IDEA.

### Unexcused Absences

Any absence not listed above or approved in advance by the principal due to extenuating circumstances will be considered an unexcused absence. Family trips, vacations, or non-school sponsored events will remain as unexcused absences.

When determined that the absences indicate a pattern of nonattendance without documentation, the principal or their designee shall refer the case to the School Based Team. The School Based Team meets with the legal guardian to discuss resolution of the attendance problem. The School Based Team shall implement interventions that best address the problem(s) including but not limited to:

- attendance contracts
- frequent communication with the teacher and family
- changes in the learning environment
- mentoring, counseling, tutoring, including peer tutoring
- placement into different classes
- referral to other agencies for Family Services
- Information about alternative methods of education (i.e. virtual, home or district school). If interventions are in place and working, no referral needs to be completed.
- After the interventions have been diligently put in place and implemented within 30 days, and there continues to be undocumented, unexcused attendance concerns, the Attendance Team completes the truancy referral for the principal.

If not done previously, the principal sends notification to the DJJ-CINS/FINS (Department of Juvenile Justice – Children In Need of Services / Families In Need of Services) provider for services.

See Florida Statutes §1003.26 for more information.

## Leaving Campus During School Hours

A student younger than 18 years old must have prior legal guardian approval, either in writing or in person with identification, before that student may leave the school campus during school hours.

## Tuition

IDEA may not charge tuition to an eligible student.

# REQUIRED INSTRUCTION AND GRADUATION

IDEA maintains compliance with all state laws and regulations governing curriculum and graduation requirements.

## Required Curriculum

IDEA provides instruction aligned to the Florida State Standards of the appropriate grade levels in the following required curriculum:

1. A foundation curriculum that includes:
  - a. English language arts and reading
  - b. Mathematics
  - c. Science
  - d. Social Studies
  
2. An enrichment curriculum that includes
  - a. Spanish
  - b. Health education
  - c. Physical education (“PE”), to the extent required
  - d. Fine Arts
  - e. Financial Literacy
  - f. Career Planning

## Grading Scale and GPA

Students earn high school credit for high school courses taken in grades 7 through 12. All high school level courses earn high school credit and are calculated into the student’s GPA for high school. Core classes (Math, Science, Social Studies, and English), AP, IB, and dual credit classes are on a 5.0 scale compared to a 4.0 scale for other courses. Honors courses are on a 4.5 scale.

Grades are recorded on the transcript and GPA is computed in January and May. Courses must be completed in order for a student to earn credit for the course.

If a student transfers out of IDEA at the end of the semester, the College Prep campus will award the student .5 credits for courses taken and passed with a 60% or higher.

If a student transfers into an IDEA campus, only AP, IB, and dual credit courses will be given the additional weight of 1 grade point; all others will follow the 4.0 grade point scale. Honors courses will be given an additional 0.5.

*See chart on next page.*

Percent Grade	Standard Scale	5.0 Scale		Percent Grade	Standard Scale	5.0 Scale
100	4.0	5.0		84	3.20	4.20
99	3.95	4.95		83	3.15	4.15
98	3.90	4.90		82	3.10	4.10
97	3.85	4.85		81	3.05	4.05
96	3.80	4.80		80	3.00	4.00
95	3.75	4.75		79	2.95	3.95
94	3.70	4.70		78	2.90	3.90
93	3.65	4.65		77	2.85	3.85
92	3.60	4.60		76	2.80	3.80
91	3.55	4.55		75	2.75	3.75
90	3.50	4.50		74	2.70	3.70
89	3.45	4.45		73	2.65	3.65
88	3.40	4.40		72	2.60	3.60
87	3.35	4.35		71	2.55	3.55
86	3.30	4.30		70	2.50	3.50
85	3.25	4.25		69 and below	0.00	0.00

## Academic Rank

Weighted GPA is used to determine class rank. Top 10% classification is communicated to students at the beginning of the Fall semester of senior year in preparation for college and scholarship applications. For seniors, the final class rankings are determined at the end of students' 8<sup>th</sup> semester.

## Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Graduating seniors with the highest and second highest cumulative weighted grade point average carried out two decimal places as determined at the end of the spring semester of senior year will be eligible to serve as the valedictorian and salutatorian respectively.

Additional Considerations:

- Valedictorian and salutatorian eligibility requires attendance at an IDEA Public Schools high school for all eight semesters of high school from 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- In the event of a tie for valedictorian based on GPA, schools will make the decision based on the raw average.
- A student who is in violation of the school code of conduct, honor code, or has criminal charges may be deemed ineligible to represent school as the valedictorian or salutatorian.

If the two highest ranked graduating seniors have the exact same weighted GPA, they will both be named co-Valedictorians.

For campus planning purposes, the unofficial Valedictorian and Salutatorian determination can be communicated with appropriate staff members and students after Quarter 15 grades are stored.

# Standardized Testing

## Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST)

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students will take state-mandated assessments such as FAST, in the following grade levels and subjects:

- Mathematics, three times during the school year in grades 3-10
- English and Language Arts, three times during the school year in grades 3-10

Florida's Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T) and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSS) End of Course (EOC) assessments are also administered to students enrolled in the following EOC courses:

- Algebra 1, Biology 1, Civics, Geometry, High School U.S. History

By law, students enrolled in grade 3 must participate in the statewide standardized assessment program and demonstrate proficiency in grade 3 ELA reading to be promoted to fourth grade. Students must also take a civics course in middle school, which counts as 30% of the course grade. Students are required to take and pass the 10<sup>th</sup> grade *FAST* ELA exam and Algebra 1 EOC exam to graduate. EOC exams in Biology, Civics, Geometry and U.S. History count 30% toward a student's final course grade in those courses. Courses must be passed to earn course credit for promotion and graduation.

## Florida Alternative Assessment (FAA)

The Florida Alternative Assessment (FAA) is for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities whose participation in FAST, even with accommodations, is not appropriate. Tested grade levels and subjects/courses include:

- English Language Arts in Grades 3-10
- Writing in grades 4-10
- Mathematics in Grades 3-8
- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Science in Grades 5 and 8
- Biology
- Civics
- U.S. History

## ACCESS for ELLs & Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

The ACCESS for ELLs suite of assessments is used to measure proficiency in the English language for identified English Language Learners (ELL) in grades K-12. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is a paper-based assessment for students in grades 1-12 classified as English Language Learners who have significant cognitive disabilities. It too, measures their proficiency in the English Language.

# Advanced Placement (AP)

AP exams measure how well a student has mastered the content and skills of a specific AP course. Beginning in grade 9, students may enroll in AP courses annually or by semester, with IDEA administering the corresponding AP exams each May at no cost. Achieving a score of 3 or higher may qualify students for college credit.

## PreACT and ACT

The PreACT is an exam administered to students in grade 10 to help predict performance on the ACT test the following year. The results from this exam will help educators make instructional decisions for students that will better prepare them for the ACT.

The ACT is an exam used by colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. ACT measures a high school student's readiness for college and provides colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. At IDEA, the ACT will be administered to students in grades 11 and 12. One administration of the ACT is state-funded, while the other administration is IDEA-funded. IDEA staff will register all students and request applicable accommodations for eligible students.

## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, also called the "Nation's Report Card", provides educators, policymakers, elected

officials, and legal guardians information on students' academic performance in reading and mathematics in comparison to other students locally and in other states. It serves as a common measure of student achievement across the country. A small sample of students is selected to participate each year.

## Promotion and Retention Requirements

### Kindergarten through Grade 5 Promotion

Students must demonstrate satisfactory or higher-level performance in reading, writing, science, and mathematics to be promoted to the next grade. Exceptions may be made using the School Placement Committee procedures, except for grade 3 (see Grade 3 Mandatory Retention section below). Placement decisions are made at the end of the school year.

### Midyear Promotion for a Retained Student

A student who is retained may be considered for promotion at any time during the year once the student demonstrates the ability to read at grade level.

Refer to the General Statements, Grade Level Placement section in the [Florida Pupil Progression Plan](#) for additional information.

### Grade 3 Mandatory Retention

Students in grade 3 who do not score at level 2 or above on the statewide ELA assessment must be retained. A student in grade 3 who does not have a FAST ELA score is assessed to determine if the student's reading proficiency meets promotion criteria. (F.S.1008.25(6))

The school will provide the following for each student retained in grade 3:

- A review of the previous year's progress monitoring
- Continuation of progress monitoring during the current school year
- A student portfolio (the prior year grade 3 portfolio may be continued)
- All appropriate support and services delineated in the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan
- A highly effective teacher, as determined by the teacher's performance evaluation (F.S.1008.25(7)(3))

Exemptions from mandatory retention in grade 3 must align with current state statutes regarding student progression.

Exceptions are limited to the following:

- English language learners with less than two years of instruction in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program
- Students with disabilities who have an IEP that indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate, consistent with the requirements of State Board of Education rule
- Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education
- Students with disabilities who participate in the statewide, standardized reading assessment and who have an Individual Education Plan or a Section 504 plan that documents the student has received the intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and who was previously retained in kindergarten through grade 3 (F.S.1008.25(6)(b)(7))
- Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten through grade 3 for a total of two years
- Students who demonstrate through a student portfolio, that the student is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the content standards in reading equal to at least a level 2 performance on the statewide standardized reading assessment
- Students who have already been retained once in grade 3 (F.S.1008.25(6)(b)(6))

### Middle School Promotion:

Promotion and/or retention is determined when final grades are submitted at the end of the regular academic year. (F.S.1008.25) Middle school students must pass language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to meet annual promotion requirements. Before being promoted to high school, middle school students must meet the following cumulative requirements:

- Successful completion of three middle school, or higher level, courses in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, to include one civics education course and one career planning course; and
- A personalized academic and career plan. (F.S. 1003.4156)

Students scoring a level 3 or higher on the Algebra 1 EOC exam meet the promotion requirement for the corresponding mathematics course.

If a student does not meet promotion requirements, exceptions may be considered per grade placement procedures.

### High School Promotion:

Promotion from one grade to the next is determined, in part, upon satisfactory performance in English Language Arts, social studies, science and mathematics, along with all credits required for graduation. A student’s grade level placement is determined based on the year they entered grade 9, unless they are a foreign student with no obtainable record of credits.

- Promotion from grade 9 to grade 10 occurs when a student has completed one full year and has earned five credits towards graduation.
- Promotion from grade 10 to grade 11 occurs when a student has completed two full years and has earned eleven credits towards graduation.
- Promotion from grade 11 to grade 12 occurs when a student has completed three full years and has earned seventeen credits, including eight required credits in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Students electing to graduate with the 24-credit program in three years or less are promoted to grade 12 on May 1 of their final semester if they are on track to graduate.

IDEA Florida adheres to the [Pupil Progression Plan](#).

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

IDEA is committed to creating positive, safe, health-promoting learning environments throughout the school year as well as cultivating healthy and safe habits in students and providing access to resources that support these efforts. In addition to all state and federal laws, IDEA adheres to board approved policies aligned with our commitment to overall student physical and mental wellness.

For more information and to read our full Health & Wellness policies, see here:

- [Health policy](#)
- [Wellness policy](#)

### Healthy & Safe Physical Environments

Providing physically safe school environments so that our scholars will thrive is paramount to IDEA’s vision and mission. IDEA and its property are alcohol, tobacco, drug, and gun free. Student violators of the prohibitions and restrictions relating to illegal substances and firearms which are detailed below are subject to possible prosecution, as allowed by law, as well as the disciplinary terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

### Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health

IDEA may adopt board policies that promote student physical and mental health, including policies regarding:

- Food and nutrition management
- Wellness and health services
- Physical examinations
- Health Screenings
- Immunizations
- Medical treatment
- Communicable diseases
- Crisis intervention

- Training in resilience
- Trauma-informed care
- Student safety
- Child abuse and neglect
- Freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation
- Freedom from bullying

If a school's Threat Assessment Team determines that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to himself or herself or others or significantly disruptive behaviors, a referral may be made to counseling or behavioral health programs.

If an immediate mental health or substance abuse crisis is suspected, school personnel will engage behavioral health crisis resources to provide emergency intervention and assessment, make recommendations, and refer the student for appropriate services.

A good faith attempt will be made to notify the student's legal guardian; however, nothing will preclude school district personnel from acting immediately to address imminent threat and/or danger.

IDEA has also developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement these policies. Please contact your campus health clinic staff for information on these policies and procedures.

### Alcohol-Free School Notice

All alcoholic beverages are always prohibited on IDEA property at all school-sanctioned activities occurring on or off school property.

### Tobacco-Free and E-Cigarettes Prohibited

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any form of smokeless tobacco or electronic vapor product while in school buildings, vehicles, or on or near school property, or at school-related or school-sanctioned events off school property.

### Drug-Free School Notice

IDEA prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs by students on school premises or any school activity or event, regardless of its location. IDEA also prohibits the use, sale, possession, or distribution of look-alike substances and/or synthetic substances designed to imitate the look and/or effects of illicit drugs.

### Pest Control

Pesticide applications on IDEA Public Schools' property are made only by trained and licensed applicators. Should you have questions about the district's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact our IPM coordinator, Nelva Leal, Director of Facilities Compliance, at [nelva.leal@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:nelva.leal@ideapublicschools.org).

### Asbestos Management Plan

In accordance with federal and state regulations, IDEA Public Schools has implemented an asbestos management plan to monitor and control any potential asbestos hazards in our facilities. IDEA's Asbestos Management Plan is available for review during regular hours of school operations at the school front office. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact IDEA's Asbestos Designated Person, Nelva Leal, Director of Facilities Compliance, at [nelva.leal@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:nelva.leal@ideapublicschools.org).

### Preparedness Training

In a commitment to safe physical environments, IDEA utilizes complies with the following instruction requirements as they relate to student and staff training.

### CPR Instruction

School are encouraged to provide basic training in first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, for all students in grade 6 & 8. Schools are required to provide basic training in first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, for all students in grade 9 & 11.

# Student Health

## Mental Health Promotion and Intervention

IDEA has developed protocols for providing a legal guardian with a recommended intervention for a student with early warning signs and a possible need for early mental health or substance abuse intervention, or who has been identified as at risk of attempting suicide. The campus School Counselor or Social Worker will notify a legal guardian within a reasonable amount of time after learning that a student has early warning signs and possible need for intervention and will also provide additional information on available counseling options.

Teachers and administrators will be trained to recognize and assess for mental health crisis or suicide risk annually. The campus School Counselor or Social Worker will be trained in providing intervention and resources for students and families. The assessment process will determine the level of intervention and next steps for the student, legal guardian, and campus.

IDEA has developed protocols for staff members to notify the School Counselor or Social Worker to identify a student who may need intervention.

The School Counselor or Social Worker at each campus can provide additional information about the school's intervention program, as well as materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment, and accommodations available at school.

## Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

IDEA has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care
- Positive behavior interventions and supports
- Positive youth development
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health concern or substance abuse, IDEA has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the School Counselor or Social Worker for additional information.

Teachers and other school employees may discuss a student's behavior or academic progress with the student's legal guardian or another employee; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication and that is intended to alter perception, emotion, or behavior. An employee who is a registered nurse, advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate.

## Food Allergy Information

For purposes of this requirement, the term "severe food allergy" means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

Allergy information is to be updated annually as part of the registration process. Legal guardians are required to:

1. Update the student's Health History Information in STREAM indicating the type of allergy, specifying the food(s) which the

- student is allergic to, nature of the reaction, and whether the allergy is life-threatening.
2. Complete a Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and Special Diet Request Form signed by both the legal guardian and physician.
    - a. Submit the Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and any prescription medication in its original container from the pharmacy (U.S.A. Only) with a proper label directly to the school Health Aide/Nurse.
      - i. A proper label contains the patient's name, medicine's name, and dosage.
      - ii. Students are not to be sent to campus with medications, they must be delivered by a legal guardian.
    - b. Submit the Special Diet Request Form to the campus Assistant Principal of Operations.
      - i. Completed forms are reviewed for consideration by the Special Diets Manager and may take up to three weeks to be established.
  3. Ensure a medication refill, in its original container with a proper label, is delivered to the school Health Aide/Nurse before the medication is completed.
  4. At the end of the year, pick up any remaining medication before the last day of school or it will be appropriately disposed of.

## Communicable Diseases

If a student is experiencing any of the following symptoms, the child should be excluded from school and extracurricular attendance:

- The child has a fever equal to or greater than 100°F.
- The child is vomiting repetitively (more than two times in 24 hours and is not from a known condition).
- The child has diarrhea (more than two loose stools above normal for that child).

For students experiencing these symptoms, legal guardians should:

1. Notify the principal or teacher of the student's illness.
2. Keep the student home from school and extracurricular activities until the scholar has been symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If an illness on campus is among those considered communicable and contagious diseases, IDEA will:

1. Refer to the state health authority's list of Notifiable Conditions.
2. Contact the local health authorities who will advise on next steps as necessary, until the situation has resolved.
3. Communicate with classes or grades affected with guidance and next steps, as needed.
4. Communicate directly with the legal guardian of students with a confirmed disease to discuss methods of readmission to school once the disease is no longer communicable.

## Head Lice

While head lice is not an illness or disease, it is a common condition among children and may spread easily through physical contact with hair and sharing of items that have come in contact with hair. If head lice is observed on campus, an IDEA administrator will:

1. Contact the student's legal guardian to discuss an at-home plan for prevention and treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse.
2. Ensure legal guardian is made aware that student may remain in school the remainder of the day and should not be excluded from school the next day.
3. Send a Notification of Head Lice in Classroom letter home to legal guardians in the class of the affected student, including recommendations for at-home monitoring and prevention steps.

## Medical Treatment

Medical treatment refers to treatment, responsiveness, and care available to IDEA students for preventative and emergency services while at IDEA schools.

### Emergency Medical Treatment

In the event there is a life-threatening emergency, IDEA will:

1. Immediately call 911 and contact EMS.
2. Ensure that immediate medical care is provided to student while EMS is en route.

3. Designated staff member travels to hospital with student via EMS, if needed.
4. When EMS is called, the school will also contact the student's emergency contact listed on their Emergency Card.
5. Continue to contact emergency numbers until one is reached over phone and voice contact is made.

## Medication Administration

### Prescription Medication

For authorized IDEA employees to administer prescription medication to students for health conditions, legal guardians must:

1. Complete a Medication Consent Form and Action/Care Plan signed by both the legal guardian and physician.
2. Submit the Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and prescription medication in its original container from the pharmacy (U.S.A. Only) with a proper label directly to the school Health Aide/Nurse.
  - a. A proper label contains the patient's name, medicine's name, and dosage.
  - b. Students are not to be sent to campus with medications, they must be delivered by a legal guardian.
3. Ensure a refill, in its original container with a proper label, is delivered to the school Health Aide/Nurse before the medication is completed.
4. At the end of the year, pick up any remaining medication before the last day of school or it will be appropriately disposed of.

### Self-administration of Prescription Asthma or Anaphylaxis Medicine

Before a student may be allowed to self-administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication, the legal guardian must provide:

1. Signed, written authorization for the student to self-administer the prescription medicine while on school property or at a school-related activity.
2. A written statement signed by the child's physician or provider stating that the student has asthma and/or anaphylaxis and is capable of self-administering the prescription medication.
3. The name and purpose of the medicine
4. The prescribed dosage of the medicine
5. The time(s) at which or circumstances under which the medicine may be administered
6. The period for which the medicine is prescribed.

Upon receipt of prescription medication from the legal guardian of a student with a health condition, IDEA will:

1. Review the Medication Consent Form, Action/Care Plan, and medication container to ensure accuracy on all accounts and follow-up with the legal guardian with any questions.
2. Store the medication in a locked cabinet that is only accessible to trained IDEA staff and deliver the medication to the prescribed student per physicians' orders.
3. Call the legal guardian at the end of the school year to pick up any remaining medication.
4. Dispose of any remaining medication appropriately by the last day of school.

## Telemedicine Services

IDEA has partnered with a telemedicine provider to bring additional healthcare services to all students at IDEA campuses. The cost of services varies on health insurance status, and all billing is managed through a third-party provider, should legal guardians desire to have this service available to their scholar:

1. They must complete an online registration form, which is available at any time during the school year.
2. Agree, upon registration, to incur costs for telehealth services not covered by their health insurance.
3. Consent via telephone and potentially join a telehealth appointment virtually, in the event that the campus health aide/Licensed Practical Nurse determines a student's need warrants an appointment.

## Immunizations

The law requires that every child be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with an established immunization schedule. To comply with State Law, legal guardians must submit proof of immunization via Form DH 680, Florida Certification of Immunization, before the first day of school.

## Exemption from Immunization Requirements

Exclusions from immunization requirements are allowable temporarily in specific instances, for medical reasons, and religious beliefs.

A legal guardian may, for each student:

1. Claim a temporary exemption for the following instances:
  - Students transferring interstate: A child who transfers into a Florida school from another state.
  - Students transferring intrastate: A child who transfers into a new county to attend class.
  - Or a homeless child; Juvenile justice; Active-duty military children with the armed forces of the United States.
2. To claim exclusion for armed forces, the student must prove that he or she is serving on active duty with the armed forces of the United States.
3. Claim exemption for medical reasons either:
  - Temporarily for a child who has received as many immunizations as are medically indicated by a physician and is in the process of completing necessary immunizations, by presenting a Temporary Medical Exemption (DH 680 Form, Part B).
  - A Temporary Medical Exemption (Part B) is invalid without an expiration date.
  - The expiration date is the date when the child is past due for their next immunization.
  - The child must return to a physician or clinic before the expiration date to receive the immunizations needed.
  - Once the expiration date has passed, the DH 680 Form, Part B is no longer valid, and the child must be excluded from school until the additional dose is administered.
  - To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.
  - *permanently* by submitting a Permanent Medical Exemption in which the physician states in writing or in Florida SHOTS via DH 680 Form, Part C.
    - The Permanent Medical Exemption must state the medical basis based upon clinical reasoning or evidence, demonstrating the need for a permanent exemption.
    - The physician must list the vaccine(s) that are contraindicated and provide valid, medical reasons in writing for each vaccine that is not administered.
4. Request religious exemption, by submitting the Department of Health’s Religious Exemption From Immunization Form (DH 681 Form).
  - The DH 681 Form is issued only by county health departments and only for a child who is not immunized because of his/her family’s religious tenets or practices.

Students who have not received the required vaccination for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, may be excluded from school in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health.

## Health Screenings

Children in certain grade and geographic areas as set by state must be screened for vision, hearing, spinal and growth and development conditions annually. To facilitate compliance with state screening regulations, a trained IDEA staff member will:

1. Issue a Screening Notice to the legal guardian of students to undergo a health screening.
2. Conduct the screenings on the indicated date, with a follow-up re-screen within 2-4 weeks, for any student who fails the initial screening.
3. Provide a written referral to the legal guardian of students who do not pass the health screenings and encourage further medical evaluation from a health professional.

## Exemption

A legal guardian who declines participation in the health screenings provided by IDEA for reasons of religious tenets, practices, or reasons of conscience must submit in writing a request for exemption to the Principal or designee.

## Dyslexia and Related Disorders

From time to time, students may be tested and, where appropriate, treated for dyslexia and related disorders in accordance with programs, rules and standards approved by the state. The program approved by the state must include at least one screening for each student in kindergarten through third grade. Legal guardians will be notified should IDEA determine a need to identify or assess their student for dyslexia and related disorders.

*Additionally, pursuant to F.S. §1003.57, IDEA will not wait until an evaluation has been conducted to provide appropriate, evidence-based interventions for a student whose submits documentation from a professional, licensed under chapter 490, which demonstrates that the student has been diagnosed with dyslexia. Such interventions must be initiated by IDEA upon receipt of*

documentation and based on the student's specific areas of difficulty as identified by the licensed professional.

## Toileting & Extra Clothing

Toilet training is a process that varies from age to age and ability to ability. Children are typically toilet trained between the ages of two-three years old. Therefore, most children entering IDEA's kindergarten program are able to toilet themselves with minimal supervision, including proper wiping. Legal guardians can provide a change of clothing in case of an accident, to be kept in the student's backpack.

1. IDEA staff will call the child's legal guardian to inform them of the incident.
2. If a change of clothes has been provided, the student will change themselves.
3. If a change of clothes has not been provided, IDEA staff will ask the legal guardian to bring a change of clothes to the school.

## Restroom and Changing Facility Designation

To ensure the safety and privacy of all students, the following rules apply to restroom and changing facility use:

- Restrooms: Designated for exclusive use by males or females based on biological sex at birth.
- Changing Facilities: Designated for exclusive use by males or females based on biological sex at birth.

Students may request a unisex restroom if available.

Refer to the Discipline Matrix section of this handbook for information regarding offenses and corresponding consequences.

# STUDENT SAFETY

## Student Code of Conduct

IDEA has adopted a Student Code of Conduct in accordance with state laws. Legal guardians acknowledge receiving the Student Code of Conduct upon enrollment and reenrollment of their child.

### Students with disabilities

Any change in placement and/or any disciplinary action regarding a student with a disability, who needs or is believed to need special accommodations under the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act and/or Education Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, shall follow applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

## Mandatory Reporting Policy for Abuse and Neglect

### Section 1: Background:

IDEA Florida understands our greatest responsibility is to ensure the physical and mental well-being of our students. This requires that staff comply with the mandated identification and reporting of cases of child abuse or neglect in accordance with law.

### Section 2: Reporting Suspected Cases

- A. Any person, including teachers, administrators, support personnel, volunteers and other personnel, who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child or a student has been abused, abandoned, or neglected by a legal guardian, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families in a manner prescribed by law. A person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.
- B. The proper procedure for reporting known or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect is:
  1. School personnel or volunteer report immediately by telephone to the Department of Children and Families central abuse hotline, using the single Statewide toll-free telephone number: 1- 800-96- ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). School personnel reporting such cases are required to provide their names to the hotline staff. The names of reporters shall be entered into the record of the report but shall be held confidential as provided by law.
  2. As soon as practicable after making the report, the school staff member shall inform the principal or supervisor of the knowledge or suspicions that led to the reports and advise the principal or supervisor that a report has been

- made.
3. A notice regarding this reporting requirement shall be posted in a prominent place in each school.
- C. School personnel and volunteers are advised that reporting their knowledge or suspicions of suspected abuse to a principal, or supervisor, or other school or IDEA personnel does not comply with the mandatory reporting requirements of the law. The principal, supervisor, volunteer and other school or District personnel who are informed of suspected abuse, abandonment, and neglect likewise have an obligation to report to the central abuse hotline as required by law.
  - D. No employee nor volunteer shall be subject to reprisal or discharge because of his/her actions in reporting abuse or neglect pursuant to the requirements of F.S. 39.203.
  - E. No Board employee nor volunteer may agree, as a condition of receiving information about child abuse, neglect, or abandonment from a victim, a perpetrator, witness, or other person, that the Board employee will not report this information as required by law and this Board policy.
  - F. If the person accused of the abuse or neglect is an employee of the Board and acting in their official capacity:
    1. The principal will report or cause to be reported suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the appropriate law enforcement agency that come to the attention of school, teachers, other school officials, personnel or volunteer. This notification must be made immediately.
    2. The appropriate law enforcement agency is the agency which has law enforcement jurisdiction throughout the municipality (municipal law enforcement) or the unincorporated area (sheriff's department) where that alleged abuse occurred. The law enforcement agency having jurisdiction will issue to the reporter an incident report number to document that reporting notification. Include that incident report number, as well as the date and time of notification, as a reference for school- based documentation.
    3. Immediately after notifying law enforcement, report the case by telephone to the Department of Children and Families central abuse hotline, using the single Statewide toll-free telephone number 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). School personnel reporting such cases are required to provide their names to the hotline staff. The names of reporters shall be entered into the record of the report but shall be held confidential as provided by law.
  - G. Failure to report as required by law is a second-degree misdemeanor and can be punishable up to 60 days in jail, up to a \$500 fine, & up to six months supervised probation. Additional penalties may also result.

### Section 3: Referral to Law Enforcement

Reports on the central abuse hotline (1-800-96-ABUSE) alleging that a public school employee acting in official capacity has abused a child or student may also be referred to the sheriff's department or local law enforcement by the Department of Children and Families. The sheriff's department or local law enforcement agency may contact the school to initiate a criminal investigation.

## Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

### Statement of Nondiscrimination

IDEA prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. IDEA also prohibits dating violence, as defined by this Handbook. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of IDEA policy.

### Discrimination and Harassment (Prohibited Conduct)

For purposes of IDEA policy, the term "Prohibited Conduct" means discrimination or harassment against a student involving conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, or sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law and that adversely affects the student, and/or that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes;

or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

IDEA also considers gender-based harassment to be Prohibited Conduct. Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

"Prohibited Conduct" may also include dating violence, which occurs when one partner in a dating relationship, either past or current, intentionally uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

## Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of Prohibited Conduct is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of reported Prohibited Conduct is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with an IDEA investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

## Reporting Prohibited Conduct

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced Prohibited Conduct or retaliation or believes that another student has experienced Prohibited Conduct or retaliation should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, the Principal, or other school employee. The report may also be made by the student's legal guardian. Alternatively, a report may be made directly to the appropriate Compliance Coordinator who can be found in the Statement of Nondiscrimination section in this Handbook.

Upon receiving a report of potential Prohibited Conduct, IDEA will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited discrimination, harassment, dating violence, or retaliation. If not, IDEA will determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** IDEA's process concerning formal complaints of sexual harassment is outlined in "Freedom from Sexual Harassment" below.

## Investigation

To the extent possible, IDEA will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of Prohibited Conduct will be promptly investigated. The investigation may be conducted by the Compliance Coordinator or designee, or by a third party designated by IDEA, such as an attorney. When appropriate, the Principal or the student's teacher(s) will be involved in or informed of the investigation.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies IDEA that it is investigating the matter and requests that the school delay its investigation, IDEA will resume the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, IDEA will take interim action to address the alleged Prohibited Conduct.

If the school's investigation indicates that Prohibited Conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. IDEA may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

## Appeal

A student or legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the school's student and legal guardian complaint process, beginning at Level Two.

## Freedom from Sexual Harassment

IDEA prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, by an employee, volunteer, or another student.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to IDEA's educational programs or activities.
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as those offenses are defined in the Clery Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), and the Violence Against Women Act, 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)).

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and school employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

### General Definitions

A "complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "respondent" means an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

A "formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that IDEA investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

"Supportive measures" means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered voluntarily and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to IDEA's educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening either party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or IDEA's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of class schedules, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, and other similar measures.

### Reporting Sexual Harassment

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator in the "Statement of Nondiscrimination" section of this handbook, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or email address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

IDEA's response to a report of sexual harassment must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures and by following a grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

After a report of sexual harassment has been made, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

## Notice of Allegations

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, IDEA must provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

- Notice of IDEA’s grievance process, including any informal resolution process.
- Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment, including, to the extent known, the identity of the parties, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident.
- Notice that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made known at the conclusion of the grievance process.
- Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.
- Notice that the parties may inspect, and review evidence related to the complaint.
- Notice that IDEA prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, during an investigation, IDEA decides to investigate allegations about the complaint or respondent that are not included in the initial notice of the complaint, IDEA must provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

## Grievance Process

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of IDEA.

The following guidelines apply when IDEA receives a formal complaint of sexual harassment. This process is designed to incorporate due process, principles, treat all parties fairly, and to assist IDEA reach reliable responsibility determinations.

- IDEA will require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and credibility determinations may not be based on a person’s status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
- Any individual designated by IDEA as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. IDEA will ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process receive appropriate training related to the requirements of Title IX and IDEA’s sexual harassment policy.
- IDEA recognizes a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the complaint process.
- IDEA shall attempt to complete an investigation of reported sexual harassment within 60 calendar days of receiving a complaint. However, the investigation process may be delayed or extended for a limited time for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension. Good cause may include considerations such as absence of a party, a party’s advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.
- Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- IDEA shall employ the preponderance of the evidence to determine responsibility when reviewing formal complaints.
- IDEA may not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions of evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure, of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

## Consolidating Formal Complaints

IDEA may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

## Dismissal of Formal Complaints

IDEA must investigate the allegations in a formal complaint.

IDEA *must* dismiss a formal complaint if the conduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- Would not constitute sexual harassment, even if proved
- Did not occur in IDEA’s education program or activity or
- Did not occur against a person in the United States.

IDEA *may* dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation:

- A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein
- The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by IDEA or
- Specific circumstances prevent IDEA from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon a dismissal, IDEA must promptly send simultaneous written notice to the parties of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. Dismissal of a formal complaint does not preclude IDEA from taking appropriate action under the Student Code of Conduct or any other school policy that may apply to the alleged conduct.

## Investigating Formal Complaints

The following guidelines apply during the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process.

- IDEA will ensure the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on IDEA and not on the parties.
- IDEA cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless IDEA receives that party's voluntary, written consent to do so.
- IDEA will provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
- IDEA will not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.
- IDEA will provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisory of their choice, and not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding. IDEA may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties.
- IDEA will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews or other meetings with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.
- IDEA will provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the recipient does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation.
- Prior to completing an investigative report, IDEA must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 calendar days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completing the investigative report.
- IDEA must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and, at least 10 calendar days prior to a determination regarding responsibility, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for review and written response.
- After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written relevant questions that a party wants asked of any witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

## Determination Regarding Responsibility

The decision-maker(s) making a determination regarding responsibility cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s). The decision-maker(s) must review the investigation report and make a written determination, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, regarding responsibility. The written determination must include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment
- A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, or methods used to gather other evidence
- Findings of fact supporting the determination
- Conclusions regarding application of IDEA’s Code of Conduct to the facts
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to IDEA’s education program or activities will be provided to the complainant
- IDEA’s procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

IDEA must provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously. The determination becomes final either on the date IDEA provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.

## Appeals

IDEA will offer both parties an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and from IDEA’s dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter
- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

As to appeals, IDEA will ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, or the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. IDEA will provide both parties a reasonable equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.

The decision-maker(s) for the appeal will issue a written decision, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result, and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

A party who is dissatisfied with the appeal decision may file an appeal through the student and legal guardian complaint process, beginning at Level Two.

## Emergency Removals

IDEA is able to remove a respondent from IDEA’s education program on an emergency basis, provided that IDEA undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. IDEA’s ability to do so may not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## Informal Resolution

At any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, IDEA may facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, which does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. However, IDEA may not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continued employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to an investigation and adjudication of formal complaints. Additionally, IDEA may not require the parties to participate in an informal process and may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

Prior to facilitating an informal resolution process, IDEA must:

- Provide to the parties a written notice disclosing the allegations and the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations. The notice must also inform that, at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint, as well as of any consequence resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

- Obtain the parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

IDEA may not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

## Retaliation Prohibited

Neither IDEA nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under this policy.

Examples of retaliation may include, but are not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedure described above.

## Confidentiality

IDEA must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by FERPA or as required by law, or for purposes related to the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising under the Title IX regulations.

## Non-Sexual Harassment Sex Discrimination

The formal complaint investigation and resolution process outlined above in "Freedom from Sexual Harassment" applies only to formal complaints alleging sexual harassment as defined by Title IX, but not to complaints alleging sex discrimination that do not constitute sexual harassment. Complaints of non-sexual harassment sex discrimination may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator and will be handled under the process described in the "Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation" section of this Handbook.

## Freedom from Hazing and Bullying

IDEA Florida has adopted an anti-bullying and hazing policy found [here](#).

## Interrogations and Searches

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that IDEA is safe and drug free, school officials may from time-to-time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Administrators, teachers and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students have no claim to the right not to incriminate themselves.

Students shall be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by school officials. School officials may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, or property by establishing reasonable cause or securing the student's voluntary consent.

A search is reasonable if (1) the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will uncover evidence of a rule violation or a criminal violation and (2) the scope of the search is reasonably related to the circumstances justifying the search, such as the extent of the search, the objectives of the search, the age and sex of the student, and the nature of the infraction.

## Desk and Locker Searches

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers, desks or other school property. Lockers and desks assigned to students remain under the control and jurisdiction of IDEA. IDEA will make periodic inspections of lockers and desks at any time, with or without notice or student consent. School officials will remove any item that violates school policy or that may potentially be dangerous.

Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks and shall be held responsible for any prohibited items found therein. A student's legal guardian shall be notified if any prohibited articles or materials are found in a student's locker or desk, or on the student's person.

## Vehicles on Campus

Vehicles parked on school property and property under school control are under the jurisdiction of IDEA and may be searched at

any time if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the search will result in evidence that school rules or other laws have been violated. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student shall be asked to unlock the vehicle and consent to a search of the vehicle. If the student refuses to permit the vehicle to be searched, IDEA may contact the student's legal guardians and/or law enforcement officials. A student may be held responsible for and in possession of prohibited items found in his or her vehicle parked on school property or at a school-related event.

## School Visitors

All IDEA visitors must sign in at the school administrative office. A sign at the entrance to the campus will direct visitors to the appropriate location.

A government-issued photo ID is required for identity verification and a safety check via the Florida State Sex Offender and Child Predator Registry or similar. Approved visitors will receive a visitor sticker or badge to wear on campus, which must be worn throughout the entire visit and returned upon signing out of the IDEA campus. Some visitors may require a staff member to accompany them throughout the duration of their visit. Approval from the principal and classroom teacher is required for classroom visits during instructional times to ensure minimal disruption.

## Registered Sex Offenders

Registered sex offenders are generally prohibited from entering school grounds.

### Exception

A legal guardian who is required to register as a sex offender may enter school grounds for the following limited purposes:

- To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the academic and/or social progress of the legal guardian's child
- To attend an IEP meeting or other conference where evaluation or placement decisions may be made respecting the student's exceptional student education (ESE) services
- When the Principal has requested their presence for any other reason concerning their child or
- To transport the child to school or pick up the child from school.

Requirements for the Exception to Apply:

- The legal guardian must notify the Principal of the purpose of the visit and when the visit will occur, including date and time, before the legal guardian enters the school grounds.
- The Principal shall notify the school front office of the legal guardian's intent to visit.
- The legal guardian must check in at the school front office upon arrival and departure from the school.
- The legal guardian must remain under the direct supervision of staff at all times.

Even under the limited circumstances set out above, the legal guardian will not be permitted to enter or be present on school property if:

- The individual's parental rights have been terminated.
- The individuals' presence at school is prohibited by court order or conditions of probation or
- The Executive Director or campus administrator determines that the individual poses a threat to student safety or is likely to cause a disturbance to the educational environment.

In those cases, communications regarding the student will be conducted by alternate means such as telephone, mail, or electronic communications. Where the administration determines that a meeting is necessary, it will identify an appropriate meeting place where students are not present.

## Weapon and Concealed Handgun Prohibition

Florida Statutes §790.115 prohibits the possession of firearms and dangerous weapons on the physical premises of the school, any grounds or building on which an activity sponsored by a school is being conducted, or school transportation vehicle. Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit.

# MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENTS

## Religious Expression

IDEA prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of religion. Students have the right to silently pray or meditate at IDEA, so long as it does not disrupt the instructional day or other activities of the school. IDEA shall not require, encourage, or coerce any student to engage in or to refrain from prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## Moment of Silence

Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

## Pledge of Allegiance

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

For more information, see “[Civics Policy](#).”

## Civics Opt-Out Participation

To opt out of participation in any activities described above (Religious Expression, Moment of Silence, Pledge of Allegiance), where applicable, a legal guardian may:

1. Complete the Civics Opt-Out Participation Form found on IDEA’s Parent Resource Landing Page: [LINK](#)
2. Download and print the completed form.
3. Submit completed and printed form in person to the receptionist at the school front office.

## School Calendar

IDEA operates according to the school calendar adopted annually by the Board of Directors. Holidays may be used as school make-up days for learning days lost due to bad weather or other closure. The dates will be communicated in advance and updated on the online version of the calendar. The latest changes to the calendar will be available on the IDEA website at <https://ideapublicschools.org/parents/academic-calendars/>.

## School Day

Students should be in their classrooms ready for instruction at the designated time to begin the school day. Any student not in class by the designated start time will be marked tardy. Any student not in class during roll call will be marked absent.

Students must leave campus immediately after school dismisses in the afternoon, unless they are involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or sponsor. If a student is involved in an after-school activity, he or she must remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. The student may not go to another area of the school without permission by the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity.

During the school day, students may not loiter or stand in the halls between classes. Students must have a pass to be outside the classroom during class time. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action.

## Textbooks and Curriculum Materials

Textbooks and additional curriculum materials are provided free of charge for each subject or class, except for dual credit courses. Materials must be used by the students as directed by the teacher and treated with care. A student who is issued damaged materials should report the damage to the teacher.

Students must return all textbooks and supplemental materials to the teacher at the end of the school year or when the student withdraws from school. Any student failing to return issued materials in an acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and educational materials until the student and/or legal guardian pay for the damages. However, a student will be provided

textbooks and educational materials for use during the school day. IDEA may reduce or waive the payment requirement if the student is from a low-income family.

## Transcripts

Current students, former students, and/or their legal guardians are entitled to request copies of their high school transcript. Transcripts include student information, grades, scores on standardized tests, graduation type, and class rank. Copies can be requested by contacting the high school's registrar or counselor.

## Student Records

### Classification and Retention of Records

1. Information for each student will be kept current while the student is enrolled at IDEA and retained permanently: Full legal name, birthdate, place of birth, race, ethnicity, sex, address, parent(s) or guardian(s) names, last school attended, attendance records, courses taken, grades, date of graduation, and records of requests for Personal Identifiable Information (PII) access.
2. Student information that is subject to periodic review and elimination in accordance with Section 1001.52(3), F.S: Health information, family background data, test scores, career plans, honors, work reports, teacher comments, discipline records, threat assessments, intervention services, psychological evaluations, therapy notes, correspondence, and driver education certificates.

### Deviation Form

Legal guardians can specify the use of any deviation from their child's legal name in school by completing the Deviation Form. The Deviation Form is available at the school's front office.

## Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations

Participation in school-related activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students. Participation, however, is a privilege and not a right. Eligibility for participation in many school-related activities is governed by state law and rules of the Florida High School Athletic Association ("FHSAA"), a statewide association overseeing interscholastic competition. Additional information regarding extracurricular activities, clubs, and organizations may be obtained from the principal.

Participation in these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When IDEA arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provide by IDEA to and from the event. Exceptions may only be made with approval from the activity's coach or sponsor.

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior – including consequences for misbehavior – this may result in additional consequences for those students. If a violation of organization rules is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

## Legal Guardian Notification for School-Sponsored Events and Activities

Legal guardians will receive details about their child's school-sponsored events or activities, including supplemental programs as defined in Rule 6A-10.085, F.A.C.

For applicable school-sponsored events or activities, legal guardians will receive permission forms to sign and complete. Signed permission forms from legal guardians are required for participation. Permission forms will include:

- The nature of the event or activity.
- The date(s) and time(s) of the event or activity.
- Specific location(s) and type(s) of sponsors/guests.
- Method of student supervision, including the anticipated number of chaperones.

## Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own consumable items, such as pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, calculators, headsets, etc. Students may be required to pay certain fees or deposits, including:

- A fee for materials for a class project that the student will keep, if the fee does not exceed the cost of materials.
- Membership dues in voluntary student clubs or organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities
- A security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- A fee for personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel, although a student may provide the student's own equipment or apparel if it meets reasonable requirements and standards relating to health and safety
- A fee for voluntarily purchased items, such as student publications, class rings, pictures, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- A fee for voluntary student health and accident benefit plan.
- A reasonable fee, not to exceed the actual annual maintenance cost, for the use of musical instruments and uniforms owned or rented by the school.
- A fee for items of personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that become the property of the student.
- A parking fee
- A fee for replacement of a student identification card.
- If offered, a fee for a driver training course, not to exceed the actual cost per student in the program for the current school year.
- A fee for an optional course offered for credit that requires the use of facilities not available on campus or the employment of an educator who is not part of the school's regular staff.
- A fee for summer school courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee, not to exceed \$50, for costs associated with an educational program offered outside of regular school hours through which a student who was absent from class receives instruction voluntarily for the purpose of making up the missed instruction and meeting the level of attendance required for class credit, so long as the fee would not create a financial hardship or discourage the student from attending the program.
- A fee for lost, damaged, or overdue library book.
- A fee specifically permitted by any other statute.
- A fee for lost, damaged or vandalized technology equipment.
- An optional electronic insurance fee.

IDEA may waive any fee or deposit if the student and legal guardians are unable to pay. A request for such a waiver must be made in writing to the Principal or designee and include evidence of inability to pay. Details for the fee waiver are available in the Principal's office.

## Displaying a Student's Artwork, Projects, Photos, and Other Original Work

Teachers may display student work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, IDEA will seek parental consent before displaying student artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, and other original works on the IDEA website, on any campus or classroom website, in printed materials, by video, or by any other method of mass communication. IDEA will also seek consent before displaying or publishing an original video or voice recording in this manner.

## Distribution of Materials or Documents

### School Materials

Publications prepared by and for IDEA may be posted or distributed with prior approval by the Principal and/or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

### Non-School Materials

Students must obtain prior express permission of the Principal or designee before distributing, posting, selling, or circulating written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials on campus.

Non-school literature shall not be distributed by students on IDEA property if:

- The materials are obscene, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience.
- The materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students.
- The materials promote illegal use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances.
- The distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person.
- The materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others.
- The materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action.
- The materials are hate literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or contain content aimed at creating hostility and violence, and the materials would materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of others.
- There is reasonable cause to believe that distribution of the non-school literature would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials over which IDEA does not exercise control shall not be sold, circulated, or distributed by persons or groups not associated with IDEA or a school support group on school premises unless the person or group obtains specific prior approval from the Superintendent or designee. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring organization or individual.

## Electronic Devices and Technology Resources

### Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices and Other Electronic Devices

IDEA permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless the device is used for approved instructional purposes. Such devices may not be visible in the pocket of a jacket or pants; items must be completely put away and out of sight.

A student must also have permission from the Principal to possess other personal telecommunication devices (such as a pager, notebook computer, laptop, tablet, or other portable computing device) at school. Students may also be permitted to possess other electronic devices (for example, MP3 players, iPods, video or audio recorders, DVD players, or similar electronic devices). Such devices must be turned off between instructional school hours. Such devices may not be visible in the pocket of a jacket or pants; items must be completely put away and out of sight.

If a student possesses a personal telecommunication device or other electronic device without permission, school staff will collect the item and turn it in to the Principal's office. The Principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or contact a legal guardian to pick up the item.

The use of mobile telephones or any other device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in restroom areas or other sensitive areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunication device or other electronic device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated. If the student and legal guardian have executed a waiver permitting the student to possess an electronic communication device at school, IDEA officials may power on and search the device if there is reasonable cause to believe that the device has been used in the transmission or reception of communications prohibited by law, policy, or regulation. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. These guidelines apply even if the item in use is not the property of the student found in violation of the policy.

A confiscated device may be picked up from the Principal's office. Confiscated telecommunication devices that are not retrieved by the student or legal guardian will be disposed of after the notice required by law.

IDEA will not be responsible for damage to or loss or theft of personal devices, including confiscated items.

### Use of Campus Technology Resources

School-owned technology resources for instructional purposes may be issued to individual students. Use of these technological resources, which include IDEA's network systems and use of school equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. All

students must adhere to IDEA standards set forth in the Student Acceptable Use policy and Electronic Communication Device Commitment Form.

Students and legal guardians will be asked to electronically sign an Electronic Communication Device Commitment Form regarding use of these school technology resources via STREAM. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is IDEA-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as "sexting," will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement.

TikTok is prohibited on all district- or school-owned devices and any device connected to district- or school-provided internet. TikTok cannot be used to communicate or promote any school district, school, club, extracurricular organization, or athletic team.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of IDEA's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of recommended expulsion.

### Additional Information

The following website provides information and resources related to student technology and internet safety for students and their families:

- Student Technology at IDEA: <https://ideapublicschools.org/learningtech/>
- Parent's Guide to Internet Safety: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/net-safety.html>

### Consequences for Violations of the Student Acceptable Use Policy

Violation of IDEA's policies and procedures concerning acceptable use of technology resources will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of school policy, including the Student Code of Conduct. Any or all the following consequences may be enforced if a student violates the terms of this policy:

- Any disciplinary consequence, including suspension or expulsion, as allowed under the Student Code of Conduct and deemed appropriate by IDEA.
- Denial, revocation, or suspension of a user's access to IDEA's technology resources, with or without cause or notice
- Referral to law enforcement authorities
- Termination of a system user account

Violations of law may also result in referral to law enforcement authorities, as well as disciplinary action by IDEA. IDEA will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's computer systems and networks.

### Change of Address or Telephone Number

Legal guardians are responsible for notifying IDEA when a student's address or telephone number changes. A legal guardian may submit changes to student's address or telephone number by providing their valid ID and proof of new residency to their campus.

### Uniform Requirements

As authorized by state law and the IDEA charter, Students are required to wear uniforms to school. IDEA's uniform policy is designed to prevent disruption, minimize safety hazards, and provide a consistent and professional dress standard across all IDEA schools.

Legal guardians must provide their student(s) with the required uniform. Uniforms may be available free of charge for families experiencing financial difficulty. A request for school assistance for purchasing uniforms must be made in writing to the principal or designee and include an explanation of financial hardship. Further details are available in the principal's office.

Students who do not follow IDEA's guidelines for personal attire and appearance may be subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

Newly enrolled students may be provided with a grace period of up to two weeks to obtain appropriate IDEA uniforms.

## IDEA Student Dress Code

Uniforms help our students to focus on academics, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and provide a socially safe, secure, and stable school climate. The appearance of all students reflects the high standards and culture of our school.

### Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday Uniform

- Khaki, black or navy bottoms (skirts, skorts, capris, shorts, or pants). Joggers or pants with elastic at the cuffs are not permitted. Skirts and shorts must be knee length. Shorts and pants may not be rolled up.
- IDEA logo polo shirt in designated grade-level color and purchased at a store on the uniform guide ([Link](#)). Uniform shirts must be tucked in, and sleeves may not be rolled up.
- The only sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts that may be worn inside the classroom must be the official sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts sold by one of the vendors listed in the uniform guide. All other sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts may only be worn outside of the school building during cold weather and stored in their backpacks in class.
- During cool/cold weather, students may wear a long-sleeved black or white shirt under their IDEA logo polo shirt. Undershirts and polo shirts must be tucked in. Any undershirts worn must be black or white.
- Black belts must always be worn. Belts are not required for Kinder.
- Footwear: black athletic shoes, must be closed toe.

### Friday Uniform

- Blue jean denim bottom (skirts, skorts, capris, shorts, or pants) with a spirit shirt (IDEA) or college shirt (the name of the college or university must be explicit) may be worn. Blue jean denim bottoms in colors other than blue and/or with holes or tears are not allowed.
- Students may wear their IDEA polo shirt with blue jean denim bottoms. Students may also wear a spirit shirt with their khakis, black or navy bottoms.
- If a student chooses not to wear a spirit or college shirt, they must wear their IDEA logo polo shirt.
- College sweatshirts are allowed, but hoods may not be worn on the head.
- Black belts must always be worn. Belts are not required for Kinder.
- Footwear: Black athletic shoes must be closed toe.

### Head Coverings

- Head coverings that honor religions and/or culture and hats or head coverings necessitated by a medical issue are permitted.
- All types of hand gloves and headgear (beanies, earmuffs, etc.) may be worn outside of school buildings during cold weather and stored in their backpacks in class.

## Child Nutrition Program

Legal guardians for students at launching campuses are strongly encouraged to fill out a Free and Reduced Meal Application before the beginning of the academic year. It is used to determine if students and/or families qualify for free or reduced-priced meals. The meal application can be completed online at [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com).

The Child Nutrition Program (CNP) at IDEA Public Schools has qualified to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) in the State of Florida. Through the CEP, we are able to provide free breakfast and lunch to all children, at qualified schools, and eliminates the collection of free and reduced meal (FARM) applications. This approach reduces burdens for both families and school administrators and helps ensure that students receive nutritious meals. For more information on the Child Nutrition Program and to view menus, visit: <https://ideapublicschools.org/parents/cnp/>.

## Transportation

IDEA makes school bus transportation available to students eligible for bus transportation. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted on the school website. For more information regarding transportation, visit our school website at <https://ideapublicschools.org/parents/transportation/> or contact Campus Transportation Manager.

Riding a school vehicle is a privilege. School vehicle drivers have the authority to maintain discipline and

require seating charts. When riding a school vehicle, students are held to behavioral standards established in this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver’s directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner.
- Scan your Transportation ID when getting on and off the bus.
- Follow the seating arrangement as directed by the bus driver.
- If the vehicle is equipped with seatbelts, scholars must put them on before the vehicle moves.
- Keep feet, backpacks, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle and rear exit door.
- Not eat or drink while on the bus.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, legs, or an object out of any window, and
- Wait for the driver’s signal in order to leave or cross in front of the vehicle.

Only designated students are allowed to ride in the vehicle. Students may not ride the vehicle to a different location nor have friends ride the vehicle to participate in after-school activities.

IDEA requires legal guardians to have kinder and elementary age up to third grade be escorted to and met at the bus stop after school by a responsible person. Legal guardians, please remember to get out of your vehicles to meet your children at the designated bus stop locations. This will allow our drivers to confirm that you or the responsible party is receiving your children.

If a special needs student is receiving bus transportation as a result of an Individual Education Plan (“IEP”), the IEP Committee will have the discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary consequences related to inappropriate behavior in a school vehicle.

For more information regarding transportation and the Bus Rider Behavior Contract which outlines bus riding expectations, visit our school website at <https://ideapublicschools.org/parents/transportation/> or contact the Transportation Manager at your campus.

## Permission for Students to Walk or Bike to School

Legal guardians who wish for their child to walk or bike to school must request and complete the Student Walk Home Release form from the school’s front office, available at <https://ideapublicschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/25-26-FL-Walking-Home-Release-Form-Eng-and-Spanish.pdf>.

By signing this form, legal guardians acknowledge that the school is not responsible for the student’s safety prior to arriving to campus before the start of school and once they leave the school premises at the end of the school day. This form also confirms IDEA’s immunity from liability for any potential injuries or damages that may occur during the student’s commute. Completed forms must be returned to the school to be kept on file.

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## Purpose of the Student Code of Conduct

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of every student. In addition to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship must also be taught and modeled by school staff. To foster an orderly and distraction-free environment, IDEA has established this Student Code of Conduct in accordance with state law and the IDEA open-enrollment charter. The Student Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Board of Directors and provides information to legal guardians and students regarding expectations for behavior, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline.

The Student Code of Conduct will be posted at each IDEA campus and/or will be available for review at each principal's office. Legal guardians will be notified of any violation that may result in a student being suspended or expelled from IDEA. Students and staff must be familiar with the standards set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, campus and classroom rules.

The Student Code of Conduct does not define all types and aspects of student behavior, as IDEA may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct. When students participate in student activities, they will also be expected to follow the guidelines that further specify the organization's expectations, student behavior, and consequences.

## Authority and Jurisdiction

IPS has disciplinary authority over a student:

- During the regular school day and/or while the student is going to and from school on IDEA transportation.
- During open lunch periods in which a student is allowed to leave campus.
- While the student is in attendance at any school-related event or activity, regardless of time or location.
- For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.
- For any expulsion offense committed while on IDEA property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of IDEA or of any other school in Florida.
- For any expulsion offense committed away from IDEA property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the misconduct creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment.
- While the student is in transit to or from school or to or from school or school-related activities or events.
- When retaliation against a student, school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location.
- When the student commits any felony, regardless of time or location.
- While a student is participating in any remote / virtual classroom or other period of online instruction provided by IDEA.
- While the student is in attendance at any school-related event or activity, regardless of time or location.
- When criminal mischief is committed on or off IDEA property or at a school-related event.

## Reporting Crimes

In addition to disciplinary consequences, misdemeanor and felony offenses committed on campus or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Standards for Student Conduct

Each student is expected to:

- Adhere to the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Cooperate with and assist IDEA staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.
- Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
- Meet IDEA's standards of dress.
- Obey all campus and classroom rules.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Respect the property of others, including IDEA property and facilities.
- Respect the rights and privileges of students, teachers, and other IDEA staff and volunteers.

## Discipline Management Techniques

Disciplinary techniques are designed to improve conduct and encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as school community members. Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Discipline will be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements.

Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense, unless otherwise specified by law, may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

## Techniques

The following discipline management techniques may be used—alone or in combination—for behavior prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct or by campus or classroom rules:

- Assignment of school duties such as cleaning or picking up litter (this technique may be applied if the offense is related to school property damage).
- Behavioral contracts
- Cooling-off time or “time-out.”
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or administrative personnel
- Rewards for positive behavior
- Demerits
- Detention
- Expulsion. An IDEA principal can, and in some cases, must, recommend to the local school district superintendent that a student be expelled.
- Grade reductions for cheating, plagiarism, and as otherwise permitted by policy
- In-school suspension, as specified in the suspension section of the Code of Conduct
- Out-of-school suspension, as specified in the suspension section of the Code of Conduct
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Referral to an outside agency or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by IDEA
- School-assessed and school-administered probation (final warning contracts)
- Seating changes within the classroom
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area
- Techniques or penalties identified in individual student organizations’ extracurricular standards of behavior
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Verbal correction, oral or written
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in extracurricular activities, field trips, eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices, or membership in school-sponsored clubs and organizations.
- Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges (this technique may be applied if the offense is bus or school- transportation related).
- Other strategies and consequences as determined by school officials, including, but not limited to, requests that legal guardians “shadow” their children at school for a specified period of time.

## Discipline Matrix

The Discipline Matrix detailed in this section has been included within the Student Code of Conduct to develop consistent practices and provide specific grounds for disciplinary action.

### BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL I

BEHAVIORS	RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES
Level I Behaviors are acts that disrupt the ordinary operation of the classroom, school function, extracurricular activities, or approved transportation.	The principal or designee must implement all Required Actions and may select one or more of the Optional Strategies from PLAN I.
<b>LEVEL I-</b> Disruptive Behaviors  <input type="checkbox"/> Confrontation with another student <input type="checkbox"/> Cutting class <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive behavior (including behavior on the school bus and at the school bus stop) <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to comply with class and/or school rules <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate public display of affection <input type="checkbox"/> Misrepresentation	<b>PLAN I</b> Required Actions: <input type="checkbox"/> Legal guardian contact (See Special Notes #2) <input type="checkbox"/> Student conference (See Special Notes #3)  Optional Strategies: When behaviors are repeated/ habitual: (See Special Notes #4) <input type="checkbox"/> Student/ Legal guardian/staff conference <input type="checkbox"/> Reprimand

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possession of items or materials that are inappropriate for an educational setting (See Special Notes #1)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repeated use of profane or crude language (general, not directed at someone)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized location</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized use of wireless communication devices</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Violation of dress code</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student contract</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practical FBA</li> </ul> <p>Campus-Based Support Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer Mediation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participation in a counseling session related to the infraction</li> </ul> <p>Restorative/Corrective Action Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confiscation of wireless communication devices</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replacement or payment of any damaged property (if appropriate)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendations from MTSS: RTi strategies</li> </ul> <p>Exclusionary Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Revocation of the right to participate in social and/or extracurricular activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loss of bus privileges up to 10 days</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Detention or other Board-approved in-school programs</li> </ul>
<b>SPECIAL NOTES</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrators must contact the local police department for any sexual offense. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the school administrator must report the incident to the VP of Schools. Incident related elements must be included in the description of the incident leading to the disciplinary action. (see glossary for definitions of the incident-related elements).</li> <li>2. A good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact the legal guardian by telephone. Record in the Focus Student Contact Log.</li> <li>3. Students must be given the opportunity to be heard about the incident.</li> <li>4. 'Repeated behavior' is defined as a specific set of behaviors that occur more than twice during a nine-week grading period. Staff are required to begin the MTSS: RTi process for these incidents and document in the Focus SSS module.</li> </ol>	
Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.	

## BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL II

BEHAVIORS	RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES
Level II Behaviors are more serious than Level I behaviors because they significantly interfere with learning and/or the well-being of others.	The principal or designee must implement all Required Actions and <u>may</u> select one or more of the Optional Strategies from PLAN II. The use of appropriate prior plan strategies may be used <u>in conjunction with</u> this Plan.I.
<b>LEVEL II- Seriously Disruptive Behaviors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cheating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confrontation with a staff member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Defiance of school personnel</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of items or material that are inappropriate for an educational setting (See Special Notes #1)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Failure to comply with previously prescribed corrective strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> False accusation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (minor)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forgery (written misrepresentation)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Harassment (non-protected categories)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Instigative behavior</li> </ul>	<b>PLAN II</b> <p>Required Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal guardian contact (See Special Notes #2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student conference (See Special Notes #3)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corrective Strategy from PLAN I</li> </ul> <p>Campus-Based Support Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School-based program that focuses on modifying the student's inappropriate behavior and promotes positive behavior (including MTSS:RTi strategies)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Referral for Tier 3 mental health support</li> </ul> <p>Exclusionary Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Detention or other Board-approved in-school</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Joining clubs or groups NOT approved by IDEA Public Schools.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leaving school grounds without permission</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Libel</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Petty theft (under \$750.00)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possession of and/or use of tobacco products or smoking/vaping devices</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prohibited sales on school grounds (other than controlled substances)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Slander</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use of profane or provocative language directed at someone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (minor)</li> </ul>	<p>programs</p>
<b>SPECIAL NOTES</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrators must contact the local police department for any sexual offense. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the school administrator must report the incident to the VP of Schools. Incident related elements must be included in the description of the incident leading to the disciplinary action. (see glossary for definitions of the incident-related elements).</li> <li>2. A good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact the legal guardian by telephone. Record in the Focus Student Contact Log.</li> <li>3. Students must be given the opportunity to be heard about the incident.</li> <li>4. 'Repeated behavior' is defined as a specific set of behaviors that occur more than twice during a nine-week grading period. Staff are required to begin the MTSS:RTi process for these incidents and document in the Focus SSS module.</li> <li>5. For any assignment away from the student's regular course schedule, written notice must be sent to the legal guardian withing 24 hours. If legal guardians are unavailable, please send the notification via US Mail.</li> </ol>	
Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.	

### BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL III

BEHAVIORS	RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES
<p>Level III Behaviors are more serious than Level II behaviors because they endanger health and safety, damage property, and/or cause serious disruptions to the learning environment.</p>	<p>The principal or designee must implement all Required Actions and <u>may</u> select one or more of the Optional Strategies from PLAN III. The use of appropriate prior plan strategies may be used <u>in conjunction with</u> this Plan.</p>
<p>LEVEL III- Offensive/Harmful Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assault/Threat against a non-staff member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering/Burglary</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bullying (repeated harassment) (See Special Notes #1, 6 &amp; 7)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disruption on campus/Disorderly conduct</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (serious)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> False or Improper Activation of the fire alarm system or fire extinguisher</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gambling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Harassment (Civil Rights violation) (See Special Notes #7, 8)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hazing (misdemeanor)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possession of simulated weapons (See Special Notes #10)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possession or use of alcohol, unauthorized over- the- counter medications, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances and/or anything that alters mood or is used for mood</li> </ul>	<p>PLAN III</p> <p>Required Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal guardian contact (See Special Notes #2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student conference (See Special Notes #3)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corrective Strategies from PLAN I &amp; PLAN II</li> </ul> <p>Exclusionary Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permanent removal from class and reassignment to different class (MTSS: RTi committee decision required)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Suspension [in or out of school] (1-10 days with regional approval for serious or habitual infractions) (See Special Notes #8, 9)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation for expulsion (regional approval for serious or habitual infractions)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>altering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sexting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual harassment (See Special Notes #6,7,&amp; 8)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Technology &amp; Computer related offense</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Threat/Intimidation (See Special Notes #10)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trespassing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (major)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Any student who willfully enters, for a purpose other than those listed in subsection 553 865.9 (a) (6), a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex on the premises of the educational institution and refuses to depart when asked to do so by: any instructional personnel as described in s. 1012.01(2), administrative personnel as described in s. 1012.01(3), or a safe-school officer as described in s. 1006.12(1)-(4), shall have committed a Level III offense.</li> </ul>	
--	--

**SPECIAL NOTES**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrators must contact the local police department for any sexual offense. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the school administrator must report the incident to the VP of Schools. Incident related elements must be included in the description of the incident leading to the disciplinary action. (see glossary for definitions of the incident-related elements).</li> <li>2. A good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact the legal guardian by telephone. Record in the Focus Student Contact Log.</li> <li>3. Students must be given the opportunity to be heard about the incident.</li> <li>4. 'Repeated behavior' is defined as a specific set of behaviors that occur more than twice during a nine-week grading period. Staff are required to begin the MTSS: RTi process for these incidents and document in the Focus SSS module.</li> <li>5. For any assignment away from the student's regular course schedule, written notice must be sent to the legal guardian within 24 hours. If legal guardians are unavailable, please send the notification via US Mail.</li> <li>6. Allegations of Bullying and Harassment that are not able to be substantiated after investigation must be reported in SESIR as Unsubstantiated Bullying and Unsubstantiated Harassment. Bullying infractions do not require a SPAR unless the incident is Hazing related.</li> <li>7. Harassment Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment do not require a SPAR but must be reported to the Department of Children &amp; Families.</li> <li>8. Corrective action for Sexual Harassment may be issued only in accordance with the Title IX policy.</li> <li>9. Suspension of students from school programs is a last resort, to be utilized only in the most extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal AFTER other learning-centered corrective strategies have been employed AND regional notification.</li> <li>10. If a student brings a firearm or weapon to school and/or makes a threat or false report, the school MUST refer the student to receive 'mental health services' identified by the school pursuant to 1012.584(4). The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property may result in criminal penalties in addition to expulsion.</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;">Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.</p>

## BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL IV

BEHAVIORS	RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES
<p>Level IV Behaviors are more serious acts of unacceptable behavior than Level III. They seriously endanger the health and well-being of other and/or damage property.</p>	<p>The principal or designee must implement all Required Actions and <u>may</u> select one or more of the Optional Strategies from PLAN IV. The use of appropriate prior plan strategies may be used <u>in conjunction with</u> this Plan.</p>
<p>LEVEL IV- Dangerous or Violent Behaviors</p>	<p>PLAN IV</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Battery (Physical Attack) against a non-staff member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grand Theft (over \$750.00)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hate Crime</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hazing (Felony)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intent to sell and/or distribute alcohol, unauthorized over-the-counter medications, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances and/or anything that alters mood or is used for mood altering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Motor vehicle theft</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other major crimes/incidents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Robbery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sale and/or distribution of alcohol, unauthorized over-the-counter medications, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances and/or anything that alters mood or is used for mood altering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sex Offenses (other) (including possession and/or distribution of obscene or lewd materials)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sexting (level 2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Technology and computer-related offense (level 2)</li> </ul>	<p>Required Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal guardian contact (<i>See Special Notes #2</i>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student conference (<i>See Special Notes #3</i>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corrective Strategies from PLAN I- PLAN III</li> </ul> <p>Exclusionary Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permanent removal from class and reassignment to different class (MTSS: RTi committee decision required)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Suspension [in or out of school] (1-10 days with regional approval for serious or habitual infractions) (<i>See Special Notes #5,9</i>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation for third party intervention (e.g., Department of Juvenile Justice)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation for expulsion</li> </ul>
---	--

**SPECIAL NOTES**

1. Administrators must contact the local police department for any sexual offense. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the school administrator must report the incident to the VP of Schools. Incident related elements must be included in the description of the incident leading to the disciplinary action. (see glossary for definitions of the incident-related elements).
2. A good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact the legal guardian by telephone. Record in the Focus Student Contact Log.
3. Students must be given the opportunity to be heard about the incident.
4. 'Repeated behavior' is defined as a specific set of behaviors that occur more than twice during a nine-week grading period. Staff are required to begin the MTSS: RTi process for these incidents and document in the Focus SSS module.
5. For any assignment away from the student's regular course schedule, written notice must be sent to the legal guardian withing 24 hours. If legal guardians are unavailable, please send the notification via US Mail.
6. Allegations of Bullying and Harassment that are not able to be substantiated after investigation must be reported in SESIR as Unsubstantiated Bullying and Unsubstantiated Harassment. Bullying infractions do not require a SPAR unless the incident is Hazing related.
7. Harassment Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment do not require a SPAR, but must be reported to the Department of Children & Families.
8. Corrective action for Sexual Harassment may be issued only in accordance with the Title IX policy.
9. Suspension of students from school programs is a last resort, to be utilized only in the most extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal AFTER other learning-centered corrective strategies have been employed AND regional notification.
10. If a student brings a firearm or weapon to school and/or makes a threat or false report, the school MUST refer the student to receive 'mental health services' identified by the school pursuant to 1012.584(4). The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property may result in criminal penalties in addition to expulsion.

Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.

## BEHAVIORS AND RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES- LEVEL V

BEHAVIORS	RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES
Level V Behaviors are the most serious acts of	The principal or designee must implement all

misconduct and violent actions that threaten life.	Required Actions and <u>must</u> select one or more of the Optional Strategies from PLAN V. The use of appropriate prior plan strategies may be used <u>in conjunction with</u> this Plan.
<p>LEVEL V- Most Serious, Dangerous or Violent Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aggravated assault</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aggravated battery against a non-staff member</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Armed robbery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arson</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assault/Threat against IPS employees or persons conducting official business (See Special Notes #10, 11)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Battery (Physical Attack) or Aggravated battery against IPS employees or persons conducting official business</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Homicide</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kidnapping/Abduction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Making a false report/threat against the school (See Special Notes #10, 11)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other major crimes/incidents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possession, Use, Sale and/or distribution of firearms, explosives, destructive devices and other weapons (See Special Notes #10, 11)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sexting (level 3)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual battery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Technology and computer-related offense (level 3)</li> </ul>	<p>PLAN V</p> <p>Required Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal guardian contact (See Special Notes #2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student conference (See Special Notes #3)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corrective Strategies from PLAN I- PLAN IV</li> </ul> <p>Exclusionary Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Suspension [in or out of school] (1-10 days with regional approval for serious or habitual infractions) (See Special Notes #7)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation for third party intervention (e.g., Department of Juvenile Justice)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation for expulsion</li> </ul>
<b>SPECIAL NOTES</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrators must contact the local police department for any sexual offense. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the school administrator must report the incident to the VP of Schools. Incident related elements must be included in the description of the incident leading to the disciplinary action. (see glossary for definitions of the incident-related elements).</li> <li>2. A good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact the legal guardian by telephone. Record in Focus Student Contact Log.</li> <li>3. Students must be given the opportunity to be heard about the incident.</li> <li>4. 'Repeated behavior' is defined as a specific set of behaviors that occur more than twice during a nine-week grading period. Staff are required to begin the MTSS: RTi process for these incidents and document in the Focus SSS module.</li> <li>5. For any assignment away from the student's regular course schedule, written notice must be sent to the legal guardian withing 24 hours. If legal guardians are unavailable, please send the notification via US Mail.</li> <li>6. Allegations of Bullying and Harassment that are not able to be substantiated after investigation must be reported in SESIR as Unsubstantiated Bullying and Unsubstantiated Harassment. Bullying infractions do not require a SPAR unless the incident is Hazing related.</li> <li>7. Harassment Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment do not require a SPAR, but must be reported to the Department of Children &amp; Families.</li> <li>8. Corrective action for Sexual Harassment may be issued only in accordance with the Title IX policy.</li> <li>9. Suspension of students from school programs is a last resort, to be utilized only in the most extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal AFTER other learning-centered corrective strategies have been employed AND regional notification.</li> <li>10. If a student brings a firearm or weapon to school and/or makes a threat or false report, the school MUST refer the student to receive 'mental health services' identified by the school pursuant to 1012.584(4). The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property may result in criminal penalties in addition to expulsion.</li> <li>11. These incidents will automatically warrant a recommendation for expulsion to the local school district.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.</p>	

## GLOSSARY

1.	Administrators	<p>Adults in school with executive authority to manage the day- to-day business. They include the principal, and the assistant principals, among others.</p> <p>Example: School <i>administrators</i> are responsible for making schools run smoothly.</p>
2.	<p>Alcohol/Alcohol Use</p> <p>Level III Behavior</p>	<p>Mind-altering or mood-altering beverages, including but not limited to beer, wine, wine coolers, vodka coolers, liquors, etc.</p> <p>Possession, use, sale, purchase or distribution of alcohol means that a person is caught in the act of using, admits using or is discovered to have used in the course of an investigation.</p> <p>Possession, use, sale, or distribution of alcohol will result in corrective actions at school and may lead to address and criminal penalties.</p> <p>Example: Drinking alcohol at the basketball game is prohibited on school property.</p>
3.	Alcohol-related incident	<p>An incident is alcohol-related if there is evidence that those involved in the incident were caught drinking at the incident or had been drinking, based on testing or investigation of a Law Enforcement Officer at the scene, or if they admit to drinking or if the incident is somehow related to possession, use or sale of alcohol.</p> <p>Example: The SSO found students drinking wine (<i>alcohol</i>) in a bathroom.</p>
4.	Alternative Educational Setting (AES)	<p>A corrective response to behavior where the student is temporarily removed from his or her regular program of instruction and assigned to another educational setting, either within the students' regularly assigned school or to another assigned school, under the supervision of district school personnel, with specific classwork assignments to complete. Assignment to an AES is made by a principal with approval from the VP of Schools for a period not to exceed ten (10) days.</p> <p>Example: Severe Behavioral infractions at school might results in assignment to an Alternative Educational Setting.</p>
5.	<p>Arson</p> <p>Level V Behavior</p>	<p>To intentionally damage or cause to be damaged, by fire, or explosion, any dwelling, structure, or conveyance, whether occupied or not, or its contents.</p> <p>Example: The girl was arrested for arson and expelled because she intentionally started a fire in the restroom.</p>
6.	Assault/Threat	An intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to

	Level III Behavior	do violence to another, coupled with the apparent ability to do so, and doing some act, which creates a well-founded fear in the other person that such violence is imminent.  Example: The students assaulted another girl by sending her notes saying that they would beat her up right after class.
7.	Aggravated Assault  Level V Behavior	As assault with the use of a weapon or with the intent to commit another felony.  Example: The boy used a knife to threaten his rival for a girl's attention committed aggravated assault.
8.	Battery (Physical Attack)  Level IV Behavior	(Physical Attack/Harm) An actual and intentional striking of another person against his or her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to an individual.  Under Florida law, battery that causes great bodily harm, permanent disfigurement or permanent disability is called "felony battery." Under the law, battery, felony battery, and aggravated battery are distinguishable. Example: The student battered the teacher by pushing her against the wall.  Assault and/or battery committed against a staff member require a mandatory recommendation for expulsion.  Administrators distinguish battery from fighting by reporting an incident as battery only when force or violence is carried out against a person who is not fighting back or is merely attempting to shield his or her body from attack.
9.	Aggravated Battery  Level V Behavior	A battery where the attacker intentionally or knowingly causes great bodily harm, permanent disfigurement, or permanent disability to another, use of a deadly weapon or where the attacker knows or should have known the victim was pregnant.  Example: When a group of kids jump on one student and knock them unconscious, they committed aggravated battery.
10.	Behavior	The way people act or read or the way they conduct themselves.  Example: There is certain behavior that is acceptable in school.

11.	Bullying  Level III Behavior	Repeatedly using hostile, intimidating, domineering or threatening behavior with the intent or purpose of physically or mentally hurting
-----	------------------------------------	--

		<p>another individual. Bullying occurs within an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power (physical or psychological). Unwanted and repeating written, verbal, or physical behavior including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing acts, by an adult or student that are severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.</p> <p>Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress or one or more students or employees that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offense environment; or unreasonably interferes with the individual’s school performance or participation. Bullying includes instances of cyberbullying.</p> <p>Example: When the girl repeatedly made fun of another student for being poor, the girl was guilty of <i>bullying</i>.</p>
12.	Bullying-related incident	<p>An incident is bullying-related if the incident includes systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; or unreasonably interferes with the individual’s school performance or participation.</p> <p>Example: when a student bumps into another student every day to force them to drop their books during transition, that’s a <i>bullying-related incident</i></p>
13.	Burglary/Breaking and Entering Level III Behavior	<p>Unlawful entry into or remaining in a dwelling, structure, or conveyance with the intent to commit a crime therein.</p> <p>Example: The students committed <i>burglary</i> when they crawled through the window to steal a camera.</p>
14.	Cheating Level II Behavior	<p>Using unauthorized answers or sources to receive credit of schoolwork. Plagiarism is a form of cheating when you present another person’s words or ideas as your own without giving the originator credit.</p> <p>Example: The teacher accused the student of cheating when she found the answers to the test written on her desk.</p>
15.	Complaint	<p>A verbal or written disagreement or concern about something that is alleged to be unfair.</p> <p>Example: The student voiced a complaint to her assistant principal about the amount of homework</p>

		her teacher assigned daily.
16.	Complaint Procedure:	A series of steps taken to try to resolve a complaint.  Example: The parent-teacher conference was held as required by the complaint procedure process.
17.	Confrontation:  Level I Behavior (student) Level II Behavior (staff member)	An argument or squabble.  Example: The student went up to the custodian and caused a confrontation by yelling at him when the custodian asked him to not walk on the wet floor.
18.	Controlled Substances (drugs):  Level III Behavior	Mind-altering or mood-altering drugs, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, heroin, various pill, etc. Possession, use, sale or distribution of controlled substances will result in correct strategies at school and may lead to arrest and criminal penalties.
19.	Corporal Punishment:	The use of physical punishment by a legal guardian or student on a student.  The use of corporal punishment is prohibited in IDEA Public Schools. This prohibition extends to legal guardians on school grounds.  Example: Slapping or spanking a student is corporal punishment and not allowed in school.
20.	Corrective Strategies/ Disciplinary Actions	Methods or steps used to help students learn how to follow school rules and to protect the safety of everyone at the school.  Example: The teacher used corrective strategies to improve his school behavior.
21.	Counselor	A school employee who is uniquely trained to help students overcome obstacles that may form barriers to learning. Example: Trust counselors are trained to talk with students about their problems.

## Corporal Punishment

IDEA will NOT administer corporal punishment upon a student for misconduct.

## Conferences, Hearings, and Appeals

All students are entitled to conferences, hearings, and/or appeals of disciplinary matters as provided by applicable state and federal law, and IDEA policy.

### Process for Suspensions

In addition to the above list of Code of Conduct violations, the principal has authority to suspend a student for a period of up to ten school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- The need to further investigate an incident,
- A recommendation to expel the student, or
- An emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety.

## Prerequisites to Suspension

Prior to suspending a student, the principal or designee must attempt to hold an informal conference with the student to:

- Notify the student of the accusations against him/her,
- Allow the student to relate his or her version of the incident, and
- Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

## Notification to Legal Guardians

If the principal or designee determines the student's conduct warrants suspension during the school day, the principal or designee will make reasonable effort to notify the student's legal guardian(s) that the student has been suspended before the student is sent home. The principal or designee will notify a suspended student's legal guardian(s) of the suspension period, the grounds for it, and the time and place for an opportunity to confer with the principal.

## Credit During Suspension

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed during the period of suspension within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension.

## Process for Expulsion (extended suspension) & Notice

When the principal or designee determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, the Principal will provide the School District Superintendent and legal guardians with a recommendation for expulsion as required by Florida law. The School District will provide notice of further proceedings to the legal guardians.

## Emergency Placement

If the principal or designee reasonably believes a student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class, with the ability of a student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of IPS or a school-sponsored activity, the principal or designee may order immediate removal of the student. The principal or designee may impose immediate suspension if he or she reasonably believes such action is necessary to protect persons or property from eminent harm. At the time of such an emergency removal, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action and appropriate hearings will be scheduled within a reasonable time after the emergency removal.

Notwithstanding any provision of law prohibiting the disclosure of the identity of a minor, whenever any student who is attending a public school is adjudicated guilty of or delinquent for, or is found to have committed, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, or pleads guilty or nolo contendere to, a felony violation of:

- Chapter 782, relating to homicide
- Chapter 784, relating to assault, battery, and culpable negligence
- Chapter 787, relating to kidnapping, false imprisonment, luring or enticing a child, and custody offenses
- Chapter 794, relating to sexual battery
- Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent exposure
- Chapter 827, relating to abuse of children
- Section [812.13](#), relating to robbery
- Section [812.131](#), relating to robbery by sudden snatching
- Section [812.133](#), relating to carjacking or
- Section [812.135](#), relating to home-invasion robbery

and, before or at the time of such adjudication, withholding of adjudication, or plea, the offender was attending a school attended by the victim or a sibling of the victim of the offense, the Department of Juvenile Justice shall notify the appropriate district school board of the adjudication or plea, the requirements in this paragraph, and whether the offender is prohibited from attending that school or riding on a school bus whenever the victim or a sibling of the victim is attending the same school or riding on the same school bus, except as provided pursuant to a written disposition order under s. [985.455\(2\)](#). Upon receipt of such notice, the district school board shall take appropriate action to effectuate the provisions in paragraph (b).

## Mandatory Expulsion- zero tolerance offenses

Florida law requires expulsion of students for the following offenses:

Zero-tolerance policies must require students found to have committed one of the following offenses to be expelled, with or without continuing educational services, from the student's regular school for a period of not less than 1 full year, and to be referred to the criminal justice or juvenile justice system.

(a) Bringing a firearm or weapon, as defined in chapter 790, to school, to any school function, or onto any school-sponsored transportation or possessing a firearm at school.

b) Making a threat or false report, as defined by ss. [790.162](#) and [790.163](#), respectively, involving school or school personnel's property, school transportation, or a school-sponsored activity.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each charter school shall recommend expulsion, and each district school board shall adopt rules providing that any student found to have committed any offense in s. [784.081](#)(1), (2), or (3) shall be expelled or placed in an alternative school setting or other program, as appropriate. Upon being charged with the offense, the student shall be removed from the classroom immediately and placed in an alternative school setting pending disposition.

784.081 provides Assault or battery on specified officials or employees; reclassification of offenses.

1. For purposes of this section, the term "sports official" means any person who serves as a referee, an umpire, or a linesman, and any person who serves in a similar capacity as a sports official who may be known by another title, which sports official is duly registered by or is a member of a local, state, regional, or national organization that is engaged in part in providing education and training to sports officials.
2. Whenever a person is charged with committing an assault or aggravated assault or a battery or aggravated battery upon any elected official or employee of: a school district; a private school; the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind; a university lab school; a state university or any other entity of the state system of public education, as defined in s. [1000.04](#); a sports official; an employee or protective investigator of the Department of Children and Family Services; an employee of a lead community-based provider and its direct service contract providers; or an employee of the Department of Health or its direct service contract providers, when the person committing the offense knows or has reason to know the identity or position or employment of the victim, the offense for which the person is charged shall be reclassified as follows:
  - a. In the case of aggravated battery, from a felony of the second degree to a felony of the first degree.
  - b. In the case of aggravated assault, from a felony of the third degree to a felony of the second degree.
  - c. In the case of battery, from a misdemeanor of the first degree to a felony of the third degree.
  - d. In the case of assault, from a misdemeanor of the second degree to a misdemeanor of the first degree.
3. An assault, aggravated assault, battery, or aggravated battery upon a sports official shall be reclassified pursuant to subsection (2) only if such offense is committed upon the sports official when he or she is actively participating as a sports official in an athletic contest or immediately following such athletic contest.

## Mandatory Reporting of "Threats of Terrorism" or "Threats of Violence"

The principal or designee shall thoroughly investigate any and all threats of terrorism or threats of violence that have been reported, with such investigation including an interview with the person reporting the threat, the person allegedly making the threat, and all witnesses. If the investigation supports that a threat is credible and imminent, it shall be immediately reported to the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

If a student brings a firearm or weapon and/or makes a threat or false report, the school must refer the student to "mental health services" pursuant to [1012.584\(4\)](#).

### Placement of Students with Disabilities

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities (504 or special education under IDEA) shall be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

### Suspension/Expulsion Requirement

A student with a disability shall not be removed from his or her current placement for disciplinary reasons for more than ten days without IEP Committee action to determine appropriate services in the interim and otherwise in accordance with applicable federal

and state law. If an exceptional student education due process appeal is filed, the student with a disability shall remain in the current education setting in place when such appeal is noticed to IDEA, unless IDEA and the student’s legal guardians agree otherwise.

## Gun-Free Schools Act

In accordance with the Gun-Free Schools Act, IDEA shall expel from the student’s regular program for a period of one year, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school. The principal may modify the term of expulsion for a student or assess another comparable penalty that results in the student’s expulsion from the regular school program on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with legal requirements.

For the purposes of this section, “firearm” means:

- Any weapon – including a starter gun – which will, or is designed to, or which may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive from the frame or receiver of any such weapon.
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
- Any destructive device. “Destructive device” means any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the preceding described devices. It also means any type of weapon – other than a shotgun shell or a shotgun that is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes – by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; and any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device as described, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

## School Emergency Management Plan

The School shall examine the environmental conditions and operations of each School building to determine potential hazards to Student and staff safety, and develop and adopt a comprehensive school emergency management plan to respond to such hazards (“EMP”).

In the event of an emergency, Legal guardians will be notified of emergencies through the Remind app and/or robo-calls. Please DO NOT come to the School until given the “all-clear” if alerted to any emergency, as your presence may impede access of emergency personnel.

## Behavioral Threat Assessments

Each school has a behavioral threat assessment team dedicated to ensuring the safety of our school community. These teams follow the Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management and are responsible for evaluating and intervening when a Student's behavior may pose a risk to themselves or others.

- Legal Guardian Notification and Participation: Legal guardians will be informed and can participate in the threat assessment process for their child if applicable.
- Law Enforcement Involvement: Law enforcement is part of the school’s threat assessment team.
- Reporting a Threat: Threats can be reported by Students and families directly to staff, the campus emergency response team, or through the state's anonymous reporting tip line.

For questions regarding Behavior Threat Assessments, legal guardians can reach out to school principals or counselors.

# INFORMATION FOR LEGAL GUARDIANS AND IMPORTANT NOTICES

## Accommodations for Children of Military Families

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain school requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement
- Eligibility requirements for participating in extracurricular activities and
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her legal guardian, including a stepparent, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by IDEA. IDEA will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the legal guardian's return from deployment.

## Student or Legal Guardian Complaints and Concerns

IDEA values the opinions of its students and legal guardians, and the public it serves. Legal guardians and students have the right to express their views through appropriate informal and formal processes. This grievance policy's purpose is to resolve conflicts efficiently, quickly, and justly.

The Board of Directors encourages legal guardians to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal meetings with the principal. Concerns and complaints should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Neither the Board of Directors nor any IDEA employee shall unlawfully retaliate against a legal guardian or student for voicing a concern or complaint.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that IDEA's complaint and grievance procedures are provided to all legal guardians and students. The complaint procedure will provide for any complaint or grievance to ultimately be considered or heard by the IPS National Executive Director.

For purposes of this policy, "days" shall mean calendar days and announcement of a decision in the student's or legal guardian's presence shall constitute communication of the decision.

### Informal Conferences

A legal guardian or student may request an informal conference with the principal, teacher, or other campus administrator within seven school days of the time the legal guardian or student knew or should have known of the event(s) giving rise to the complaint.

If the legal guardian or student is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he or she may submit a written grievance form to the principal. Grievance forms may be obtained from the principal's office.

### Formal Grievance Process

The formal grievance process provides all persons with an opportunity to be heard up to the Board of Directors if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, a person can bring concerns or complaints to the IPS National Executive Director, as outlined below.

A grievance must specify the harm alleged by the legal guardian and/or student, and the remedy sought. A legal guardian or student should not submit separate or serial grievances regarding the same event or action. Multiple grievances may be consolidated at the school's discretion. All time limits shall be strictly complied with; however, if an administrator determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or to issue a response, the administrator shall inform the legal guardian or student in writing of the need to extend the response time and provide a specific date by which the response will be issued.

## Level One – Principal Review

A legal guardian or student shall submit a written Grievance Form, same as the form referenced above, to the principal or designee within the later of (1) seven days from the time the event(s) causing the complaint were or should have been known, or (2) within five days following an informal conference with the principal. IDEA reserves the right to require the grievant to begin the grievance process at Level Two.

The principal or designee will meet with the complaining legal guardian or student within seven days of receipt of the complaint. Following the conference, the principal or designee shall have seven days to respond in writing.

## Level Two – IPS National Executive Director Review

If the student or legal guardian is not satisfied with the Level One decision, or if no decision is provided, the student or legal guardian may appeal the Level One decision to the IPS National Executive Director or designee by filing written notice. The request must be filed within seven days of the Level One decision or the response deadline if no decision is made. The appeal must include a signed statement of the complaint, any evidence supporting the complaint, and a copy of the written complaint to the principal and a copy of the Level One Decision, if issued. The appeal shall not include any new issues or complaints unrelated to the original complaint. The IPS National Executive Director or designee will hold a conference within seven days of receiving the appeal and issue a written decision within seven days following the conference.

Written appeals can be sent to:

IDEA Tampa Bay  
Formal Grievance: Request for Conference  
Attn: Executive Director  
5050 E 10th Ave.  
Tampa, FL 33619

or

IDEA Jacksonville  
Formal Grievance: Request for Conference  
Attn: Executive Director  
4949 Blanding Blvd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32210

## Board of Directors Meeting Dates

For 2025–26 school year IDEA Board of Director meeting dates, see [IDEA Florida's website](#).

## Additional Complaint Procedures

This legal guardian and student complaint process does not apply to all complaints:

- Complaints alleging Prohibited Conduct (discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and similar matters) shall be submitted as described in “Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation” in this Handbook.
- Formal complaints alleging sexual harassment shall be submitted as described in “Freedom from Sexual Harassment” in this Handbook.
- Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted as described in “Freedom from Bullying” in this Handbook.
- Complaints concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be submitted as described in “Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns” above, except that the deadline for filing an initial Level One grievance shall be 30 calendar days.
- Complaints concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with applicable Board policy and the procedural safeguards provided to legal guardians of all students referred to special education.
- Complaints regarding the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the school is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, political beliefs, age, disability, national origin, or limited English proficiency. (Not all bases apply to all programs.) Reprisal is prohibited based on prior civil rights activity. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which is available online at the following website: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer>, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339, or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

- Complaints regarding notice to legal guardians shall be handled as provided in that section.

## Notice to Parents Required by Florida Statute 1001.42 / Complaint Process

Schools shall notify a student’s parent or legal guardian via an email in the FOCUS student information system (“Parental Notification”) if there is a change in the student’s services or monitoring related to the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student (“Qualifying Change”). If there is a “Qualifying Change,” the School’s Principal (or their designee) shall initiate a FOCUS email to the legal guardian(s)’ email address(es) associated with the contact information in the student’s record that states as follows (or substantially similar language):

*“Dear Parent/ Guardian(s):*

*We are notifying you that there has been a change in the services or monitoring related to your child’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for your child. We have encouraged your child to discuss the change(s) with you. We are available to facilitate discussion of the change(s) with you and your child. For additional information, please contact your school’s principal to arrange a time to meet or discuss via telephone.”*

If there is no email address(es) in the FOCUS system for at least one legal guardian or the email Parental Notification sent to the legal guardian(s) is returned as undeliverable, the school shall mail the Parental Notification to the legal guardian(s)’ address(es) associated with the contact information in the student’s record.

The school’s principal (or their designee) shall be responsible for managing the parental notification process at their school.

The School may withhold the parental notification required above, if a reasonably prudent person would believe that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect, as those terms are defined in s. 39.01. If a legal guardian has a concern regarding this notification process or any other appropriate matter set forth under Section 1001.42(8)(c)(1-7), Florida Statutes, the legal guardian should contact the school’s principal and notify the principal of the concern. The principal then has seven (7) calendar days to resolve the concern. Upon receipt of a concern from a legal guardian, the principal shall conduct a review of the concern and attempt to resolve the concern. If the concern is not resolved, then within 30 days of the principal’s notification of the concern, the school must provide a written statement to the legal guardian(s) setting forth the reasons for not resolving the concerns.

A good faith attempt will be made to notify the student’s legal guardian; however, nothing will preclude school district personnel from acting immediately to address imminent threat and/or danger.

IDEA has also developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement these policies. Please contact your campus health clinic staff for information on these policies and procedures.

### Complaint Policy

This policy is implemented to comply with the requirements of Rule 6A- 6.0791, Florida Administrative Code, and other relevant laws. The Parental Rights in Education Law, codified in Section 1001.42(8) Florida Statutes, requires a charter school policy to address parental complaints at a charter school before a complaint is referred to the school district, and ultimately if not resolved for the appointment of a special magistrate, *Appointment of a Special Magistrate Form* published by the Florida Department of Education and available here: <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9741/dps-2022-192b.pdf>

This process includes any complaints or disputes related to the following:

- Concerns over procedures for notifying a student’s legal guardian if there is a change in the student’s services or monitoring related to the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student.
- Concerns related to any school policies or procedures that are perceived to discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting their student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.
- Concerns over classroom instruction related to sexual orientation or gender identity, which is prohibited in grades K-8. 8, except when
  - required by ss. 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46. If such instruction
  - is provided in grades 9 through 12, the instruction must be

- age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.
- Concerns over student support services training developed or provided to school
  - personnel that is believed to be out of compliance with guidelines, standards, and
  - frameworks established by the Department of Education.
- Concerns over parental notification at the beginning of the school year about
  - healthcare services offered by the School, including the ability to opt out or withhold consent for any such services.
- Concerns over whether the School provided a well-being questionnaire or health
  - screening form to the legal guardian and sought their permission before it was administered to the student in grades K-3.

## Complaint Procedures

Legal guardians have the right to notify the Principal in writing of any concerns related to the above areas. The Principal or their designee must provide a response to the legal guardian within seven (7) business days of receiving the complaint. If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Principal or designee within seven (7) days, the legal guardian may present the dispute to the relevant school district, which complaint must be addressed within 30 business days. The district complaint process is available on the relevant school district websites.

The IDEA Contact person for the Florida Department of Education in regard to this policy is Michelle Knapp, Director of Compliance, [michelle.knapp@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:michelle.knapp@ideapublicschools.org), (813)-927-3375.

## Notice of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (“PPRA”) requires that students may not be required to participate in certain surveys, analyses, or evaluations – funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education – that concern:

- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has close family relationship
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family
- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s legal guardian(s)
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or legal guardians or
- Sexual behavior or attitudes

Legal guardians may inspect the survey or other instrument and any corresponding instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.

The PPRA also gives legal guardians the right to receive notice of and deny permission for their student’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from their student for the purpose of marketing or selling that information
- A non-emergency, invasive physical examination, or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student (exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam of screening permitted or required under state law.)

## Notice of Parent and Student Rights (Annual FERPA Confidentiality Notice)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords legal guardians and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days after the day IDEA receives a request for access. Legal guardians or eligible students who wish to inspect their child’s or their education records should submit to the

Principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the legal guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the legal guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Legal guardians or eligible students who wish to ask IDEA to amend their child's or their education record should write the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If IDEA decides not to amend the record as requested by the legal guardian or eligible student, IDEA will notify the legal guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the legal guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before IDEA discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is:
  - A person employed by IDEA as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel)
  - A person serving on the Board of Directors
  - A volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by IDEA, performs an institutional service or function for which IDEA would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of IDEA with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist
  - A legal guardian or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or
  - A legal guardian, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, IDEA discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by IDEA to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

## Directory Information Notice

FERPA, a federal law, requires that IDEA, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, IDEA may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised IDEA to the contrary in accordance with IDEA's procedures.

IDEA has designated three forms of directory information: (1) disclosure for school-related purposes; (2) disclosure to military or college recruiters; and (3) limited disclosure to law enforcement authorities.

### Directory Information for School-Related Purposes

IDEA has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure for school-related purposes:

- Student name
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Most recent educational institution attended

- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Photographs (including video images) and
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

School-related purposes are those events/activities that IDEA conducts and/or sponsors to support the school’s educational mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Extracurricular programs or events (e.g., playbills or programs for events such as school plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremony, etc.).
- Publications (e.g., printing student names and pictures in newsletters and yearbook, etc.), including sharing directory information with companies who have a contractual relationship with IDEA, such as companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.
- Honor roll and other student recognition lists
- Sharing directory information with companies who have a contractual relationship with IDEA and who perform services on IDEA’s behalf.
- Marketing materials of IDEA (e.g., using directory information for print media, website or social media accounts operated by IDEA, videos, newspaper articles, etc.).

### Directory Information Supplied to Military and College Recruiters (Secondary Students Only)

Two federal laws require IDEA to provide military recruiters or an institution of higher education, upon request, with access to the name, address, electronic mailing address (electronic mail address provided by the school, if available), and telephone listing of each secondary student served by IDEA, unless legal guardians have advised IDEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

### Directory Information Supplied to Law Enforcement Officials and Authorities

IDEA has designated the following categories of information as directory information for purposes of responding to requests for general student information made by law enforcement officials and authorities:

- Student’s name, address, and telephone number.

### Guidelines for Release of Directory Information

IDEA shall not release directory information except for the purposes indicated above, namely, disclosure relating to school-related purposes; for the purpose of disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education for secondary students; and for the purposes of disclosure upon request by law enforcement officials and authorities.

A LEGAL GUARDIAN OR ELIGIBLE STUDENT MAY OPT OUT OF THE RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION FOR ANY OR ALL OF THESE DESIGNATED PURPOSES BY SUBMITTING A WRITTEN OBJECTION TO THE SCHOOL FRONT OFFICE WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING THIS “NOTICE OF PARENT LEGAL GUARDIAN AND STUDENT RIGHTS (ANNUAL FERPA CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE).”

### Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) without Consent

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students’ education records, without consent of the legal guardian or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the legal guardian or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires IDEA to record the disclosure. Legal guardians and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

IDEA may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the legal guardians or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution IDEA has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom IDEA has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in the FERPA regulations are met.
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student’s enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of the FERPA regulations.
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of

Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the Florida Department of Education. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met.

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to the FERPA regulations.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To legal guardians of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to the FERPA regulations.
- Information IDEA has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under the FERPA regulations are met.
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement.
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions.

## REQUIRED FORMS

IDEA's required forms are now available via [STREAM](#). STREAM is IDEA's online platform used for registration and reregistration. These required forms provide guidance and information about our school policies and procedures. Legal guardians review and acknowledge each required form during the registration and reregistration process via STREAM. To access these required documents, please log into your STREAM account.

