



Student and Family Handbook & Code of Conduct

Si usted necesita este documento en español,
por favor llame al 617-254-8904, x100

Se você precisa desta mensagem traduzida,
por favor, ligue para 617-254-8904, r100

Table of Contents

I.	Welcome from Our Head of School	
	Our Mission.....	4
II.	Family and Student Learning Agreements	
	(Must be signed and returned to the school).....	5
III.	Academic and Music Programs	
	Balanced Literacy	6
	Academic Subjects (Math, Social Studies, Science)	7
	El Sistema	7
	Learning Through Music (LTME).....	7
	The Listening Project	8
	Expeditionary Learning	8
	Field Work.....	9
	Homework/Practicing	9
	.Social Emotional Learning and Play	10
	Intervention and Enrichment	11
	Assessments	11
	Research	12
	Class Dojo and the Crew System.....	12
IV.	General Program	
	Attendance	13
	Arrival and Dismissal.....	13
	School Calendar	14
	Snow Days and Emergency Closings	14
	School Uniform Policy	15
	Cell Phone Policy	16
	Personal Items.....	16
	Limited Touch Policy	16
	El Sistema Policies	17
	Food Program.....	18
	Health and Wellness	19
	Communication.....	22
	Progress Report Cards and Report Cards	22
	Parent/Guardian Involvement.....	23
	Parent Compliant Procedure	24
	Student Records and Confidentiality	24
	School Governance	25
	Transportation	25
V.	Student Services	
	Student Support Team (SST)	27
	English Language Learners Services	27
	Special Education	28
	504 Accommodation Plans	29
	Counseling Services.....	29
	Nondiscrimination Statement.....	30
	Promotion Policy	30
	Pregnancy Policy for Students	30

Home and Hospital Instruction.....	30
Students Seeking Employment.....	31
VI. Code of Conduct	
General Behavioral Expectations.....	33
Logical Consequences.....	34
Minor and Major Disciplinary Infractions.....	35
Transportation Related Behavioral Infractions.....	36
Suspension and Expulsion Policy.....	37
Use of Restraint	39
Discipline of Students with Special Needs.....	39
Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination Policy	45
Crisis Management Overview.....	47
VII. Anti-Bullying Policy	
Reporting and Responding to Bullying.....	50
Professional Development and Training.....	57

Welcome to Conservatory Lab!

Mission: To empower a diverse range of children as scholars, artists, and leaders through a unique and rigorous academic and music education. We enrich the larger community through performance, service and collaboration. As a laboratory school, we develop and disseminate innovative educational approaches that will positively impact children in other schools and programs.

I am delighted to welcome you into our learning and caring community. We are looking forward to working with your children this school year – a year full of opportunity and promise for all.

We have assembled an incredible team at all levels and across all programs. Since the beginning of August, the team has been preparing to welcome the students. They have spent long hours in professional development, planned for both the short and the long-term, set up their classrooms and offices, and developed strong bonds with each other as well as structures fostering collaboration.

Our enrollment has grown to 400 students at two sites: 320 Washington Street and 2120 Dorchester Avenue. Pre-K through Grade 6 each have two sections, while Grade 7 and 8 each have one. Our school is anchored in two programs, Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema, which both share principles that strongly support the social-emotional development of children and adolescents. We recently earned the honorary designation as an Exemplary Arts School because of our programs, as well as our strong culture of scholarship and artistry, and students' outstanding academic and musical achievement.

Our students continue to grow as scholars. Last year, the Upper School's final production of *Monkey King* was outstanding! Project-based expeditions, such as *Building with the 3 Little Pigs*, *What's on your Plate*, *The Truth about Snakes*, and *Portrait of an Artist*, also reached new heights. Fifth graders designed their own website to share their knowledge from the *Rainforest* unit, while third graders' flip *Wampanoag/Pilgrim* book debuted to the great delight of peers and parents alike. This year, we will deepen our expeditions and pilot new ones too.

As our enrollment increases, our orchestras and ensembles are expanding as well. This year, we will have the following orchestras: Ellington (Grade 1), Abreu A and B (Grade 2, 2 sections), Bernstein (Grade 3), Abbado (Grade 4) and Dudamel (Grades 5-8). In addition we will have 3 ensembles at the Upper School level: Ives (Winds), Casals (Lower Strings), and Heifetz (Upper Strings). We will continue our strong collaborations with Pro-Arte, From the Top, Landmarks Orchestra, and Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. The Pre-K and K students will continue to participate in their respective ensembles. This year is going to be a busy performance year as our students will delight many different audiences throughout the year.

Conservatory Lab values a professional community rooted in an apprentice model that turns deep knowledge into action. In our view, professionalism is defined by honesty and integrity based on shared ethical and social obligations, individual and professional internal accountability, and the ability to contribute to the field. Our teachers are also students, and our students are also our teachers. We look forward to learning from your children as much as they learn from us, and we are excited to embrace you – the family – into the larger family of Conservatory Lab Charter School.

Warmly,

Diana Lam

Head of School

Family and Student Learning Agreements

Conservatory Lab Charter School believes that a strong parent-school partnership is critical to every child's success in both academic and social-emotional development. To building this partnership, we believe that making a commitment to the following actions are crucial. We would ask that you join us in doing so.

I commit to my child's education by agreeing to the following:

Learning Agreement: Together, our overarching goal is to support student learning. Our most important job is to ensure that our students are fully engaged in learning, both in school and at home. Therefore, I pledge that:

- My child will attend school regularly, arriving to school on time, in full uniform, ready for the day ahead. My child will, to the best of my abilities, spend the entire day in school, reserving early dismissal only for doctor's appointments and emergencies.
- My child will participate fully in the El Sistema program, attend all concerts, and perform to his/her full potential.
- My child will receive help and support at home in every way, so that s/he will be prepared for each school day, including support with instrument practice and homework. I will provide a quiet, distraction-free space for homework and practice.
- If my child is experiencing difficulty with homework or practice at home, I will contact my child's teacher and ask for support.
- I will set long-term goals for my child that include completing high school, entering college, completing college, and creating life-long standards of excellence.

Discipline Agreement: Children learn best when they are fully able to access the academic curriculum, make solid connections in the community, and feel good about their behavior. With this in mind, I pledge that:

- I will support the school's policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct, drop-off and pick-up policies, consistent attendance, and safe bus behavior. I will support the school if asked to pick up my child from the program due to non-compliance, non-participation, or ongoing behavioral issues (ref: Code of Conduct).
- I will communicate joys and concerns to the school, teachers, and administration. I will also listen and seek to understand when school personnel call to express joys and concerns about my child's behavior in school.
- I will seek solutions with the school that will best support my child as s/he develops into productive, capable global citizens.

Partnership Agreement: A child cannot develop joyfully on his or her own. S/he needs help and guidance to explore the many facets of his/her world. Because I am my child's mentor, I pledge that:

- I will take an active role in the school and be a partner. This includes prompt communication about my concerns as well as responding to the school's requests and concerns.
- I will participate in *all* parent-teacher conferences and student portfolio reviews. I will join Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and other school meetings and activities, as I am best able.
- I will volunteer my gifts, talents, and strengths to the school and in my child's classroom.
- I will read the weekly newsletters, *Family Notes*, emailed to me.

I understand that by signing this document I am accepting the aforementioned responsibilities. By supporting these responsibilities I will help my child excel academically, musically, and social-emotionally.

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Academic and Music Programs Overview

Balanced Literacy

FUNdations: Wilson FUNdations for K-2 is the phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling program used in Conservatory Lab classrooms. Teachers incorporate a 30-minute daily FUNdations lesson into their language arts classroom instruction. Foundations lessons focus on carefully sequenced skills that include print knowledge, alphabet awareness, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and spelling. Critical thinking, speaking and listening skills are practiced during story time activities.

Writer's Workshop: Writer's Workshop is an interdisciplinary writing technique that can build students' fluency in writing through continuous, repeated exposure to the process of writing. Conservatory Lab uses the Writer's Workshop model in the K2-8th grade classrooms.

Through Writer's Workshop students learn to write by making the process a meaningful part of the classroom curriculum. Ideally students write daily through varied activities, organizing thoughts to create a story or write about a given topic and develop it into an understandable narrative with a voice and focus that present information to the reader. Students grow to be able to use writing mechanics comfortably and the shift in their cognitive abilities to higher order thinking allows them to develop a more sophisticated sense of what makes good writing.

Guided Reading: Guided reading is a strategy that helps students become proficient readers. The teacher provides support for small groups of readers as they learn to use various reading strategies (context clues, letter and sound relationships, word structure, and so forth).

When appropriately leveled books are selected, students are able to read with approximately 90% accuracy. This enables the students to enjoy the story because there is not an overwhelming amount of "road blocks" that interfere with comprehension. Students focus on the meaning of the story and application of various reading strategies to problem solve when they do hit a road block in their knowledge or reading ability.

Readers Workshop: The Reader's Workshop program emphasizes the interaction between readers and text. Students learn to ask questions, make connections to prior knowledge and previously read texts, and ask questions to clarify faulty comprehension they recognize has occurred. The program includes peer conferences and teacher conferences with students but emphasizes students' independence and allows them to become successful readers outside of the classroom. Once implemented, Reading Workshop can quickly become students' favorite part of the day.

Shared Reading: Storybook reading is a critically important factor in young children's reading development. In school, which is different than at home, a teacher reads to a group of children rather than to a single child. The shared reading model often uses oversized books (referred to as big books) with enlarged print and illustrations. Due to the large size of the book being read, as the teacher reads the book aloud, all of the children who are being read to can see and appreciate the print and illustrations. This Shared Reading brings the story time feeling of reading into the classroom while strengthening sight word vocabulary, decoding skills, and comprehension strategies.

- Other aspects of a Balanced Literacy approach include Reader's Theatre, Poem of the Week, Independent Reading, Reading Conferences, and Read Aloud.

Mathematics

The Conservatory Lab math curriculum, allows teachers to use a variety of interactive math materials, curricula, and texts from a carefully selected math resources, ensuring that instruction is differentiated to fit each student's needs. Lessons are carefully crafted to provide a high level of rigor, meet Common Core State Standards, and prepare students for proficiency on the PARCC exam. Teachers pull on such resources as Engage NY Math, TERC investigations, and Ready Common Core. We hold all students to a high level of academic achievement, but are continuously assessing potential areas of weak understanding in order to support every student.

Every six to eight weeks, we administer math benchmark assessments to students in grades two through eight. Benchmark assessments take place during one regular classroom period, as to not lose much learning time. Benchmark assessments are given every six to eight weeks to examine student mastery on recently taught material and standards. Data from these benchmarks are then used to inform instruction and meet the degree of difficulty of the year-end state tests (PARCC.)

Social Studies and Science

The social studies and science curricula is addressed through the multidisciplinary LTM Expeditions piloted in Conservatory Lab over the course of the year. For example, when fifth graders study global climate change, they run experiments, interview experts, and conduct research in order to better understand the meteorological forces at work. Then they open up their study to examine the economic and sociological impact of climate change on various parts of the world. Each child specializes in a particular country and a particular perspective then assumes the role of a real-life scientist, encouraging them to act and perform using their scientific and social studies knowledge.

El Sistema

Based on a Venezuelan model of music instruction which provides free, intensive, ensemble-based music instruction to children in that country's poorest neighborhoods, El Sistema offers every child two hours a day of music instruction, beginning in pre-kindergarten (K1). In kindergarten (K2), students choose a string instrument to study and learn what it means to be part of an orchestra. While some may transition to a wind or percussion instrument later on, every child will be part of a symphonic orchestra throughout each year.

Group achievement is balanced with individualized attention. Children develop the skills and confidence to perform artistically as soloists and the empathy and cooperation needed to contribute as ensemble members. Through focused, daily practice, children learn to persevere through challenges, hone their attention, and take pride in the results of their work. These social and emotional goals run parallel to their success in producing a beautiful sound and developing the literacy to read, write, interpret, and create music.

We systematically assess music achievement and this is part of our accountability plan. We expect our students to be proficient on the Instrument Technique Proficiency Assessment and on the Music-in-Education National Consortium Music Literacy Skills Test at the appropriate level for each child.

Learning Through Music (LTME)

Music is fundamental to learning at Conservatory Lab. Each child at Conservatory Lab is encouraged to embrace the identity of an artist, a scholar, and a leader. Every child becomes proficient on an instrument, literate in the language of music, and active as a performing member of an ensemble. This shared experience of playing in orchestra together shapes the culture of our school and becomes a model for all of our interactions. Like an orchestra, we are all members of a team with a unique voice and a vital role to play in the success of a group.

Taken in combination, Expeditionary Learning, El Sistema, and the other programs and practices at Conservatory Lab add to a milieu of interdisciplinary, inquiry-fueled, project-based learning. Academic and music teachers are in continual conversation about how to integrate learning strategies across the curriculum and collaborate routinely on projects that challenge children to make connections and applications across disciplines.

Learning Through Music encompasses the entire academic and artistic program at Conservatory Lab through three distinct but interrelated components—Music Instruction and Performance (El Sistema), Music Appreciation (Listening Project), and Connecting Music to Academic Content Areas (*Learning Through Music* Expeditions). It is a flexible model that fosters music infusion without requiring that every subject be taught through music every day. The five music processes—listening, questioning, creating, performing, and reflecting—are evident across the curriculum.

The Listening Project

Conservatory Lab Students make connections among musical style, culture, and historical context as they study the evolution of western music. Through The Listening Project curriculum, each grade focuses on a different genre of music, including folk, country, musical theatre, rock n' roll, classical, jazz, R&B, and blues. By the end of eighth grade, students have an historical timeline in their minds connecting major political and cultural events through song.

The Listening Project empowers children to create informed opinions about what they hear, to back up their personal preferences with informed commentary, and to open their ears and minds to sounds and cultures unfamiliar to them. Through art and music, they have a conversation with history. They sharpen their writing and critical thinking skills while making emotional connections to an historical period and individuals from that time.

Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning is a philosophy and organizational means to unleash and cultivate the passion and genius of every child. Students learn to ask questions, set goals, and seek knowledge at its source. Their studies culminate in the creation of useful, beautiful products that bring real value to the community.

Throughout their time at Conservatory Lab, students will engage in a progression of **Learning Through Music Expeditions**, a series of multidisciplinary learning expeditions, aligned with Massachusetts and Common Core standards that integrate social studies, science, English language arts, music, math, and art.

For example, when fourth graders studied The Great Migration, they explored the poetry of Langston Hughes and his contemporaries, the development of Blues music and collage as an art form, and read historical first-hand accounts in order to piece together reasons why so many African American families chose to move North after the Turn of the Century. They created graphs to show the rate of change in population densities over time. Their learning culminated in a presentation to their community in which they shared original artwork, writing, and music compositions that conveyed their learning and personal reflections on the process.

The core practices of Expeditionary Learning are focused learning targets aligned with formative and summative assessments; fieldwork, local expertise, and service learning; producing and presenting high quality student work for real audiences; and learning in and through the arts.

There are ten principles that guide the work:

- **The Primacy of Self-Discovery** – Learning needs emotion and challenge. People discover their abilities, talents and grand passions in environments that offer adventure and the unexpected and require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, self-discipline and real achievement. The primary job of an educator is to help students overcome fear, discover who they are and find they have more in them than what they think.

- Empathy and Caring – Learning is fostered best in small groups where there is trust, sustained caring and mutual respect between teachers and students, and among all members of the learning community.
- The Having of Wonderful Ideas – Teaching so as to build on children’s curiosity around the world by creating learning situations that provide them with matter to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed. Foster a community where students’ ideas are respected.
- Success and Failure – Students must have the experience of setting ambitious goals and meeting them with a fair assurance of success to gain confidence and the capacity for undertaking increasingly difficult challenges. At the same time, your disability is your opportunity. Working to overcome adversity or weakness or falling short of personal or group goals can teach even more powerful lessons in courage, compassion and commitment.
- Responsibility for Learning – Students take responsibility for their own learning by asking questions, finding information, demonstrating what they have learned in oral and written presentations. They are able to assess the quality of their work by referring to the rubrics and by listening to their peers’ feedback.
- Collaboration and Competition – Teach so as to join individual and group development with the value of friendship and trust made manifest. Encourage students to compete not against each other but with their own personal best.
- Diversity and Inclusion – Diversity and inclusivity dramatically increase the richness, creative power, compassion, and problem-solving ability of groups. Students discover these when teachers encourage them to investigate, value and draw upon the different histories, talents and resources of their own and of other communities and cultures.
- The Natural World – A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and reveals the important lessons of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards on the earth and of generations to come.
- The Solitude of Reflection – Solitude, reflection and silence are important elements in the construction of meaning. Time away from our task replenishes our energy and opens our minds. Time alone encourages us to explore our own thoughts, make our own connections, and create our own ideas.
- Service and Compassion – We are crew, not passengers. We are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others.

These are unlike the traditional principles underlying assumptions that have governed and shaped public schools for the last century. Courage, intellect and compassion are the guideposts. Expeditionary Learning assumes not only that every child can learn but that all children can reach their fullest potential.

Field Work

Field Work is an important part of our curriculum, providing the children with experiences outside of the school that directly connected to what they are learning in the classroom. It is expected that all Field Work will correlate in a *significant* manner with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and/or Conservatory Lab curriculum. A few examples are a walk through the neighborhood, collecting specimens at Thompson’s Island, exploring the Freedom Trail, writing poetry on Walden Pond or visiting a factory. Field Work gives children the opportunity to explore subjects more deeply, work with experts, ask questions, and explore new ways to gain knowledge from the world around us all.

Parents are always notified when fieldwork will take place outside of the building. Families may be expected to contribute towards the cost of fieldwork trips, but we attempt to keep these costs to a minimum. Families are asked to help with chaperoning when necessary and encouraged to participate in the fieldwork at hand.

Parents are asked to sign a general permission slip allowing their children to participate in field work at the beginning of the school year—please see the accompanying packet of forms. Prior to each individual trip, a notice of field work (some requiring payment) will be sent home. If you require a scholarship, please contact your child’s teacher or Director *prior* to the day of the trip.

Conservatory Lab main office must, AT ALL TIMES, have current contact information including home, cell, and work phone numbers and email addresses of parents/guardians as well as family emergency contacts.

Homework and Practicing

We assign homework because we believe it supports our young learners as they develop the disciplines needed to become true scholars. Students are expected to complete their assigned homework independently in the upper elementary and middle school grades (3rd-8th). In grades K1-2 we require that children read at home either with an adult or independently (depending on ability), solve the math games, puzzles, and problems the teachers provide. Students in K1-2 should also practice writing as assigned.

As musicians, children will need to practice their instruments at home when assigned.

Students are expected to complete their homework independently in the upper elementary grades (3rd-8th). Parents are welcome to go through each assignment with their child and check the work, but they are not required to review and sign it like they are required to in the primary grades. Reviewing homework with your child and helping on the areas that are difficult can show our scholars how much their parents value academic success and also offers them additional academic tutoring; however, if a parent always completes a child's homework with him/her, it does not teach the child independence.

In grades K1-2 we require that children read at home either with an adult or independently (depending on ability), play and solve the math games, puzzles, and problems the teachers provide, and practice writing as assigned. Conservatory Lab believes that scholarship takes practice and that this practice begins as early as possible.

As musicians, children will need to practice their instruments at home as assigned. Conservatory Lab students are well trained in their musicianship and should have no problem monitoring their practice at home. Families are encouraged to provide a safe a space for instruments, provide praise for efforts, and be enthusiastic audiences.

If a student has an absence, the student will need to complete the homework no later than one day after returning to school (unless the teacher has given approval for an extension). If a child accumulates a significant amount of missed homework, we require a family conference to strategize getting back on the track to true scholarship.

Please contact your child's teacher for more information on homework and practicing policies.

Social Emotional Learning and Play

Open Circle: Conservatory Lab emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. The social-emotional pedagogical approaches used when creating lessons and activities are based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. Our approach consists of classroom and school-wide practices such as Open Circle, and Crew to deliberately help children build academic and social-emotional competencies.

In our elementary school, grades K1-5, we use the program Open Circle to guide our social emotional learning (SEL). The core of the program is the *Open Circle Curriculum* for Kindergarten through grade 5, which integrates research findings in child development with the best teaching practices. The curriculum's holistic approach involves training the adult role-models in a child's life to teach and embody principles of communication, responsibility, cooperation, respect and assertiveness. These principles are essential for helping children foster healthy relationships, become engaged, thoughtful citizens, and enjoy productive, fulfilling lives. Through the Open Circle Curriculum the entire school becomes a community in which all participants – children and adults alike – work together to resolve conflicts and to build relationships in ways that mirror how our society should function at its very best.

Crew: In our middle school (6th-8th grades), we will use an advisory model (**Crew**) to guide our social emotional learning. Advisory programs play a critical role in a school's overall academic and student support services plan. Advisories are a primary vehicle for creating a more personalized learning environment where all students are well known by at least one adult. Moreover, advisory provides a structure and a set of practices for monitoring and supporting students' academic progress and college and career readiness throughout their high school career.

Play: Conservatory Lab Charter School promotes the healthy and safe lifestyle of each scholar by supporting health enhancing behaviors such as optimum nutrition, and regular physical activity. Through positive role models, facilitating learning opportunities and through practice, Conservatory Lab integrates and emphasizes physical activity throughout the school day. Overall good health supports the school’s mission in the following ways: it fosters good student attendance and optimizes student performance potential to ensure that no child is left behind. Sports, play and physical activity serve as a catalyst for fostering physical, social and emotional development in our scholars, as well as promoting positive self-esteem. Students learn healthy behaviors and build healthy habits that will ultimately lead to an enhanced quality of life. Classroom teachers are encouraged to play with their children and to incorporate play into each school day as much as possible.

Intervention and Enrichment

Over the course of a school year, children go through many emotional and academic stages. Conservatory Lab will ensure that children are supported during these periods of growth by offering a variety of educational opportunities in the school day. This section outlines a few of the support systems we have in place for the school year.

Each day we make decisions regarding how to best educate our students to their fullest academic, artistic and social-emotional capacities. We recognize that our students have different strengths, assets and talents and that our role, as educators, is to help students build upon these. The power and promise of differentiated instruction is that it is an all-day model for all students. It is not a rigid approach, but instead values flexibility and cooperation among teachers across grade levels and disciplines. This approach places a high premium on what is best for the student.

At Conservatory Lab:

- We take presentation and performance seriously and we want them to be successful, positive learning experiences for the performer. Quality takes time, effort and practice; we therefore do not rush children into performance. It is our expectation that all students at our school will and can perform in a variety of settings.
- Student Data Reviews encourage teachers and all involved to look at and discuss the ways we need to differentiate. As collaborative teams, we meet often to review student data gleaned from interim assessments, looking for ways to differentiate instruction across curricula. We discuss individual students to plan interventions and extensions so that each may meet their full potential in their own way.
- Our Learning Through Music expeditions feature in-depth research and creative projects that provide enriched learning experiences for all students. This project-based model incorporates differentiated instruction in reading, writing, and research skills. It allows each student to work to his or her potential while contributing to a high-quality, collaborative product.

Assessments

PARCC

As part of the Common Core State Standards initiative the Conservatory Lab is participating in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam. The PARCC exam is a modern assessment that is designed to replace previous state standardized testing (MCAS). IT evaluates student progress and breaks down data to better inform instruction for teachers and parents. The data reported will identify areas of weakness in a standard in detail, as well as areas the student is excelling in, in order to enhance instruction to accurately meet individual student needs.

Achievement Network (ANet)

The Achievement Network (ANet) is an education nonprofit that designs benchmark assessments for schools. These benchmarks provide teachers and coaches with effective data that drives instructional changes and identifies areas for

innovative strategies to help in addressing and closing gaps in student learning. ANet enables schools to increase student achievement, through data, by combining high-quality standards-aligned assessments and educator coaching in how to analyze assessment results. As an ANet partner, teachers and administrators at Conservatory Lab will be regularly looking very closely at student achievement and targeting effective interventions and enrichments for each individual child so that each may meet their full academic and social potential.

Research

From time to time, educational research projects may take place in Conservatory Lab either through internal assessments or through community partnerships. Conservatory Lab, for example, is the site of significant research into the “*Learning Through Music*” model, assessing its impact on children as well as on the total school environment. If projects are designed and implemented, families will be informed about what the research will entail, as well as the results of the work as it is completed.

Class Dojo and the Crew System

Class Dojo is an incentive based classroom management system. This system allows teachers and students to set the tone of mutual respect and high expectations in each classroom. This app is a great way for teachers to communicate student behavior to parents and other teachers. This system is used in grades 2-8 and every child will receive an avatar with login information for families, at the beginning of the year.

Through this behavior tracking system, students can receive “dojo points” for positive behavior that reflects our school crew qualities, and they can also receive “stairs” for behavior that requires improvement. All points correlate to a percentage that the students, parents and teachers can check throughout the day. There are a range of incentives that students can use their earned point values to obtain. Students in grades 2-4 receive frequent shout outs and small prizes, and students in grade 5-8 are able to bid their points in a silent auction that happens six times a year. Teachers also use class-wide point values for class sized rewards such as; extra recess, dress up days, and organic fruit parfait parties. The opportunities are endless, when classrooms are demonstrating positive and inspiring behaviors. At Conservatory Lab, we teach into our crew philosophy by highlighting the importance of doing your best as an individual for the betterment of the entire crew.

If a student is scoring below 60% they will be required to do a reflection, where they can think freely about what is happening in their day, and how they can improve it. If students are consistently scoring below 60%, then the student will earn a logical consequence and may be subject to serving detention or requiring a family meeting to address concerns.

This tool has been proved to be a productive way to help students self-regulate, and get them excited about their accountability to our school community. We appreciate your support in our efforts to maintain a positive classroom and school culture through effective classroom management.

The Crew System is a tool used in El Sistema only, and a way for orchestras to track desirable and undesirable or unacceptable behaviors. Teachers will set a point goal with their students, as a crew, at the beginning of each sectional for that respective day or week. Then they will check in at the end of each period and evaluate, as a class, how well their crew exhibited crew qualities. Teachers may determine which incentives as a class, they can earn when they reach a certain goal number of points. Consequences in El Sistema operate the same way as they do in the academic setting, as our expectations are the same regardless of which class students are engaged.

General Program

Attendance

ARRIVAL: Conservatory Lab's school day begins at 7:15. Conservatory Lab does not have an early morning drop-off program and children will not be permitted into the school until 7:15 a.m.

ABSENCES: Your child's attendance patterns often have a direct link with achievement. Frequent absences hurt academic performance. Massachusetts State Law mandates that unless children are ill, they must be in school *on time* every day. Absences are considered excused for the following reasons:

1. Student illness or injury
2. Student medical appointment
3. Bereavement (some restrictions apply - please contact the school)
4. Some religious observances

For any of the above reasons, Massachusetts State Law further stipulates that parents must notify their child's school within 24 hours. This can be done by phone by calling (617) 254-8904 ext. 100, each day of a student's absence. Messages may be left on the school's voicemail system at any time. When calling, please clearly list (a) your name, (b) your child's name, (c) your child's grade, and (d) the reason for the absence. When your child returns to school, you should send an absence note with an explanation for the child's absence from school. ***ALL*** other absences are considered unexcused. Three unexcused absences can result in a referral to a Director for review. Furthermore, excessive tardies will be cause for referral to Director's Review. If your child has excessive excused medical absences (more than 14 in a school year), the school will require that a doctor's verification of illness be provided for each absence or there may be cause for referral to Director's Review.

Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Law states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. ***If a child has more than seven unexcused absences in a six month period, then a school referral to the Department of Children and Families will be submitted. Additionally, if a child is not making adequate academic progress, more than 15 absences will result in a Retention Hearing.***

TARDINESS: School begins each day at 7:15 am. Tardiness is a serious detriment to each child's and each classroom's success. It detracts from the progress of the class as well. When a child is tardy, it prevents him/her from benefit of the most important part of a school day when the day's work is outlined. Tardiness is a serious distraction for the teacher and students who are punctual, because it detracts from the progress of the class. Although excessive tardiness is when a child is late in excess of 30 minutes, the habitual tardiness of 5 to 10 minutes is equally detrimental. This is typically the parents' responsibility. Please assist your child to learn the valuable lesson of personal responsibility by setting the example for punctuality. It is a most valuable life skill. Children who are tardy will make up the lost time doing missed morning work during recess and/or lunch.

DISMISSAL: Dismissal will begin at 3:45 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On Wednesdays, dismissal will begin at 11:45am

- Students who walk home (including taking the MBTA) and students being picked up by a parent or family member will be released at 3:45pm.
- Parents picking up their children at the 3:45pm dismissal time are asked to refer to our "pick up procedure."

Students who take the bus will go to a designated room for the bus color/route. After 4:00 p.m., Conservatory Lab students will be called to the buses as each bus arrives at the front door dismissed.

EARLY PICK UP: If you need to pick up your child at a time earlier than his/her normal pick-up time, we ask that you follow this procedure:

- Please send a note or call the school before 12:00pm, so we can inform the teacher and student(s).
- At the time of the pick-up, come in to the school and sign your child out with the Operations Assistant at the front desk.
- Wait in the reception area for your child to come downstairs and join you. Please do not go to their classrooms.

Arrival and dismissal times are busy transition times and it is not an appropriate time to meet with a teacher. If you wish to meet with a teacher, please leave a note with the school's administrative assistant, send the teacher an email requesting a meeting, or a message on her/his voicemail. Your cooperation will help to make this busy end-of-day period run more smoothly for all children and staff.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS: Please note that the school calendar reflects several professional development days, both full days and half days, in which students do not attend school. Every Wednesday is a ½ day and pick up or bus dismissal will be at 11:45am. There is no after school care on these days. Please refer to the calendar for specific details.

If there is a change in the normal pattern of dismissal for your child, please send a note in with your child in the morning and call the school's administrative assistant during the day to confirm. Children will be permitted to leave with someone other than their parent/guardian only with written or oral permission, and the person will be asked to show ID.

INDEPENDENT STUDY: Family vacations are not considered to be excused absences, and should be scheduled only during holidays to minimize absences from school. If your child must be absent from school for more than five or more days, an Independent Study Plan will keep absences from being unexcused. An Independent Study Plan is simply a way for your child to have appropriate academic activities during a school absence, but it is in no way a substitute for school attendance. Please contact your child's teacher a week before the planned absence to have work prepared. You and your child will agree upon a "contract" guaranteeing the work will be done.

School Calendar

Conservatory Lab calendar essentially conforms to the Boston Public School calendar for MOST holidays and vacations, but please check carefully for differences from BPS. On days that Conservatory Lab is in session and BPS schools are not, students are expected to be in school on those days. For a copy of the school calendar, please visit www.conservatorylab.org or contact the school. We will be glad to send another copy home.

Snow Days and Emergency Closings

Conservatory Lab is closed when the Boston Public Schools are closed due to severe weather. Closing is broadcast over WBZ (AM 980), WCRB (102.5 FM) and TV channels 4, 5, and 7. If the school closes at other times, or will reopen before the public schools do, we use a telephone chain to notify faculty and parents/guardians. When a major storm threatens, school may close early; parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their children early. If there is an exception, Conservatory Lab will phone your home with news of any emergency closings or dismissals. If in doubt, call the school.

School Uniform Policy

Conservatory Lab Charter School's uniform is available on www.allensuniforms.com

Shirts: Uniform shirts must be worn at all times. If you choose to wear an undershirt underneath the uniform shirt, that shirt must be white. The undershirt cannot be long sleeved. Uniforms may not be modified, cut, or written on. Shirts must be tucked in.

Pants and Skirts: Pants and skirts must be khaki in color. In warm weather, scholars may wear shorts. If wearing a skirt, we recommend the "skort," which is a skirt with shorts built in. Examples of acceptable pants, shorts, skirts, and skorts are on the Allen's Uniform website. Skirts/skorts must be at least knee length.

Belts: Chain belts or belts with designs or studs are not permitted.

Sweaters and Jackets: Scholars are permitted to wear a Conservatory Lab fleece jacket to stay warm, while in the building. Long sleeve Conservatory Lab polo shirts are also available. Any other sweater or jacket will not be permitted indoors. If worn, students will be asked to remove it.

Tights/Socks: Socks or tights must be worn at all times and only in colors: black or white

Shoes: Shoes must be closed toe and have a rubber sole. Shoes may not light up, blink, make noise, or have cleats or wheels built in to the shoe.

Jewelry: Distracting jewelry is not permitted. Stud earrings or hoops are permitted.

Headwear: Hats and bandanas are not permitted indoors. However, religious items are permitted.

Makeup: Excessive makeup is not permitted.

Outdoor Wear: All children are expected to arrive in school in the appropriate outdoor wear (hats, scarves, winter coats, warm pants, gloves), especially in winter. These items will be hung neatly on student hooks and outdoor shoes left neatly on the floor under hooks. Scholars go outdoors at all times of year and are expected to be dressed accordingly.

Concert Attire: All children are expected to wear a combination of black bottoms and a white top. This may mean black skirt, dress, or pants and a white blouse or button up shirt. All children will be expected to also wear a solid black shoe.

We believe that our school uniforms show a commitment to school culture, make our students readily identifiable when on Field Work or in case of an emergency, and reduce social stigma and anxiety amongst peers.

Children out of uniform compliance will receive a Violation Report. Repeated violations will result in a parent conference. Please note: *the school does have an opt-out policy for religious observances and medical needs.*

Children in the younger grades should keep a complete change of clothes in school to use in case of bathroom accidents, etc. Families will be called to pick up a child for whom clothing cannot be found.

Families are strongly urged to label all children's clothing, especially sweaters, coats and jackets, hats, mittens, gloves, scarves.

A lost and found box will not be maintained. Teachers will make every effort to connect lost items with children immediately. Items left unclaimed, will be donated to charity once a month, so please check in with teachers regularly for any lost clothing.

***If there is ever a time when students are allowed to be out of uniform, a note will be sent home explaining the details and expectations.**

Cell Phone Policy

The state of technology is changing and families now depend on quick communication between members. Due to serious situations such as inappropriate use of the internet and cameras, cyberbullying, and texting to students in other schools, 2nd – 8th grade students may not keep their cell phones with them during the day. Cell phones should be handed in to their Crew Leader/Teacher at the beginning of each day. Phones will then be collected from the teachers and kept in a safe and locked place. Phones will then be returned to students during dismissal each day.

Conservatory Lab has landlines in every room in the building. There is absolutely no reason for a student to need their phone during school time. If you need to get a message to your child, please call the school directly. Students may request permission from their teacher to use the classroom phone in case of an emergency. They may also request permission to use the phone in the Dean of Student's office.

If any student is in possession or uses a cell phone during the instructional day, the phone will be confiscated immediately. After being confiscated, an administrator will hold the phone until a parent/guardian can come to the school and pick it up. We are asking for our parent community to help support this decision for the safety of all our students. Many of our students do not understand the capabilities and dangers of these devices including cyberbullying. Please have a serious discussion with your child on appropriate use of cell phones and full compliance with the school's policy.

Personal Items

Toys, electronics, cell phones, and other personal items should be left at home. Conservatory Lab cannot be held responsible for items broken, lost, or stolen if brought from home to school. If your child does bring one of these items to school, they must turn them in to a Conservatory Lab Administrator immediately upon arrival for safekeeping. If they do not and the items are later found in the school, the item will be confiscated and a parent must personally retrieve the item from the school.

Limited Touch Policy

We are a school in which there are a lot of high-5s, handshakes, hugs, and handholding. However, our school rules prohibit children kissing or touching one's self or others inappropriately. We aim to promote healthy displays of affection, but do not condone "dating," and work to protect all children from inappropriate touch from members of the community. Along with these school rules, children are taught about healthy physical and verbal boundaries amongst peers and with staff.

Staff members are educated to recognize the difference between healthy touch and inappropriate touch. In particular, staff members are trained to recognize the signs of unwelcome physical contact or physical closeness that is sexually suggestive, sexually degrading, or sexually intimidating such as the unwelcome touching of another's body parts; cornering or blocking an individual; or any other kind of unwelcome physical contact. In addition, staff members are trained to recognize unwelcome communication that is sexually suggestive, sexually degrading or imply sexual motives or intentions.

Staff are informed of the appropriate avenues to express their concerns about those signs. If anyone suspects abuse, then they must report concerns immediately to the school administration. Following receipt of a report, the Head of School will promptly conduct an investigation and work to ensure the immediate safety of the child/children. If determined necessary, the Department of Children and Families and/or police may be called in to support the investigation. The reporting of reasonable suspicions about staff conduct is taken as seriously as reporting suspicions about abuse in the home or of bullying.

The goal of the policy is to help protect children as they grow and develop healthy relationships with peers and with adults. Touching is a reality between teachers and students, and it is our goal to clarify that *appropriate touching is limited physical contact* so that students can more easily identify something that may be unusual if it should happen in their lives.

El Sistema Policies

All students must participate fully in El Sistema as an integral part of the school curriculum, which includes attending all concerts that occur during school hours. In addition, students must adhere to school-wide rules, norms and expectations during El Sistema music classes.

Full Participation

Our school's charter and mission are built around Learning through Music and the El Sistema program, therefore each child is expected to participate fully in the El Sistema program, attend all concerts, and perform to their full potential. A parent will be asked pick up their child from the program due to issues of non-compliance, non-participation (for example, not attending concerts), or ongoing behavioral issues. On-going concerns may result in a schedule modification. If a schedule modification is mandated, a parent will be expected to pick their child up at an earlier time daily. Busing cannot be provided for early pick-ups.

Reed and Rosin Policy

String Students and Families:

Rosin is musical accessory that increases the quality of the sound. At the beginning of the year, all string students will receive their own rosin. It comes with every string instrument and will be labeled with their instrument number and name. Each student will be responsible for this rosin, and if the rosin is lost, that student will be responsible **for bringing in \$2 to replace it.**

It is forbidden for any student to touch a fellow student's rosin. If any student is found taking someone's rosin, the incident will be brought to the Head of School and treated as theft.

Wind Students and Families

All wind players, as they get more advanced, must take responsibility for their instrument accessories, such as flute cleaning cloths, clarinet reeds, trumpet valve oil and trombone slide grease. As students make progress, we will be asking families to help their children take on this responsibility. For the moment, we will begin with **second year clarinetists only**, who will be responsible for ordering their own reeds online. More information will be provided to the families concerned by El Sistema staff.

Private Lesson Policy

All Conservatory Lab students receive private instruction on their instruments as a part of El Sistema at Conservatory Lab. If parents wish to supplement their children's learning through private lessons outside the school, they are of course welcome to do so, and the school will be happy to recommend private instructors. *It is the school's policy, however, that currently employed Resident Artists may not teach Conservatory Lab students outside the school.*

Instrument Take-home Policy

There will be meetings at the beginning of the year to review El Sistema policies with parents and to provide them with an instrument care demo. Parents must attend one of these meetings in order for their children to take their instruments home. Parents will also sign a form agreeing to take full financial responsibility for any loss or damage that may occur to the instrument. If any student is found to have purposefully damaged an instrument, the incident will be brought to the Head of School for possible disciplinary action.

Each Conservatory Lab student in grades 1-6 is allotted one (1) instrument, to be provided by the school.

Food Program

Conservatory Lab provides a school breakfast and lunch program. Breakfast and lunch may be purchased, and are available at free or reduced cost to those who qualify. Students may also choose to bring lunch from home. We ask each family to return a Meals Form to the school so that we know which students qualify for the Free or Reduced lunch program. Even if you do not plan on taking advantage of the meals program, having this document is extremely helpful to the school. These forms help us determine the overall spending formulas for the entire school community.

Conservatory Lab does not have a cafeteria. The meals are delivered daily by City Fresh foods and meet all school nutritional food requirements. All meals delivered are the exact same. Therefore, Conservatory Lab cannot provide substitutions for meals. If you have religious or dietary restrictions, please contact the school's administrative assistant for a monthly meals calendar. With this information, you can send a lunch to school with your child on days that you know your child will not be able to eat all or a portion of the meal (for example, restrictions around dairy, pork, beef, etc.).

Also, if you do not meet the requirement for the Free lunch program and must pay either full price or a reduced fee for breakfast and lunch, Conservatory Lab must receive monthly payments **in full** at the start of each month in order for your child to participate in the program. Missed payments may result in suspension from the program until all payments owed is settled. We also work with families on creating payment plans for those dealing with financial hardships. Stay in communication with the meals coordinator so that you are educated about options that may be helpful to you.

Please inform the school if your child has any food allergies and should not have specific foods. While the school will make every effort to monitor and keep such foods away from an allergic child, it is ultimately the child's responsibility not to eat forbidden foods. Please educate your child. Students who bring lunch are asked to pack healthy food. Soda, candy, and chips are not considered healthy or appropriate lunch foods and will be returned home uneaten. **Soda and candy will be thrown away.**

Do not send any glass containers, or anything that requires heating or refrigeration. Also, parents are asked not to deliver "fast food" to their children during the school day.

As of August 2009, Conservatory Lab is a Peanut and Tree Nut free school. Thank you for not sending peanut or tree nut foods into the school.

In the interest of being a community that respects diversity, there is no food or parties associated with birthdays or religious holidays. Thank you for your cooperation.

Health Policy

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The school will notify parents/guardians when cases of serious communicable diseases occur anywhere in the school.

Please do not send a child to school under the following circumstances. It is the parent/ guardian's obligation to inform the school of any of the following:

- Child has had a fever within 24 hours
- Child has conjunctivitis ("pink eye")
- Child has vomited that morning or the night before
- Child has strep throat
- Child has open sores, ringworm, or infectious skin ailments or contagious illness
- Child has head lice or nits (lice eggs)

IN-SCHOOL ILLNESS OR INJURY

Conservatory Lab does not have a nurse in the facility. A child with minor bumps, bruises or abrasions will be treated at the school. We have staff trained in CPR and First Aid. In the case of fever or other signs of illness, the family **must** pick up the child. The child should be picked up within 30 minutes by an identifiable adult (ID may be required).

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a major injury or serious illness, every attempt will be made to notify a parent/guardian or emergency contact person. If no one can be reached, the school will call 911 for ambulance services. If the child is in stable condition, the ambulance will take the child to the hospital requested by the parents/guardians on the medical emergency form. If the child is in unstable condition, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital (Carney Hospital). **The parent/guardian is financially responsible for all expenses incurred by the ambulance and hospital.**

RECORDS (See also *Family Contact Information and Health Forms*)

Parents/guardians **must** submit the following to the school **before the school year begins** (please see Health forms packet):

1. A new health history form filled out by parent/guardian
2. The most recent physical exam report, must be within the last two years
3. Emergency contact form, indicating emergency contact information and the preferred hospital to use in case of an emergency (please see Health forms packet)
4. **An up-to-date immunization history.**

Health records must be returned to the school before the school year begins. **Students will be excluded from school if the school does not receive the required medical records or appropriate documentation. No exceptions.**

Teachers check the records so that they know of any special medical conditions; parents/guardians are also urged to talk over any special issues with teachers and appropriate staff members.

MEDICATION

Students at Conservatory Lab DO NOT carry any medication in school. If a child is to receive prescription medication in school we require a written *doctor's order* and written *parent permission* for each medication. This applies to all medications including inhalers, Tylenol, and allergy medications.

The school does not have a school nurse on site; rather, we partner with Carney Hospital in case of emergency. We cannot, therefore, dispense prescription medication at school. If your child has a medical condition that requires medication, please contact the Director of Student Services to discuss the best way to properly care for your child's health.

Wellness Policy

Policy /Intent /Rationale

Conservatory Lab Charter School promotes a total learning environment by supporting wellness, positive lifestyle practices, optimum nutrition, and regular physical activity. The school contributes to the basic health status of children through positive role models, and by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition, pro-active health practices, and physical activity. Overall good health fosters good student attendance and optimizes student performance potential to ensure that no child is left behind.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that each student is provided ongoing opportunities designed to maximize the prospect that the student will make positive decisions throughout life. Health education provides critical content for students to develop and demonstrate health-related knowledge, attitudes and practices. Physical education and regular physical activity is an integral part of the total education of students, which contributes to the physical development of the individual through promotion and appreciation of physical fitness. School food services will provide students with a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students.

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition, regular physical activity, and healthy lifestyle practices. In the school newsletter, pro-active health information and anticipatory guidance is disseminated to the whole school community by our school staff. Bulletin boards and posters will be used to display health promotion messages throughout the school year.

B. Support and promote good nutrition and proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

School Food Program:

All foods and beverages served at school for breakfast and lunch meet or exceed acceptable nutritional standards. Emphasis is placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high quality, nutritious meals, foods are served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging.

- Reimbursable school meals meet, at a minimum, the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (ACT U.S.C. 1779) and sections 9(f)(1) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42U.S.C. 1758 (f)(1), 1766(a), the USDA Nutritional Standards and the American Dietary Guidelines
- Menus are prepared and foods are served to incorporate variety, appeal, taste and safety to ensure high quality meals. Conservatory Lab meals are provided by City Fresh Foods. According to the school's contract with City Fresh Foods, provided food portions meet or exceed the above-mentioned guidelines.
- Meal times and Scheduling:
 - The school will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
 - Lunch periods are scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- **CONSERVATORY LAB IS A PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE SCHOOL. FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE NUT ALLERGIES, SNACKS AND/OR LUNCHESES THAT CONTAIN PEANUTS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.**
- Parents who provide food for children to bring to school are encouraged to provide healthy lunches. No soda or sugar drinks are permitted.

- Parents are to consult with the classroom teacher or Director before sending food to be shared. This is because every school has children who have severe, life-threatening allergies of all kinds and other restrictions on some children's diets. No child shall be put at risk of having an allergic reaction to foods brought into school.
- Staff members will be regularly updated by the school administration regarding children who have severe food allergies.

Nutrition and Health Education

- Nutrition instruction will be taught as part of classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective in order to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect health.
- Nutrition instruction includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, multicultural festivals and food tasting, promotions, farm visits, and school gardens;
- A comprehensive sex education component will be taught in the Upper School to prevent risk-taking behaviors that can adversely affect student health and well-being. Permission for participation in this program will be secured for each student by his/her parent or guardian.

C. Provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A physical activity program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in so as to develop life-long skills and enjoyment of physical activity.

- The school schedule includes a 30-minutes daily recess period for students in grades 2-8 and 60 minutes daily for students grades K1-1. During daily recess, students are encouraged to participate in organized games that foster gross motor development and aerobic activity.

Communication

NOTICES:

The Family Notes, a weekly newsletter will be sent electronically to your email account each Friday. The Family Notes will include updates on class and grade happenings, sharing photos, and informing you of upcoming class events and/or needs. On occasion, the school will send home a classroom report and school administrators might send home flyers, forms, and other notices. All papers will be tucked in your child's school planner or placed in a home school folder in your child's backpack. **Please check your email and your child's backpack every day, so that you don't miss any important information, especially on Fridays.**

If you have an email address, please make sure the school has it as we are moving towards sending all messages home electronically. Please check your email for important information and announcements.

Conservatory Lab will also contact you via our mass messaging phone system. We will use this phone system to call and alert you to upcoming events such as a PAC meeting or the Book Fair. We may also use this phone system in case of an emergency. It is important that we have your current phone numbers at all times.

CONTACTING TEACHERS: (Also, see www.conservatorylab.org)

An open line of communication between home and school is vital to your child's academic success. Our teachers welcome your input, and encourage you to maintain a dialogue with them. To make this communication possible, *it is important that we have your current phone numbers at all times.*

If you need to reach a teacher, please call the school (Brighton Campus – 617-208-6200 or Dorchester campus – 617-254-8904 and leave a message on his/her extension, or send in a note with your child, including information about when and where the teacher may contact you. Please be aware that teachers are generally not available to talk on the phone during school hours. Teachers' school email addresses are also available as another way to communicate.

CONTACTING ADMINISTRATORS: (Also, see www.conservatorylab.org)

The school administrators maintain an open-door policy. Please feel free to stop by to discuss any issues or concerns. Telephone calls will receive a response within 48hrs, and individual meetings can be easily arranged. You may also contact administrators by email.

PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES:

All parents/guardians **must** participate in scheduled parent-teacher conferences, portfolio reviews, and expedition exhibitions each year. In addition, conferences may be scheduled at any time if any special concerns need to be addressed. These meetings have two major objectives. The first is to provide an opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to build a working relationship based on trust, mutual understanding and support for each student. The second is to share insights and perceptions and explore goals for your child, while reviewing student progress and achievement with the teacher and your child.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Students receive four written reports a year, composed of two progress reports and two formal report cards. All reports at Conservatory Lab are standards based. Students receive a number score from 0-4 on each standard based on how they have showed mastery most recently (not averaged). Teachers take into consideration student progress on applicable homework, class work, class discussion, quizzes, and assessments. These reports track your child's progress over the course of a year in the areas of Math, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Science, Music, and Social/Emotional Skills. Students are expected to earn grades of Mastery (a 3) or higher to indicate they are on or near grade level.

You must attend Parent Teacher Conferences and Student-led Conferences; we strongly encourage you to come to our Expedition Celebrations as you will see the scope and depth of your child's academic growth.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parent/guardians of students at Conservatory Lab are expected to sign and return a Family Learning Agreement indicating their willingness to make a significant commitment to the education of their child in the following ways:

- Communicating often and routinely with their child's teacher
- Making sure their child arrives at school on time each day
- Reinforcing the school's behavioral expectations at home
- Keeping informed about school policies and requirements of their child's academic program
- Assisting with homework and practicing
- Participating in parent/guardian-teacher conferences
- Attending school events
- Responding promptly to school communications
- Serving as volunteer in the school
- Participating in the Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

During Parent-Teacher Conferences, at Open House, and during other meetings, teachers will be checking in with families to make sure our agreements are being upheld.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Conservatory Lab has a very active Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The mission of Conservatory Lab PAC is threefold: (1) to build communication within the school community; (2) to support parents/guardians in being effective educational partners and advocates for school improvement; and (3) to assist and work as a team with Conservatory Lab staff. The PAC holds monthly business meetings, and several informational/social events throughout the school year. The Steering Committee of the PAC includes two co-chairs, a secretary, a treasurer, representatives to the School Advisory Council; Director of Student Services PAC; representatives to the Board of Trustees, and room parents from each classroom. All parents and guardians are urged to become active members of the PAC.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SE-PAC)

The Special Education PAC (SE-PAC) seeks to be a clearinghouse on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities; meets regularly to disseminate best practices that are emerging in the field of special education; meets regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school's special education programs and to advocate for the appropriate supports and special education services necessary to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities.

The Special Education PAC (SE-PAC) meets quarterly to help provide the structure for an amazing experience for our children at school and in life. They serve as advocates of equal educational opportunities for parents and children with special (more) needs. Meetings provide a time to share experiences and ideas, to learn from each other, and support each other with our similar concerns. SE-PAC also fosters a better understanding and communication between staff, parents and administrators concerning all aspects of special education needs. They will provide parental input into educational programs and policies. The Council will meet four times a year; check the school calendar for dates.

The PAC as a whole gives parents, teachers and administrators a voice in decisions that affect them. The PAC is chaired and supported by parents and a Conservatory Lab administrators and the Director of Student Services attend as well. This group meets monthly over the course of the school year and serves the school community by acting as a formal clearinghouse on issues, including Special Education, that directly impact student achievement in school and at home and as a conduit for parent, teacher, administrative, and student concerns. Its function is to assess, prioritize, act on and direct these concerns through appropriate channels and also to communicate with all members of the school community regarding decisions and procedures.

Parent Complaint Procedure

In keeping with the school's commitment to creating partnerships for learning between parents and teachers, parents are expected to initially contact their child's teacher when any questions or concerns arise.

If parents believe that their child's teacher has not adequately addressed their concern, any parent, guardian, or other member of the school community may appeal to Conservatory Lab Principal. Complaints concerning buses, behavior, suspensions, issues concerning teachers, academics, civil rights, etc. may be filed in person, by telephone (617 254-8904), by mail (2120 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124) or by email see www.conservatorylab.org for email addresses) and may be verbal or in writing.

The appropriate administrator will respond within 7 days of receipt of the complaint to the complaining party.

If the person believes that the Director has not adequately addressed his/her complaint, s/he may submit the complaint in writing to Conservatory Lab Head of School.

If the person believes that his/her complaint has still not been adequately addressed by the Head of School, s/he may submit the complaint in writing to Conservatory Lab Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees shall investigate the complaint. The complaining person and all school personnel shall cooperate fully in the investigation. The Board of Trustees shall provide a written response no later than 30 days from the receipt of the written complaint.

If the person believes that the Board of Trustees has not adequately addressed his/her complaint, and that Conservatory Lab is violating the law and regulations that govern charter schools (M.G.L.c.71, s.89; 603 CMR 1.00), s/he may also submit the complaint in writing to the Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner shall investigate the complaint, make a written response, and if the school is found to be in non-compliance, take further action as deemed appropriate.

For "Parent Advocacy" or how parents can become involved, please see *Parent/Guardian Involvement*.

Student Records and Confidentiality

A student's record consists of his or her school transcript, including all standardized assessments and temporary records. As the parent/guardian of your child you have the right (as mandated in The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA]) to inspect all portions of your child's school record upon written request to the school administration at least 24 hours in advance. You may also request copies of any part of the record. Any student who is at least 14 years old has the right to view and receive a copy of his or her student record.

The student's transcript, or Permanent Record, includes the student's name, date of birth, address, years and grades complete and courses and grades earned. The Permanent Record is kept for 60 years after the student leaves the school.

All other records regarding the student are Temporary Records and are destroyed seven years after the student leaves the system. Parents/Guardians have a right to receive a copy of this Temporary Record prior to its destruction and may request a copy by contacting the administration of the school.

Transcript Requests require a request in writing and must be received at least one week in advance.

Letters of Recommendation or Evaluation for private school applications requires a three-week-in-advance written request. As per the standard Conservatory Lab confidentiality policy, all such recommendations will be mailed in a sealed envelope directly to the school and not to a parent.

School Governance

As a public school chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Conservatory Lab is directly accountable to the state for all aspects of its operation. Conservatory Lab is overseen by a **Board of Trustees**, which meets regularly to establish policy and ensure sound financial management and fundraising success. Included on the Board are representatives from the school's Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The Board is organized into several committees: executive; governance; facilities; finance and audit; development; education; and research and replication.

Both Board meetings and Parent Advisory Council meetings are subject to Massachusetts Open Meeting law and, as such, any member of the school community or the public is welcome to attend.

Transportation

Our policy is that unless otherwise specified, your child will go home on his or her bus. It is your responsibility, not your child's, to communicate any change in transportation plans.

Students who live more than one mile from school qualify to ride a school bus, unless the student lives outside of Boston. School bus transportation is provided to Conservatory Lab by the Boston Public Schools Transportation Unit. Please direct questions about school bus transportation to the BPS Transportation Unit, at (617) 635-9520. Please let the school know of any changes that you make in your child's bus arrangements (e.g. new bus stop or different bus).

For the safety of all, proper conduct on school buses must be upheld. Students are under school care from the time they leave their homes in the morning until they return at day's end. Therefore, improper behavior on a BPS school bus will result in consequences imposed by the school, including temporary or permanent bus suspension. The following Bus Safety Rules must be adhered to by all, whether going to and from school, or traveling with a teacher on a field trip:

Bus Safety Rules

- **Obey the instructions of the bus driver, teacher or chaperone**
- **Remain seated at all times**
- **Keep hands and all objects inside the bus**
- **No loud arguing, provocative behavior or fighting**
- **Use an indoor voice and respectful language**
- **Respect property: no littering, defacing, stealing or spitting**

Any bus driver may refer a student to the school for improper conduct on their bus. Should a Bus Safety Rule be broken, the consequences are as follows:

- First offense – A written or telephone warning to the home, and possible additional consequences, such as loss of recess, etc., depending on the nature of the offense
- Second Offense – A phone call to parents/guardians, informing them of the bus incident and the number of days of bus suspension.
- Third Offense – A conference with parents/guardians, informing them of the bus incident and the number of days of bus suspension.
- Fourth Offense- Permanent removal from the bus.

Please note that in the event of a serious violation of the Bus Safety Rules, Conservatory Lab reserves the right to suspend a child from the bus for a first or second offense. ***Children must attend school when suspended from the bus.*** Any absence, as a result of a bus suspension, is considered unexcused.

Students waiting to board buses in the morning should be at their assigned bus stops five minutes before the scheduled bus time. They need to wait until buses have come to a complete stop and put out a stop sign before approaching to get on.

Except in cases of extreme emergency, no student(s) will be allowed to ride a bus other than his/her regularly assigned bus. In such cases, the student may receive permission from the school office after a specific request from a parent/guardian. The school will then give the driver written permission and information about the appropriate stop.

No stops to pick up or discharge passengers will be made by any bus driver other than at officially designated places.

Parents/guardians may ride the school bus with their child by obtaining a written permission slip from the office. This letter must be given to the bus driver. Parents/guardians are not allowed to step onto buses without this letter of authorization. Please contact the Director for a permission slip.

Children that do not attend Conservatory Lab are not permitted on the bus.

Student Services

Student Support Team (SST)

The Student Support Team (SST) is a problem-solving team that meets on a weekly basis (alternating weeks between PreK-Grade 1, Grades 2-4, and Grades 5-8) to discuss concerns about individual students in the domains of academic achievement or social, emotional, or behavioral functioning and determine appropriate interventions that will help students to be successful learners at the Conservatory Lab. The SST is coordinated by the Director of Student Services and may consist of the following members: learning specialists, counselors, related service providers, interventionists and support staff, administration, and any teachers working with the student.

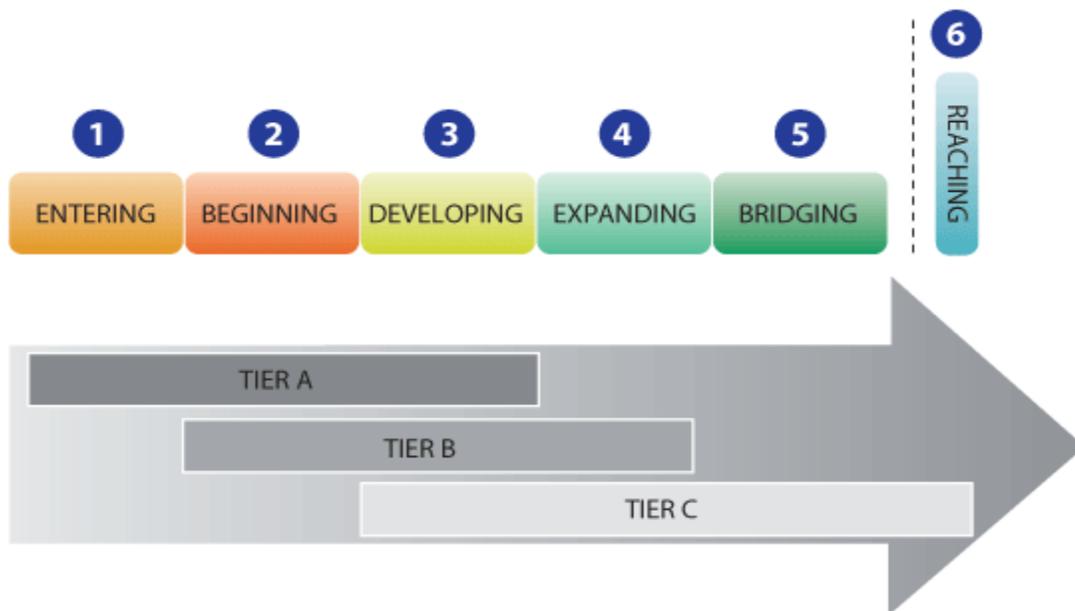
Teachers are responsible for notifying parents about any concerns prior to referral and for communicating the content of any intervention plan that has been created (e.g. strategies, supports, accommodations, etc.). The Director of Student Services is responsible for communicating the intervention plan and follow-up steps from the SST meeting to any teacher or staff member that works with the student. This will allow for collaboration between home and school and among the school staff so that the student's specific needs are being addressed and monitored.

If your child has been given strategies or support, you will be informed. If a parent or guardian has any concerns about your child's success in school, you may contact your child's teacher, who in turn will refer your concerns to the SST. If you would like more information about the SST process, please contact the Director of Student Services.

English Language Learners

Some students may be eligible for language instruction and academic support through the services of the English Language Learners (ELL) Program at Conservatory Lab. The recommendation for ELL service is based upon a combination of classroom teacher's observation, answers on the Home Language Survey, and through the WIDA-Placement Test.

Students identified as ELL will receive language and content support in either push-in and/or pull-out sessions. The sessions will work on the same content that the regular education teacher provides, but will be delivered by a licensed ESL teacher and will specifically address the four primary language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The length of the sessions is determined by state regulations of recommended hours according to each student's level of English language proficiency:



As mandated by the state, ELL students will participate in all state required English language proficiency assessments annually until they graduate from the program. As of 2013, these assessments include the ACCESS test and the WIDA-Apt Placement test. Students must take these two assessments in addition to any grade level PARCC tests they may be required to take during the same school year.

In addition to targeted ESL instruction, classroom teachers at the Conservatory Lab are being trained in Sheltered English Immersion content teaching, which will allow them to provide English language learners with support in the content subjects throughout the day.

Special Education

Although all attempts will be made to use the SST process (see above) to address individual student needs, there are cases when the interventions implemented are not sufficient. In those cases the student may be *referred* for an evaluation to assess their skills and present levels of functioning and to better determine the nature of their difficulties.

What is a referral? A referral is a written request for an evaluation that is given to the school district when a child is suspected of having a disability and might need special education services.

Who can make a referral? Parents
School personnel in collaboration with the SST
Agencies concerned with the welfare of students, including city and state agencies

If you believe that your child may have a disability, you may refer your child for an evaluation by submitting a written request to the Director of Student Services. The director will call you to discuss the exact concerns then develop a set of evaluations best suited to satisfy those areas of concern. Regardless of the referring source, the evaluation process begins once the parent or guardian has signed a “Consent to Evaluate” notice. The school then has **30 days** to complete the evaluation and an additional **15 days** (45 days total from receipt of consent) to convene a team meeting that includes the parents and all relevant support staff and teaching personnel to determine the student’s eligibility for services and to develop a plan to best meet his or her needs.

The evaluation should examine all areas of suspected disability and provide a detailed description of the student’s needs. In order to be eligible for special education services:

1. The student must have a disability determined by a doctor or other diagnostic means;
2. The disability results in a lack of effective progress in the regular education setting; and
3. The student requires specially designed instruction or related services (e.g. occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, counseling, etc.) in order to access the general curriculum and make effective progress.

The potential disability may be a developmental delay, autism, or an intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, communication, physical or health impairment, a specific learning disability, or a combination of the preceding impairments.

If student is found *not* eligible, he or she may still receive support, although not special education services.

If the student *is* eligible for special education services, parents work as equal partners with school personnel to develop an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. When appropriate, students (particularly those age 14 or older) can be involved in the development of their IEPs.

The IEP goes into effect after parents agree to the services and sign the IEP form. Parents receive a copy of the IEP after it is finalized. The also receive **quarterly updates** on the student’s progress towards his or her IEP goals (following the schedule of progress reports for non-disabled student). The IEP is **reviewed at least annually** but may also be reviewed any time concerns arise regarding the services being provided. Additionally, students participate in **triennial reevaluations** every 3-years from the completion date of the initial evaluation.

It is important to note that students with disabilities have many rights and protections under federal and state law. Specifically, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) stipulates that all children with disabilities have the right to *free and public education* (FAPE) that is designed to meet their individual needs and prepares them for further education, employment, and independent living.

At the Conservatory Lab Charter School, placement and service decisions are based on the individual needs of the student and students with special needs are educated in the *least restrictive environment* and in accordance with the core value of *social justice and equity for all*. Conservatory Lab strives to be an inclusive school, meaning that students will be educated within the general education classroom to the fullest extent possible. As necessary, students also receive pull-out services from other professionals who provide students with math and literacy support, speech and language services, occupational therapy, and counseling.

504 Accommodation Plans

In addition to the protections and special education supports afforded under IDEA, the rights of students with disabilities are also protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities, public and private that receive federal financial assistance. It is important to note that Section 504 is intended to establish a "level playing field" - usually by eliminating barriers that exclude persons with disabilities - whereas IDEA is remedial - often requiring the provision of programs and services in addition to those available to persons without disabilities (typically through the IEP process described above).

If a student has a disability that "substantially limits one or more major life activities" (e.g. learning, mobility, etc.) but does not require specially designed instruction, they may still require accommodations to their school program in order for them to maximize their potential and function to the best of their abilities.

A **504 Accommodations Plan** is not a special education plan. However, similar to an IEP, it is developed based on an evaluation of the student's present levels of performance and functioning and is reviewed annually to align with each student's individual goals and needs.

Counseling Services

As was previously noted in this handbook, the Conservatory Lab emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. Although the general curricular programs available may meet the needs of a majority of students in these areas, we recognize that some students may benefit from additional social, emotional, or behavioral support in school.

In order to address this need, a staff social worker/counselor will be available to work with children both individually and/or in small groups to help them develop appropriate social skills and strategies to cope with strong emotions. The social worker/counselor will often also be available during recess and to provide consultative support to teachers within the classroom.

Beyond traditional skills groups, the social worker/counselor will work with students who require this level of support via a variety of techniques to address their individual needs and help them process everything from friendship struggles to changing family dynamics to trauma and grief. These services will be available to students who are mandated for counseling as part of an IEP as well as to the general student population. Please contact the Director of Student Services for more information.

Nondiscrimination Statement

All programs, activities, and employment opportunities at Conservatory Lab are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, size, sexual orientation, gender identification (including, but not limited to Transgendered) and disability. Conservatory Lab has a Civil Rights Complaint Policy and Procedure, which is available upon request from the school office. If you believe that you or your child has been subjected to illegal discrimination or harassment at Conservatory Lab, you may file a complaint with the Head of School or Robyn Pretlow, Director of Civil Right and Parent Community Relations, who is the school's Title VI and Title IX Coordinator and Civil Rights Coordinator (Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2120 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124). The Section 504 Coordinator is Dana Reder (Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2120 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124). The Homeless Liaison is Martin Sarango (Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2120 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124). They can all be reached at (617) 254-8904, or by email (see www.conservatorylab.org for email addresses).

Using Conservatory Lab complaint process does not prevent you from also filing a complaint with an outside governmental agency, as outlined in the Complaint Policy and Procedure.

Promotion Policy

Conservatory Lab takes student promotion very seriously. Promotion decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Decisions will be made based on a student's academic achievement, social and emotional needs, and academic assessments through the year. Parents are a critical part of the team and will be contacted throughout the year if academic or social/emotional concerns are prohibiting their child from fully engaging in Conservatory Lab academic and music programs. Conservatory Lab teachers and administrators have the final word on promotion; however, parents are expected to participate fully in the conversation and actively engage in maximizing their child's learning potential.

Pregnancy Policy for Students

If a student is a pregnant or parenting student, under Title IX (see *Nondiscrimination* section in this Handbook), she has a right to stay in school so she can meet her education and career goals. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy, parenting and all related conditions, such as abortion – in educational programs and activities that get federal funding. The school will provide to all students who might be, are, or have been pregnant the same access to school programs and educational opportunities that other students have.

The school will excuse any absences due to pregnancy or any related conditions for as long as a doctor says it is necessary for a student to be absent. When a student returns to school, she will be reinstated to the status she held before her leave. The school requires the student to submit a doctor's note from a doctor, as is required of all students with medical conditions or doctor's appointments.

Home and Hospital Instruction

Conservatory Lab Charter Public School provides home and hospital tutoring to students who, “in the judgment of their physician, should remain at home or in the hospital on day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for a period of at least fourteen school days in any school year.” Before a student can receive these services, a licensed physician must complete a state-required form. **The required physician's statement form is available at www.doe.mass.edu/sped/28mr/**

Students Seeking Employment

Students who are between the ages of 14-17 are eligible for employment in the states of Massachusetts. A student must be in good standing academically and already have a position of interest before obtaining a work permit. Students may access the Employment Permit Application from the Dean of Students directly, or online at <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/docs/dos/youth-employment/youth-application.pdf>

All applications must be filled out completely by student and parent, then submitted to the Dean of Students for approval and Work Permit ID number.

Code of Conduct & Anti-Bullying Plan

Si usted necesita este documento en español,
por favor llame al 617-254-8904, x100

Se você precisa desta mensagem traduzida,
por favor, ligue para 617-254-8904, r100

Conservatory Lab Charter School

Code of Conduct

“Part of our contract as a learning community is the expectation that children will act responsibly. We help them learn responsibility through daily practice of integrated tasks into the daily arrangements and design of our classrooms. We expect that children tell the truth, do their jobs as academics, take care of property, and treat each other with respect, fairness, and friendliness. A breach of this trust includes but is not limited to telling lies, acting or speaking in ways that show disregard for others’ personal rights or feelings, and acting in ways that show disregard for materials in the room.”

-from Ruth Sidney Charney’s *Teaching Children to Care*

Conservatory Lab Charter School is a community of teachers and families who come together for one purpose: to provide the best possible education to our children. Using the phrase “our children” promotes the idea that we all take ownership in teaching not only academics, but citizenship, responsibility, respect, kindness, and friendliness. Positively embracing our children at both school and home, they will have the tools necessary to make positive and powerful decisions, which will affect the way they grow and give back to their communities throughout their lives.

Conservatory Lab uses the best practices of Expeditionary Learning, El Sistema, and other sound social-emotional learning techniques in the school to teach, model, and practice positive behavior and deep academic engagement. Our Guiding Principles at work in the classroom assert that:

- A strong social curriculum is as important as a strong academic curriculum
- How children learn is equally as important as what they learn
- Social interaction promotes the greatest cognitive growth
- Daily classroom practice of Cooperation, Responsibility, Perseverance, Reflection, and Empathy (our **Crew Qualities**) lead to deeper social and academic engagement
- Knowing our children is as important as knowing what we teach
- Knowing our children’s families is critical to knowing our children
- Adult cooperation in the school supports a healthy environment for all children and families

Classrooms, like businesses, hospitals, and playgrounds, *depend* on everyone working together in a positive and cooperative manner. To make the above Guiding Principles successful in our classrooms, staff provide constant opportunities for practice and reflection.

In the practice of any skill, mistakes will be made. Conservatory Lab strives to use the moments when a person makes a mistake as an opportunity to teach. We believe that teaching discipline- as leaders, scholars, and artists – is critical for continued success in life. Without discipline, students will not be able to engage fully in learning.

General Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to:

- adhere to the school schedule for arrival and dismissal
- walk in hallways
- remain silent in hallways
- follow directions the first time and readily comply, if redirected
- complete all homework assignments with integrity
- care for their instruments and protect them from harm
- care for their learning materials and protect them from harm
- refrain from bullying and report bullying when witnessed
- stay in assigned areas
- communicate with staff and peers respectfully

- contribute positively to the full academic, musical, social life of the school

Not upholding these behavioral expectations **will** result in a referral to the school Dean of Students, and a possible suspension and/or further consequence.

To create an environment that allows all members to be successful, Conservatory Lab staff will employ:

- Take-a-break (includes buddy break)
- Logical consequences and Reparations
- Loss of Privilege

Take-A- Break: is a non-punitive way for a child to break from the group or activity, in order to calm down, practice self-control, reflect on their behavior and rejoin the class when they are ready to begin learning again. Take-a-break typically does not require the student to leave the classroom, but it may mean they take a “buddy break,” in a neighboring classroom where they can reflect until they are ready to rejoin.

Logical consequences: children must learn that their behaviors, actions, and words make an impact, on the people and world around them. Logical consequences are relevant, connect to the behavior, are short term, respectful, and allow for opportunities to learn and re-engage with the community after a specific time of teaching and learning.

Reparations: If children spend work time talking, then they need to fix it by getting the work done during playtime. If a child knocks over a tower a classmate is building with blocks, then it needs to be fixed with an apology and a rebuilding of the project. Reparations are fair and connect directly to the incident. Conversations about the incident and get at the heart of why something happened and how to keep it from happening again.

Loss of Privilege: a privilege is a chance to learn what it takes to be a productive, kind, and full member of a community. A privilege can be a class job, the chance to take home a violin, or to sit where you like on the bus. When a child shows that they are not able to engage in a privilege correctly, then a loss of privilege is in order. Again, the loss of privilege is not meant to be punitive or degrading. Instead it is an opportunity for a child to work cooperatively with adults to learn what it takes to engage appropriately with a privilege, reflect on past behaviors, take a break from something they are struggling with and then try again.

Staff at Conservatory Lab commit to keeping the environment safe, clean, challenging and respectful. They provide daily opportunities to practice rigorous academics as well as socio-emotional growth. We believe that by setting high expectations and providing ample practice time that we are setting our children up for greatness. Families are a critical partner in this greatness and are welcome into the classrooms to join in the learning, meet with teachers and administrators, share joys and concerns, and learn how we teach what we know.

Logical Consequences

All students are expected to follow the Conservatory Lab Charter School’s Code of Conduct, unless otherwise determined by the student’s Individualized Education Plan Team or 504 Team and written in the student’s IEP or 504 Plan. Federal and state laws provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of these rights may be obtained from the Principal or Director of Special Programs.

The policies herein and the considerations given to students and parents are respectful and at the same time demand that all students and parents pay equal respect to other school community members, including other students and parents, teachers, bus drivers and monitors, administrators and all other school staff. The Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with school district policies, specifically, the Anti-Discrimination policy, the Anti-Harassment policy, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention plan, and special education policies, laws and regulations.

Students are always expected to demonstrate acceptable behavior while in any school setting, including classrooms, stairwells, hallways, after school programs, school buses, and while on all fieldwork.

Stairs:

Teachers give students visual reminders and verbal clarification to help them develop the discipline that CLCS expects. Students whose behavior in class is unproductive or counter-productive will earn “stairs,” stairs will result in point reduction, in our school-wide and incentive-based behavioral system. Repeated earning of stairs may result in detention or mandatory parent conference.

Office Referral:

Any student whose behavior disrupts the learning environment and jeopardizes another student’s education will serve a detention, at the discretion of the teacher. This means that the student must report to the office of the Dean of Students, immediately and remain in the office until it is clear that the disruptions will cease. Office referral will require a student to reflect upon and learn from his or her behavior as demonstrated through writing and perhaps through service towards the school community.

Detention:

Any student who demonstrates continued egregious or unacceptable behavior, that is disrespectful in nature, or disruptive to the learning of others, will have to serve a detention.

Out of School Suspension:

An out-of-school suspension will result in the immediate removal from school of the student in question. Unless otherwise stated, the determination of the length of any out-of-school suspension will rest with the Dean of Students. The administration will arrange for a meeting with the student and his/her parent(s) to discuss the student’s behavior and re-admission into the school community. This meeting will take place, as quickly as possible after the student’s removal. In the case of more serious or repeated infractions, suspensions may last for a longer duration and may be accompanied by other sanctions. A student suspended from school will not be allowed on school grounds or at school-related functions during the suspension period without explicit permission from a school administrator.

Expulsion:

Please see Expulsion Policy p.37-38

Minor and Major Disciplinary Infractions

Minor disciplinary infractions to expected student behaviors or to any additional rules developed in the classroom are defined as those infractions that are addressed by the teacher or staff person responsible for the student when the infraction occurs. Examples of logical consequences for minor infractions are: opportunity for a break in a buddy classroom, behavior reflection activities, loss of recess or other privileges, rebuilding a relationship, apologizing, and notification to a parent or guardian.

It would be impossible to compose a complete list of all such infractions, but some examples include:

- Teasing
- Not following the teacher’s instructions
- Behavior that is disrespectful to others
- Littering
- Minor disruption of the learning environment
- Talking back to an adult
- Disrespecting school materials

Major disciplinary infractions are those problems that must be addressed by the Administration. A major infraction might consist of several minor incidents or one serious incident of violent or illegal behavior (any unsafe, violent, or uncontrollable behavior, using any object as a weapon, fighting, stealing, possession of a weapon, harassment, or illegal substance, etc.).

Again, it would be impossible to describe every possible disciplinary infraction. There are, however, two general categories of major disciplinary infractions.

1. Violations of school rules or the law that are judged to be disruptive to the classroom learning and are dangerous and/or destructive. Examples of major disciplinary infractions include:
 - Acts or threats of serious physical violence against adults or students
 - Stealing
 - Destruction of school or other people's property
 - Obscene language
 - Fighting
 - Bullying and harassment (physical, verbal, sexual)
2. Multiple incidents of minor infractions, failure to complete a disciplinary assignment, or unresponsiveness to the usual forms of corrective action described in the previous section.

When minor or major discipline issues arise with your child, the Conservatory Lab teaching community feels very strongly that he or she must learn from the experience. In every instance, the student must make restitution for the infraction, in the same manner as described in the previous section. The appropriate Administrator will make every effort to communicate with families, and through this communication, integrate parents into the circle as well.

When and if a request is made for a parent to pick a child up from school, the parent must comply immediately to the request. *If a parent does not comply, Conservatory Lab may have no other choice but to bring the child to the family.*

Transportation Related Behavioral Infractions

For the safety of all, proper conduct on school buses must be upheld. Students are under school care from the time they leave their homes in the morning until they return at day's end. Therefore, improper behavior on a BPS school bus will result in consequences imposed by the school. The following Bus Safety Rules must be adhered to by all, whenever on a school bus. The ability to ride a BPS sponsored school bus is considered a privilege, not a right or necessity.

Any bus driver may refer a student to the school for improper conduct on their bus. Examples of improper bus conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying
- Failure to obey the instructions of the bus driver, teacher, or chaperone
- Not remaining seated
- Failure to keep hands and/or belongings inside the bus
- Loud arguing, provocative behavior, or fighting
- Using an unusually loud voice and /or disrespectful language
- Littering, defacing, stealing, or spitting
- Distracting the bus driver
- Lewd and/or sexual behavior

Should a Bus Safety Rule be broken, the consequences are as follows:

- First offense – A *written or telephone warning* to the home, and possible additional consequences, such as loss of recess, assigned bus seat, apology to the driver, etc., depending on the nature of the offense
- Second Offense – A *phone call* to parents/guardians informing them of the bus incident and the number of days of bus suspension.

- Third Offense – A *conference* with parents/guardians informing them of the bus incident and the number of days of bus suspension.
- Fourth Offense- Permanent removal from the bus.

Please note that in the event of a serious violation of the Bus Safety Rules, Conservatory Lab reserves the right to suspend from the bus for a first or second offense. ***Children MUST attend school when suspended from the bus.*** Any absences in the event of bus suspension is considered unexcused.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

It is the philosophy of Conservatory Lab that suspensions /and or expulsions should be a carefully considered option to address inappropriate student behavior. When behavioral issues arise that require suspension of a student, the school will provide the student with an opportunity to maintain academic progress during the suspension period. It is expected that students who are suspended for any length of time, will spend the time completing assignments and turn in all work upon re-entry.

Suspension for Major Disciplinary Infractions

After speaking with the teacher and the student, the Administrator in charge will decide, at his/her discretion, in conjunction with the student’s age, disability status, or other extenuating circumstances, whether suspension is logical/necessary. Suspension may be immediate (resulting in the student leaving for the rest of the day) and/or may occur in the days following the infraction.

There may be times, however, that the student will be suspended immediately for at least the rest of the school day. The Administrator will call the parent/guardian to arrange for immediate pick-up of the student. The student will complete his/her schoolwork in the office until picked up. Before leaving the school building, the parent/guardian and the student will meet with an Administrator to discuss the reason for the suspension. If circumstances dictate (i.e. the Administrator determines that it is in the best interests of the child to remain in school) the suspension may be an in-school suspension. **When and if a request is made for a parent to pick a child up from school, the parent must comply immediately to the request.**

If the Administrator, in consultation with the student’s teacher, judge the infraction to warrant a suspension of longer than the rest of the day, the parent/guardian will be so informed, in writing and by phone. A decision to suspend a student for a longer period will be based on the totality of the circumstances, including the student’s age and special needs, if any, the severity of the incident, and the student’s past record. Suspension will not exceed 10 days.

Expulsion Policy

Expulsions for Major Disciplinary Infractions

At conservatory Lab, expulsions are rare, but do occur. Conservatory Lab will examine each possible expulsion very carefully to determine the appropriate course of action. Conservatory Lab teachers and administrators have the final word on expulsion; however, parents are expected to participate fully in the conversation.

EXPULSION

An expulsion will result in the permanent removal from school of the student in question, pending a full investigation of the offense. Any time a student is expelled from school, he or she will be allowed to make academic progress. The Dean of Students will facilitate how the student’s educational services will be made available with teachers and families. At the time the student is expelled, the Principal or Dean of Students will inform the student and parent in writing of this opportunity to receive education services.

EXPULSION OFFENSES

The following is a list of offenses that may result in an expulsion. All students are held accountable for their own behavior in school and while commuting to and from school.

- Possession of a dangerous weapon (including, but not limited to a gun or a knife) or a controlled substance (including, but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and heroin) on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H
- Assault on a Principal, Director, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H
- Being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, pursuant to M.G.L. c.71§37H ½

This is not an all-inclusive list of offenses. The Principal, School Director, or Dean of Students will determine if a given action by a student will result in detention, suspension or expulsion.

NOTICE AND RIGHT TO HEARING

Before an expulsion takes effect, written notice will be provided to the student and parent or guardian of the charges and of the reasons and evidence for expulsion. The notice will include the student's right to a hearing with the Dean of Students and Principal before the expulsion takes effect, including date, time, and location. Student's parent or guardian will need to be present at the hearing. Additional written notification will be provided at the hearing informing the student, parent, or guardian of the right to appeal, and will outline the process for appealing the expulsion and of the opportunity to receive educational services. The student may have representation, along with the right to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing on his or her behalf.

APPEAL

Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Head of School.

For a 37H charge (see Expulsion Offenses above), the student, or the student's parent or guardian, shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion to notify the Head of School of his or her appeal. The notice must be in writing. The student has a right to be represented by an attorney at the hearing. The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing.

For a 37H1/2 offense (see Expulsion Offenses above), the Principal may remove the student for period of time up to expulsion if the Principal determines the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school. The student will receive written notice of the charges and the reasons for the expulsion before the expulsion takes effect. The student, the student's parent or guardian must make a request for appeal in writing no later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Head of School will hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within 3 calendar days of the request for appeal.

At the hearing, the student will have the right to present oral and written testimony, the right to counsel and the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. The Head of School shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal and Dean of Students, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of school district with regard to the expulsion.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

All students will be allowed to make academic progress in the event of expulsion. Under G.L. c. 76, §21 and 603 CMR 53.13, students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive days must be provided a list of education services that the school will provide the student during the period of suspension or expulsion. We afford students with academic support via the following educational services; take home assignments, in-district tutoring, and distance learning.

The Use of Restraint on a Child

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has established regulations governing the use of physical restraints on students. Conservatory Lab is required to follow the provisions of 603 CMR 46.00. A number of Conservatory Lab's staff has been certified through the *Crisis Prevention Institute* (CPI)

Physical restraint is to be used only in emergency situations after other less intensive alternatives have failed or have been deemed inappropriate or inadequate. Physical restraint should be administered only when needed to protect a student, other students, staff etc. from imminent, serious physical harm. Physical restraint should be administered in the least intrusive manner possible, and should be used to prevent or minimize physical harm to the student. Any restraint lasting more than 20 minutes or causing injury must be reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Principal may designate additional staff to be trained in the proper physical restraint. During the first week of school each year, all staff will be required to undergo training with regard to the restraint policy. Proper restraint training and other appropriate de-escalation methods will result in effective crisis intervention and prevention here at Conservatory Lab Charter School.

Only staff that has received proper training in physical restraint procedures shall administer it to students. To the greatest degree possible, another adult who does not participate in the restraint should witness administration of a restraint. However, nothing in 603 CMR 46.00 or this policy shall preclude a teacher, employee or agent of the school from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. During August of each school year, all staff will receive training with regard to the restraint policy.

All staff are required to undergo annual training in physical restraint. Parents and staff should refer to the full text of the regulations www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603CMR46.html. For a more robust explanation and requirements you may request **Appendix M: Use of Physical Restraint Policy** from the School directly to reference.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

Federal and state laws provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified as having special needs based upon a disability. Such students will be subject to the provisions of Conservatory Lab's Code of Conduct and will be treated in a manner that closely resembles the treatment of their peers in regular education while at the same time considers their unique needs.

The disciplining of students with special needs is governed by federal and state special education laws and regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. 91400, et seq; 34C.F.R. §300.519-529 et seq., and Massachusetts General Laws c. 71

Protections in the IDEA apply to students who have been found eligible for special education and to students for whom the school is deemed to have knowledge that the child might have a disability (i.e., students who have not yet been found eligible but the school had a basis of knowledge of a disability, including students who have been referred for initial evaluation). 34 CFR § 300.354

Beginning on the 11th school day of a student's disciplinary removal during the school year, and if removal is a change in placement, the student must be provided free appropriate public education (FAPE) services during the period of removal to allow him/her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards IEP goals, even if in a different setting. 34 CFR § 300.530(b) & (d).

If the conduct that the student is being disciplined for involves the “special circumstances” of weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or serious bodily injury, school personnel may remove the student to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, regardless of the manifestation determination. 34 CFR § 300.530(g). The IEP Team must determine the IAES.

Although the school must take all necessary steps when disciplining a student with a disability, at any point, the parent and school can agree to change a student’s placement for disciplinary reasons. Agreements shall be in writing, and signed by the school personnel and the parent.

A student for whom the school is deemed to have knowledge of a disability – A child who has not yet been determined to be eligible for special education and related services may assert the disciplinary protections under IDEA if the school had a basis of knowledge that the child is a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The school is deemed to have knowledge if: (1) the child’s parent expressed concern in writing to administrative or supervisory personnel of the school that the child is in need of special education and related services; (2) the parent of the child had requested a special education evaluation; or (3) the child’s teacher or other school personnel expressed specific concerns to the director of special education or to other supervisory personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child. The school is *not* deemed to have knowledge of a disability if (1) the parent has not allowed an evaluation or has refused special education and related services, *or* (2) the child has been evaluated and determined not to be a child with a disability. 34 CFR § 300.534.

Change of placement – A change of placement because of a disciplinary removal occurs if a child with a disability is removed from his/her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days, or the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitutes a pattern because: (1) the removals total more than 10 school days in a school year; (2) the child’s behavior is substantially similar to previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and (3) additional factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another constitute a pattern. 34 CFR § 300.536.

Current placement – The placement from which the student was removed for disciplinary reasons.

Interim alternative educational setting (IAES) – An IAES is a disciplinary placement that is not the same as the child’s current placement as defined in his/her IEP.

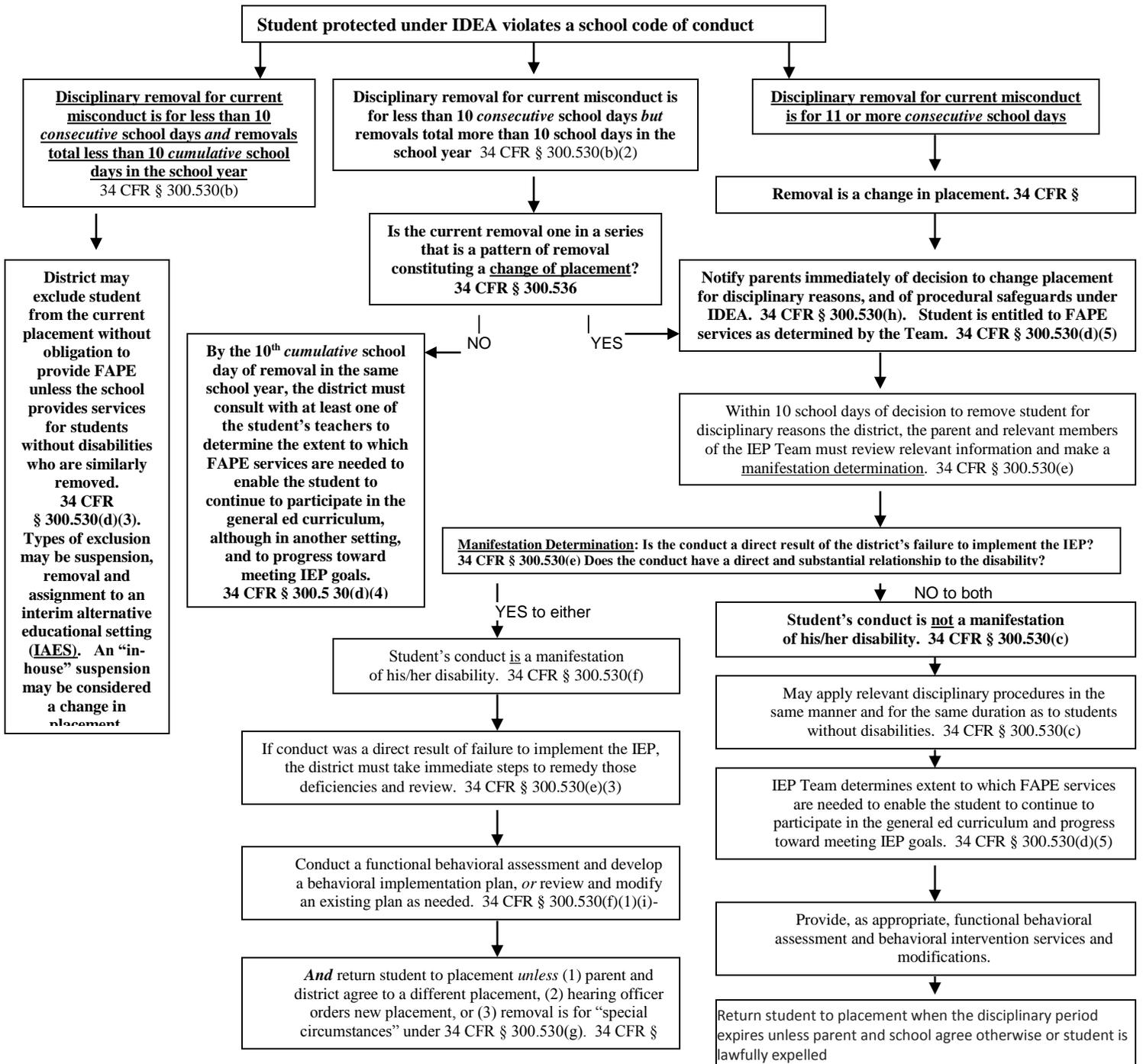
Manifestation determination – The determination made by the school, the parent, and relevant members of the student’s Team, after review of all relevant information in the student’s file including the IEP, teacher observations, and relevant information provided by the parents, whether (1) the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child’s disability; *or* (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the district’s failure to implement the student’s IEP. 34 CFR § 300.530(e).

Special circumstances – Where the disciplinary conduct is a “special circumstance,” school personnel may remove a student to an IAES for not more than 45 school days, regardless of the results of the manifestation determination. Special circumstances exist if the student:

- carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function); or
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function ; or
- inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function. 34 CFR § 300.530(g).

Serious bodily injury – As defined in 18 U.S.C. § 930, a bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 34 CFR § 300.530(i)(3).

For more details on these procedures, please contact Dana Reder, Director of Student Services x134

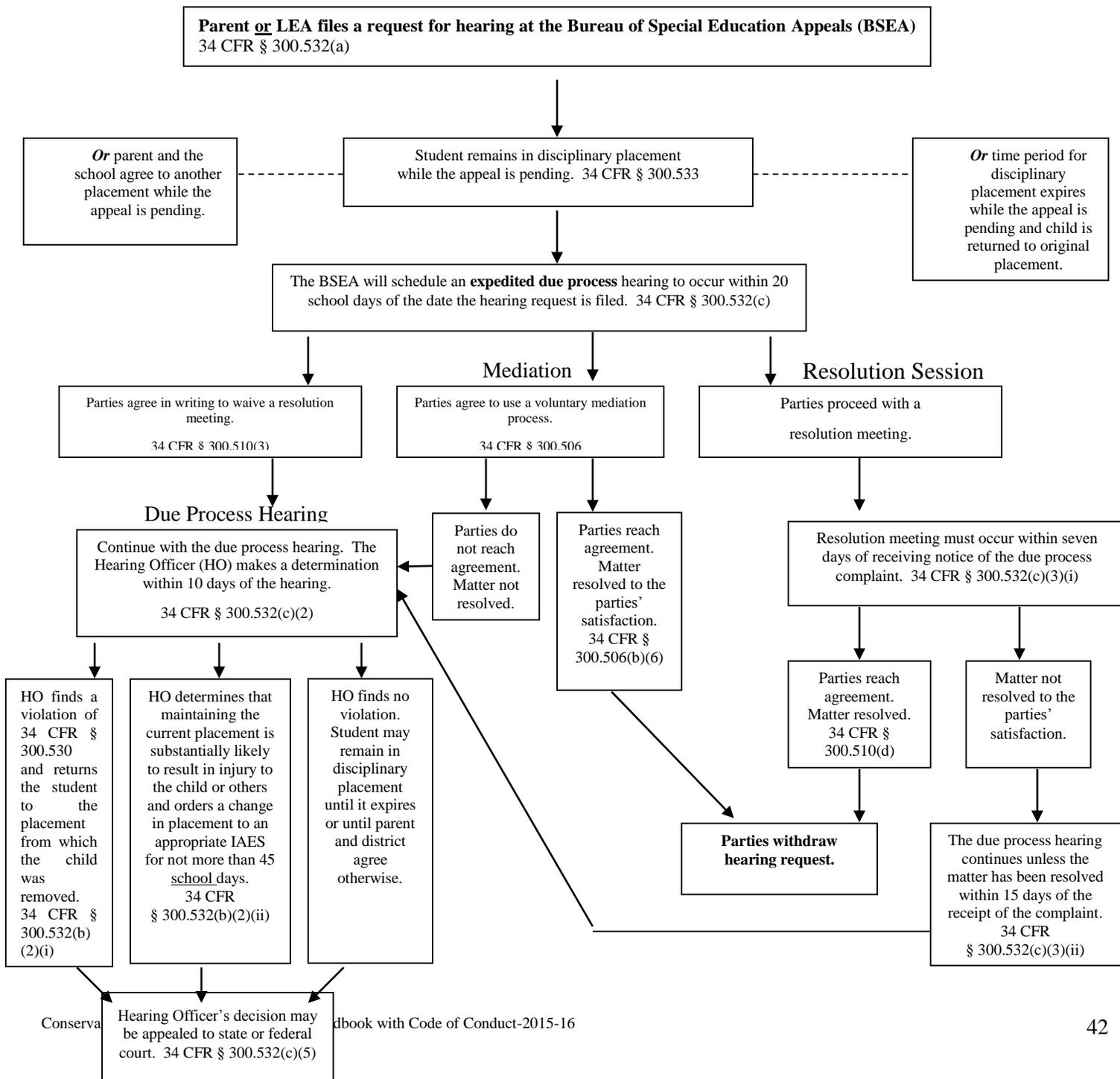


Appeals Process for Disciplinary Placement Decisions for Students with Disabilities

Under IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and 34 CFR §§ 300.532-300.533

Who may file an appeal of a disciplinary decision?

- A parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding the child’s disciplinary placement, or the manifestation determination, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Reasons for appeal may include, but are not limited to, disagreement with the student’s removal to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES), disagreement regarding the manifestation determination, disagreement regarding the determination of whether the removal is a change of placement, disagreement regarding the educational services the student receives during the period of removal, and disagreement regarding the functional behavioral assessment and/or implementation of a behavioral intervention plan. 34 CFR §§ 300.530-300.531.
- An LEA that believes that maintaining the student’s current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others may file a request for hearing at the BSEA.



DEFINITIONS:

A student for whom the school is deemed to have knowledge of a disability – A child who has not yet been determined to be eligible for special education and related services may assert the disciplinary protections under IDEA if the school had a basis of knowledge that the child is a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The school is deemed to have knowledge if: (1) the child’s parent expressed concern in writing to administrative or supervisory personnel of the school that the child is in need of special education and related services; (2) the parent of the child had requested a special education evaluation; or (3) the child’s teacher or other school personnel expressed specific concerns to the director of special education or to other supervisory personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child. The school is *not* deemed to have knowledge of a disability if (1) the parent has not allowed an evaluation or has refused special education and related services, *or* (2) the child has been evaluated and determined not to be a child with a disability. 34 CFR § 300.534.

Change of placement – A change of placement because of a disciplinary removal occurs if a child with a disability is removed from his/her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days, or the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitutes a pattern because: (1) the removals total more than 10 school days in a school year; (2) the child’s behavior is substantially similar to previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and (3) additional factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another constitute a pattern. 34 CFR § 300.536.

Current placement – The placement from which the student was removed for disciplinary reasons.

Interim alternative educational setting (IAES) – An IAES is a disciplinary placement that is not the same as the child’s current placement as defined in his/her IEP.

Manifestation determination – The determination made by the school, the parent, and relevant members of the student’s Team, after review of all relevant information in the student’s file including the IEP, teacher observations, and relevant information provided by the parents, whether (1) the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child’s disability; *or* (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the district’s failure to implement the student’s IEP. 34 CFR § 300.530(e).

Special circumstances – Where the disciplinary conduct is a “special circumstance,” school personnel may remove a student to an IAES for not more than 45 school days, regardless of the results of the manifestation determination. Special circumstances exist if the student:

- carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function); or
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function ; or
- inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function. 34 CFR § 300.530(g).

Serious bodily injury – As defined in 18 U.S.C. § 930, a bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 34 CFR § 300.530(i)(3).

For more details on these procedures, please contact Dana Reder, Director of Student Services x134

Promoting Safety for the Victim/Target and Others:

The Head of School or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Head of School or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Head of School or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Head of School or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff:

The school will respond to and resolve a report of bullying of a student by school staff. We address safety planning, notification to parent or guardians, investigation, and response – areas that are addressed when a student is alleged to have bullied another student. We will emphasize the importance of the investigation, the need for the aggressor, target, and witnesses to be truthful, and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Collaboration with Families:

The school will engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school or district to prevent and respond to bullying, and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the school Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to include provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the school district or school including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying. Parents and guardians must also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents or guardians. School- or district-specific approaches to collaboration should take into account age, climate, socio-economic factors, linguistic, and cultural make-up of students and the parents.

A. Parent education and resources. We will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Parent Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and similar organizations.

B. Notification requirements. Each year the school will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school will post the Plan and related information on its website.

Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation:

As stipulated by M.G.L. c. 71, §37O(b), we are including a statement that describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying. Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Problem Resolution System: Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include the following statement: Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent’s office. Any member of Conservatory Lab faculty who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of bullying of any kind or becomes aware of retaliation against the student who reported information on bullying is expected to report concerns immediately to the school administration.

Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination Policy

All parents and students are encouraged to report any and all civil rights violations to the Civil Rights Coordinator, Robyn Pretlow, Director, Conservatory Lab (2120 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124), 617-254-8904. School staff are required to report any violations of a student’s civil rights to the Civil Rights Coordinator. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall investigate all reported allegations. The Civil Rights Coordinator will conduct an investigation into the allegation and provide to the Head of School written findings of the investigation with a copy to the reporting party within 15 school working days. The Civil Rights Coordinator’s findings shall include:

- Recommendations for corrective action where applicable
- The reporting party shall also be informed by the Civil Rights Coordinator that the following agencies may provide additional support or actions concerning any alleged civil rights violations.
 - Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General Civil Rights Division
www.mass.gov/ago (617) 727-2200
 - Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
www.mass.gov/mcad (617) 994-6000
 - US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights
www.ed.gov/ocr (617) 289-0111
 - US Department of Justice Community Relations Service
www.usdoj.gov/crs (617) 424-5715

Statement on Non-discrimination and School Safety

In order to build an increasing awareness and understanding in all of us of the civil rights afforded all citizens by law, and the responsibilities that accompany them, Conservatory Lab Charter School has developed the document “Civil Rights and Safety Information for School Personnel, Parents and Students” which is available upon request, but summarized here:

- Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment.
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972: prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs on the basis of sex.
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation and denial of benefits based on disability.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disabilities.
- MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5 of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5: prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.

Additionally, per civil rights afforded to all individuals, students who are pregnant at Conservatory Lab Charter Public School are permitted to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non- pregnant students throughout their pregnancy. After giving birth, they are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as they participated in before they left.

The following individuals have been designated to serve as appointed coordinators:

Director of Student Services (IEP and 504 Coordinator)

Dana Reder
Conservatory Lab Charter Public School
2120 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-254-8904

Homeless Liaison

Martin Sarango
Conservatory Lab Charter School
2120 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-254-8904

Title VI and Title IX Coordinator

Director Robyn Pretlow
Conservatory Lab Charter Public School
2120 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-254-8904

Civil Rights Coordinator

Director Robyn Pretlow
Conservatory Lab Charter School
2120 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-254-8904

As an educational institution, Conservatory Lab is committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that prevents discrimination of all types, while at the same time ensuring the health and safety of all that learn at Conservatory Lab Charter School. The policies we have implemented as a school to ensure that students attend an environment that is safe and free of discrimination are available online or by requesting the document, “Civil Rights and Safety Information for School Personnel, Parents and Students.”

It is the role of Conservatory Lab Charter School to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all its students without distinction based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexual orientation. The Conservatory Lab Charter School’s policies reflect a growing need for schools to make explicit the ways in which our policies adhere to state and federal laws concerning non-discrimination and civil rights. Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated.

A student, parent, teacher, administrator, or other staff member believes that s/he has been the victim of or has witnessed another person being treated differently or being subjected to harassing conduct on the basis of race, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, size, gender, or sexual orientation and/or gender identification (including, but not limited to Transgendered).

To begin, community members witnessing abuses of individual civil rights are expected to take immediate action to interrupt the behavior. Then complaint of possible civil rights violations should be directed to the appropriate Conservatory Lab School Director, in his or her capacity as Civil Rights Coordinator. Families or students, who, for any reason, do not feel comfortable approaching the appropriate Director with such a complaint, should speak to the Head of School about their concern. This person should, in turn, report the situation to the Civil Rights Coordinator for investigation.

For more information, please see *Conservatory Lab Civil Rights Complaint Policy and Procedure*, available upon request from the school office.

Suspected Student Abuse/Neglect

Teachers and School Administrators are mandated reporters of suspected student abuse, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect. A reportable condition occurs when a teacher sees marks or signs on a student (i.e. bruises, burn marks, broken bones), or the student discloses abuse or neglect. The teacher, in consultation with the Principal, and a health official, if appropriate, will make a decision as to whether a 51A report should be filed with the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Parents will be informed when the school files a 51A.

Disciplinary or Psychiatric Emergency

Rarely, a child may have a disciplinary or psychiatric emergency. Please be assured that Conservatory Lab during moments of crisis takes the well-being of all children seriously and works towards a safe resolution for all children and adults in the community.

The Administrator will review the incident with the teacher and assess safety risk. If the student is determined to be a risk to the safety of himself/herself or others, arrangements will be made for immediate pick up of the student by parent/guardian. Conservatory Lab Administration will work closely with the families, making supportive recommendations for next steps.

For more information on **Mass. General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H, 57H1/2 37H3/4 Discipline of Students with Disabilities and 504 Accommodations**, and **The Use of Restraint on Children** please reference the following website:
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section37H>

Crisis Management Overview

Purpose of the Crisis Management Overview

The following is offered to provide a general overview of procedures and administrative structures to be used in the event of a crisis that involves Conservatory Lab Charter School. The specific procedures to be utilized have been reviewed by all Conservatory Lab employees. Through the designation of individuals charged with particular responsibilities, and by providing appropriate contact resources and appropriate procedures for generic types of crises, it is expected that this overview will provide assistance to parents, particularly in the initial stages of managing a crisis. The document purposely does not address more specific responses demanded by the limitless variety of possible crises. The overview instead provides a general framework for response, which in turn will guide more specific steps that a given critical situation demands, to be determined at the time of its occurrence by those who are managing it.

Definition of a Crisis

A crisis is an event or perceived event that has the potential to cause harm to Conservatory Lab or any of its constituents. Examples of such an event include: death of, or serious injury to, a faculty member or student; arrest of a faculty member or student for a serious legal infraction; charges of malfeasance against administrators, faculty or staff; suicide by an immediate member of the school community; bomb threat; a physical disaster on campus; neighborhood or city emergency; transportation emergency; or a missing student (*please consult the Head of School if at all in doubt of what constitutes and emergency*). This crisis management plan should be followed in the event of any related crisis, whether or not it occurs on campus or during school hours.

Goal

The goal of this overview of the Crisis Management Plan is to ensure the school community of Conservatory lab is aware that there is a plan to effectively managed responses to any crisis.

Responses to Crises Threatening the Safety of the School Community

Specific initial responses to a crisis will depend upon the nature of the crisis and initial responses may vary. In responding to any crisis, faculty and staff must immediately assess the situation and take any action necessary to address any imminent or immediate threat to the physical safety and well-being of members of the school community. In some emergency situations, consultation with the Crisis Management Team may not be possible. In such cases, those supervising adults who are present must immediately take responsible and independent action. Depending upon the particular circumstances, appropriate actions by staff members or other adults may include:

- Removing students and adults from the immediate area of danger
- Dialing 911 to contact Boston police/fire/EMT services
- Following necessary first aid procedures
- Informing the Head of School (or the alternates designated on page 2 of this plan) and/or the Front Office
- Seeking help from other school staff members

All of the above outlined actions are intended as immediate responses to an emergent situation threatening the well-being of students, faculty, or staff. Once such an immediate response is taken, the supervising adults will immediately inform the Head of School or designee of the event.

The Crisis Management Team (CMT)

Once supervising adults have responded to any immediate threats to safety, the School's Crisis Management Team will immediately develop a plan to respond on behalf of the School to the particular crisis. The Crisis Management Team will be responsible for all significant decisions and matters regarding the School's response to any crisis. These matters include determining the facts of the situation; all communications with internal or external constituencies (including parents of students and members of the press); formation of appropriate legal responses and protective legal steps; approval of any arrangements to address campus needs as they arise in relation to the crisis; follow-up communications with public safety officials; consultations with medical, mental health and other appropriate professionals; and maintenance of written records of all counsel given and actions taken.

The Crisis Management Team will direct the management of any sudden crisis. It will be limited in size to ensure efficiency and clear authority in managing any crisis. The Crisis Management Team will be composed of:

- Diana Lam, Head of School,
- John A Chistolini, Chief Operating Officer
- Shalem Livingston Lower School Director
- Brad Kershner, Primary School, Director
- Ashley Jaundoo, Dean of Students
- Corey Doe, Student Support
- Other support staff

Other individuals may be asked to join the team by the Head of School as needed. In managing any crisis, the Crisis Management Team will work closely with other members of the school community (EMT, Police, and Fire) to determine the best course of action and to keep the school community informed of events and responses as the crisis and its management unfold. At all times, the Crisis Management Team will balance individuals' right to privacy with the overall community's need to know the facts.

The operation center for the Crisis Management Team will be the Head of School's Office and/or the Director's.

The following resources are available, by prior arrangement, to the Crisis Management Team for their use as needed:

Medical Advice: 911
Mental Health Advice: BEST Team, 1.800.981.4357

Dorchester Police Department Area C: 617 343 5526
Brighton Police Department: 911
Brighton Police HQ: 617.343.4260
City of Boston Public Safety and Firefighting: 911
Carney Hospital: 2100 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester, MA 02124
St. Elizabeth's Hospital: 736 Cambridge Ave., Brighton, MA 02135 617.789.3000
Brighton High School (Evacuation site): 25 Warren Street, Brighton, MA 02135 617.635.9873
Carney Hospital (Evacuation Site): 2100 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester, MA 02124
Boston Public School Transportation Office (Bus): Rosita Ching 617.635.9873
Grief counseling: Adult & Adolescent Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Consultation, 617254.6761

Communicating with Students and Families

Students:

In the event that crucial information must be shared immediately with school community members who are present on campus, the Crisis Management Team may direct that **students** be assembled in a designated room so that a designated staff member can provide them with any essential information. Upon the instruction of a support team member, faculty will escort students to the designated room and stay with the students. Students will be instructed by a member of the crisis support team to remain calm and follow the directions staff. Depending on the circumstances, students may or may not be allowed to use their cell phones. Do not call them until the Crisis Management Team allows.

Parents:

The Head of School or a designated administrator will contact the parents of all students directly involved in, or affected by, the emergency as soon as possible. The school administration will inform parents fully of the circumstances and the School's response. In informing parents of the emergency, the administration will consider the guidelines provided by any medical, counseling, legal, or other consultants that the School has retained to assist it in addressing the situation.

In the event that the parents of a large number of students must be notified of a crisis affecting their children, the Crisis Management Team and designated personnel will begin contacting all families. The school will use the text alert system to contact families, as well as emails and phone calls. During that conversation, among other things, the administrator(s) will do their level best to answer all questions, but we always ask patience as we try to assemble the information and assure child safety.

When a crisis arises that does not require immediate parent notification, the school Directors will provide essential information about the crisis and the School's response in a letter to parents, and, if needed, to board members and trustees.

Conservatory Lab Charter School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Conservatory Lab Charter School is committed to creating a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment that strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying of any student by anyone. Site-based initiatives developed collaboratively by personnel, school administration, families, and students seek to: (1) help students of all ages and abilities to stay safe, act with care and consideration (2) help adults respond effectively to student reports and their own observations.

In Massachusetts, **Massachusetts General Law c. 71, § 37O** (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) defines bullying as:

“Bullying”, the severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of: (i) causing physical or **emotional harm to the other student** or damage to the other student’s property; (ii) placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) **creating a hostile environment at school for the other student**; (iv) **infringing on the rights of the other student at school**; or (v) materially and **substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school**.

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

Bullying behaviors can include, but are not limited to: intimidation, such as name calling or threatening; social alienation such as shunning or spreading rumors; cyber-bullying; retaliation; or physical aggression such as assaults on a student or deliberate destruction of a student’s property. Again, these acts create a hostile environment in which a student cannot learn to their greatest potential, and in some cases children miss school due to fear or social anxiety.

Biased-related bullying is based on an individual’s race, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, socio-economic status, size, disability, and/or religion.

Bullying is typically a repeated and ongoing pattern of threatening behaviors over time. Conservatory Lab believes that bullying can also be a one-time event when a significant incident is biased related.

The bullying of students occurring in the school is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by Conservatory Lab Charter School. For the purposes of this policy, Conservatory Lab defines “school” as the classroom, hallways, common areas, recreation areas, any area in which field work occurs (including off school property), any school sanctioned event, and when travelling to and from school.

Conservatory Lab believes that a failure to address bullying gives students and other community members the impression that it is permissible to engage in bullying behaviors. Conservatory Lab takes allegations of bullying seriously and will respond promptly to complaints.

At least once every four years, the school will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education-developed student survey to assess school climate, including the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. Similar tools to the student survey will be used with faculty, staff, and parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs.

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

A. Consequences:

Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, Conservatory Lab will act promptly to address and eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action, which may range from a social plan created with the offenders educational team, the recommendation for behavioral therapies provided outside of the school, and/or disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or court involvement.

Should a thorough investigation support an allegation of bullying, Conservatory Lab will enact the following minimum consequences:

- **First Offense** – An immediate phone call reporting the incident and subsequent family meeting with administration, pick up from school, a suspension, and the implementation of the school re-entry plan.
- **Second Offense** – An immediate family meeting with teachers and school administration, pick up from school, a suspension, the implementation of the school re-entry plan (to include social service support). Conservatory Lab reserves the right to file a police report and/or 51A at this point.
- **Third Offense** – Conservatory Lab reserves the right to begin expulsion proceedings.

B. Reporting bullying or retaliation:

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report the incident immediately to the Dean of Students. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not staff members, may be made anonymously. The school will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, Behavior Incident Report, a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address. Use of Behavior Incident Report is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will: 1) include a copy of the Behavior Incident Report in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the nurse's office, and other locations determined by the Head of School or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website and file-sharing platform. The Behavior Incident Report will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians. At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, custodians, bus drivers, El Sistema staff, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff: A staff member will report immediately to the Head of School or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.
2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others: The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Head of School or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying.

C. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation – Allegations of Bullying by a Student:

Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target to go to, and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The Head of School or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Head of School or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Anonymity

Conservatory Lab faculty **cannot** anonymously report incidents of bullying or retaliation. Conservatory Lab families and students **can** anonymously report incidents of bullying or retaliation. The school, however, urges all faculty, families, and students not to make reports anonymously as they are hard to substantiate, but an anonymous report is better than none at all. Conservatory Lab administration makes every effort to protect the identity of anyone reporting incidents of bullying. We cannot promise strict confidentiality as effective investigations depend on specific information gathered from specific people.

To submit an anonymous report of bullying or retaliation, please download the Behavior Incident Report (available electronically), fill it out, and leave it in the Dean of Student’s or Head of School’s mailbox. Children are urged to leave anonymous letters either on a teacher’s desk, in the director’s mailbox, or to report incidents to family members so that they may fill out the Behavior Incident Report for them.

Process

Anyone who believes he/she has been bullied should implement the following procedures:

1. **Students**-Let the offending person or persons know that you want the behavior to stop. Say "no" firmly, looking directly at them to give a clear message about how you feel. If you are unable to confront the person(s) alone, take a friend along or write a letter. You may want the assistance of an adult (e.g. guidance counselor, administrator, and teacher) in preparing the letter as well as in presenting it.
Faculty-Let the offending person or persons know that the behavior is to stop. Then report the incident to your supervisor.
Families-Let the offending person or persons know that you want the behavior to stop. Say "no" firmly, looking directly and unapologetically at them to give a clear message about the conduct. Then report the incident to a classroom teacher or school administrator.
2. If your objection does not cause the behavior to stop, keep a record of when, where, and how the bullying has occurred. Include witnesses, direct quotes, actions, evidence, and any written communication.
3. Promptly contact someone at the school about the situation —teacher, faculty member, social worker, or administrator.

A response from Conservatory Lab will be made in consultation with the person making the complaint. It will be made discreetly to protect the confidentiality of the information and the reputations of those involved. Retaliation in any form against any person who has filed a complaint relating to harassment is forbidden. If retaliation occurs, it could be cause for dismissal of staff, personnel, or student.

Reporting

To report an incident of bullying or retaliation the reporter must fill out a Behavior Incident Report that can be emailed or given to the reporter upon request. The incident form should be given to the Head of School or designee. The reporter’s

name must be on the form but the reporter will remain anonymous during the investigation to the greatest degree possible to allow for “anonymous” reporting.

Procedures for Responding to and Investigating Bullying

Following receipt of a Behavior Incident Report, the Head of School or designee will promptly conduct an investigation and complete a Bullying Investigation and Determination Form.

"Home Base": This is a location in the school selected by student and school staff where the student can go when not feeling safe. ("Safe" and "unsafe" feelings would need to be defined and taught). This location should be a place where the student can be supervised and monitored by school staff. Some examples could include the School Counselor's office, the main office, or the resource room.

"Safe Person": This is a designated person in the school who the student can talk to and process social situations that are troubling, confusing, or agitating (including bullying) that may not be readily understood by the student. This person should be familiar to the student and have a trusting relationship already established. This needs to be a person chosen with the student and parents who understands the student and can help him or her de-escalate a situation or calm down and resume the normal school day routine. This does not need to be a specialist or a teacher but can be a staff member who knows and understands this student and can help him or her interpret confusing situations. The Safe Person must be familiar with practices known to be helpful when working with students with disabilities that affect communication and social awareness.

False Accusations

Students making false claims of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be sent for a conference with the school administration and will result in a phone call to parents. Repeat offenders will face suspension or possible expulsion at the discretion of the Head of School or designee.

Reporting to proper authorities (police)

Conservatory Lab will contact law enforcement in cases where criminal charges may be pursued against an aggressor and file a police report. In some cases, Conservatory Lab will file a 51A with the Department of Children and Families.

Identifying Target's Needs:

Conservatory Lab understands that victims of bullying have a very specific set of needs. We also hold as a hallmark of our community the home-school connection. If a student is indeed identified as the target of bullying, Conservatory Lab will contact the target child's family immediately to:

- discuss the incident, outline specific and immediate actions to prevent further incidents, and move to establish a safe return to the classroom;
- additionally, the school and family will collaboratively create a unique school safety and prevention program for that individual student, including, but not limited to, a lunch and recess safety plan, a transportation safety plan, a seating plan change, and change of schedule for the bully.

Bullying not only impacts physical safety, but impacts one's psychological safety, as well. Conservatory Lab will:

- offer school counseling to support the victim and appropriate family members; if need be, the school will help to facilitate therapy outside of school. The child's safety team will consist of their family, teachers, Pyramid Builders Counseling Services, and will be facilitated by a school administrator.

School Re-Entry Plan for Offender:

If a student has received a consequence for bullying another student or students, that student will be re-entered into the community slowly to ensure the physical and emotional safety of others.*

Re-Entry Plan (Day 1):

1. Re-entering student will meet with a Director and/or Dean of Students to purposefully reflect on incident and make a plan for practicing new, positive behaviors.
2. School administrator will facilitate Apology of Action between re-entering student and offended child.

Re-Entry Plan (Day 2):

1. Re-entering student will review plan with Director and/or Dean of Students.
2. Administrator will contact the family of re-entering child with update on re-entry into community.

Re-entry Plan (Day 3) - *if necessary*:

1. Continued monitored transitions and bathroom breaks.
2. Monitored lunch with teachers and peers.
3. Launch of a social skills group with school social worker.
4. Closely monitored recess.
5. Administrator will contact the family of re-entering child with update on re-entry into community.

Bystander Bullying and Passive Bystanders:

Bullying situations usually involve more than the bully and the victim. They also involve bystanders- those who watch bullying happen or hear about it.

Conservatory Lab defines bystander bullying as instigating (prodding the bully to begin), encouraging (laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully), and joining in on the bullying once it has begun.

Most bystanders passively accept bullying by watching and doing nothing. Often without realizing it, these bystanders also contribute to the problem. Passive bystanders provide the audience a bully craves and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behavior.

Restitution:

If property is damaged, lost, or stolen, it is understood that the parents of the student responsible for the damage will make every effort to pay for or replace the broken item(s).

Protection for All Students:

Victim / Target

Victims of bullying include girls and boys of all ages, sizes, and backgrounds. Every child's individuality should be appreciated for the value it brings to the group, rather than suppressed to reduce the risk of victimization. Conservatory strives to protect all children from bullying and to create a learning environment in which bullying is unthinkable. Conservatory Lab commits its time and resources to provide physical, social, and emotional support for those targeted by bullies, including social work, consequences for bullies, parent support, and teacher education. If a child reports that he or she is being bullied, that child has a right to remain anonymous during the investigation process and beyond. Additionally, Conservatory Lab does not discriminate based on an individual's race, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, national origin, socio-economic status, and/or religion. All staff understands these principles as a core cultural belief and fundamental human right upon hiring.

Reporters

Conservatory strives to protect all children from bullying and to create a learning environment in which bullying is unthinkable. The staff and administration at Conservatory Lab makes every effort to protect anyone reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying, or has reliable information about an act of bullying. Anyone who reports bullying may remain anonymous: however, anonymous reports of bullying will not be investigated.

Special Education and 504 Plans

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

Students with special needs or accommodations are often the targets of bullying and the community must be vigilant to their protection. During every IEP and 504 meeting, the law now requires a question about involvement in bullying. IF there has been some provocation or victimization, parents, child, and teacher are requested to fill out related forms to document the incident. Follow-up on the incident is not required but may be requested. In addition, supports must be put in place for a victim with special needs, which may include counseling, speech or expressive language practice, social skill practice, or other support.

Students with special needs who were the perpetrators will go through a Manifestation Determination Meeting. This will determine if the student's disability has led them to behave in this socially inappropriate way. IF the Team determines it is not a direct result of the disability, then full disciplinary actions will go into effect. If the Team determines it has been the direct result of their disability, the student must participate in specially designed instruction to support appropriate means of social interaction, physical activity, sexual activity, repetitive actions, use of language or other necessary instruction. Disciplinary actions may still be valid as listed for regularly abled students, and will be determined by the Team.

In order to ensure that students have the skills and proficiencies to avoid or respond to bullying, harassment, and teasing, Conservatory Lab is committed to incorporate into each IEP the follow core categories identified by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL):

- **Self-Awareness:** accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths/abilities, and maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.
- **Self-Management:** regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting personal and academic goals and then monitoring one's progress toward achieving them; and expressing emotions constructively.
- **Social Awareness:** taking the perspective of and empathizing with others; recognizing and appreciating the individual and group similarities and differences; identifying and following societal standards of conduct; and recognizing and using family, school, and community resources.
- **Relationship Skills:** establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; and seeking help when needed.
- **Responsible Decision-making:** making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate standards of conduct, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; and contributing to the well-being of one's school and community.

IEP teams cannot prevent or respond to bullying alone. Its efforts to help individual students develop the skills and proficiencies to prevent or respond to bullying must also be supported and informed by the broader bullying prevention plan at the school.

The school's policies and procedures address the need for students with disabilities to experience the school as safe and supportive, have a clear understanding of what bullying is, know how to respond when incidents of bullying occur, and feel comfortable making reports of bullying. Adults check-in with students with disabilities to gather accurate information regarding safety issues. Adults are identified as a student's "safe person" and are responsible for communicating the student's needs to the IEP team and school staff. General education staff are responsible for collaborating with IEP Teams when a bullying incident occurs so that they understand any special considerations for the student(s) involved. The policy directs the Head of School or designee to consult with the IEP team and/or "safe person" so that bullying investigations involving a student with disabilities consider specific supports that students may need to communicate effectively. School personnel

must also consult with the IEP team to consider the role a student's disability may have played in the behavior before disciplining or reporting an incident to the police. Finally, there is a policy in place to consider with the IEP team any adjustments to the school environment that may be necessary (including increased adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying occurred) to enhance a student's sense of safety after being the target of a bullying incident

The IEP team also has additional considerations, such as:

- Provide direct instruction in all of the relevant policies and procedures contained in the school's bullying prevention and intervention plan
- Modify the form that is used to report bullying to address communication, cognitive, or other barriers resulting from the student's disability
- Identify a "safe person" (specific individual to whom the student knows she/he can immediately report incidents of bullying). Also, ensure that the student knows that every adult is an available reporter
- Identify a "home base" (a place in the school where the student feels safe) with the student's input
- Develop a "safety plan" that includes the following:
 1. "Checking in" with the student on a regular basis to determine if the student is feeling safe from bullying, has witnessed any episodes of bullying that are troubling him/her, or has engaged in any behaviors that might be seen as bullying
 2. Ensuring that necessary adjustments to the school environment, as determined by the IEP team, are made. Specific places, situations, and students identified by the student as potentially high-risk or vulnerable will be shared as well. Increased supervision, accompanied by an aide or a fellow student, or other such plans will be considered
 3. Communicating with all staff who have contact with the student the specifics of the IEP as they relate to bullying prevention and intervention, including the skills the student is working on, the special considerations when a bullying incident occurs, and the specific scripts the student is to use when confronted by bullying incidents
- Identify issues to be considered in the event a student with a disability is involved in a bullying incident, including:
 1. Concern about further exclusion from the social group
 2. Changing the seat of the aggressor rather than the target
 3. Concern about stigma, arising from unique needs related to their disability
 4. Difficulty with self-advocacy
- Other issues reflecting the social, communication, and other needs.
- Identify any necessary modifications to the Code of Student Conduct that are appropriate based on the student's disabilities

504 Accommodation Plan

Upon completion of an evaluation, the Special Ops team will meet with the parent/guardian and may recommend that a 504 Accommodation Plan be written for a student rather than an IEP. Students with disabilities who are eligible for aids and services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, must have access to bullying prevention and intervention programs, activities and protections. Pursuant to Section 504, no student with a disability may be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of the school's programs. This includes the school-wide bullying prevention and intervention curriculum, programs, services, and initiatives. Under Section 504, the school is committed to ensuring that any 504-eligible student, regardless of the nature or severity of our student's disability, receives a free appropriate public education. We will provide services and/or accommodations in academic, non-academic, and extracurricular programs and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford each student equal access and opportunity to high-quality education.

Professional Development and Training

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O calls Conservatory Lab to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, custodians, bus drivers, El Sistema staff, and paraprofessionals. Our plan includes the following:

1a) Annual all-staff training: Annual training for all school staff on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Head of School or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years. In addition, the following points of understanding are included in the training:

- Students with disabilities can form successful relationships with other students and participate fully in school activities when provided with sufficient supports and opportunities for interactions.
- Students with autism spectrum disorder and students with other disabilities affecting communication and social skills are vulnerable targets for bullying because they often lack the skills necessary to understand social cues. Sometimes these students are viewed as atypical or “odd” when they engage in “quirky” behaviors. Unable to understand when they are in a bullying situation, they can have difficulty protecting themselves and require specialized teaching, supports, and services to help deal with the problem.
- Students with emotional impairments, such as attachment, post-traumatic stress, and impulse control disorders, can be at risk for being both targets and aggressors. Some are easily persuaded to participate in bullying behavior. Others may adopt a “strike first” posture due to having been bullied or excluded in ways that have not been evident to adults. It is important to be alert to signs of stress and communicate openly with parents to identify underlying causes of behavior for these students.
- Disability awareness among staff and students will increase understanding and empathy for students with social, emotional, communication, and behavioral differences and motivate them to intervene if a student with a disability is involved in bullying. This includes helping staff and students understand that unusual and disruptive behaviors, including noises, rocking, and pacing, may be meeting a student’s internal needs and are not addressable by behavioral interventions.
- Students with disabilities must be taught to respond to teasing and harassment as well as bullying. Staff may need to be trained on the differences among these three categories so they can teach students how to respond accordingly.

1b) Provisions for specialized consultation for staff working with IEP students:

- Provide training to staff (selected staff members involved with the particular student) on strategies or approaches necessary to avoid and/or respond to bullying.
- Provide ongoing consultation to the student’s classroom teachers, or other direct service providers, from the context of the student’s particular needs and disabilities.
- Provide specific training and consultation to staff related to the student’s particular disability.

2) Ongoing behavioral professional development: The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, communication, and mutual respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;

- information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and Updated Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan 7 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development. Other focus areas include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (PBIS);
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making;
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students; and
- engaging staff to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct, instill accountability in the school setting, and bullying behaviors

3. Written notice to staff: We will provide all staff with an annual written notice of this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff, in the both the Staff Handbook and the Student & Family Handbook. There will also be an electronic copy on the school-wide file-sharing platform, as well as on the school website. Through professional development, teachers are trained in specific bullying prevention approaches, including:

- identifying the signs of bullying
- strategies for interventions to stop bullying
- information about the complex power dynamics that can take place between an aggressor, target, and witness to bullying,
- information on students who are at risk for bullying,
- information on cyber-bullying, and
- information on internet safety issue and cyber-bullying.

These approaches emphasize:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.
- Teachers will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, including anonymous reporting procedures.

Community Development:

Conservatory Lab will host two Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings each year, one in the fall and the other in the spring, to address the subject of school bullying. During these meetings the PAC, in collaboration with school administration, will train families how to implement the school's anti-bullying curriculum at home, how to spot and discuss the dynamics of bullying, and online safety and ways to spot and prevent cyber-bullying.

For more information on Massachusetts State Law, please visit <http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section37O> or, request the full Massachusetts Anti-Bullying Law document from School Administration.

Creation and Implementation:

1. Conservatory Lab Charter School Anti-Bullying Plan was created by the school administration, Diana Lam, Head of School.
2. On December 15, 2010, the plan and its need in the community were presented at the school's PAC meeting to parents and our Special Education Administrator and ELL Specialist.
3. On December 17, 2010, the plan went to the entire family community via email for public comment.
4. On December 20, 2010, the 3rd-5th graders took a survey to discover the impact of bullying on the community and their learning.
5. Conservatory Lab Charter School will share the updated plan with both the PAC and SPEDPAC in March of each school year.

Obligations to Notify Others

- A. Notice to parents or guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Head of School or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- B. Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Head of School or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Head of School or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- C. Notice to Law Enforcement: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Head of School or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Head of School will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Head of School or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor. In making this determination, the Head of School will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the Head of School or designee deems appropriate.
- D. Investigation: The Head of School or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. During the investigation the Head of School or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Head of School or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews may be conducted by the Head of School or designee, other staff members as determined by the Head of School or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Head of School or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Head of School or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Head of School or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

- E. **Determinations:** The Head of School or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Head of School or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Head of School or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. Depending upon the circumstances, the Head of School or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development. The Head of School or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Due to the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Head of School or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. The Head of School or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.
- F. **Responses to Bullying:** The school employs a number of strategies to build students' skills, as well as individualized interventions to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior through Skills-Building

Upon the Head of School or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the Head of School or designee may consider include:

- individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- parent/guardian to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the Head of School or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Head of School or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline. If the Head of School or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

