




Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence


STUDENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK

285 Dorset Street
Springfield, MA 01108

 www.mlkcs.org

 info@mlkcs.org

 413-214-7806

 413-669-0851



Dear MLKCSE Families,

We are honored to welcome you to Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence. To our new families, welcome to our school community, and to our returning families, welcome back to a new school year! We are looking forward to a better, stronger year together.

We know that our success as a school depends on strong partnership with you. We look forward to working together to help your child grow academic, socially, and emotionally.

The following Handbook will help you become familiar with school procedures, policies, and practices and should serve as a resource that you can always refer back to.

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to ask us.

In partnership,

The Faculty and Staff
Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence

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Section 1: Our Mission

MISSION

Through high expectations, a structured academic environment, and positive character development, Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence ensures that every student in kindergarten through grade 5 is equipped to think critically, communicate clearly, and are empowered with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life. The school incorporates Dr. King’s commitment to the highest standards in scholarship, civic participation, and the ideal of the beloved community.

OUR VISION

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence provides a structured, engaging, and nurturing learning environment to children in Springfield. We believe that all children can achieve at high levels when they have access to excellent instruction, opportunities to grow, and responsive tiered support. Our students rise to the level of high expectations that we hold for them because we foster an enthusiastic, creative community of learners by promoting social justice, purposeful academics, and character development. We instill a love of learning and a growth mindset which will enable them to expand their potential and prepare them to thrive as productive, responsible, ethical, creative, and compassionate members of society.

OUR CORE VALUES

P for Promoting Social Justice
R for Respect
I for Integrity
D for Determination
E for Excellence

Section 2: Key Information for Families

WHO TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

Question or Concern	Who to Contact
My student’s academic progress	Your student’s teacher
Homework	Your student’s teacher
School activities	Your student’s teacher
Assessments	Your student’s teacher
Academics, instruction, teaching	Your student’s teacher

My student has an allergy	School Nurse
My student needs to take medication	School Nurse
My student is sick, should I send them to school?	School Nurse
COVID-19 concerns or questions	School Nurse
Contagious illness questions or concerns	School Nurse
Transportation questions or concerns	Mr. Breish
Operational questions or concerns	Mr. Breish
My student will be late or absent	Mrs. Flores
My student's dismissal type needs to change	Main Office
I need to pick my student up early due to an emergency	Main Office
I need to update my address and/or contact information	Main Office
I need to get an emergency message to my student during the school day	Main Office
I need an application to apply to attend MLKCSE	Main Office or Mrs. Flores
I would like to enter my student's sibling into the lottery for next year	Mrs. Flores
I need a copy of the annual or monthly calendar	Main Office
Uniform questions or concerns	Main Office or Ms. Germain
Discipline questions or concerns	Ms. Germain
My student has a 504 plan or an IEP	Ms. Harte
My student is an English Language Learner	Ms. Yousfi
I need help with housing, food, or clothing	Ms. Griffin
I need help with community resources	Ms. Griffin
I would like to volunteer	Ms. Griffin
I would like to join the Parent Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or the English Learner Parent Advisory Council	Ms. Griffin Ms. Flores
I have a complaint to file	Mrs. Cole or Ms. Salvador

UNIFORM POLICY

Research shows that school uniforms support a safe and effective learning environment. Students who are safe and secure are better able to learn and exemplify the essentials of good citizenship. Uniforms instill pride in the school and give each child a feeling of being part of the school community. They also help eliminate peer pressure.

It is for these reasons that Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence has a uniform policy requiring students to come to school in uniform at all times, except on scheduled non-uniform days or when permission is granted by the administration for extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, uniforms are more cost-efficient per family than purchasing multiple outfits for school wear.

All students are expected to wear uniforms all year long including the first day of school. Non-logo school uniform items can be purchased at local stores such as Old Navy, Target, JCPenney,, Kohls, etc. Our uniform logo shirts/micro fleece jackets can be purchased through: Blake's School Uniforms Co. on 1205 Parker Street, Springfield, MA 01129. Items may be ordered from Blake's in one of four ways:



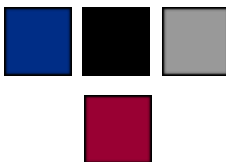

By phone: 413-728-4123

Online: www.blakesschooluniform.com

In person: 1205 Parker St., Springfield, MA 01129

By mail-in form: Available at the Main Office

UNIFORM POLICY

Shirts	Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Skorts, Jumpers & Dresses	Sweaters	Shoes/Sneakers	Socks, Tights & Leggings
<p><u>Color:</u> Burgundy or Navy Blue (with or without school logo)</p>  <p><u>Style:</u> Must have a collar. Button polo, button dress shirt, short- or long-sleeved shirts are allowed.</p> <p>Not allowed: non-school logos, printing, T-shirts, or tank tops.</p> <p><u>Fit:</u> Shirts must be tucked in. Shirts must cover a student's mid-section.</p> <p>Visible under shirts should be solid white, burgundy, navy blue or gray</p>	<p><u>Color:</u> Navy blue or khaki solid color.</p>  <p><u>Style:</u> Non-jean material. Pants, shorts, skirts (flat-front or pleated), skorts and jumpers are allowed.</p> <p><u>Fit:</u> Must fit properly (not baggy, not too long, not too short, and not too tight). Dresses, skirts and skorts must be an appropriate length.</p> <p>Absolutely NO jeans, sweatpants, pajamas, logos, insignias, pictures or messages.</p> <p>No Black pants.</p>	<p><u>Color:</u> Navy blue, black, gray or burgundy solid color.</p>  <p><u>Style:</u> V-neck pullover, front button-down, zip-up sweater or vests are allowed.</p> <p>Not allowed: Non-school logos, printing, hooded, pattern designed.</p>	<p><u>Color:</u> ANY color.</p> <p><u>Style:</u> No open-toe, open-back, light ups, heelys, crocs, slippers, slides</p>	<p><u>Color:</u> Solid navy, solid black, solid white, or solid burgundy are the only allowable colors.</p>  <p>Not allowed: Bright colored, multi-toned, piping, pattern designed socks/tights. Tights and leggings can be worn under skirts, jumpers, shorts, or pants but are not a replacement for them.</p>
			Accessories	Make-up
			Small bows and headbands can be worn.	Make-up is NOT allowed.
			Non-approved outerwear is not permitted to be worn in school.	Belts
				Strongly Encouraged
				When wearing belts, they must be worn and fitted at the waist on pants with belt loops.
				Ties
				Optional

SCHOOL UNIFORM SWAP

MLKCSE offers a Uniform Swap Program. Please consider donating your child's used uniform pieces when they outgrow them. When you donate gently used school uniforms that no longer fit your child, you can exchange each item for good quality uniforms your student(s) can use or you can just donate to help others. If you would like to donate or swap uniforms, please visit the Main Office or schedule a time with our Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.

UNIFORM ASSISTANCE

MLKCSE is committed to ensuring that the cost of uniforms is not a barrier for any student. If families feel that the cost of uniforms would pose a significant financial hardship, they may contact the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator to resolve the situation.

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Please let your child's teacher and/or the Main Office know your preferred method of communication. Communication from school will be in a variety of ways:

- School calendar
- School website (www.mlkcs.org)
- ClassDojo (school and classroom communication, direct messaging with teachers)
- Kickboard (student behavior)
- School Messenger RoboCalls & SMS messages
- Monthly newsletters and calendars
- Email
- Phone call
- Text message
- Digital sign out in front of the school building

Please keep the school current on information regarding your child(ren).

- General information (Address Changes, phone changes, and/or email)
- Custody Documentation or other legal documents pertaining to the care of your child
- Physicals & Immunizations (Mandatory for all Kindergarten & 4th grade students)
- Food allergies
- Medications that need to be administered at school.
 - Important notes: Any medication (over the counter or prescription, must be handed from the parent/guardian directly to the school nurse or their designee. Medication can not be sent with a student. It is against the law.

We want to be true partners in working together to make sure our students are getting the best support in being academically and socially successful. Parental involvement in a child's educational life is critical to a child's success. Research shows that when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and enjoy school more. We encourage parents to develop strong positive partnerships with the school.

It is really important that the school has accurate methods of contacting caregivers or other family members at all times. This is important especially in case of an emergency, illness, or concern requiring immediate family contact. Caregivers are advised to notify the main office as soon as possible of any moves, changes of home or emergency telephone numbers, and/or places of employment.

In case of an emergency, caregivers should contact the Main Office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should caregivers contact students in their classrooms or attempt to dismiss students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the Main Office.

Families will periodically receive pre-recorded messages from the school office with important information and reminders. We ask that you listen to the full message before hanging up. Please note that if you or someone else with access to your phone opts out of the robocalls, you will not receive any more calls. To opt back in, please contact the school office. These messages will be used for events such as snow days, late arrival days, early release reminders, late buses, etc.

All parents will be provided with the e-mail address for their child's teacher and for other staff members. In addition, all families will be encouraged to sign up for an online program called Class Dojo each year. Parents should feel free to call, e-mail or message via Dojo any time that they have a question, concern, or suggestion. Please note that teachers will not be interrupted during instructional time to take phone calls.

All staff members will make every effort to respond during the school week within 24 hours or one business day. Please leave a voicemail if you call the Main Office and there is no answer. We will return your call promptly.

Teachers and other staff members will contact caregivers to share both positive and concerning developments in academic performance and behavior. We ask for your partnership in supporting your child. Please make your best effort to respond to phone calls, Class Dojo messages, and e-mails regarding your student promptly. Please never hesitate to be in touch with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

We welcome families and community members to visit our school at any time after the first few weeks of school. During the beginning of school, it is critical for students to transition into their new setting, and parental presence in the classroom can slow this process.

We encourage parental involvement and we ask that all visitors respect the learning environment while in the building. We especially welcome visitors to attend our school-wide monthly assemblies and evening events throughout the school year.

All visitors, including parents/guardians, must report to the school office upon entering the building. All visitors must sign in. You will then receive a Visitor badge. Your Visitor badge should be worn at all times. School and classroom visits should be arranged in advance, by contacting the school office. Although we have an open-door policy, if you wish to speak with your child's teacher or any other staff member then we will ask you to wait until the office staff can arrange an appropriate meeting time. A staff member will walk visitors to their location.

When visiting classrooms, we ask that you remember:

- Please do not interrupt instruction
- Please do not remove your child from the classroom, unless arranged in advance with the teacher
- Please do not interact with students that are not your child
- Please schedule a mutually convenient time to talk with your student's teacher in advance
- Finally, please be aware that no visitors are allowed in the building during MCAS testing

Any visitor(s) who are disruptive or disrespectful to the educational process will be asked to leave. Any visitor who does not report to the office or is found in the building without authorization will be asked to leave immediately. If being disruptive or disrespectful when visiting the school becomes a pattern or is extreme, the school may pursue further action. Our common goal is to always try to work together to best support your student.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We invite you and your family to “get social” with MLK Charter School! We can be found on Facebook (@MLKCSE) and Instagram (@MLKCSE).

Section 3: School Calendar and Schedule

SCHOOL YEAR

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence has an extended school year (184 school days). Please see the annual school year calendar attached at the end. The school reserves the right to modify this calendar due to weather or other unanticipated events. If we do so, we will communicate these changes to families as far in advance as possible.

Our Annual Calendar is distributed through our summer mailing and available at our Annual Meet & Greet, on the school website, or by request in the Main Office. It can also be found [here](#).



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CHARTER SCHOOL EXCELLENCE | 2023-2024 CALENDAR

<p>Have a fun and safe summer!</p> <p>July 10-28: Summer Academy</p> <p>Remember to read and complete your summer work. Every student that turns in a completed summer packet the first day back to school will be entered into a raffle.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">July</th> </tr> <tr> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	July					M	T	W	Th	F	3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31					<p>Monthly Core Value: Promoting Social Justice Monthly Theme: Poverty in America Awareness</p> <p>Jan. 1: New Year's Day - School and office are closed Jan. 5: Teacher PD Day; students released at 12:00pm Jan. 15: Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday - School and office are closed Jan. 22: Quarter 2 ends</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">January</th> </tr> <tr> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	January					M	T	W	Th	F	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26	29	30	31		
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<p>Monthly Core Value: Excellence Monthly Theme: National Gratitude</p> <p>Nov. 1: Quarter 1 ends Nov 10: Veterans Day - School and office are closed Nov. 20 & 21: Early Release Conferences; students released at 12:00pm Nov 22-24: Thanksgiving vacation - School and office are closed</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">November</th> </tr> <tr> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	November					M	T	W	Th	F			1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30		<p>Monthly Core Value: Determination Monthly Theme: Asian Pacific American Heritage</p> <p>May 14 & 15: Math MCAS, Grades 3-5 May 21 & 22: Sci. MCAS, Grade 5 May 24: Teacher PD Day; students released at 12:00pm May 27: Memorial Day - School and office are closed</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">May</th> </tr> <tr> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>Th</th> <th>F</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	May					M	T	W	Th	F			1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
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Last revised: 02/16/2023

SCHOOL DAY

In the pursuit of excellence, MLKCSE has an extended school day as well. This gives our students more time for academic growth and enrichment opportunities. It also provides us the time needed to support students in making academic strides and social-emotional learning opportunities that will equip them for future successes.

Our school hours are as follows:

- 8:25am - 3:45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursdays (unless otherwise noted)
- 8:25am - 1:35pm on Fridays (unless otherwise noted)

Students can be dropped off in the morning between 8:00 am and 8:24am.

The school building is closed at 5:00 pm. Voicemail will be on automated attendant before 8:25 am and after 4:30pm and 2:20 pm on Fridays, though families should feel free to dial directly the appropriate extensions at any time.

Section 4: Our Academic Program

OUR CURRICULUM

LITERACY

Our approach to literacy at MLKCSE is grounded in the Science of Reading. There are 7 Science of Reading principles based on decades of research on how children best learn to read. Here they are:

1. Reading is not natural; it can and must be taught.
2. Background knowledge is as critical to comprehension as decoding skills.
3. Foundational skills instruction must be systematic and explicit, beginning with sounds.
4. Instruction must be engaging, through multiple modes and senses.
5. Science-based reading instruction reduces the need for intervention, and allows children to move forward as capable, confident learners.
6. Science-based reading instruction is a matter of equity.
7. Science-based reading instruction is urgent, and the most crucial work of the elementary teacher.

Our primary curricular resource for reading and writing is Wit & Wisdom. With Wit & Wisdom, students move through 3-4 module topics in a school year. Each module has core texts that are wide-ranging, varied, and provide a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine arts texts. The texts represent grade-level complexity. Formative and summative assessments are embedded in every module.

A website with more information about Wit & Wisdom as well as resources to support your student's learning at home can be found [here: https://greatminds.org/english/families](https://greatminds.org/english/families)

For an integrated and comprehensive approach to reading and spelling, we supplement Wit & Wisdom. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 also use two additional curricular resources. They are Foundations and Heggerty. Foundations is a multisensory, systematic, explicit, and

structured language program. It focuses on critical foundational skills, emphasizing: phonemic awareness, phonics/ word study, high-frequency word study, reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension strategies, letter-keyword-sound, alphabetic order, letter-formation skills, handwriting, and spelling.

Heggerty is a research-based 35-week curriculum of daily phonemic and phonological awareness lessons. Phonemic awareness is the ability to understand that spoken words are made up of individual sounds called phonemes, and it's one of the best early predictors of reading success.

Students also use Geodes. Geodes are accessible, knowledge-building books for emerging and developing readers. They provide explicit phonics instruction and opportunities for applied practice in taught concepts through authentic, knowledge-building text.

For intervention, all students use iReady Reading's MyPath which is personalized to each individual student. It provides instructional lessons based on individual skill levels and needs. You can watch a video to learn about it [here](https://i-readycentral.com/view-resource/?id=37384): <https://i-readycentral.com/view-resource/?id=37384>

MATH

Our approach to math instruction is that students develop both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency that a student must apply in order to solve real-world math problems and build strong mathematical habits in all students.

The mathematical habits of practice we work to build in students are:

1. Make sense of problems & persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly & quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments & critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for & make use of structure
8. Look for & express regularity in repeated reasoning

Our primary curricular resource for math is iReady Classroom Mathematics. This program includes instruction, interactive practice, diagnostic assessments, My Path intervention work, and Learning Games.

A website with more information about iReady Classroom as well as resources to support your student's learning at home can be found [here](https://readyclassroomcentral.com/familycenter): <https://readyclassroomcentral.com/familycenter>

SCIENCE

Our approach to science instruction is that students should be empowered to make sense of the world around them. We align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which were designed with the idea that students should have a science education that they can use in their lives. With this type of science learning students do not just memorize a set of science facts, but rather try to figure out how and why things happen. This learning is called "3D". These three dimensions are core ideas, practices, and crosscutting concepts. They work together in science classes to get students to solve real-world questions and problems. Our primary curricular resource for science is Amplify Science.

A website with more information about Amplify Science as well as resources to support your student's learning at home can be found [here](https://amplify.com/caregiver-hub/amplify-science-k-5/):
<https://amplify.com/caregiver-hub/amplify-science-k-5/>

ESL

Our goal for our emerging bilingual students is to promote rapid English language acquisition through explicit sustained language instruction across the four domains of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, ensuring that students engage in complex tasks that push students to think critically about the world around them. Our multilingual learners receive standards-aligned and grade-appropriate Sheltered Content Instruction (SCI), language development within content classes as well as strategic systematic ESL instruction aligned to the WIDA standards and contextualized by the MA Curriculum Frameworks.

Our primary curricular resource for ESL instruction is our adaptations of DESE's Next Generation ESL Curriculum Units.

ENRICHMENTS

In addition to their core academic subjects, students will also take Enrichment classes in physical education, art, and music. We believe exposure to different activities is important for students. As such, Enrichment classes are not optional. They will have the same enrichment class every day for approximately a 15-day rotation. Just as with their academic subjects, all work and effort will be graded and they will receive a grade on their report card.

ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

We want each and every one of our students to achieve at their highest level. We will push them and also support them along the way. We are fortunate to offer extra academic support to students who need it during intervention times daily.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

MLKCSE will supply students with the necessary materials for school, including things like pencils, paper, books, binders, art supplies, tissues, hand sanitizer, and technology. However, parents and families are encouraged to supplement these supplies with preferred materials if they so choose. Please note, the school is not responsible for any damaged or missing items.

Suggested School Supply List:

- Backpack
- Pencils (no mechanical)
- Eraser caps
- Homework folder
- Crayons and/or markers
- Glue stick
- Hand sanitizer
- Highlighter
- Pencil pouch/box
- Water bottle (no glass)

Open for classroom donation:

- Kleenex/tissues
- Paper towels

Kindergarten Only:

- Change of clothes (as needed)

HOMEWORK

We believe homework is important to reinforcing skills and teaching organization and responsibility. Every student has a Homework folder that should go back and forth from home to school each day. Students at MLKCSE are assigned homework daily. Homework over the weekend is optional and determined by the teacher. Homework should be something that the majority of students can complete independently with minimal adult support.

Every night, students are expected to read for at least 20 minutes and to complete their Reading Log. Additionally, students will have homework in math. Science will have homework but it may not be daily. Should a parent/guardian have a homework question, they should reach out to the teacher directly. If your student is coming home without homework, please reach out to the teacher. Homework is a part of students' grades in each grade level.

SAMPLE DAILY STUDENT SCHEDULE

Note: This is a sample schedule only. For each student, times, schedules, and course offerings may vary.

Sample Student Schedule	
Time	Subject
8:00 - 8:25 am	Arrival
8:25 - 8:55am	Community Meeting
~30-45 minutes	Reading Foundations
~45-65 minutes	Integrated Literacy
~65 minutes	Math
20 minutes	Lunch
20 minutes	Recess
~45-65 minutes	Science
40 minutes	"WIN" What I Need Block (intervention)
40 minutes	Enrichment

40 minutes	“WIN” What I Need Block (intervention) 2
	Dismissal

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

We strive to prepare our students to be successful citizens in the real world. Academic classwork and/or homework will be made available to any absent student. Students will have the number of days that they were absent to complete the make-up work and submit it to their teacher(s). For example, if a student is sick for 1 school day (Wednesday), they will have 1 day (Thursday) to complete the make-up work and should turn it into their teacher(s) the next day (Friday).

In other situations, where a student was present in school but has incomplete classwork or homework, the student will still be responsible for completing all missed work. If the student requires academic support daily to complete the assignment, they will need to ask and the support will happen outside of regular academic time. Be advised that the teacher may also not award the student full credit for assignments that are incomplete or late. Offering credit for late work is determined by the teacher.

ASSESSMENTS

We believe that assessing our students often is necessary to monitor their progress and be data-driven in supporting them throughout the academic year. At the same time, we work to be thoughtful in the number of assessments we administer and how often instructional time is used for assessing. We work hard to protect time for teaching and learning.

At MLKCSE we use a variety of assessment methods:

- diagnostic assessments (at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year)
- growth assessments in reading and math
- Teacher-created formative and summative assessments (unit tests, quizzes, performance tasks, exit slips)
- Additional assessments, as needed, to inform learning and growth for Special Education students and English Language Learners
- MCAS, our state-mandated standardized assessment. These exams are given in the areas of English (Grades 3-5), Mathematics (Grades 3-5), and Science/Technology Engineering (Grades 5). Students classified as English Learners are required to take the ACCESS 2.0 Assessment. Families will be sent score reports to update them on their child’s annual progress when they are available by the state, typically in late fall or early winter.

GRADING POLICY

Grades exist to provide students and families with feedback about student learning. Students will receive a report card at the end of each quarter. This is how grades will be calculated:

Category	Weight
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Classwork Completing all classwork	30%
Engagement and Effort Participating in the lesson and giving their personal best effort	20%
Work Products Exit tickets	25%
Assessments Mid-unit, end of unit, performance tasks, quizzes, comprehension checks, interim assessments	20%
Homework Reinforcement and building fluency through reading and math logs	5%
	100%

Student work and effort will be graded on a daily basis using the rating system below.

Rating	Letter Grade	Percentage Range
Exceeds Expectations	A	90% - 100%
Meets Expectations	B	80% - 89%
Meets Average Expectations	C	70% - 79%
Meets Few Expectations	D	60% - 69%
Fails to Meet Expectation	F	0% - 59%

PROMOTION & RETENTION POLICY

At MLKCSE, we take the promotion and retention of our students very seriously. We recognize that retention of a student in the same grade level for a second year is an intervention of last resort for students who are failing to meet expectations. If at any time the school is considering retention of your child, a representative from the school will reach out to you to discuss the concerns, plan for intervention, and establish what growth needs to happen in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

Students who demonstrate a substantial and sustained risk of failure in major academic subjects, and for whom teachers have already made instructional modifications and sought parent

involvement, will be referred to the Student Intervention Committee (SIC). Within the context of the regular education support services available, systematic remediation in the areas of literacy, mathematics, or behavioral performance will be provided and periodically reviewed by the team. Note: Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will also be supported by their special education team.

The promotion/retention policy of the Martin Luther King Jr, Charter School of Excellence is part of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan summarizes the resources and programs available to allow all children access to the full curriculum of the district. Only after the provision of support services consistent with the district DCAP, and a determination that a student is not able to make effective progress, will the retention of a student be considered. This policy recognizes that retention is complex, involving many factors, and is never a guarantee of future success. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives have been unsuccessful.

The criteria that we collectively assess are: reading levels, math levels, end-of-year data in math and literacy, has been referred to our Student Intervention Committee, whether or not the student has an Individualized Evaluation Plan (IEP), whether or not the student has a 504 Plan, is the student an English Learner and their ACCESS level, the student's attendance, whether or not the student has ever been retained, behavioral concerns.

Parents/guardians of students who are being considered retained will receive notice of this possibility in writing at the end of the second trimester. In any decision that affects retention, the school will share this policy with parents and staff and adhere to all state and local regulations as they pertain to the rights of the individuals involved.

All students who are reading below grade level or performing far below grade level in math at the end of the academic year may be required to attend summer session. Summer session is an intensive, targeted instructional program that aims to develop reading, writing, and math skills in a small classroom setting.

Section 5: Family Engagement

PARENT GROUPS TO JOIN

The MLKCSE's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) supports the educational and social community of Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence. All parents/guardians are encouraged to join MLKCSE's PAC. Your participation is welcome at any level, whether it be simply becoming a member, attending a PAC meeting, volunteering to chair or be a member of a committee, or volunteering to work at a PAC event.

We also have a Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) and an English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (ELPAC) for our families whose students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan and/or a student that is an English Learner.

Our SEPAC promotes parent engagement in the development and modification of programs serving students with special needs. In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, some responsibilities of our SEPAC will include, but not be limited to, advising the school on matters

pertaining to the education and safety of students with special needs and meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school's special education programs. The SEPAC also offers workshops and educational programming of interest to parents of children with special needs.

Our ELPAC promotes parent/guardian involvement in the development of programs serving English learners. In accordance with the Language Opportunity for Our Kids Act (LOOK Act), some responsibilities of our ELPAC include, but are not limited to, advising the school on matters pertaining to the education of students who are learning English and meeting regularly with school staff to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the EL programs. Our ELPAC also offers workshops and educational programming of interest to parents of children who are learning English.

Benefits of Becoming a Member

Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education, the children are more likely to have better academic success, have better social skills, and be more positive in their attitude toward school. When parents get involved early in their children's education, the results are more long-lasting. In addition to supporting your child, becoming a member has many benefits for you:

- It's a great way to meet other families with children the same age as your own.
- You will become a greater part of your children's early learning experiences.
- You'll get to know the teachers at school and to understand their needs and ideas.
- You can create, plan, and execute fun events for the whole family.
- You'll experience feelings of self-worth through volunteering your time and seeing your efforts pay off in the smiles of your children and their friends.

To sign up or get more information, please call the main office and ask for either Mrs. Griffin (cgriffin@mlkcs.org) or Mrs. Flores (bflores@mlkcs.org).

CLASS DOJO

Dojo is a simple and easy way to communicate back and forth with your student's teacher and other staff members. You will also be connected to your student's classroom. Being connected on ClassDojo will ensure you have access to the most current information, you can view the newsfeed of updates, and view the classroom's feed to see what students are doing and learning. If you aren't already signed up and connected, please [visit: https://home.classdojo.com/#/signup](https://home.classdojo.com/#/signup)

KICKBOARD

Kickboard is where we keep track of positive and also unwanted behaviors at school. It also keeps track of out-of-class referrals. It updates in real time, so you have up-to-date information at your fingertips.

Students will bring home a Weekly Progress Report on Fridays. This will be your student's Weekly "Paycheck". It will show generally how their week went. Feel free to talk with them about it - celebrate a strong week and process and help make a plan for a better week the next week. These

Weekly “Paychecks” should be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the teacher the next school day as homework.

Section 6: Attendance

At Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE), our goal for every student is to be learning and growing as much as possible - academically and socially-emotionally. The most basic requirement for learning is being present. Our curriculum is ambitious and students who are absent frequently cannot keep up with the rest of the community in regards to academics and character. In order for our students to reach for their personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort on a consistent, daily basis. **Therefore, we strictly enforce the school’s attendance policy, which requires a minimum of 96% percent attendance from each student. Our school attendance goal is 96% or higher.**

Furthermore, it is important for students to be on time and remain in school for the entire day. Habits of timeliness and completeness that continue throughout their lives start in elementary school. To that end, students should be in their classroom before the 8:35 bell and remain in school until dismissal.

According to MGL c. 76 and c. 72, § 8, all students under 16 are expected to be in school. All students under the age of 16 will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow the procedures set out in M.G.L. c. 76, § 18 if the student does not comply with the law. At MLKCSE, regular attendance is required, and poor attendance will not be accepted (Massachusetts State Law, Chapter 76). In cases of truancy, the Attendance Manager (or their designee) will investigate the situation. MLKCSE operates in compliance with Department of Transitional Assistance requests and requirements, which can include mandated reporting of truancy to appropriate state agencies.

MLKCSE keeps accurate records of attendance and will make the records available for inspection by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as needed. All questions regarding student attendance and attendance records should be directed to the school’s Main Office.

Note: Any combination of 5 tardies and/or early dismissals will count as 1 absence internally.

Incentives

Each month, all students with 96% or higher attendance for the month will:

- Be publicly recognized on the intercom and on social media
- Receive a certificate of Awesome Attendance for the month
- Have the opportunity to participate in a special activity or reward.¹

Interventions

Daily, the caregiver of each child who is marked absent will receive an automated call from the school, alerting them of the absence. If they believe the call is in error, they should call the school.

¹ Activities might include watching a movie, a dance, an extra recess, being awarded extra Kickboard Dollars

While we encourage you to provide notes when your student is absent, please know that it does not excuse the absence, as the MA Department of Education does not recognize excused vs. unexcused in our school's reporting and accountability. In order to address absenteeism before it has a significant impact on learning, we will provide a Make Up Academy (MUA) every Friday (starting in September) for students whose attendance has slipped below 96%. MUA will be held each Friday from 1 PM-4 PM. Teachers will ensure any student that is not present has any missed work/assignments placed into a folder. For any students staying for MUA, they will bring their makeup work folder with them. At the end of MUA, the folder will be returned to the classroom so the work can be graded and entered into the gradebook by the classroom teacher(s). At the MUA, students will be provided the work that was missed when they were out. Work that is made up will be reflected in the student's grade. Additionally, each completed three hour session of MUA will take the place of one absence. (Sample tracker)

Additionally, if attendance falls to 90% or lower at any given time, MLK will mandate that a meeting take place between representatives from the school and the parent to develop an intervention plan to improve attendance. The following table will be used to determine the level of intervention required.

Chart 1		
Month	If a student's total ² absences equal or exceed the number ³ below by this month, they will be assigned one or more days of MUA until their absences fall below the threshold.	If a student's unexcused ⁴ absences equal or exceed the number ⁵ below by this month, the parent/guardian will be asked to meet with a member of the attendance team to problem solve and develop an intervention plan to improve attendance.
September	2	4
October	2	4
November	3	6
December	4	8
January	4	8
February	5	10
March	6	12
April	6	12
May	7	14

² Includes unexcused and excused absences.

³ This number represents < 96% ytd.

⁴ No doctor's note provided

⁵ This number represents < 90% ytd.

June	8	15
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If a student exceeds 15 **unexcused** absences before the end of the school year, the school will require a second in person meeting between attendance team members and the family. At this meeting, the previously adopted intervention plan will be revisited and revised as necessary to improve attendance. The school reserves the right to consider Saturday School and/or summer school as a next step intervention to learning loss due to attendance. In extreme circumstances the school may also involve the Department of Children and Families if there is a question of educational neglect.

Documented, Medically Excused Absences

MLKCSE recognizes that chronic or serious illness can cause some students to miss significant amounts of school. That said, it is still our collective responsibility to help every child make up for learning loss. Even students who have documented medical excuses will be assigned to MUA to help them catch up with learning *and* make up missed days on their attendance.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

We want to promote a culture of on-time arrival and complete days of learning. Frequent tardiness and early dismissals disrupt learning for your student and their classmates. Even small amounts of time lead to incomplete understanding of concepts, similar to walking late into a movie or leaving early. To that end, combinations of tardies and early dismissals will lead to the assignment of MUA for your child. The chart delineates the thresholds:

Chart 2	
Total Combined Tardies and/or Early Dismissals	Make Up Academy (MUA)
5	1st MUA Assigned
10	2nd MUA Assigned
15	3rd MUA Assigned
20	4th MUA Assigned
25	5th MUA Assigned
30	6th MUA Assigned
35	7th MUA Assigned
40	8th MUA Assigned

Vacations and Trips During the School Year

It is important for students to be in school and family trips should be planned during school

vacations or summer. If it is essential for your child to be out of school due to a trip, the school **is not responsible for providing work for the child during their absences**. All assignments will be made available as the work is assigned in the classroom/when the student returns. The child will be assigned to MUA's per the chart 1.

School Activities and Absences

Students who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission. Additionally, if a student has been assigned to MUA, they may not participate in other after school activities that day *in place of* MUA.

Attendance and Un-enrollment

If a student is absent for the first five days of school, or at least ten consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain their absences, that student may lose their seat at MLKCSE and may be considered un-enrolled from the school.

INCOMPLETE DAYS: TARDIES & EARLY DISMISSALS

Per DESE Guidelines, students are required to be present for at least half of the allotted instructional time on a given day in order to be considered present for the school day. Students arriving at school late must report to the Main Office to sign in before proceeding to their classroom. Late arrivals after 8:25 am disrupt class for all students in the class and therefore should be avoided if possible. Tardies and early dismissals due to traffic, medical appointments, family emergencies, etc. are not excused. With professional documentation, situations will be assessed on an individual and case-by-case basis.

In order to minimize disruptions to class, we ask that notification regarding early dismissals be made as far in advance as possible, but no later than an hour and a half before the day's school dismissal. We also ask that appointments be limited to non-school hours to avoid students missing class time. Students leaving early must check in with the main office before leaving.

LATE PICK-UPS

We recognize that occasionally unexpected situations can occur that delay a parent/guardian. Pickups after 4:00 pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays or after 1:50 pm on Fridays are considered late.

Late parents/guardians should pick up their student(s) at the Main Entrance. Students will need to be signed out in the Late Pick-up log. As a courtesy to families, the school office staff attempts to contact by phone the parents/guardians of students who have not been picked up on time. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that we have updated home, cell, work, and emergency telephone numbers. On any instance, at 5:00 pm, if no contact has been made with you by the school (we will attempt multiple times), a telephone call will be made to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to report any student who has not yet been picked up. Please note if you are repeatedly late to pick up your student the School will set up a meeting with you to discuss this concern and how the situation can be resolved.

HELPFUL ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

- Parents/guardians are expected to call the school as early as possible but no later than 8:30 am if their child will not be attending school for any reason. Calls should be left on the school's main voicemail at 413-214-7806. In phone calls, voicemails, emails, and notes, please indicate your child's name, your relationship to the child, and the reason for and date(s) of the child's absence.
- Students are still accountable for missed work.
- Work may not always be available in advance of absences.
- Please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illness (ex. fever, nausea, or anything contagious). We have a school nurse, so if your child begins the day feeling sick, comes to school, and starts to feel worse, they can report to the nurse and be sent home as necessary. Please make sure that we have the most up-to-date contact information with the Main Office so that we can reach you in these situations. This also allows your child to obtain work from their teachers so that they do not have to fall behind due to illness.
- Exceptions are made for court-mandated appearances with proper documentation and religious observances.
- The Massachusetts Department of Education defines Chronically Absent as missing at least 10% of days enrolled regardless of whether the absences are considered excused, unexcused, and/or for disciplinary reasons. Being chronically absent can have a significant impact on a student's ability to read at grade level, perform academically, and graduate on time.
- While we encourage you to provide notes when your student is absent, please know that it does not excuse the absence, as the MA Department of Education does not recognize excused vs. unexcused in our school's reporting and accountability.
- Students are afforded rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") should their absences be related to a disabling condition. Other rare exceptions may apply.

Section 7: Behavior Expectations and Discipline

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that an orderly, predictable and safe learning environment enables all learning to occur. According to Fullan (2007), school culture can be defined as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates. 'School culture' is used to encompass all the attitudes, expected behaviors, and values that impact how we operate at MLKCSE.

We believe that to have a strong school culture, students are expected to take responsibility and leadership for the community to ensure it is a safe, supportive, and cooperative environment. Students will be most successful when academic and behavioral expectations are clear and consistently held. Classroom and school rules are simple and consequences are consistent.

Building positive relationships among peers and staff and students is paramount. The quality of our relationships with each other, with our students, and with our families will significantly impact the level of our success as a team. We want our students to feel safe, supported, and challenged.

As part of our mission to develop positive character, a key lesson we teach our students is that “all actions have consequences” be it positive or corrective. In order to establish expectations and boundaries, we implement a student accountability system. We define accountability as being willing to accept responsibility for one’s actions. We want to reinforce positive behavior and also address unwanted behaviors. When addressing unwanted behaviors, we support students in understanding the harm and teach replacement behaviors. This helps to continually clarify for students what is and is not acceptable in our school community. We want our teachers to be “intentionally inviting” - meaning proactive, systematic, transparent, consistently positive, growth mindset oriented, purposeful, and sensitive to student needs. They take appropriate action when needed.

SIX PRINCIPLES OF KINGIAN NONVIOLENCE

Pulled from Dr. Martin Luther King’s Essay “A Pilgrimage to Nonviolence”

Principle 1: HAVE COURAGE

Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people. It is a positive way to try to change things that are unfair. It stretches people’s minds, hearts, and spirits to creatively make things better. It is very brave.

Principle 2: BE KIND

The Beloved Community is the framework for the future. We need to give energy to what we do want for our future, not just what we don't want. The most important thing for our future is to have a community where people are kind and fair to each other.

Principle 3: DON’T HATE

Attack forces of evil not persons doing evil. Focus on problems, not people. Figure out what is at the root of the problem and work to fix it. Be forgiving towards the people who are involved in the problem

Principle 4: STAY THE COURSE

Accept suffering without retaliation for the sake of the cause to achieve a goal. Revenge only makes problems worse. Be patient and committed to nonviolence so that you can reach your goal. More people will join you when they see you doing what’s right.

Principle 5: LOVE YOURSELF

Avoid internal violence of the spirit as well as external physical violence. Be kind to yourself as well as others. Be forgiving or forgiving of yourself. Find ways to not let hate and anger take over your spirit.

Principle 6: TRUST

The Universe is on the side of justice. Truth always comes out. Sometimes it takes a very long time, but when you do what’s right you are in harmony with the universe, and many people and things will be on your side.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

One goal of our mission is to empower every one of our students with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life.

Our expectations for our students begin with the fundamental belief that all students want to learn, can learn, and can behave well in an academic environment. In order for students to thrive, they must be taught in a safe, predictable, and structured learning environment. Teachers and staff members should strive to create classrooms in which all students feel valued and a strong sense of belonging. Our classrooms are places where maximizing time on learning is paramount.

One of the core beliefs of MLKCSE is respect. Respectful behaviors are modeled and taught by all MLKCSE staff in order to create a safe learning environment. Students will be expected to follow modeled behaviors in order to interact with each other and adults appropriately in the learning environment.

<p>During class instruction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared with all required materials for the class block ● Get organized and seated as quickly as possible so instruction can begin ● Respect others by not entering others' personal space; keeping your body to yourself ● Sit in STAR to be ready to learn and engage ● Track the speaker to show you are listening, on task, and value what the speaker has to say ● Write their full name and date on each written assignment ● Write neatly ● Complete all work given during any instructional or non-instructional period in the day ● Help all of their teammates participate in lessons by avoiding distractions or avoiding the temptation to create a distraction for others ● Follow the classroom procedures and MLKCSE Hand Signals (non-verbal cues) throughout the class block to minimize distractions from focused time on learning ● Stay in your assigned seat unless given permission to get up from a staff ● Show classroom guests the same respect as all other staff at MLKCSE
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<p>When collaborating or speaking with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wait for the teacher to give the signal to begin ● Follow the expectation for noise level ● Follow the expectation for time ● Use good manners (i.e. please, thank you, excuse me, etc.). ● Use appropriate school language and correct grammar ● Make eye contact with a partner when appropriate ● Speak clearly ● Raise a silent hand to participate ● Put their hand back down and be patient when another student is called on so you can fully listen to what others are sharing ● Participate in call and response times ● Respond with a “yes” or “no” non-verbal when asked ● Respond to calls to attention ● Answer in a complete sentence with a rephrase of the question ● Take and let others use think time ● Share air time ● Share responsibility fairly in partners and groups
<p>Organization & Responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep your backpack, desk, and locker neat and organized ● Put papers inside the correct folders without crumpling them ● Keep desk materials inside the desk when not in use ● Keep desk materials (such as pencils, crayons, scissors, glue) in a pouch or box ● Keep a neat and organized desk and floor area ● Bring homework back and forth from home to school daily ● Take school job responsibilities seriously ● Respond respectfully if redirected ● Practice routines such as WALK, STAR, or any other procedures as needed ● Work towards solving problems independently and practice perseverance and conflict resolution strategies ● Ask for help when they are unsure of what to complete or do next ● Be honest and take responsibility for their choices and actions ● Be respectful, responsible, and a contributing members of our school community and your classroom team ● Treat everyone with basic human respect and dignity

COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Education without social action is a one-sided value because it has no true power potential.
 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

At MLKCSE, all students participate in community service learning each year. Projects and the resulting student reflections are age-appropriate and grade-specific. Community service-learning projects help students expand their sense of Dr. King’s beloved community, not just within their class or grade or our school, but also locally and even globally. The projects, occasionally designed

by students themselves, facilitate differentiated learning that helps all students learn the educational standards of our enhanced curriculum and participate fully in our culture of achievement.

MLKCSE students benefit from partnerships with, and resources from, academic institutions within Springfield and beyond. All students also participate in service-learning projects throughout the year. Service-learning is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students; and provides structured time for students to reflect on the service experience (according to the National and Community Service Trust Act, 1993). Students will complete community service and then reflect on their experience and positive societal impact by drawing or writing (depending on grade level and/or ability).

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Every MLKCSE classroom utilizes our Student Accountability System. The system is simple, educational and value-driven, privilege-based, and positive. At the same time, we also believe that a clear and predictable school-wide system is critical in keeping our culture safe, orderly, and focused on learning and making good choices.



Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence

Our Accountability System



🤗 😄
FRESH START 😊
Intervention 1 = non-verbal redirection 😞
You can turn it around. Make the right choice. 👍 🙅 🙅 If not, then...
Intervention 2 = last non-verbal redirection 😞
You can turn it around. Make the right choice. 👍 🙅 🙅 If not, then...
Intervention 3 = verbal redirection 😞
You can turn it around. Make the right choice. 👍 🙅 🙅 If not, then...
Intervention 4 - Dollar deduction 😞 😞
You can turn it around. Make the right choice. 👍 🙅 🙅 If not, then...
Intervention 5 - Dollar deduction and additional consequence. 😞 Teacher will decide what's next.

Assigning Consequences

It is expected that teachers and staff will ensure on-task behavior by having strong procedures and routines, maintaining high behavioral expectations, and building rapport and trust with students.

When misbehaviors occur, teachers are expected to first utilize the least to most invasive strategies. When a teacher is unable to successfully redirect and correct a student's behavior it is necessary to issue a consequence.

Consequences are given effectively by ensuring that they are consistent, brief, depersonalized, and provide a way for students to re-establish positive connections in the classroom. Example consequences for corrective behavior given by teacher: MLK Kickboard dollar deduction, recess reflection, message/phone call home, loss of classroom privilege, immediate re-do, re-do after class, in-class break/cool down corner

The goal of the consequence is to teach appropriate pro-social behavior. If the misbehavior continues after the consequence is given by the teacher, the teacher should complete an out-of-class referral using Kickboard.

More extreme behaviors are addressed in our Code of Conduct section to follow.

Section 8: School Meals

MLKCSE participates in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Snack Program. All students are served free breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Students are served one snack per day. Menus for breakfast and lunch are available on the school's website. Our school meals are provided in kind by Springfield Public Schools through Sodexo.

Students are welcome to bring breakfast, snacks, or lunch from home. They will not have access to a microwave to heat any lunches or a refrigerator. Soda and candy are never permitted at school, even in lunches brought from home.

All students attending MLKCSE are currently eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 for free breakfast and lunch. CEP is a provision from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that allows schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) with high poverty rates to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. CEP eliminates the burden of collecting household applications to determine eligibility for school meals, relying instead on information from other means-tested programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

FOOD ALLERGIES

The school will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate students with food allergies. Parents are required to inform the school nurse of all food allergies and their severity. A parent of a child with food allergies is responsible for providing classroom snacks and lunch for his or her own child. These snacks can be kept in the classroom in a separate snack closet. Sharing or trading of food is prohibited for all students. For students who have been diagnosed with a life-threatening food allergy, once the parent has informed the school nurse they must also provide medical documentation for the diagnosis of the life-threatening food allergy. After documentation is provided, the family and school officials (including but not limited to the school nurse and the school nutrition director) will meet to develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) to

accommodate the student. This plan must be developed before the student begins school or as soon as possible after the school is provided documentation of the life-threatening allergy.

MLKCSE is an “allergy-aware” school. In order to ensure the safety of all of our students, DO NOT send your child to school with any foods containing or processed with nuts. This includes peanut butter. If a student is found to have a nut-containing food item at school, that item will be sealed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child. A school lunch will then be provided for that day, and parent/guardian will be called and reminded about our policy. While we will do our best to keep nuts out of the school, MLKCSE cannot guarantee that the school will be entirely nut free. Please be aware that children with severe food allergies should continue to be vigilant about their safety. Please make sure that you have let the School Nurse know about your student’s food allergies.

HEALTHY FOODS GUIDELINES

MLKCSE’s healthy food policy was inspired by those of several other schools, locally and nationally, and many of our breakfast, lunch, and snack guidelines are already in place in many public schools. In addition to inspiring our students to achieve academic excellence, we also want to encourage them to develop healthy eating habits. If you plan to send your child to school with food from home, carefully review the information below. Free breakfast and lunch as well as a snack are provided to all students every day. We do not allow soda or caffeinated beverages. Students need well-balanced meals each day. If a student is found to have a lunch that consists of only “junk foods,” we will serve the student a school lunch.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please don’t hesitate to reach out to our Director of Operations.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Please contact the classroom teacher to make arrangements for any birthday celebration. We cannot allow birthday celebrations to interrupt the academic day. Parents will be informed if there is a food allergy in the class; if such an allergy exists, we ask parents to be considerate and avoid that food product in birthday snacks. The birthday treat also needs to be easily consumed at lunch. Students may not distribute invitations to parties within the school building unless every member of the class is invited.

Section 9: Health

MLKCSE is committed to supporting the health and well-being of all students. The school staff includes a full-time registered nurse. The Nurse is able to provide basic first aid, care for ill students, administer medication to students who require it during the school day, and provide basic guidance on health-related issues to students and their families. In addition, the school has a relationship with a local pediatrician who advises the school with regard to health-related matters.

SCREENINGS

Students in all grades will undergo annual vision and hearing screenings. In addition, students in first grade will undergo body mass index, or BMI, screenings. Posture screenings will occur beginning in grade 5, as required by regulation. The school nurse will contact the family if

screening results indicate a need for follow-up. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to ensure that identified needs are addressed. The school will provide referrals for appropriate services at the request of a family. Families may "opt-out" of any screenings by submitting a request in writing to the school nurse.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

If a student requires medication while in school, the parent/guardian must submit to the school a Medication Order Form, filled out by the student's physician, and a Parent/Guardian Consent Form, completed by the parent/guardian. In addition, students being followed by a doctor for asthma and students with prescribed EpiPens must have on file an action plan, completed by the child's medical provider.

Any medication to be given during school hours must be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent/guardian or another responsible adult. The medication must be brought to school in the original, pharmacy-labeled container. Only a thirty-day supply of a medication will be accepted at any time. No student is allowed to possess medication while at school, with the exception of asthma inhalers and EpiPens in some instances (see below).

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Certain over-the-counter medications, including Tylenol and Advil, are available in the school health office. For students to receive these medications, signed consent is required from the parent/guardian each school year. These medications will be administered by the school nurse only and according to the recommended dose by weight. The school nurse reserves the right to refuse to dispense medication at any time based on the assessment of the situation.

If a student requires an over-the-counter medication that is not stocked in the school health office, all guidelines regarding prescription medications apply. The student must have on file the Medication Order and Parent/Guardian Consent forms, and the medication must be delivered by the parent/guardian and in its original packaging.

ASTHMA INHALERS

If a student needs to have an asthma inhaler with them at school, the parent/guardian must provide the school nurse with the order from a doctor stating that the student needs to carry the inhaler. The order must also be signed by a parent/guardian, and the parent/guardian must provide the nurse with a second inhaler that will be kept in the nurse's office.

EPI-PENS

If a student has a serious allergy, MLKCSE strongly encourages parents/guardians to bring an EpiPen to school on the first day of school. The EpiPen must be accompanied by an Allergy Action Plan and a Medication Order Form, both completed by the prescribing physician, as well as a Parent/Guardian Consent Form. The school nurse will work with the parent/guardian to develop an Individual Healthcare Plan for the student.

EpiPens may also be administered in case of a possible allergic reaction in accordance with best medical practices. If an EpiPen is administered, the parent will be contacted as soon as possible, and the student will be transported to a medical treatment facility via ambulance.

FIRST AID & MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Minor accidents, cuts, scrapes, and bruises will generally be treated at the school by the school nurse or by selected teachers and administrators. The school is not equipped to provide medical services beyond basic first aid. In the event that a child requires emergency medical care, a parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible. If a parent, guardian, or other emergency contacts cannot be reached, the school may need to arrange for the student to be transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital.

It is essential that we have on file each student's Health History Form, which provides up-to-date contact information for parents and guardians, and which gives the school authorization to begin medical treatment.

MEDICAL EXCLUSIONS

In the interest of protecting the health of all students, please **DO NOT** send a student to school in the case of any one or more of the following:

- Vomiting two or more times in the past 24 hours
- Two or more instances of diarrhea or any stool accidents in the past 24 hours
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Certain diagnosed contagious illnesses such as strep throat or chicken pox

If a student is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please contact the school nurse immediately so that the nurse may monitor the spread of disease. Students should come to school when they have routine sore throats, aches and pains, headaches, or other minor medical concerns.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Massachusetts state law requires all students enrolling in a new school to have a physical examination before entering the school. Before a student can enroll in the school, the school must have on file the following forms:

1. **MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL HEALTH RECORDS** - This form contains records showing that the student has had a physical exam within the past year prior to the start of the school year, has up-to-date immunizations, and has had all required screenings.
2. **IMMUNIZATIONS** - MLKCSE enforces the School Immunization Law. According to Massachusetts General Laws, students will not be permitted to attend school without a physician's certification of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and other such diseases as specified by the Department of Public Health unless a doctor provides written documentation that immunization would endanger the health of a student or a parent or guardian provides written documentation that immunization

conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs. Documentation will be required at the start of each school year. Students lacking immunizations may be excluded from school during disease outbreaks in order to protect their health and that of the school community at large. There are exceptionalities for students defined as Homeless per the McKinney Vento Act.

3. **HEALTH HISTORY FORM** - This form contains information about a student's allergies, health conditions, physician, dentist, and health insurance. The form also authorizes MLKCSE to act in case of a medical emergency. No student will be allowed to enter school without having this form on file.
4. MLKCSE expects families to update medical records throughout the school year. Parents should provide the school with a copy of each physical that the student has. In addition, parents should provide the school with documentation anytime a student visits the emergency room, undergoes surgery, or is diagnosed with a health condition.

Please be advised that updated physical exam forms are required in kindergarten and 3rd grade. Please be advised that updated immunization records are required in kindergarten.

HEALTH-RELATED RECESS EXCLUSION

Our students go outside for recess only when temperatures are deemed safe by our school administrators and the Department of Public Health. When the weather is found to be appropriate for outdoor recess, all students are required to be outside with their classmates. In order to effectively and consistently manage head injuries, MLKCSE has established protocols to prevent, train, manage and take the appropriate return-to-activity decisions for all students. We work with the parent on a case-by-case basis in these instances. A student may stay inside for health-related reasons at the parent/guardian's request. For long-term exclusions, the parent/guardian must provide a doctor's note indicating a medically necessary exemption.

EDUCATION SERVICES IN HOME OR HOSPITAL

In accordance with 603 CMR 28.03(3)(C), upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any MLKCSE student must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the Director of Student Services shall arrange for provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue their educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The Director of Student Services shall coordinate such services with the Executive Director for eligible students. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP.

Section 10: Safety and Security

WEATHER CLOSINGS

In the event of poor or severe weather conditions such as heavy snow, please listen to the local television or radio stations for relevant information regarding school cancellation. When extreme weather conditions may require us to cancel school, delay opening or dismiss early, MLKCSE will follow the decision(s) made by the Springfield Public Schools. If Springfield Public Schools are closed, so is MLKCSE. If Springfield Public Schools are delayed due to inclement weather, so is MLKCSE. The primary reason for this is our families' reliance on school buses to transport their children to and from school.

Information regarding school cancellations or delays will be broadcast on:

- Television Stations: WWLP 22, ABC 40
- Internet: www.abc40.com, www.wwlp.com
- ClassDojo
- @MLKCSE on Facebook & Instagram

In addition, MLKCSE uses the School Messenger telephone & SMS system to notify parents of these situations. You should expect to receive a call or SMS message at approximately 6:45 am depending on what time we receive relevant information from the Springfield Public Schools (SPS). MLKCSE follows SPS on weather-related closings.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

If a student is found in possession of a cell phone, electronic, toys, or other prohibited item in the school, the item will be collected by a teacher or an administrator. Examples of these objects include, but are not limited to, cell phones, tablets, e-readers, cameras, game systems, action figures, trading cards, fidgets, and toys. If a staff member sees or hears one of these objects, they will collect it and bring it to the Director of Operations for safekeeping. The parent/guardian may have to come to the school to retrieve the item if it happens more than once.

STUDENT SEARCHES

In order to maintain the security of all its students, MLKCSE reserves the right to conduct searches of its students and their property based on a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible. School cubbies, lockers, and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of MLKCSE and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to searches by school administrators at any time.

STUDENT PROPERTY

Students should not bring anything to school other than a backpack, seasonal outerwear, lunch (optional), and academic materials. MLKCSE is not able to guarantee the safety or security of any items brought to school. The School will do our best to help recover any lost item, but we make no

guarantees and accept no liability for lost or damaged items. Additionally, the School will not be responsible for the damage, theft, or loss of any personal property that is brought to school.

LOST & FOUND

The school has a Lost and Found. Parents/guardians may come in any day between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm to search the Lost and Found. At the end of every quarter, items left unclaimed may be donated to a local charity or disposed of.

RESTRAINING ORDERS

If there is a restraining order involving any student, parents/guardians must inform the Director of Operations immediately and must provide a copy of the Restraining Order as well as a physical description of the individual against whom the order exists. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the school has a current copy of all court documents.

If an individual against whom there is a restraining order enters the building, the student will be held in a secure location, and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

At MLKCSE, we have a Crisis Plan with emergency protocols in place to keep our school community safe and secure. We practice emergency procedures with our staff and students throughout the school year to ensure that everyone knows what to do in the case of an actual emergency. These emergency drills include but are not limited to:

- Fire
- Shelter in place
- Lockdown
- Medical Emergency
- Evacuation
- Bus Evacuation

During an actual emergency situation, though difficult, we ask that you do not try and contact the school. This allows us to keep our phone lines available for emergencies and help from local authorities. The school will communicate with families through ClassDojo and/or robocall in these sensitive situations. For practice drill situations, the School will let families know when they are happening by sending home a letter in advance.

Section 11: Transportation

Buses to and from MLKCSE are offered in-kind through the Springfield Public Schools transportation department in collaboration with First Student Bus Company. The school advocates for families as much as possible, however, the SPS transportation department ultimately decides a child's eligibility for transportation. Students who live one and a half miles or more from the school are eligible to ride the bus. All others are not eligible to receive transportation services through the Springfield school department transportation company.

You can obtain a transportation request form from the school office. If a student moves, the parent/guardian must submit a new transportation request form with proof of residency in order for the school to request a new bus assignment. New bus assignments usually take up to 2 weeks to be returned back from the transportation department.

Springfield Public Schools Transportation Department Contact Information
Debra Duncan, Department Head
Springfield Public Schools Central Office
1550 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103
413-787-7150

Specific information about Springfield Public Schools' Transportation can be found at:
<https://www.springfieldpublicschools.com/departments/transportation/about>

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This is determined by the distance the child resides from their school and the grade in which they are enrolled. If a student resides over 1.5 miles from their home to school and is enrolled in grades K-5, they would be entitled to no cost transportation. The SPS will consider travel and safety hazards (i.e., no safe walking route or lack of sidewalks) for those students residing under the state mileage restrictions who could encounter such conditions.

Eligibility for door-to-door transportation is based on a student's IEP. Transportation must be included in the student's IEP. If it is not, special transportation is not provided. The parent should start by contacting the Director of Special Education and Student Services to begin the process. For medical conditions, you must obtain a letter or diagnosis from your child's physician and submit all documentation to the Transportation Department. Once received, the documentation will be forwarded to your child's school where it will be evaluated by the 504 Team. This team will determine if your child's medical condition warrants transportation.

Other transportation information:

The Transportation Department of the SPS determines the locations of all school bus stops.

Massachusetts State Law requires that seating be provided for each student assigned to the bus. Standees are strictly prohibited. Furthermore, all students are to be completely seated at all times.

All concerns regarding the capacity of school buses should be directed to the Transportation Department of the SPS.

School buses contracted by the SPS afford students the safest form of transportation to and from school. This has been validated by Federal crash testing and research by the National Academy of Sciences. School buses have to meet rigid Federal construction standards for the sides and top of the bus, fuel tanks along with the inside of each bus. The thick padded seats and seat-backs provide a passive form of crash protection known as "compartmentalization." This padding, combined with the placement of the seating area high above the impact zone offers a protection that has resulted in an unmatched record of passenger safety.

The SPS will only allow students who are assigned and authorized to ride school buses to and from their home address.

The SPS will provide transportation to children living in motels, hotels, emergency or transitional shelters, substandard accommodations or share the housing of another person taking into account established transportation guidelines. To inform the district you are homeless, please notify us immediately at (413) 214-7806 and ask for Lori Ford, School Counselor.

All school buses that transport SPS students are equipped with video recording devices. Recordings are confidential and can only be used by school officials and law enforcement personnel for disciplinary actions or prosecutions related to incidents occurring on the school bus.

It is advisable to have your child at the bus stop a minimum of ten minutes prior to the scheduled pick up.

If your child's bus has not arrived at the bus stop, please contact First Student by calling 413-736-6781, or if your child rides a minibus or van, please call 413-787-2592. If your child is confined to a wheelchair or if you are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, please contact Van Pool Transportation by calling 413-599-1616.

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTER-SCHOOL CARE CENTER

The Springfield Public Schools under the auspices of the Transportation Department operates an after-school center located at the Rebecca M. Johnson School, 55 Catherine Street, Springfield. The telephone number at the center is 413-787-6859. The center operates each school day, from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm and serves children who cannot safely be returned home upon the conclusion of their school day. Children are transported to the after-school center by their school bus drivers where they are met by staff.

The after-school center caters to kindergarten children who are not met at the bus stop by their parent/ guardian or responsible sibling/adult. The center also cares for children with special needs in grades K-5 who are not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult when brought home from school. Children in lower grades who show apprehension or are unfamiliar on how to travel home safely when not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult may also be brought to the after-school center. Furthermore, the after-school center will also care for students in grades 6-12 with disabilities who cannot safely be left at home alone or who cannot safely gain access to their home.

BUS INFRACTIONS

Students are expected to adhere to the School expectations and Code of Conduct while riding a school bus. While on the bus, students are expected to:

- Remain seated at all times unless boarding or departing the bus
- No throwing anything
- Keep hands, feet, and head, and all belongings within the bus
- Treat bus equipment with respect
- Keep the bus safe and clean
- Be respectful to the bus driver, monitor, and other students on the bus
- No disorderly behavior
- No harassing, bullying, or hazing behavior

Violations of these expectations or other unsafe bus behavior will result in the following:

- Students will receive a verbal warning and a parent will be informed of the infraction.
- Students may lose school incentive(s) and a parent meeting will be scheduled.
- Action will lead to escalated disciplinary action, including suspension from the bus and a parent meeting will be scheduled.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION

If a child receives transportation services through an after-school program, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange the schedule and notify the school of the child's dismissal arrangements.

STUDENT PICK-UPS

Parents/Guardians or their designees may pick students up directly from school at dismissal time. Parents/Guardians should not go to the classroom to dismiss their students before the regular dismissal time as this is very disruptive to the class. Parents/Guardians should not leave their vehicle and wait outside the student entrance or come to the main office to dismiss their student. Students will not be dismissed ahead of school dismissal time after 3:30 pm. Parents/guardians will need to wait until 3:45 pm to pick up their students. This is a critical time of the day for the school and we need to focus on ensuring all our students get to the correct locations in order to get home safely. Interruptions during this time can lead to errors. Please understand that this is coming from a good place and we are not trying to be difficult.

NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL OF CHANGES IN DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENT

Dismissal arrangements will not be made on the word of the child. A parent/guardian must send a note or call the school office to make any changes to their child's normal dismissal routine. Parents/guardians should notify the school office at least 1 hour prior to dismissal if a change is to be made to the child's regular dismissal routine.

Section 12: General School Policies

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE), does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA); or any other protected status as required by state or federal law, including homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. It has most recently been reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to MLKCSE on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability,

age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, homelessness, or prior academic achievement, as required by M.G.L. c. 71, §89(l); 603 CMR 1.06(1). No person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or access to the courses of study offered by MLKCSE on the basis of race, sex, color, gender identity, religion, national origin, homelessness, or sexual orientation as required by M.G.L. c. 76, § 5.

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

The School recognizes the legal requirement to maintain the confidentiality of student records. Access to student records shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and its implementing regulations, 603 CMR 23.00 and M.G.L. Chapter 71.

At least once each year, the School shall, by means of an individual mailing or by inclusion in one of the School's regular publications, notify all parents and eligible students of their rights under FERPA. The notice will include a statement that the parent or eligible student has a right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. A specification of the intent of the School to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records except: a. by prior written consent of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or the eligible student; b. as directory information; or c. under certain limited circumstances, as permitted by FERPA;
3. Request that records be amended to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
4. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education alleging failure of the school to comply with FERPA and its regulations; and
5. Obtain copies of this policy and the locations where copies may be obtained.

The policy applies to the release of student directory information, which includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of degrees and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student, applies equally to military recruiters, the media, colleges and universities, and prospective employers.

The school shall arrange to provide translations of this notice to non-English speaking parents in their native language.

The school does not plan to publish a directory of student information. In the event that the school plans to publish a directory in the future, FERPA permits the disclosure of certain categories of directory information, i.e., name, age, address, etc., without specific permission from the parents having been obtained. However, while permission is not required, the school must give parents/guardians the opportunity to object to the publication of some or all of this information.

ACCESS & AMENDMENT BY PARENTS AND/OR STUDENTS

A parent/guardian or eligible student has a right to access student records and to seek their amendment if the parent or eligible student believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or

otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. In order to obtain access or to seek an amendment to student records, please contact the Executive Director.

ACCESS BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, § 34H (“Section 34H”) governs access to student records by a parent who does not have physical custody of a student. Generally, Section 34H requires a non-custodial parent seeking access to submit a written request and other documentation to the Executive Director on an annual basis. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding access to records by non-custodial parents are requested to contact the Executive Director for detailed information regarding the procedures that must be followed under Section 34H.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Release of student records generally requires the consent of the parent or eligible student. However, the Regulations provide certain exceptions. For example, staff employed or under contract to the school have access to records as needed to perform their duties. MLKCSE also releases a student’s complete student record to authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without further notice to, or receipt of consent from, the eligible student or parent.

Please see the regulations for a description of other circumstances in which student records may be released without the consent of a parent or eligible student. Parents and eligible students have a right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures by a school district to comply with the requirements of the student records laws and regulations with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148. Complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing student records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington D.C., 20202-5920.

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

MLKCSE commits to maintaining student records for a specific period of time following a student's graduation or transfer to a different school, after which said records will be destroyed. Student temporary records (including student disciplinary and medical records) will be maintained for 5 years following a student’s departure from MLKCSE. A parent or guardian can collect these records at any time during this period. At the end of 5 years following the student’s departure, MLKCSE will destroy all temporary records. Student permanent records (including academic and attendance information) will be maintained for up to 65 years following a student’s departure from MLKCSE. A parent or guardian can request a copy of these records at any time during this period. At the end of 65 years following the student’s departure, MLKCSE will destroy all permanent records.

PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO, AUDIO, RECORDED COMMENTS

For the purpose of publicizing student and school accomplishments, and/or documenting and studying teacher practice, MLKCSE has a practice of recording student life through photography, video, audio, or otherwise recorded comments. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release or publication of any of the above, the parent/guardian may complete the

“Photo/Video Use Opt-Out Form”. Parents/guardians are given this form to complete at the time they enroll their child at MLKCSE. Parents/guardians may change their preference at any time by requesting another form from the main office and updating their preference.

STUDENT PHONE USE

The office phone is a business phone and should be used by students for emergencies only. The phones may not be used by students to arrange for the delivery of any items. If parents need to leave a message for their child, they should call the Main Office to leave a message. Students will not be called from class to the office to speak with a parent except in case of an emergency.

Students may not use telephones in classrooms, bathrooms, or anywhere in the school building during school hours. Students may use the phone in the office or nurse’s office with granted permission by a staff member. Generally speaking, students will not have opportunities to call home during the school day. MLKCSE students cannot use cell phones or have them out while at school. We understand that many students have cell phones for safety reasons which we support by allowing students to turn on cell phones once they are dismissed from school. All student cell phones are expected to be off and put away at all times during the school day. MLKCSE will not be held liable for any and all damage and/or theft that may occur. Families that choose to allow their student to bring in the device at their own risk.

INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE USE POLICY

Violations of the Appropriate Use Guidelines may result in the revocation of a student's access privileges to Information Technology (including, but not limited to, digital devices and services, computer equipment and software, and School-assigned emails) for a period of time up to one School year and other disciplinary action in accordance with MLKCSE’s Code of Conduct.

Any student who utilizes any technology and/or digital equipment at the School, or provided by the School, must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities. Procedures are in place for the protection of students and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers, school-assigned student emails, and the information technology (IT) network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their instructor or school administration. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system, or network. Students are not permitted to run programs not on the menu, or attempt any activity not specifically authorized by their instructor or a school administrator.

Students and families are responsible for ensuring that any memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the School or use on School-provided devices are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.

If appropriate for the student’s grade level, the School may make Google Apps for Education available for use. Google Apps for Education is a suite of free, web-based programs that includes document creation, shared calendars, and collaboration tools. Students in using Google Apps for Education will also have access to School-assigned student email accounts.

THE INTERNET

Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. MLKCSE offers Internet access to students and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of the school. The school expects that students and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. The school makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the school's Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

MLKCSE students who use social networking sites or group chats have a responsibility to maintain a safe, courteous learning environment for all in the building. Inappropriate use of social networking sites or group chats to bully other students, or to spread false information about students or teachers, even if this takes place outside of school on personal computers or phones, may be cause for disciplinary action, in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 ~ 370.

ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES

- Any online communication should always be at the direction and with the supervision of an instructor or school administrator.
- Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or School name online.
- Never respond to, and always report to the instructor, School administrator or parent, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
- Never send a photo of yourself or anyone else.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you met online.
- Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
- Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites that you observe being accessed by another user or that you browse to accidentally.

UNACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES

- Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are:
 - Damaging to another person's reputation
 - Threatening or demeaning to another person
 - Abusive
 - Obscene
 - Sexual in nature
 - Contrary to the School's policy on harassment or Code of Conduct
 - Harassing, or Bullying
 - Illegal
- Using the network for financial gain or advertising
- Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent
- Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages
- Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages, documents, or files of other system users
- Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information

- Using the School's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws
- Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any School computer or computer system
- Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any School computer or network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information
- Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person
- Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account
- Using the School's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended
- Using the School's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with an instructor's or administrator's directions and generally accepted network etiquette
- Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software
- Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any digital device, computer, network hardware, or related components
- Any student who utilizes the computer lab(s) or any digital equipment at the School, or provided by the School, must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities
- Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by an instructor or School administrator or inconsistent with School policy.
- Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which is not School system property or in MLKCSE's technology resources without prior approval of MLKCSE's IT Service Provider and School administrators
- Bringing on premises any disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data
- Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by teacher or other authorized MLKCSE staff member
- Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies
- Possessing or accessing information on School property related to "Hacking", or altering, or bypassing network security or policies
- Participating on message boards without direction from an instructor or administrator
- Students may use the School computer system only for legitimate educational purposes, which include class work and independent research that is similar to the subjects and content studied in School. Students shall not access entertainment sites, such as social networking sites or gaming sites, except for legitimate educational purposes under the supervision of a teacher or other professional.
- All student use of the School network and Internet system or personal cell phones or other digital devices used by students while on campus is subject to the provisions of the School's Code of Conduct and related policies. Students may not share or post personal information about, or images of, any other student, staff member or employee without permission from that student, staff member or employee

- Students should follow the guidelines for searching that utilize safe search engines and technology.

SAFETY USE

Use of the internet has potential dangers. Users are encouraged to read two brochures regarding Internet safety that the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office has prepared. The brochures are entitled *The Internet, Your Child and You: What Every Parent Should Know* and *Internet Safety: Advice from Kids Who Have Faced Danger Online*. Copies of these brochures are available on the Internet at www.ago.state.ma.us or can be provided by the school upon request.

The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications:

- Never reveal any identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs;
- Use the "back" key whenever you encounter a site that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable;
- Immediately tell a teacher if you receive a message that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable; and
- Never share your password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you should change it immediately and notify a teacher.

PRIVACY

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. The school reserves the right to examine all data stored on diskettes involved in the user's use of the school's Internet service.

Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

VIOLATIONS

Access to the school's Internet and technology services is a privilege not a right. The school reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (students), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. The school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the school's Internet service. The school also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

ELECTRONICS & TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Students who choose to bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school do so at their own discretion and the school does not accept responsibility for the security of such items that are brought onto school grounds. Furthermore, all electronic devices shall remain off and out of sight during the school day. They either need to be turned in to the teacher during morning breakfast in the classroom or stay in the student's locker. Failure to do so will result in the device being

collected through the end of the school day and consequences will be issued in accordance with our Code of Conduct. Repeat offenses will require a parent/guardian to come to the school to retrieve the item and may result in higher-level consequences.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, the use of tobacco products is prohibited within school buildings or school facilities, on school grounds, and on school buses.

DISRUPTIVE OR DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR

If a student at our school is causing a significant distraction to the learning of others, the student will be referred to the School Culture Team or a member of the administration, who will provide the support necessary for the student to calm themselves, reflect on their choices in class, and prepare to re-engage in learning. Our goal is to de-escalate the situation, help the child regulate their emotions and behavior, regain calm, facilitate a conversation about why they are making the choice to act in a certain way, and ultimately help them re-engage in learning. In very rare instances that result in either a staff member having to restrain a child and/or bodily injury of either a child or adult, families are provided with details of the situation either on the phone or, if necessary, at the school building in accordance with the procedures required under 603 CMR 46.00 and the school's restraint policy.

STUDENT RESTRAINT

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00 and our policy regarding the restraint of students (see Appendix), physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind: to administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; or to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. All personnel authorized to administer any forms of restraint shall be trained annually in accordance with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, sex, color, creed or religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, age, ancestry, socio-economic status, housing status or homelessness, special need, physical appearance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, prior academic achievement, criminal record, or military status. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school-related events. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about harassment or against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. MLKCSE requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect, dignity, and humanity to their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

Purpose and Scope

Definition of Harassment

Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendo, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, homelessness, disability, or any other protected status as required by state or federal law. By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed or perceived by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. The protections afforded under harassment are extended to sexual harassment. In addition, protections extend to locations, events, or circumstances over which the school exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs.

Sexual harassment can be carried out by employees, students, or third parties. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Specifically, under regulations promulgated under Title IX, sexual harassment includes three types of misconduct:

1. Any instance of “quid pro quo” conduct (conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct) by an employee;
2. Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access;
3. Any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking (all as defined by federal laws.)

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by MLKCSE. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Board of Trustees, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

MANDATED REPORTING

Massachusetts law requires school teachers, educational administrators, school attendance officers, after-school program staff, social workers, psychologists, and guidance or family counselors to immediately make an oral report to DCF when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years may be suffering from abuse and/or neglect. Any such abuse must be reported immediately to the Department of Children and Families in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 19, § 51A.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Where to File a Complaint

Any student or employee who believes that MLKCSE has discriminated against or harassed them because of their race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, disability, or any other protected status under state or federal law in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities may file a complaint with the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the person who is alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment, the complaint may be filed with the Principal or Director of Operations.

To ensure prompt and equitable procedures, MLKCSE will follow these steps for filed complaints:

1. MLKCSE will provide notice of the school's grievance procedures, including how to file a complaint, to students, parents, and employees.
2. MLKCSE will apply the appropriate grievance procedures to complaints alleging harassment, including sexual harassment, carried out by employees, other students; or
3. MLKCSE will ensure an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints, including the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence
4. MLKCSE will designate and follow a prompt time frame for major stages of the complaint process.
5. MLKCSE will provide notification to parties of the outcome of the complaint to the extent possible in compliance with confidentiality regulations.
6. MLKCSE will provide assurance that the school will take steps to prevent recurrence of any harassment and to remedy its discriminatory effects, as appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

MLKCSE will take steps to alleviate any concerns of confidentiality in its response to allegations of Harassment. MLKCSE will discuss confidentiality standards and concerns with the complainant and other participants. If a complainant, or their parent or guardian, asks that the student's name not be disclosed to the respondent or that nothing be done about the alleged harassment, the school will inform the student that the confidentiality request may limit the school's ability to respond. At the same time, schools should inform any student who asks that their name not be revealed that the school will take steps to prevent retaliation and will take strong responsive actions if retaliation occurs.

MLKCSE will evaluate confidentiality requests in the context of its responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The factors that a school may consider include the seriousness of the alleged harassment, the age of the student harassed, whether there have been other grievances filed against the alleged harasser, and the rights of the accused individual to receive information about the complainant and the allegations if a formal proceeding with sanctions may result. Exceptions as permitted by FERPA, or is required by law, or to carry out the purpose of the Title IX regulations, including to conduct an investigation, hearing, or judicial process. If MLKCSE determines that it is possible to respond without revealing the identity of the complainant, the school will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complainant with the student's request as long as doing so does not prevent the school from responding effectively to harassment and the prevention of harassment of other students.

MLKCSE will offer supportive measures to the complainant, whether or not they file a formal grievance. Consideration will be given to the complainant's wishes in respect to those supportive measures. Supportive measures are defined to include non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate or reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to establish, restore, or preserve equitable access to MLKCSE's educational programs and activities without unreasonably burdening the other party. Supportive measures may include counseling, modifications of class schedules, escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, increased monitoring of certain areas of the school, and other similar measures.

Whether or not a formal grievance was filed, a respondent may be removed from an educational program or activity on an emergency basis. This is provided that MLKCSE undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis to determine that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal. The respondent, in that situation, will be provided notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment

When responding to an allegation of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will meet with the complainant to inform them of their rights under Title IX, including the right to file a "Formal Complaint" against the alleged perpetrator/respondent.

A "Formal Complaint" is a document filed by the Complainant alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school initiate the Title IX Grievance Process. Formal Complaints may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail. If a Formal Complaint is dismissed because the alleged events do not fall within the parameters of Title IX, the District will promptly notify the parties of its dismissal and the reasons therefore. When the Complainant chooses not to file a Formal Complaint, the Coordinator may elect to do so, particularly when the Coordinator deems the investigation and potential sanctions are necessary to address safety or similar concerns within the school. If electing to override a Complainant's decision, the Coordinator will document the reasons for doing so in writing.

Investigation and Resolution of the Complaint

Each complaint will be resolved based on the nature of the allegation and the investigation required. Respondents will be informed of the charges as soon as the Administrator deems appropriate. Generally speaking, the Administrator will interview witnesses whom they deem necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint and will gather other relevant information. Such interviews and gathering of information will be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint, the Administrator will meet with the grievant and/or their representative to review the information gathered and, if applicable, to propose a resolution designed to stop the discrimination or harassment and to correct its effect. Within ten (10) school days of the meeting with the grievant and/or representative, the Administrator will provide a written disposition of the complaint to the grievant and/or representative and to the respondent(s).

Notwithstanding the above, it is understood that in the event a resolution contemplated by MLKCSE involves disciplinary action against an employee or a student, the complainant will not be informed of such disciplinary action unless it directly involves the complainant (i.e., a directive to “stay away” from the complainant, as might occur as a result of a complaint of harassment).

Sexual Harassment Grievance Process

Pursuant to Title IX, MLKCSE has a separate Grievance Process for resolving Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment. Once a Formal Complaint is filed, MLKCSE will provide the Complainant and Respondent with written notice of the allegations and information about the Grievance Process. This written notice will include details of the specific allegations including (if known) the individuals involved, the alleged conduct, and its date and location. The notice must include a statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination of responsibility is to be made at the conclusion of the Grievance Process. The parties will be informed of the right to have an advisor of their choice (who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney) who may accompany them at any point during the process. Each party will also be informed of their right to inspect and review evidence that is gathered. The parties will also be reminded of the school’s prohibition against knowingly making false statements during this process and of the MLKCSE’s policy prohibiting retaliation against anyone who participates in the Grievance Process.

After the Formal Complaint is filed and the parties have been advised of their rights, the Title IX Coordinator will offer the parties the option of participating in an informal resolution process if appropriate. Before beginning an informal resolution process, MLKCSE will obtain written consent from the Complainant and Respondent. A Facilitator assigned by the Coordinator will conduct a mediation. If a resolution is reached, the Facilitator will maintain the result in writing, and no further action need be taken. As the process is entirely voluntary, either party may withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time.

If either party declines informal resolution, or in the event no agreement is reached, the Grievance Process will resume. The Coordinator will assign an “Investigator” and a separate “Decision-Maker.” In the event of an appeal, a separate “Appeal Officer” must also be appointed. All individuals involved in processing a Formal Complaint must be free of bias and conflict of interest and must receive training regarding this policy and their respective roles.

The Investigator will complete an investigation into the Formal Complaint. Both the Complainant and Respondent will have an equal opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence. Prior to any interviews with a witness, the Investigator will provide the witness with notice of the date, time, location, and participants. Both parties will have an equal opportunity to examine evidence. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigator will create an initial Investigative Report that summarizes the relevant evidence and will send it simultaneously to each party and the party’s advisor. The parties will have 10 days to review and respond to the report if they so choose. After considering any response, the Investigator will then finalize the Investigative Report and provide a copy to each party and to the Decision Maker.

The Decision-Maker will afford each party the opportunity (1) to submit written, relevant questions that a party wishes to ask of any party or witness, (2) to provide answers, and (3) to submit additional, limited follow-up questions. The Decision-Maker must provide an explanation in the event they exclude a question as not relevant.

In addition, or in the alternative, MLKCSE has the discretion (and is not required) to conduct a live hearing as a part of the Grievance Process. At such a hearing, the Decision-Maker will permit each party's advisor to ask the other party and any witnesses relevant questions. Upon the request of the Complainant or Respondent, MLKCSE will utilize technology to separate the parties during the hearing process. If a party or witness does not submit to cross-examination at the live hearing, the Decision-Maker will not consider any statement of that party or witness in determining responsibility.

Following the written or live hearing process, the Decision-Maker will issue a written decision as to whether the Respondent engaged in Sexual Harassment to both parties simultaneously. The report must include a description of the allegations, the procedural steps followed in the grievance process, a finding of facts, the conclusions reached, and the rationale therefore, and if applicable, any discipline imposed (subject to applicable procedures). If applicable, the Decision-Maker will also include remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to education and activities at MLKCSE.

Both the Complainant and Respondent shall have the right to appeal the decision by notifying the Title IX Coordinator in writing within 10 business days of receiving the decision. MLKCSE will provide written notice of the appeal to the other party. The grounds for appeal are limited to: procedural irregularity, new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination or dismissal, or an alleged conflict of interest. Both parties shall have an opportunity to provide a written statement supporting their position on the Appeal. The Appeal shall be reviewed by a person who is not the original Facilitator, Investigator, Decision-Maker, or Title IX Coordinator. The Appeal Officer shall issue simultaneously to the parties a written decision and rationale.

MLKCSE will maintain for seven years a record of the alleged conduct and of any actions taken, including supportive measures provided and the basis for MLKCSE's conclusion with respect to the alleged conduct.

COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON DISABILITY

A person who alleges discrimination on the basis of disability relative to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a person, who because of a handicap needs or is believed to need special instruction or related services, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 766, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, may also use the procedure outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Education's Parents' Rights Brochure rather than the general Grievance Procedure. In addition to the required distribution guidelines, additional copies of the brochure are available at any time by request.

HAZING

Massachusetts Anti-Hazing Law, M.G.L. c. 269, Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined. Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. *(Amended by 1987, 665.)*

M.G.L. c. 269, Section 18. Failure to report hazing.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. *(Amended by 1987, 665.)*

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, and TITLE II COMPLIANCE

Kendra Salvador, Executive Director, and Abigail Hertz, Director of Special Education and Student Services, coordinate MLKCSE’s compliance under Title IX, Section 504, and Title II.

They can be contacted at: ksalvador@mlkcs.org or ahertz@mlkcs.org.

ESSA, SCHOOL REPORT CARDS, AND HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is federal legislation enacted in 2015. As part of that legislation, schools are required to issue to parents an annual report card that presents students' performance on standardized exams such as MCAS, including student performance broken down by subgroup. In addition, the report card outlines how much funding students receive. Parents can request in writing to the Principal the educational credentials and licensure of any of their students' teachers.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Note: These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth their view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a monthly newsletter, student handbook) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).

Or you may contact them at the following address: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H and 37O, bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action by the school administration. Please see Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR BULLYING

Students who believe they are victims of bullying, who witness bullying activity, or who are retaliated against for reporting bullying, should report the incident to the Principal, Counselor, or School Administrator. Students may also report to a teacher or other trusted adult in the building,

who will in turn report the incident to the Principal or the Director of Operations. The Principal or the Director of Operations will be responsible for conducting an investigation regarding the allegations. Parents of the alleged target and alleged perpetrator will be contacted when the allegations are made, and after the investigation is complete and a determination is made in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O. The same process for appeals described above applies to the grievance procedure for bullying. Students and parents may consult the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for a detailed description of the school's procedures regarding bullying.

A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Please note that in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, law enforcement may be contacted by the school in some bullying cases.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

MLKCSE maintains a strict Code of Conduct and clear disciplinary procedures. These procedures do not allow for corporal punishment but rather include a set of clear and logical consequences, including color changes, loss of Kickboard dollars, loss of privileges, suspensions, and expulsions. In accordance with M.G.L. § 37G, corporal punishment of pupils is prohibited.

Appendix A: Code of Conduct

One goal of Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence is to have a school culture centered around safety, respect, a sense of belonging, and the importance of responsibility. We are committed to working with students to ensure this is reflected in their choices and actions, and when this is not occurring, we will hold students accountable and support them in their development.

The philosophy of our Code of Conduct is rooted in restorative justice. Restorative justice takes incidents that might otherwise result in punishment and finds opportunities for students to recognize the impact of their behavior, understand their obligation to take responsibility for their actions, and take steps toward making things right. We have a Code of Conduct to ensure that we maintain a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment. As the second pillar of our mission states, we are also committed to empowering our students with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life. The school incorporates Dr. King's commitment to the highest standards in scholarship, civic participation, and the ideal of the beloved community.

WHERE AND WHEN THE CODE APPLIES

The MLKCSE Code of Conduct and Core Values apply to incidents that occur:

- in the school building and on school grounds;
- on the property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at a bus stop, on the school bus, or in other school-sanctioned transportation
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, field trip, function, or program whether it takes place on or off school grounds;

- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased, or used by the school district or school; and
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the incident creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES

MLKCSE offers differentiated interventions for students. These interventions are aimed at addressing the root causes of students’ behaviors and focus on teaching behaviors rather than excluding students or solely punishing them. We believe that challenging and unwanted behaviors must be addressed in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavior support that is designed to teach Social Emotional and pro-social behaviors. We do recognize that there is a balance between this approach and also having clear limits and boundaries for students. Certain dangerous or substantially disruptive behaviors to the educational process or the orderly operation of a school will be disciplined in addition to developing a plan for the teaching of appropriate replacement behavior.

CORE VALUES

Core Values School and community expectations will be based on our school’s Core Values.

Core Value	Schoolwide Definition
Promoting social justice	To support or actively encourage equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities for all
Respect	Take care of yourself, others, and your environment Use kind words and actions Treat others how you want to be treated
Integrity	Do the right thing even when no one is looking The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles
Determination	Sticking with it, even when it gets challenging Willpower
Excellence	The quality of being outstanding or extremely good

Students will earn Kickboard dollars for embodying these values and other habits of scholarship (and be able to “spend” the dollars they have earned at the School Store or at the Kickboard Auctions that happen twice a year). Students will also be celebrated in Community Meetings or Town Hall Meetings for modeling these attributes.

If a student engages in behavior that runs counter to our Core Values or to the Student Expectations of our school, a staff member will intervene with the student and support them in

their continued development. We ultimately want to support our students in learning how to manage themselves, their emotions, their choices, and their relationships with adults and with peers. We want to teach them to understand how their behavior impacts others. As faculty, staff, and administrators of the school, we are responsible for maintaining safety and facilitating students' academic and social-emotional growth by setting clear limits and boundaries and supporting them in following school rules and policies, even when behavioral challenges may arise.

The table below outlines some unacceptable behaviors⁶ and the range of responses to be used. All behavior responses in levels 2-4 will be documented.

Level 1 Behavior	
Support strategy is classroom-based and provided by the teacher and/or classroom staff	
A Level 1 Behavior requires support and responses by the teacher. This may include additional consultation with school-based leadership or counselors when patterns of behavior persist.	
Prevention	Possible Actions Taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff get to know students and develop positive, trusting relationships, including greeting students daily and learning about students' lives outside the classroom. ● Practice clear, consistent procedures and routines daily. ● Interactive model all academic and behavioral expectations. ● Differentiate classroom instruction to best meet diverse student needs. Students will have less behavioral difficulties when they can access the instruction. ● Provide opportunities for student collaboration. ● Use positive, specific praise/feedback ● Individual and group recognitions and celebrations. ● Use developmentally appropriate sensory, motor and space modifications to change the environment or the ways that students engage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive directives that clearly and briefly state expectations ● Re-teaching (interactive model again) and practicing of skill or procedure ● Reminders ● Non-verbal redirection ● Verbal prompt, redirection and/ or correction ● Increased teacher proximity ● Seating change ● Cool Down Corner ● Buddy Classroom ● Assign teacher-supervised consequences ● Communication with caregiver to discuss and problem solve a concern via phone, email, or in-person <p>Possible Follow-up actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student/Teacher restorative conference ● Use of Restorative questions ● Create a classroom check-in plan ● Reflection activity ● Peer Mentoring

⁶ Please note that this list is not exhaustive and does not contain every possible example of behavior that could occur. MLKCSE reserves the right to include other behaviors as they occur given they fit the definition of the level of unacceptability.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent development of well-structured, engaging and culturally responsive lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peer Mediation ● Mediated conflict resolution ● Referral to school-based health, mental health providers, or other appropriate community support agenda ● Service to the school community ● Appropriate Restitution plan ● Daily progress sheets on behavior ● Collaborative Problem Solving ● Personal Efficacy Conference ● Restorative Circle ● Consult with school-based leadership or counselors to generate possible strategies to reduce unskillful behaviors and increase desired target behaviors. ● Complete and submit a Student Intervention Committee (SIC) Referral
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Level 2 Behavior
Involves support staff and/or appropriate administration

The behavior persists after teacher supports are not successful; it may involve student removal from the classroom, restorative supports, meeting with administrator or student support staff member or family conference. Generally, Level 2 behavior does not include exclusion, internal or external, as an initial response. However, exclusion may be considered for a particularly serious incident or pattern of incidents.

Prevention	Possible Actions Taken
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Incorporate all Level 1 Prevention and Possible Actions Taken as well.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative conferencing between teacher and student (might also include parent and/or school-based leadership) to develop a plan for improving behavior, engagement, and academic performance in the classroom. ● More intensive academic and/or behavioral progress monitoring and/or individualized support (Token Board, check-in/check-out plan) ● Re-teaching (interactive model again) and practicing of skill or procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required: document behavior via Kickboard ● If required, document student referral ● Re-teaching (interactive model again) and practicing of skill or procedure ● Buddy Classroom ● Communication with the caregiver to discuss and problem solve a concern via phone, email, or in-person ● Administration assigned consequence ● Loss of school-based privilege ● Restorative conferencing between teacher and student (might also
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	<p>include parent and/or school-based leadership) to develop a plan for improving behavior, engagement, and academic performance in the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consult with school-based leadership or counselors to generate possible strategies to reduce unskillful behaviors and increase desired target behaviors. ● Complete and submit a Student Intervention Committee (SIC) Referral ● Use of Restorative questions ● Create a check-in/check-out plan ● Create a safety plan ● Reflection activity ● Peer Mentoring ● Peer Mediation ● Mediated conflict resolution ● Referral to school-based health or mental health providers ● Service to the school community ● Appropriate Restitution plan ● Daily progress sheets on behavior ● Collaborative Problem Solving ● Restorative Circle ● Individualized case management services for students with IEPs and 504 plans with possible reconvene of IEP/504 Team to review needs for additional accommodations and support when concerns persist.
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Level 3 Behavior
 Behavior support responses may warrant in-school and/or short-term out-of-school suspension
 (1-10 Days)

Generally, behavior is serious and/or presents a risk to the safety, health, or welfare of the adults and students; may involve consideration of an emergency removal and/or in-school suspensions (partial or full day) or short-term suspensions from 1 to 10 days based on severity and repeated occurrences; may also involve meeting with administrator or student support team member, family conference, and/or re-entry restorative planning conference. If a student presents with significant mental health distress and concerns about the immediate

risk to self or others, the school counselor should be consulted to assess the need for a referral to the SIC Team or appropriate outside agency.

Prevention	Possible Actions Taken
Incorporate all Level 1 Prevention and several Possible Actions Taken from Levels 1 and 2 as well.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See Levels 1 and 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required: document behavior via Kickboard ● Required: student referral ● If warranted: written account of the incident via MLKCSE Critical Incident Form <p>If applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-School Suspension Letter sent home by administrator. ● If a short-term out-of-school suspension is considered, a Suspension Hearing Letter (notice) is sent home by administrator, including information to parents on due process rights. ● Due process hearing. ● Suspension decision letter sent home by administrator. ● Parent notification and scheduling of re-entry conference with administrator, student and parent. ● Administrator investigation of incident and consideration of past pattern of referrals in determining consequences. ● Manifest Determination Review (MDR) is required when a student with a disability reaches 10 cumulative days of suspension or a pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension occurs. ● Consultation with public safety officials, police and fire, when a crime is suspected. ● Administration assigned consequence ● Loss of school-based privilege

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete and submit a Student Intervention Committee (SIC) Referral ● Development of comprehensive student-specific academic and/or behavioral support plan, such as completion of a functional behavioral assessment and plan, reassessing and adjusting existing plans and increase monitoring. ● Creation of a safety plan ● Mediated conflict resolution ● Referral to school-based health or mental health providers ● Service to the school community ● Appropriate Restitution plan ● Collaborative Problem Solving ● Restorative Circle ● Individualized case management services for students with IEPs and 504 plans with possible reconvene of IEP/504 Team to review needs for additional accommodations and supports when concerns persist.
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<p>Level 4 Behavior Behavior Support Responses May warrant longer-term out-of-school suspension (11 days or more)</p> <p>Infractions at this level represent the most serious infractions and may result in a suspension of more than 11 days, up to and including a full year of suspension or exclusion from school. Infractions at this level represent very serious infractions and may result in an emergency removal and/or suspension of more than 11 days, up to 90 days, or until the end of the school year, whichever occurs first. Generally, behavior is very serious and/or involves violent or dangerous behavior violations that have a substantially detrimental effect on the safety and general welfare of the school but do not involve felony charges, possession of drugs, weapons, or assault on educational staff (covered by Level 5). If a student presents with significant mental health distress and concerns about the immediate risk to self or others, the school counselor should be consulted to assess the need for a referral.</p>	
Prevention	Possible Actions Taken
<p>Incorporate all Level 1 Prevention and several Possible Actions Taken from Levels 1-3 as well.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See previous Levels for possible prevention strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required: document behavior via Kickboard • Required: student referral • If warranted: written account of the incident via MLKCSE Critical Incident Form <p>If applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-School Suspension Letter sent home by administrator. • If a short-term out-of-school suspension is considered, a Suspension Hearing Letter (notice) is sent home by administrator, including information to the parent on due process rights. • Due process hearing. • Suspension decision letter sent home by administrator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent notification and scheduling of re-entry conference with administrator, student and parent. • Administrator investigation of incident and consideration of past pattern of referrals in determining consequences. • Manifest Determination Review (MDR) is required when a student with a disability reaches 10 cumulative days of suspension or a pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension occurs. • Consultation with public safety officials, police and fire, when a crime is suspected. • Administration assigned consequence • Loss of school-based privilege • Complete and submit a Student Intervention Committee (SIC) Referral • Development of comprehensive student specific academic and/or behavioral support plan, such as, completion of a functional behavioral assessment and plan, reassessing and adjusting existing plans and increase monitoring.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creation of a safety plan ● Mediated conflict resolution ● Referral to school-based health or mental health providers ● Service to the school community ● Appropriate Restitution plan ● Collaborative Problem Solving ● Restorative Circle ● Individualized case management services for students with IEPs and 504 plans with possible reconvene of IEP/504 Team to review needs for additional accommodations and supports when concerns persist.
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<p>Level 5 Behavior</p> <p>Behavior support responses may warrant a long-term suspension or expulsion (11 days or more)</p> <p>Infractions at this level represent special categories of the most serious infractions and may result in a suspension of more than 11 days, up to and including a full year of suspension, or permanent expulsion from school. Behaviors involving the possession of drugs, weapons or assault on educational staff as well as pending felony criminal or felony delinquency charges/convictions. If a student presents with significant mental health distress and concerns about the immediate risk to self or others, the school counselor should be consulted to assess the need for a referral.</p>	
Prevention	Possible Actions Taken
<p>Incorporate all Level 1 Prevention and several Possible Actions Taken from Levels 1-4 as well.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See previous Levels for possible prevention strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required: document behavior via Kickboard ● Required: student referral ● If warranted: written account of the incident via MLKCSE Critical Incident Form <p>If applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-School Suspension Letter sent home by administrator. ● If a short-term out-of-school suspension is considered, a Suspension Hearing Letter (notice) is sent home by the administrator,

	<p>including information to the parent on due process rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Due process hearing. ● Suspension decision letter sent home by administrator. ● Parent notification and scheduling of re-entry conference with administrator, student and parent. ● Administrator investigation of incident and consideration of past pattern of referrals in determining consequences. ● Manifest Determination Review (MDR) is required when a student with a disability reaches 10 cumulative days of suspension or a pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension occurs. ● Consultation with public safety officials, police and fire, when a crime is suspected. ● Administration assigned consequence ● Loss of school-based privilege ● Complete and submit a Student Intervention Committee (SIC) Referral ● Development of comprehensive student specific academic and/or behavioral support plan, such as, completion of a functional behavioral assessment and plan, reassessing and adjusting existing plans and increase monitoring. ● Creation of a safety plan ● Mediated conflict resolution ● Referral to school-based health or mental health providers ● Service to the school community ● Appropriate Restitution plan ● Collaborative Problem Solving ● Restorative Circle ● Individualized case management services for students with IEPs and 504 plans with possible reconvene of IEP/504 Team to review needs for additional accommodations and supports when concerns persist.
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DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing.

Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- the disciplinary offense;
- the basis for the charge;
- the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- the date, time, and location of the hearing
- the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section. Infractions that may warrant an OSS include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of a weapon or weapon-like object or illegal drugs (including prescription medication without a prescription) (which could also warrant expulsion under M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H)
- Continues gross disrespect of a fellow student or staff member including, but not limited to, hazing, bullying and harassment
- Assaulting another student or a staff member

- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property
- Being charged with a felony (which could also warrant a long-term suspension or expulsion upon conviction, see M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2)
- Using or possessing tobacco products
- Elopement from the classroom or building
- Using abusive, vulgar, or profane language or treatment
- Making verbal or physical threats
- Fighting, pushing, shoving, or unwanted physical contact with other students or staff
- Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats

Principal Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of their determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades Kindergarten through 3, the principal shall send their determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director or their designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades Kindergarten through grade 3, the principal shall send their determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7)

additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the Executive Director shall issue their written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the Executive Director determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The Executive Director's decision shall be final.

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year. An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension. Infractions that may warrant an ISS include, but are not limited to:

- Gross disrespect of a fellow student or staff member, including, but not limited to, hazing, bullying and harassment
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property
- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation
- Elopement from the classroom or building
- Using abusive, vulgar, or profane language or treatment
- Making verbal or physical threats
- Fighting, pushing, shoving, or unwanted physical contact with other students or staff
- Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following Procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H1/2

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff. A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in their discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.
- Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint
Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate. If the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for

appealing the suspension to the Executive Director. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Executive Director.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Executive Director has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

- Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency. The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of their request for an appeal of the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Executive Director hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Continuation of Educational Services for Students Serving Suspensions

Students who are suspended for ten (10) or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, make up assignments, and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Contact the Principal if you have any questions.

If the School needs to remove a student for more than ten (10) consecutive school days under § 37H³/₄, the school is required to provide the student and the parent/guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent/guardian, the school shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Be advised that disciplinary responses to misbehavior and support apply to all students, including all students with IEPs and 504 plans. Multiple incidents or chronic displays of unskillful or unacceptable behavior will warrant more intensive interventions and more serious outcomes. Level 3 and 4 responses may be modified for students to ensure the developmental appropriateness of the response, as well as, compliance with regulations for students with

disabilities on an IEP or 504 plan. Exclusionary responses, such as internal or external suspension, allow the school community to devise a safety and reintegration plan. Parents of any student who has engaged in highly aggressive or dangerous behaviors are expected to participate in the intervention plan created to support their child's success.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below. In addition to the IDEA, this section follows the Department of Education, 34 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 300.519-300.528 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504). Students who are not yet eligible for special education services are also entitled to these procedural rights provided that the school had knowledge that the child is a child with a disability before the behavior precipitating the disciplinary action occurred per 34 CFR §300.534. All students are expected to follow the MLKCSE's Code of Conduct unless otherwise determined by the student's Individualized Education Plan Team and written in the student's IEP. Federal and state laws provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to the discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability.

In general, if your child has violated MLKCSE's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove your child from their current educational placement for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days in any school year or ten (10) cumulative days that constitute a pattern of behavior.

Any time MLKCSE needs to remove your child from their current educational placement for more than ten consecutive school days in any school year, or if a student is removed for disciplinary reasons for more than a total of ten days in any school year when a pattern of removal is occurring, this is a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These include the following:

- (a) Prior to any disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement; the school must inform you that the law requires that the school district consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for your child's disciplinary removal is related to their disability. This is called a "manifestation determination." Remember that you, as the parent, always have the right to participate as a member of the group of people making this determination.
- (b) Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address your child's problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team will review it to make sure it is being implemented appropriately and will modify it if necessary.

When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent/guardian, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP - "a manifestation determination."

Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days

- a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or
- b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is “substantially likely” to injure him/herself or others.

Characteristics In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.

Manifestation Determination

The law provides that MLKCSE and the parent/guardian, along with relevant Team members, must consider all evaluation information, observational information, the student’s IEP, and placement and must determine whether your child’s behavior that prompted disciplinary removal was a manifestation of his or her disability. The behavior is considered a manifestation of your child’s disability if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, your child’s disability, or was a direct result of the school district’s failure to implement their IEP.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary behavior was related to your child’s disability then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the circumstances described below) until the IEP Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and you consent to that new IEP and placement, or a Hearing Officer orders a removal from the current educational placement to another placement.

If the manifestation determination is that the behavior was not related to your child’s disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school’s code of student conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding ten (10) days the school district must provide your child with educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. MLKCSE must determine the educational services necessary and the manner and location for providing those services.

If you disagree with the Team’s decision on the “manifestation determination” or with the decision relating to the placement of your child in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, you have the right to appeal the Team’s decision by requesting an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA).

Your child may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days if he/she engages in one of the following behaviors:

- Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function
- 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
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless you or MLKCSE have initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement, or you and MLKCSE agree to another placement.

Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the you and MLKCSE agree otherwise.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education

If, prior to the disciplinary action, MLKCSE had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the MLCKSE makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

- a. The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
- b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or
- c. District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

MLKCSE may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

If MLKCSE had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

If the student is found eligible, then they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Appendix B: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

PRIORITY STATEMENT

At Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE), we strive toward creating a just and beloved community. At MLKCSE, we are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. This commitment is an integral part of our continuing efforts to build a beloved community, promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. MLKCSE is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community at large to prevent any issue of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, the district has established this plan

for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The Administrative Team is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Public involvement in developing the Plan

The Plan was developed by MLKCSE staff, in consultation with members of the community served by MLKCSE, the Board of Directors, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP), and by referencing and adapting other model Bullying Prevention and Intervention plans.

Assessing needs and resources

The Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing the capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. MLKCSE will survey the students regarding school climate, Social Emotional Learning, and school safety issues annually. Building-specific data will be collected and analyzed in order to identify strengths, patterns of behavior, and areas of concern. This data will also inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

Planning and oversight

The principal or their designee is responsible for the following aspects of the plan:

- (1) receiving reports on bullying,
- (2) collecting and analyzing building-specific data,
- (3) creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports,
- (4) planning for the required professional development of teachers,
- (5) planning supports that respond to the needs of the targets and aggressors,
- (6) deciding on the curricula that the school will use,
- (7) developing and revising policies and protocols as needed
- (8) amending student and staff handbooks
- (9) leading the parent/family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and
- (10) reviewing and updating the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan yearly or more frequently if needed.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include mandatory State training on Bullying and Prevention, reviewing staff duties under the Plan, reviewing the process that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to also complete the mandatory State training on Bullying and Prevention and participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired

There will be ongoing professional development aimed at building the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The professional development will be informed by research and will focus on age and/or developmentally-appropriate information for the students of the school.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development 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;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

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.

The school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school employee handbook.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

At MLKCSE, all staff members work together to support students and identify any individual student who may be in need of additional services. This process can occur in a number of ways: self-referral, parent/guardian referral, teacher referral, and/or community agency referral. The district employs a student support team consisting of the following professionals: Administrators, Adjustment Counselors, School Nurses, School Psychologists, Special Education Director, Teachers, and Paraprofessionals. These teams work together to provide resources for students and develop specific supports and interventions when needed.

Counseling and other services. Culturally and linguistically appropriate resources are available within the school. The school Adjustment Counselor and Social Work interns are available to provide direct services to all students, including both targets and aggressors of bullying. Students may be referred for counseling by a parent/guardian or by a teacher, with parental consent. Services range from 1:1 time with a counselor, social skills-building groups, and other groups with students and model peers.

Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of their disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Referral to outside services. Some of the outside referral services MLKCSE currently uses are: Child Guidance Clinic, Gandara, Child and Family Services, and Academic and Behavioral Clinic. As appropriate, the Release of Information is given to parents and guardians.

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Specific bullying prevention approaches

Bullying prevention curricula, Safe and Caring School, which is informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- 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 cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cybersafety, 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.

The school uses multiple modalities to reinforce a safe school culture for all students.

General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts

At MLKCSE, our general teaching approach supports bullying prevention efforts through the use of positivity, consistency, and regular reference to our core values and the ideals of the beloved community. The ideal of the beloved community is borrowed from Dr. Martin Luther King, who believed that a good education develops both intelligence and character.

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying prevention and intervention initiatives:

- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including but limited to students with disabilities, LGBTQA+, homeless students, and students in foster care
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development; and
- using the Internet safely

MLKCSE recognizes certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. MLKCSE is committed to supporting vulnerable students and to providing all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Reporting bullying or retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents/guardians, or others. If bullying is suspected, anyone may request a Bullying Report Form to complete from the Principal. At the beginning of each school year, MLKCSE will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, 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, including the name and contact information of the Principal will be incorporated in Student and Employee handbooks and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents/guardians.

Reporting by Staff

A staff member will complete a written report immediately to the principal or designee when they witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee in writing. 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/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 with a staff member, or with the principal, principal designee, or counselor.

Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal 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, recess, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. The principal 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.

Obligations to Notify Others

- (a) **Notice to parents or guardians.** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- (b) **Notice to Another 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 principal or designee first informed of the

incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal 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.

Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or executive director has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal 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 principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will consult with other relevant individuals deemed appropriate.

Investigation

The principal or designee will promptly investigate 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 principal/designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given their obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. All written records will be submitted to the principal for filing.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal 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 principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action are necessary. Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school social worker, and the target's or 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 principal 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 notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal 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 directives that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal 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.

Responses to Bullying

Please see the sections above for specific strategies that MLKCSE uses to build students' skills and other individualized interventions that MLKCSE makes to remediate or prevent bullying and retaliation.

Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal/designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district 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).

Skillbuilding approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curriculum and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal/designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal/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 or district'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 principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal 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 principal 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 principal 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 principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

MLKCSE district provides parents/guardians with educational resources to allow them to understand district policy and curricula in ways that assist them in reinforcing the program(s) at home. Some of the educational resources and outreach include:

- The Leadership Team and Counselors meet annually to review the Bullying Prevention plan
- A Parent Advisory Committee forum is held to inform parents about bullying, cyber-bullying, and online safety. The forum includes information concerning actions parents can take to complement the curriculum and keep their children safe.
- MLKCSE provides information and resources throughout the school year
- District administrators and counseling staff provide individualized bullying prevention to students and their parents and guardians as needed

Notification Requirements

Each year the school will inform parents or guardians of the enrolled students about the bullying prevention strategies and measures that are being used. All notices and information made available to parents/guardians will be in hard copy as part of the Student/Family Handbook (and in electronic formats via the school website)

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying. It will be included in the MLKCSE Family/Student Handbook and the MLKCSE Employee Handbook, and on the school website (mlkcs.org).

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 district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or 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 a school district or 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 disrupts 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 (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department's problem resolution

system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information is available in both hard copy and electronic formats:

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 MLKCSE main office.

DEFINITIONS

Aggressor - Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying - "Bullying" for the purposes of requirements related to Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 legislation is defined as the following:

The repeated use by one or more students [aggressor(s)] of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of requirements related to this law, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. See section 5 of the legislation for more details on the definition of cyber-bullying and more.

Cyberbullying - is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G. L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment - as defined in M.G. L. c. 71, § 370, is 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 a student's education.

Retaliation - is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff - includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target - a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages,

privilege and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G. L. c. 71, § § 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Appendix C: Restraint Policy

To the extent required by law, Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (hereinafter "MLKCSE") complies with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (hereinafter "DESE") restraint regulations, which can be found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. (hereinafter "Regulations"). According to their terms, the Regulations apply not only at school but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property.

A brief overview of the Regulations is provided below:

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every student attending MLKCSE is free from the unlawful use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- (a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
- (b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Use of Restraint

Physical restraint⁷ shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort, and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions and/or alternatives, or such interventions and/or alternatives are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances. Prone restraint⁸ shall be prohibited in public education programs except to the extent allowed by law. All physical restraints, including prone restraints where permitted, shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

Physical restraint shall not be used:

- (a) as a means of discipline or punishment;

⁷ Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

⁸ Prone restraint shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.

- (b) when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- (c) as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a policy or directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
- (d) as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include the use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Mechanical restraint⁹, medication restraint¹⁰, and seclusion¹¹ shall be prohibited in public education programs. Seclusion does not include a time-out¹², as defined within the Regulations.

The Regulations do not limit the protection afforded publicly funded students under other state or federal laws, including those laws that provide for the rights of students who have been found eligible to receive special education services.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint

Only MLKCSE personnel who have received training pursuant to the Regulations shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. Nothing in this policy shall preclude a teacher, employee, or agent of MLKCSE from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. When administering a physical restraint, trained staff shall comply with the requirements regarding use of force, method, duration of the restraint, and safety, as set forth in the Regulations.

Staff Training

All school staff receive training with respect to the district's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used. All staff members participate in in-depth training in verbal de-escalation techniques and crisis prevention strategies. Additionally, the school identifies specific staff who are authorized to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring the proper administration of physical restraint. These individuals participate in in-depth Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training in the use of physical restraint and implementation of the Regulations.

Reporting Requirements

Program staff shall report the use of any physical restraint, as required by the Regulations. The staff member who administered the restraint shall notify the Principal verbally as soon as possible and in writing no later than the next school working day. The report shall be maintained by the school and made available for review by the Parent(s) or the DESE upon request.

⁹ Mechanical restraint shall mean the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement.

¹⁰ Medication restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior.

¹¹ Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving

¹² Time-out shall mean a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to inform the Parent(s) of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and shall notify the Parent(s) by written report within three (3) school working days of the restraint. The information in the report shall be in conformance with 603 CMR 46.06(4). The written restraint report must be provided to the Parent(s) in the language in which report cards and other necessary school-related information are customarily provided.

The Principal or designee shall review restraint data and determine the necessary next steps if any, as set forth in the Regulations.

As required by the Regulations, all physical restraints must be reported to the DESE.

Prevention of Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide

As set forth in the Regulations, MLKCSE develops methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. The School uses a range of strategies to quickly identify and address any potentially dangerous behavior. These strategies include the employment of two school counselors; the use of multiple social skills groups; regular meetings of the School Culture Team; regular communication with families; and when necessary, communication with outside providers, the Department of Children and Families, and the local Crisis Intervention team. Prevention of student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide is discussed with staff annually in professional development sessions. Through tiered behavior intervention strategies, staff members are trained to address any concerning behaviors immediately and proactively. The School Culture Team, School Counselor, and School Administration team support as needed when potential concerning behaviors arise and further intervention is required outside of the classroom to ensure the safety of all students.

Methods For Engaging Parents/Guardians and students in Discussions About Restraint Prevention and Use Of Restraint Solely as an Emergency Procedure

MLKCSE provides all families and students with information about behavioral supports and restraint prevention efforts that are utilized within the school annually through receipt of the Student Family handbook. The Executive Director follows all administrative procedures with respect to identifying students who may be at risk of restraint and work with the student and their family along with the school adjustment counselor to identify and work on behavioral supports to prevent restraint from occurring. It is the policy of MLCKSE to use restraint as a last resort.

If a student is restrained, the Executive Director is expected to follow administrative procedures with respect to engaging the student and their family about the use of the restraint, the report regarding the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed and/or any other related matters.

Engagement Strategies:

- Parent Family Meeting
- Safety Planning Meeting
- Crisis Planning Meeting
- Referral and engagement with the Student Intervention Committee (SIC)
- Outside Services Referral
- Participation in the MLKCSE Parent Advisory Council

Additionally, the school adjustment counselor or identified point person will also follow up with the student and their family regarding behavioral support as needed.

Description and Explanation of The Program's Alternatives to Physical Restraint and Method of Restraint in Emergency Situations

One goal of Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence is to have a school culture centered around safety, respect, a sense of belonging, and the importance of responsibility. We are committed to working with students to ensure this is reflected in their choices and actions, and when this is not occurring, we will hold students accountable and support them in their development.

There are a variety of appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. These alternative methods should be used first when seeking to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. Physical restraints only should be used as a last resort in emergency situations after these other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

Examples of interventions and less intrusive methods that may preclude the need for the use of physical restraint include but are not limited to, the following:

- CPI's Top 10 De-Escalation Tips:
 1. Be empathic and non judgemental
 2. Respect personal space
 3. Use nonthreatening non verbals
 4. Avoid overreacting
 5. Focus on feelings
 6. Ignore challenging questions
 7. Set limits
 8. Choose wisely what you insist upon
 9. Allow silence for reflection
 10. Allow time for decisions
- Verbal prompt - A verbal prompt is communicating what is expected behavior by clearly stating instructions and expectations.
- Full or partial physical cue - A full or partial physical cue is anytime an adult needs to temporarily place their hands on a student or physically redirects a student without force. These are used at increasing levels as needed to return a student safely back to task. See Physical Redirection and Physical Escort below.
- Time-Out - A time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out a staff member must continuously observe a student. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary and appropriate for the purpose of calming. If the time-out lasts more than 30 minutes, the principal/designee must be contacted for approval of continuation of time-out, based on the individual student's continuing agitation.

Appendix D: Complaint Procedure for Perceived Violations of Charter School Laws and Regulations

The following policy provides a mechanism for addressing complaints at the school level and complying with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89 (II). That statute requires charter schools to establish a process for persons or groups to file a complaint with the school's Board of Trustees if they believe the school has violated any of the provisions of charter school law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) and/or any regulation under 603 CMR 1.00. This complaint procedure is disseminated to all school community members and is available upon request.

Both the school and the Board work in conjunction with one another to hear and resolve any complaints. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the problem directly with the staff member(s). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the appropriate faculty or staff member, a meeting should be scheduled with a School Administrator. If the situation has still not been resolved, a meeting should be scheduled with the school's Executive Director.

If this meeting does not resolve the relevant complaint, the complainant may then submit a complaint directly to the Board of Trustees by following the process under 603 CMR 1.09 and emailing trustees@mlkcs.org if the complainant believes that the school has violated any provision of the charter school law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) and/or any regulation under 603 CMR 1.00. After receiving the complaint, the Board will review the complaint and the charter school's compliance with the law and will respond to the complainant in writing within 45 days. The Board will determine how best to address a complaint based on the allegations in the complaint. The charter school and the specific individuals involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.

If a complainant believes a complaint pursuant to 603 CMR 1.09 has not been adequately addressed by the Board of Trustees, he/she may submit the complaint to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, who shall investigate the complaint and make a written response (603 CMR 1.09(4)). In the event the charter school is found in non-compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00, as a result of a complaint or upon investigation, the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may take such action as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to suspension or revocation of the charter under 603 CMR 1.13, or referral of the matter to the District Attorney, the Office of the Attorney General, or any other agency for appropriate legal action.

If an individual believes that the charter school has violated any federal or state law or regulation regarding special education, the individual may file a complaint directly with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.