

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School

Parent and Student Handbook of Policies and Regulations

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School (LMACS) is to enable all its students to achieve academic, social and career success. This supportive school community identifies, encourages, and develops interests and abilities while acknowledging and respecting each student's personal and cultural identify.

LEARNER EXPECTATIONS

Upon graduating from LMACS, all students will be able to:

- 1) Read critically and analytically
- 2) Communicate effectively in writing and orally to a variety of audiences
- 3) Problem solve in a variety of circumstances
- 4) Use technology as a tool to gather, analyze and present information
- 5) Demonstrate a clear awareness of the rights and responsibilities of a community member
- 6) Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of a career or educational option in order to develop a plan for the future

LMACS is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all. LMACS does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT LMACS

LMACS

- has grown from a dropout recovery program based upon the completion of necessary credits to a comprehensive high school focused upon the delivery of a skills-driven, high standards curriculum to an at-risk, highly challenged population.
- serves an at-risk population of 120 students. It is a non-graded public high school. LMACS provides special education primarily through an inclusion model.
- curriculum is built around a core of traditional instructional areas supplemented by psycho-educational courses and groups, a school-to-work component, daily advising, and MCC courses under the Dual Enrollment Program. LMACS curriculum reflects its small size and mission-driven culture.
- schedule differs from that of a traditional high school. Class periods are 48 minutes long. School hours are 8:30AM to 3:00PM. Courses meet Monday through Thursday. One-on-one tutoring and additional time on learning occurs 8:30AM to 11:30PM on Fridays.
- courses require a minimum grade of 70% (C-) to pass. Students and/or their families or designated adult receive interim and trimester end grade reports, and IEP progress reports if applicable.
- students meet in daily advising groups. Advisors schedule student's course work, monitor their progress, and facilitate home contacts. Advisors update families and designated adults bi- weekly on their student's progress.
- holds monthly assemblies. Each assembly focuses on one of the LMACS ten ethical values.
- is committed to the success of every student.

LMACS COURSE OF STUDY

The LMACS course of study is called “Phases: Pathways to Success.” This innovative structure was implemented to address student gaps in learning and to progressively move students toward the successful completion of the LMACS curriculum and to provide opportunities for students to achieve Academic, Social and Career Success.

The Phases program has three essential phases or stages. Each phase is designed to provide students with the necessary skills to satisfy the graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School.

In Phase I students focus on acquiring the skills necessary to be a successful student.

In Phase II students focus on demonstrating proficiency of skills learned in Phase I.

In Phase III students focus on practicing the skills acquired in Phase I & II.

Each Phase includes the following:

- Approximately 12 academic courses
- School/community service component

Phase II and III requirements include:

- Career Preparation
- 50 Hour College/Career Exploration
- Opportunity for Dual Enrollment
- Successful completion of MCAS
- Math and English Proficiency
- Successful completion of “Senior” courses

Three trimesters are allowed for phase completion.

Progress is reviewed at the end of each trimester. Students who do not complete the phase in three trimesters will be required to repeat that phase.

For a complete list of LMACS course offerings, please see our current course catalog.

NON-NEGOTIABLE RULES AND POLICIES

LMACS Non-Negotiable Rules and Policies are founded on respect:

Respect Yourself:

To be part of the school, you must be working toward your goals for achieving a successful and healthy future.

Respect Others:

You must treat all fellow students, LMACS staff, MCC staff, and school visitors with courtesy and respect.

Respect Property:

You must show care for all areas of the school, the college, and others' personal belongings.

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- There is absolutely no violence or threats of violence. Any conflicts or disagreements must be addressed in a peaceful, non-violent manner. It is a violation of state law to carry a weapon on school property or to school sponsored events. M.G.L.A. 71 § 37H
 - Always speak with respect to others: peers, LMACS staff, MCC staff, building tenants, and visitors. No vulgar or abusive language is allowed at any time.
 - Maintain a drug-free school. No drugs or drug paraphernalia are allowed on school or college grounds at any time.
 - Students may not smoke on school grounds. This includes the doorways and alcoves of the LMACS building. Students caught smoking cigarettes, electronic cigarettes or vaping in the school will be asked to leave school for the day, and take an absence in their classes, and be responsible to make up missed work. Cigarette devices may not be plugged into any LMACS power sources. **It is a violation of state law to smoke on school grounds.**
 - Students may not leave the school building during the school day without authorization. Students who leave the school building without permission will be sent home for the day and will be responsible to make up missed work within 5 school days.
 - Come prepared for classes.
 - Bring a 5-subject notebook with you to all classes.
 - Do not bring food into classes
 - Dress appropriately for school.
 - Respect LMACS, MCC, and building grounds.
 - Do not deface or graffiti any part of any building.
 - All trash must be disposed of properly.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

LMACS Disciplinary Policies are designed to uphold the integrity of the LMACS community and support students in abiding by the LMACS Non-Negotiable Rules and Policies. Progressive levels of intervention allow students to reflect upon their behavior. Students initially encountering difficulties in meeting the behavior expectations of the school are sent to an **LMACS administrator**. If a student's behavior is determined by the Executive or Assistant Director to require further action, parents will be notified. Some offenses call for immediate action by the Executive or Assistant Director. Those offenses and the disciplinary due process procedures are described below.

Procedural Due Process

A student will not be excluded from school without being afforded appropriate due process as set forth below. If, however, a student's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the administrator's judgment there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school before receiving due process pursuant to an Emergency Removal (see below for more information).

Removal from Privileges and Extracurricular Activities

The principal or his/her designee may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. A removal from privileges and/or extracurricular activities is not subject to the procedures set forth herein.

Potential Consequences

Suspension

Suspensions may be short term or long term. Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Long term suspension means 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.

Suspensions may also occur in-school or out-of-school. In-school suspension is the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Long-term suspension means 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 Director may, in his/her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school.

During the course of an out-of-school suspension from school, a student may not be on school premises. During the course of an in-school or out-of-school suspension, a student is ineligible to participate in any school-related activities. The student and his/her parents are expected to meet with a school administrator prior to the student's return to class.

Student and Parent/Guardian Rights under Massachusetts' law, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H^{3/4}

This section governs all student offenses that may be subject to short- or long-term suspensions that *do not* involve dangerous weapons, controlled substances, assault on school staff, felony or felony delinquency charges, and/or felony delinquency findings or admissions, all of which are governed by M.G.L. c.71 §§37H and 37H^{1/2}, as detailed below. In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the principal is required to exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense, consider ways to re-engage the student in learning, and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. The following document outlines student and parent rights when the principal is considering and/or decides to implement a removal from school (suspension or expulsion) as a consequence for student misconduct.

I. In-School Suspension. An in-school suspension is a removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises. The procedure for an in-school suspension of no more than (10) school days (consecutive or cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year) will be as follows:

1. The administrator will inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged, the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to respond. If the administrator determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the administrator will inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which may not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
2. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The administrator will 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 will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the administrator is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts will constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.
3. The administrator will 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 administrator will

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 administrator and the parent.

An in-school suspension of more than 10 cumulative days in a school year will be subject to the procedures for long-term suspension found at page [10].

II. Short Term, Out-of-School Suspension. Except in the case of an Emergency Removal (see below), prior to imposing a short term out-of-school suspension (10 days or less in a school year) for conduct not covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and 37H ½, an administrator will provide the student and his/her parent oral and written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.

1. Notice: The written notice to the student and the parent will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate and will include the following:

- a) the disciplinary offense;
- b) the basis for the charge;
- c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the administrator 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 to attend the hearing;
- e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and parent.

2. Efforts to Involve Parent: The administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the administrator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The administrator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the administrator has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

3. Format of Hearing: The administrator will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also will have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the administrator should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The administrator will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to

discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.

4. Decision: The administrator will provide written notice to the student and parent of his/her determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The notice of determination may be in the form of an update to the original written notice of hearing.

III. Long Term Suspension

Except in the case of an Emergency Removal provided on page [14], prior to imposing a long-term suspension (more than 10 days of suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, whether consecutive or cumulative for multiple offenses during a school year), an administrator will follow the procedures for short-term suspension plus additional procedures as follows:

1. Notice: The notice will include all of the components for a short-term suspension, plus the following:

- a) In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the administrator may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- b) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- c) the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
- d) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- e) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the administrator, and a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request; and
- f) the right to appeal administrator's decision to impose long-term suspension to the Head of School.

2. Format of Hearing: The Hearing will afford the rights set forth in the notice above. The administrator will also provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.

3. Decision: Based on the evidence, the administrator will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to long-term suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The administrator will send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any

other method of delivery agreed to by the school and the parent. If the administrator decides to suspend the student on a long-term basis, the written determination will:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school (if more than 10 cumulative days);
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the administrator's decision to the Executive Director or designee. Notice of the right of appeal will be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and will include the following information stated in plain language:
 - a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
 - b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the administrator's determination on appeal.

No long-term suspension will extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

APPEAL TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in suspension of a student for more than 10 cumulative school days for the school year, the student may appeal the decision to the Executive Director. In order to do so the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days with a seven (7) day postponement option. The Executive Director must hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not filed within this

time frame, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The following apply:

- The Executive Director will make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Executive Director will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Executive Director to participate. The Executive Director will send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- The Executive Director will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. The Executive Director will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which will be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Executive Director will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the administrator's hearing for long-term suspension as described in Section D above.
- The Executive Director will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements for a long-term suspension as described in Section D above. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the administrator, but will not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the administrator's decision.

The decision of the Executive Director constitutes the final decision of the school district.

Expulsion

An expulsion will result in the permanent removal from school of the student in question and can only apply pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, §37H and §37H½.

Students are subject to expulsion by the Principal for the conduct listed below.

- Possession of a dangerous weapon*
- Possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse)
- Assault on teachers, administrative staff or other educational personnel

*This includes not only knives and guns, explosive devices and realistic replicas of such weapons/devices, but also other objects used to assault another person or to otherwise create a dangerous situation, such as a baseball bat, a pair of scissors, matches or a lighter. While such objects would not always constitute "dangerous weapons", administrators and educational professionals will review the circumstances of each case and make a reasonable determination about whether a particular object in a student's

possession constitutes a dangerous weapon in the school setting. Any illegal weapon will be turned over to the Police Department. Any student who brings a firearm to school must be expelled for a minimum of one school year, with exceptions granted only by the superintendent. (The definition of a firearm includes but is not limited to guns (including a starter gun), bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices.)

Students are also subject to long term suspension/expulsion by the Principal when charged/convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H½ .

Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H½ for more than ten consecutive days will have an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress during the period of removal under a school-wide education service plan, and will be so informed at the time of the suspension/expulsion.

Procedures applicable to conduct covered by M.G.L. c.71, §37H and 37H½

When considering the exclusion of a student from school for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse), or assault on teachers, an administrator may place a student on short term suspension (ten days or less) based upon an informal hearing, to be followed by a formal hearing before the Assistant Director within that period of suspension to determine whether to take additional disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

1. The informal hearing will be in the form of a conference between the student and the principal or designee. At this conference, the student (1) shall be informed of the reason for the conference, (2) shall be given the opportunity to present his or her side of the story, and (3) shall be given a decision on the suspension. If the administrator deems delay of the hearing necessary to avoid danger or substantial disruption, this process may occur immediately after, rather than before, the suspension.
2. Prior to putting a suspension into effect, the principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to telephone and inform the student's parent or guardian of the impending suspension; this shall include attempts to contact the parents or guardian at home and at work. Parents may contact the school for additional information regarding the suspension.
3. A letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian of the suspended student stating:
 - a) The reason for the suspension
 - b) A statement of the effective date and duration of the suspension
 - c) A statement regarding whether or not the Principal will schedule a formal hearing to consider further discipline, up to and including expulsion from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H

When considering a suspension/expulsion of a student charged with/convicted of felony, the Principal will use the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2. In addition, prior to initiating such procedures, the Principal may meet informally with the student and/or his parents to review the charge and the applicable standards if the Principal deems appropriate.

CONTINUATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Students serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Students who are suspended under §37H³/₄ for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension under LMACS's Education Service Plan, which is described below. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district or public school during the period of suspension, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

Services during Removals and School-Wide Education Service Plan

Students who are suspended from school for 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.

LMACS has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

LMACS's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning.

EXCEPTION FOR EMERGENCY REMOVAL

Notwithstanding the provisions for short or long-term suspension set forth above, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school if 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 administrator's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The administrator will immediately notify the Executive Director in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger [or disruption] by the student.

The temporary removal will not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the administrator will provide the following, as applicable to the length of suspension:

- Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and other applicable matters;
- Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided above, as applicable;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the administrator, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the administrator, student, and parent.
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

An administrator 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.

Students with Special Needs

All students are expected to follow the LMACS Code of Conduct, unless otherwise determined by the Team and written in the student's IEP. Federal and state law provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of these rights may be obtained from the LMACS administrators.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School is committed to maintaining a school and work environment that is free of harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability. LMACS expects all members of the school community, including the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers, and students, to conduct themselves in a manner free of any discriminatory behavior. If a student experiences, witnesses, or a third party reports an

incident of harassment or discrimination, the student informs the LMACS Executive Director. An investigation of the incident will begin immediately in accordance with procedures detailed in the LMACS *Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination Notice Handbook*.

POLICIES RELATED TO SPECIFIC OFFENSES

A student enrolled in the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School shall **not** on the school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events (including athletic events)

- a) assault or batter any member of the staff or student body,**
- b) have any weapons, including guns, knives, clubs, slingshots, or any other article that can be deemed dangerous,**
- c) maliciously destroy the real or personal property of Middlesex Community College or Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School or the real or personal property of any school or team member, or**
- d) make false bomb threats or false fire alarms, commit acts of arson, or possess explosives.**

Any of these violations will result in an immediate (10) day suspension and a meeting with Parent/DA will be scheduled to determine further discipline.

Alternatively, the Executive Director has the right to expel students for drugs, weapons or assault of staff pursuant to M.G. Lc. 71, § 37H (a) and (b).

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW CHAPTER 71 FELONY COMPLAINT OR CONVICTION OF STUDENT; SUSPENSION; EXPULSION; RIGHT TO APPEAL

Section 37H1/2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster 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 the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than

five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster 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 such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Board of Trustees. The student shall notify the Executive Director, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Board of Trustees shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Board of Trustees shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

ATTENDANCE, ACADEMIC PROBATION, SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

Absence Policy

Every student is expected to attend school on a regular basis and be on time for Advising and academic classes. Regular attendance is vital to ensure academic progress. In addition, each student's daily interactions with her or his classmates is a critical component of the learning process. If the school has not received any prior notification from a parent or guardian, parents will be notified if their child is not present.

Failure to attend and participate in class regularly adversely affects student learning, assessment and progress in school. Being absent or tardy is disrespectful to the teacher and members of the class. It is the student's responsibility to make up missed work as a result of the absence within 5 school days of that absence. Parent or D.A. cooperation with this policy is a pre-requisite for student success.

For health and safety concerns, LMACS health policy requires parents or guardians must notify the school of a student's known absence, or late arrival to school on a **daily** basis. Legally, students under the age of 18 cannot "call him or herself in" late or absent. Prolonged absences due to health concerns should be reported to the school nurse. Students must be cleared by the nurse before returning to school if they have been out with a contagious disease, a hospitalization, or been out for three (30 or more consecutive days).

If a student accumulates three (3) or more absences in a semester or misses two (2) or more classes due to tardies, the Designated Adult will be contacted. A meeting will then be scheduled with Administration to discuss the student's status and to develop an action plan to address the student's attendance.

There is a sign-in/sign-out clipboard in the Main Office. Students arriving late to school must sign in. A parent or guardian must sign out students leaving before the regular dismissal time. Students may sign themselves out only if the school has received prior notification from a parent or Designated Adult.

MARRIAGE, PREGNANCY, PARENTHOOD

In accordance with M.G.L. C.71 S.84 any student enrolled in Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School shall not be suspended, expelled, or otherwise disciplined on account of marriage, pregnancy, or parenthood. Married, pregnant, and parenting students are provided equal access to all LMACS programs including all academic, non-academic, and extracurricular activities.

In accordance with Federal Requirement 603 CMR 23.00, all information contained in or added to the student record shall be limited to information relevant to the education of the student.

The charter school does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school. However, students must have a physicians note to return to school after any hospitalization.

SCHOOL HEALTH

The school nurse is available during the school day. Students should report to the nurse for health emergencies, illness assessment, first aid/injuries, emotional support, medication administration, health record updates, and any health-related concerns. School health records and information in the health office are kept confidential. Federal law permits information in a student's school health record to be shared with school officials on a "need to know" basis and with a limited number of other persons, including those who could help in an emergency. In other circumstances, parental or designated adult consent will be required.

Student Health and Emergency Information Form

A Student Health and Emergency Information Form must be completed, signed and returned to the School Nurse at the beginning of **every** school year. This form gives information on how to reach parents in case of emergency and provides updated health information on each student. Parents and students should keep the health office aware of any health related updates (e.g., change in primary care, change in health insurance, recent medical developments, medications, etc.). **In the event of an accident or illness, the school must be able to reach the parent or another person who will assume responsibility for the student.**

Immunization/Lab Test Requirements

School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15 of the General Laws of the State of Massachusetts requires that all immunizations must be up to date for school attendance according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. Massachusetts General Law allows for the school district to exclude any student from school whose immunizations are not up to date.

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School

- A certified record of immunization and a TB risk assessment from your child's physician is required for entry into school.
- All immunization records must be provided in English and include all dates in full.
- Immunizations are reviewed by the School Nurse. In the event of missing or incorrect information, your prompt attention in addressing the error/omission is imperative to assure compliance with state law.
- Requirements:
 - 4 doses DTaP/DTP or ≥ 3 doses Td *plus* 1 Tdap (given within the last 10 years)
 - 2 MMR
 - 2 Varicella or physician documented case of chickenpox
 - 3 Hepatitis B
 - At least 3 doses Polio

Physical Exam Requirements

- School Entrance: Within 1 year prior to entry to LMACS or within 30 days after school entry.

Illnesses/Injuries/Exclusion from school

A student may be dismissed or excluded from school for any of the following:

- Temperature over 100.4° (oral temperature) – stay home until fever free (Temp <98.6) without fever reducer (ex, Tylenol or advil) for 24 hours.
- Disruptive cough
- Suspected infection of eye, ears, nose, throat, skin, scalp
- Severe abdominal pain or headache
- Suspected communicable disease
- Suspected pediculosis (head lice)- Student will be sent home for treatment if live lice or nits are found. Students should visit the school nurse on returning to school.
- Suspected fractures or any severe or disabling injury
- Questionable need for stitches
- Vomiting or diarrhea within past 24 hours
- Head injury
- Antibiotic therapy started less than twenty four (24) hours before returning to school
- Immunizations which are not up to date

In a case where the school determines a student needs emergency treatment, emergency transportation (911) will be called to transport the student via ambulance to the hospital. Every effort will be made to notify the student's parent/DA and a copy of the student's Health and Emergency Information Form will be sent with the student.

A note from a healthcare provider may be required in certain circumstances stating the student is healthy and able to safely return to school. Examples of this are, but are not limited to, suspected contagious illness, emergency transportation via ambulance to the hospital from school due to illness or injury and/or hospitalization.

Medications

Medications (both prescription and over the counter) should not be taken during school hours, if it is possible to achieve the medication regime at home. For example, medication to be taken three (3) times a day can be given at home before school, after school and at bedtime.

To insure student's safety:

- All medications at school must be in a pharmacy-labeled container (ask the pharmacy to provide separate bottles for home and school).
- A parent/guardian adult must deliver medications to the school, **never with the student** (except for emergency medications such as Epi-pens or inhalers).
- Medications that arrive in baggies or envelopes are not acceptable.
- All medications which must be taken during school hours, either long or short term, require the following forms to be on file in the school health office before any medication can be administered at school:
 - A current medication order, signed and dated by the prescribing physician
 - A signed and completed parent consent and medication administration plan
- Students are allowed to carry prescription medicine if granted permission by the school nurse. All medications, prescription or over the counter, must be taken in the school nurse's office with the exception of emergency medications (ex, Epi-pen, inhalers)

Vision and Hearing Screenings

LMACS performs vision & hearing screenings throughout the school year. Parents/legal guardians will be notified of screening results by letter or telephone only if the student has failed a screening exam or requires further care from their health care provider. Findings of these referrals for follow-up should be returned to school to update a student's health record.

School Health Records

All LMACS graduate students will receive their entire School Health Record between their last day of school and graduation. Please safely store these important documents, as they may be needed for college, military service and/or employment.

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information. The Executive Director will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements.

Federal law requires the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School provide names, addresses, and telephone numbers of high school students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education that request this information. While we are committed to protecting the confidentiality of our students, we must comply with the law.

Parents/Designated Adults who do **not** want their student's name and contact information disclosed to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education, **must** complete and return a Parent Opt Out Form to the school. Parental Opt Out Forms are included in students' acceptance packets, are mailed to students at the beginning of each school year, and are always available in the main office. Please note there is the option to withhold a student's information from military recruiters, institutions of higher education, or both. Unless Parents/Designated Adults notify the school **in writing** that they do **not** consent to the release of their student's information, the school must disclose a student's name, address, and telephone number to military recruiters and institutions of higher education that request this information about our students.

Please be aware that Parental Opt Out Forms can be submitted **any time** during a student's school career. Please advise the Registrar in writing if you change your decision at a later date.

A student also has the right to request that his or her information not be released. Parents/Designated Adults are encouraged to discuss this decision with their students.

**NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER
THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the Executive Director of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Executive Director of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

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

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

(*Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

(*Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of*–

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

(*Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer to from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

(Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.

(Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.

(Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

All students enrolled in the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School shall be free from arbitrary search of his/her person, personal property, or school property assigned to him/ her and seizure of such property.

There shall be reasonable cause for school personnel to conduct a search of a student's person, personal property, or school property assigned to him/ her. The school shall conduct general searches of the school and school property if there is reasonable cause that such a search is warranted.

Search of a students' personal property or of school property assigned to him/ her shall be conducted in the student's presence, except in cases of emergency where there is danger to the safety or security of the school or a person in the school. Then the student shall be notified as soon as possible.

Illegal items including, but not limited to, weapons, controlled substances, explosives, and other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of the school or person(s) in the school shall be seized by school personnel.

If a search reveals items or activities in violation of state law, the Police Department of the City of Lowell shall be notified.

ANTI-HAZING AFFIRMATION

LMACS strictly prohibits any form of hazing among students in student groups, teams, and organizations. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, LMACS hereby provides a written copy of the law to all students and requires that students and staff report incidents of hazing to the Executive Director. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to investigate and to take appropriate action, including but not limited to warning, suspension from school or work, expulsion from school, or termination from employment. If substantiated, the Executive Director shall make a written report to the Board of Trustees within fourteen (14) days of the initial reporting of the incident. Due process shall be followed to ensure the rights of all involved parties.

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS CHAPTER 269 CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE

CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING, DEFINITION; PENALTY

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine or 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. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

CH. 269, S.18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

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 not more than one thousand dollars. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

CH. 269 S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by this institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and section seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated students groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute by copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, and that each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall at least annually, file a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organization and to notify each full-time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said Institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the Institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the Content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the Attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report. Amended by St. 1985, c-536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

BULLYING PREVENTION

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School Student Handbook Supplement

In accordance with the M.G.L. c. 71, Chapter 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, LMACS is committed to promoting a safe environment to enable all students to achieve their personal and academic potential and become successful citizens. All forms of harmful and disruptive behavior, bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are not tolerated.

Definitions of Bullying - Cyber Safety - Retaliation:

"Bullying", the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

"Cyber-bullying", bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

"Victim", a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Hostile environment 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 the student's education.

Prohibition Against Bullying (See paragraph (d) of the M.G.L. c. 71, Chapter 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools)

Bullying is prohibited:

- on LMACS and Middlesex Community College grounds
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, including the park across Middle Street,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,

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- on a school or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased, or used by a school district or school (for example, on a school computer or over the internet using school computer,
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or materially, and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Reporting Bullying

LMACS expects students, parents, designated adults, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to any member of the faculty. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the Director, Assistant Director or another staff member. A member of the school staff is required to report immediately to the Director or Assistant Director any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of (*See paragraph (e)(2) of the M.G.L. c. 71, Chapter 370, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*). An incident report will be completed by the faculty member with the student. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged perpetrator solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Staff members include, but are not limited to educators, administrators, school nurse, custodians, advisors, social worker, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals. 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 Director or Assistant Director.

When the school Director or Assistant Director receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the Director or Assistant Director determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall:

- Notify the parents or guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation;
- Notify the parents or guardians of the perpetrator;
- Take appropriate disciplinary action;
- Notify the Lowell Police Department if the Director or Assistant Director believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator;
- All actions taken will be documented and filed in the student records.

All communication and notifications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00

Student Resources

LMACS will provide ongoing developmentally appropriate information on antibullying that will be presented in larger student body meetings and then reinforced in classrooms, such as Advising, using a variety of media. The education campaign will also build bystanders' skills for responding to bullying.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In accordance with the United States Constitution and M.G.L. C.71 Ss. 82-85, the rights of students at Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School to freedom of expression shall not be abridged, provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. Freedom of expression shall include without limitation, the rights and responsibilities of students, collectively and individually, (a) to express their views through speech and symbols, (b) to write, publish and disseminate their views, and (c) to assemble peaceably on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions.

ASSEMBLIES: The Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School provides a regular program of assemblies for students throughout the year. Students, regardless of the number, also have the right to assemble peacefully, both formally and informally, unless such assembly will be substantially disruptive to the educational process or ongoing school activities or will result in students incurring an unexcused absence. Any assembly planned by students during regularly scheduled school hours shall be held only at a time and place approved in advance by the Executive Director or her designee. No expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students.

BULLETIN BOARDS: Ample bulletin board space is provided for the use of students and student organizations, including a reasonable area for notices relating to out-of-school activities or matters of general interest to students. Although there shall be no prior censorship or requirement of approval of the contents or wording of notices or other communications, the following general criteria on posting will apply-

- a. Materials to be posted must be dated by the student or student group wishing to post them. If the posting is an announcement of an event, the date should be the date of the event. If the posting is a notice rather than an announcement of an event, the date should be the date that the notice is posted. The name of the student or student group must also appear on the posting.
- b. The student or student group is requested to remove posted material after a reasonable time so that others may use the bulletin board space.
- c. The school will not allow any materials to be posted which cause or contribute to a disruption of the educational process, that is, anything that interrupts or deters teachers from teaching or students from learning.
- d. Notices or announcements of events that are posted on spaces other than bulletin boards (such as walls, doors, or windows) without the expressed permission of the Executive Director will be removed to ensure compliance with fire and safety regulations.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIAL AND CIRCULATION OF PETITIONS:

Students shall be free to distribute handbills, leaflets, and other printed materials and to collect signatures on petitions concerning either school or out-of-school activities or matters of general interest to students. Although there shall be no prior censorship or requirement of approval of the contents or wording of such materials, the following general criteria shall apply-

- a. All printed matter and petitions distributed or circulated on school property should bear the name of the sponsoring organization.
- b. Distribution of material or collection of signatures shall be limited to periods before school begins, after dismissal at the end of the day, and during mealtime so as not to interfere with the regular school program.
- c. The place and manner of such activities shall be reasonably restricted to permit the normal operation of the school to continue without interruption and to prevent the use of coercion in obtaining signatures on petitions.
- d. In the cases of petitions presented by students to the Executive Director, students shall have the right to have their petition considered and to receive a reply.
- e. The distribution and selling of material for monetary gain by an individual or an organization that is not sanctioned by the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School shall not be allowed.

DRESS CODE

LMACS does not have a formal dress code but it is expected that students will dress appropriately in school with consideration for public sensibility. Clothing containing images of drugs, alcohol, or violence is unacceptable and students will be asked to change or cover unacceptable clothing. Shirts that are designed to intimidate or symbolize the objectification of individuals are not consistent with our Ethical Values.

TECHNOLOGY

Inappropriate use of technology or the use of threatening or abusive language on E-mail, the internet, or any other application will result in loss of technology privileges and may result in disciplinary action. Other prohibited behaviors include: The downloading of music, videos, or video games; the use of social media, and viewing or downloading of pornographic material. Students also may not bring beverages or food in the computer room.

PLAGIARISM

LMACS students will not plagiarize. Plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas without permission and treating them like they are your ideas. The most common types of plagiarism are:

Context Change: To camouflage copying by changing the context of the original paper.

Missing Footnotes: To skip footnotes altogether.

False References: To cite nonexistent books or journal articles, or referring to sources unrelated to the subject matter.

Any student caught plagiarizing will be subject to a staff intervention on the first offense. On repeated offenses the student will be subject to a meeting with Parent/DA and LMACS administrators.

Personal Electronic Devices and LMACS Owned Electronic Devices

The use of technology resources at LMACS and the freedom and responsibility to utilize personally owned electronic devices at LMACS is a privilege, not a right.

- Students should not under any circumstances photograph, film, or audio record other students or faculty during the school day with a personal or school-owned electronic device unless it is for a school sanctioned, class assignment and with consent of the administration.
- Mobile electronic devices are prohibited from use in bathrooms and stairways.
- Computers and iPads at Lowell Middlesex Academy are to be used for academic purposes only. Students are responsible for the use of an electronic device assigned to them even if they let someone else use it.
- Students may use personal cell phones, tablets, and laptops in class at the teacher's discretion.
- Other prohibited behaviors include: The downloading of music, videos, or video games; the use of social media, and viewing or downloading of pornographic material.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event that weather conditions should cause LMACS to cancel or delay classes for the day, the main office voice mail recording would be changed to indicate school cancellation for that day. LMACS main office number is (978) 656-3165.

Additionally, a cancellation announcement would be made on the following:

WCVB TV Channel 5 **www.LMACS.org**

If you do not specifically hear or see Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School is closed, there will be a regular school day. A closing or delay of Lowell Public Schools does **not** close or delay LMACS. Students and parents may also sign up for text or email delivery of the school closings on the Channel 5 website: HYPERLINK
"http://www.thebostonchannel.com/closingssignup/index.html" \o
"http://www.thebostonchannel.com/closingssignup/index.html"
 <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/closingssignup/index.html>

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

33 Kearney Square, Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Phone # 978 656-3165

www.lmacs.org