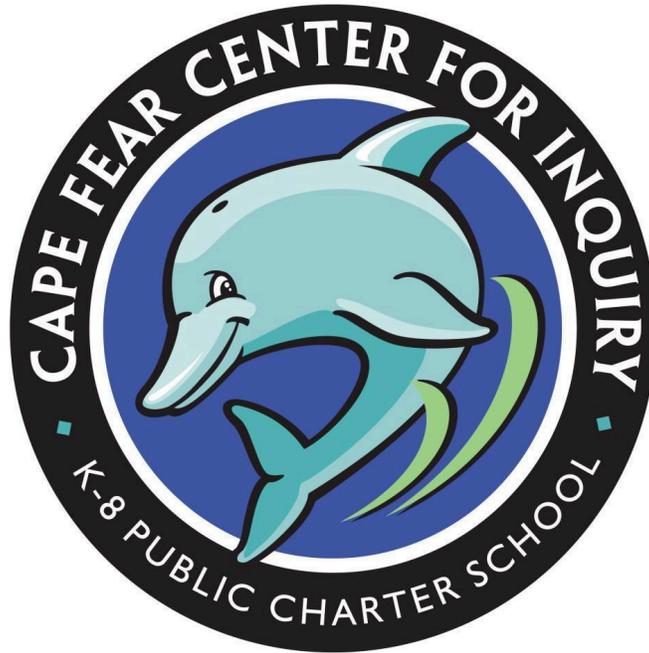


**2024-25**  
**Handbook for**  
**Students and Families**



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Wilmington, NC 28401  
910-362-0000  
[www.cfc.net](http://www.cfc.net)

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## School Essentials

### Mission, Vision, and Beliefs

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#### **Mission**

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry is committed to promoting students' abilities to think and create in personally meaningful ways through an inquiry-based, integrated curriculum in a nurturing and empowering environment.

#### **Vision for Our School**

CFCI will foster academic and social inquiry-based learning by enriching the state curriculum. We will facilitate research, communication, and action through:

- community partnerships
- environmental education
- global connection
- technology
- wellness

#### **Who We Are**

At CFCI, we believe that the whole child is more important than any single factor. We recognize physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development as integral parts of each child's growth and learning process.

Therefore, we:

- focus on student inquiry because we believe that all children have an innate sense of wonder.
- design and provide hands-on, integrated, and exciting learning experiences— through classroom and field experiences— because children learn best when they are actively engaged in making personally meaningful connections.
- are committed to a small student-teacher ratio because this is the best way to create communities of learners.
- nurture our students to be independent, lifelong learners
- appreciate diversity among learners because we value the uniqueness of each child.
- prepare our students to become effective communicators, critical thinkers and creative problem solvers because problem solving is a natural part of everyday life.
- implement a comprehensive social-emotional curriculum because children learn best in a safe and caring environment where every child is respected and valued.
- rely on mutual support of home, school and community. Open communication and family involvement are vital to ensuring student growth. We agree that nurturing and educating children are monumental tasks that require collaborative efforts.

## Inquiry

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CFCI teachers and administration work to implement methods such as inquiry-based instruction, providing student choices, as well as other innovative initiatives.

Students are actively exploring interests and taking ownership of their learning through:

- asking questions
- working together
- thinking and problem solving
- reflecting and sharing new understandings
- 

Teachers are creating a safe environment and guiding student learning by:

- accepting mistakes
- respecting students' ideas
- sharing leadership with students
- knowing students well enough to address individual needs and interests
- helping students make new connections
- nurturing a sense of wonder
- encouraging students to create their own understanding

**CFCI definition of Inquiry:** *Inquiry is a rigorous discovery process driven by curriculum and curiosity that requires exploration, analysis and problem-solving.*

## School Governance

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### Board of Directors

CFCI is a non-profit organization. As a non-profit, the school is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has between five and twelve members, and the primary responsibilities of the Board include ensuring that the school is achieving its mission, creating and following board policies, overseeing the strategic plan for the school, and approving the annual budget. The Board is also responsible for the hiring and termination of employees at the recommendation of the Co-Directors. The Board meets at Cape Fear Center for Inquiry on the third Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise posted. All board meetings are open to the public, and the agenda for each meeting is posted on the School website three days in advance of all regularly scheduled meetings. Public comments are allowed at board meetings at the discretion of the Board. Anyone who would like to make a public comment must email the Board Secretary at least 24 hours before a board meeting to request a spot on the agenda.

## Non-Discrimination

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### Equal Education Opportunities

CFCI provides equal education opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, gender, gender identity, natural hair style, cultural or economic background, or disability. Furthermore, no student, on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood, will be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity conducted by the school. The school will treat its students without discrimination with regard to course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance and extracurricular activities. CFCI adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including without limitation, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education.

*Any individual, who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed or bullied is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or, preferably, in writing to any of the following individuals:*

1. the *Director of Education (Jeremy Mortensen)*;
2. an immediate supervisor if the individual making the complaint is an employee;
3. the *Title IX coordinator (Susan Graziano)* for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
4. the *Section 504 Coordinator, (Lisa Cole)*, for claims of disability discrimination; or
5. for claims of other forms of prohibited discrimination, *Director of Education (Jeremy Mortensen)*.

### Compliance with Other Laws

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CFCI shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The School shall comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, whether federal, state or local. Neither the State Board of Education nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of the school, except as may otherwise be required to monitor the school for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

### School Campus Expectation Policy

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Purpose: To establish shared expectations for the School community and encourage frank respectful engagement.

At CFCI, we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognize that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. We understand and value the importance of sustaining a good working relationship between our parents and our educators to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. We greatly appreciate the commitment that our parents have made in choosing to entrust the education of their children to CFCI and thank them for their support of our unique school programming through which we engage our students daily. As we welcome and encourage parents/guardians to participate fully in the life of CFCI, and so we can continue to flourish, progress, and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, the purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, guardians and visitors to our school about their expected conduct. Parents, guardians, and visitors are expected to:

- Respect the caring spirit of CFCI.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and actions.
- Use effective communication with CFCI staff, administration, and board members that cultivate open dialogue while seeking peaceful solutions to issues.
- Engage CFCI with an open mind to help resolve any issues of concern.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, CFCI cannot tolerate parents, guardians and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive actions which interfere or threaten to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, board meeting, school event, field trip, car line or parking lot, office area or any other area of the school grounds (including social media postings or discussions with community members regarding the school or a staff member).
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper on or in the sight of campus.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to school staff, board member, visitor, fellow parent/guardian or student regardless of whether or not the action constitutes a criminal offense.
- Damaging or destroying CFCI property.
- Abusive or threatening emails, texts, voicemails, phone messages or other written communication.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils, parents, staff, or Board on Facebook or other social sites. Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, or the administration team, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences.)
- Carrying weapons, smoking, and consuming alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property, unless permitted for a specific event approved by the Board.

## Parent and Family Engagement with Title I

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Decades of research have shown that when schools work together with families to support learning, children are inclined to succeed, not just in school, but throughout life. Cape Fear Center for Inquiry (CFCI) believes that learning can best take place when there is shared effort, interest, and commitment among students, parents/guardians, extended family members, community members and staff. The goal of this parent/guardian and family engagement plan is to support in a more consistent and effective manner those things already in practice as well as to generate new ways of strengthening the partnership between school and home.

At Cape Fear Center for Inquiry (CFCI), the partnership between school and home will be supported by:

- a. Convening an annual meeting in the school to provide information to parents/guardians, family members, and community members about the school and available programs and maintaining on file at the school, at a minimum:
  - i. a copy of the agenda from the meeting highlighting that Title I programming was discussed;
  - ii. documentation of parent/guardian feedback and/or evaluation in the form of sign-in sheets and minutes from the presentation/ meetings;
  - iii. if relevant, a copy of any presentation, and flyers, website announcements, message recordings and/or other advertisements for the meeting
- b. Notifying parents/guardians of and clearly posting on the School's website NC School Report Card Data
- c. Offering a flexible number of meetings, workshops, and parent/guardian conferences that assist parents/guardians, family members, and community members in improving the achievement of all children
- d. Providing opportunities for all parents/guardians, family members, and community members to participate in school activities, including persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency
- e. Involving parents/guardians, family members, and community members in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in consultation for the improvement of the School and its' programs, specifically including these critical stakeholders in the planning, review, and evaluation of programs and improve programs based on the results
- f. Having all parties involved sign a School/Family Student Compact stating how

each will contribute to ensuring the student's achievement

- g. Assisting parents/guardians, family members, and community members in understanding State academic content, the North Carolina Accountability Model, State and Local assessments, and student performance standards
- h. Communicating clearly and frequently with parents/guardians, family members, and community members about school policies, programs, and their own children; Educating school personnel in the value of contributions of parents/guardians, family members, and community members and in how to communicate with and build ties between these critical stakeholders and the school in order to build school capacity
- i. Annually conducting an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this policy with parents/guardians, family members, and community members and maintaining on file at the school, at a minimum, a copy of the agenda from the meeting highlighting that this policy was discussed, reviewed and revised; a copy of this policy with latest revision date; proof that this policy was distributed in multiple ways (i.e., newsletter, student and family handbook, website, etc.); documentation of parent/guardian feedback and/or evaluation in the form of sign-in sheets and minutes from policy meetings, and flyers, website announcements, message recordings and/or meeting advertisements

## Media (Utilizing the School name or brand)

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All media utilizing the CFCI name or brand (e.g. logo, mascot, etc.) must have approval by the CFCI Board of Directors and shall be linked to the school's official website.

## Misuse of the Brand (Defined):

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The Board of Directors encourages parents and students to voice their concerns. It's important that any concerns you may have are made through appropriate channels as set forth in the student/parent handbook which includes speaking to the class teacher, the Directors, or the Board, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. We consider the use of social media websites to fuel campaigns and complaints against the School, Board, staff, students, and in some cases other parents not in the best interests of the children or the whole School community.

In the event that any staff member, pupil or parent/guardian of a child/ren being educated at CFCI is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site and may be disinvited or otherwise prohibited from the School's official social media pages, including Facebook.

All social network sites have clear rules about the content, which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity, which breaches this. The School will also expect that any parent/guardian or pupil removes such comments immediately. In serious cases, the School will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

We may take any of following steps if a parent/guardian or visitor does not follow the policy:

1. Request a parent meeting on campus
2. Ban the parent from campus for a period of time
3. Contact the appropriate authorities

Parents or visitors that receive consequences based on their behavior shall follow the School's grievance process as set out in the student/parent handbook or any other policy established by the School. Students engaged in such activity will be addressed in accordance with the School's student handbook.

We trust that parents/guardians and visitors will assist our School with the implementation of this policy, and we thank you for your continuing support of the School.

Nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to interfere with or infringe upon any rights, obligations, or responsibility under state or federal law, including but not limited to free speech rights. Furthermore, nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to discourage or interfere with any individual's right or decision to participate in a proceeding with

any appropriate federal, state or local government agency, or to prohibit any individual from cooperating with any such agency in its investigation.

## Academics & Curriculum

### Academic Honesty

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Academic honesty is required by the School and any form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the Community Discipline Guide. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating; working with another person(s) without permission, copying someone else's work, sharing your work with others, unauthorized use of notes or books on examinations, tests or quizzes; giving or receiving information on examinations, tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, lab assignments, homework assignments or any other work without the approval of the instructor; forging a parent signature; unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI); and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as intentionally using another person's words, thoughts or ideas as one's own without proper citation. Any act of academic dishonesty could result in loss of credit for the assignment and/or other disciplinary action.

### Assessment

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Students at CFCI are assessed for their understanding through formal and informal means. Teachers use data to drive their instruction on a daily basis.

Informal methods of assessment may include:

- observations by teacher or other faculty members
- anecdotal records
- samples of student work

Formal assessments may include:

- portfolios
- tests and curriculum-based measures
- project rubrics and feedback
- report cards and narratives

As a North Carolina public school, CFCI participates in the annual, state testing and accountability program. At the end of each school year, students in grade 3-8 take the End-of-Grade tests for their grade level.

## Curriculum

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As a public charter school, CFCI uses the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for each grade to inform our units of study. These standards are a foundation for instruction. Through inquiry, classes and individuals may go beyond these expectations. For information on specific grade level objectives visit the [NCDPI](#) webpage on the Standard Course of Study.

## Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

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Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a tiered framework for providing comprehensive and systematic support based on the unique needs of students. The proactive approach promotes student success through a focus on high-quality instruction. MTSS addresses students' needs in the areas of academics, behavior, and social emotional learning and utilizes a team approach to continuously analyze data to determine the appropriate layers of support.

- Core Instruction (Tier 1): all students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the core curriculum to meet their needs in the general education classroom. Teachers and school leaders review universal screening data to inform the most appropriate instructional practices.
- Supplemental Instruction (Tier 2): includes instruction, strategies, and programs designed to supplement, enhance and support the core curriculum for students' whose data support the need for additional opportunities for learning. Teachers monitor student progress frequently using multiple assessments and curriculum-based measures, as well as behavioral data.
- Intensive Instruction (Tier 3): includes strategic, research-based instruction specifically designed and customized to target a student's skill deficits. Intensive intervention is an added layer of support in combination with core and supplemental instruction.

School-based problem-solving teams, which may include school leaders, teachers, and support staff, meet to talk about possible reasons for students' needs. The team formulates and implements data-driven intervention plans for students and progress is monitored regularly to ensure growth and success.

Parents/guardians are also important members of the MTSS team and are encouraged to attend and participate in their child's progress meetings.

Below are some of the CFCI strategies and interventions that teachers **may** utilize in order to consider and/or support the decision to retain a student, or not promote them to the following grade level. Retention decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and include families, teachers, support staff, and leadership. The Director of Education or designee is responsible for finalizing decisions regarding promotion and retention. These standards and processes will incorporate all applicable State law and policy requirements.

When considering retention, teachers and families look at the whole child, which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Class performance in all academic areas, portfolios, and formal and informal assessments
- b. Social maturity and interactions with peers and adults
- c. Progress reports from classroom teachers and specialists
- d. Completion of assigned work, homework, projects
- e. Information provided by the student's parents/guardians, counselors, therapists, social workers, other professionals
- f. Information gained in the child's permanent record, health information, prior retentions, and performance at other schools
- g. Attendance and tardies
- h. Student support plans, including IEP and 504 identification
- i. Conferences with the teachers in the upcoming loop-level or grade level

The following strategies shall be implemented prior to consideration for retention:

- a. Regular parent/guardian conferences and communication regarding the area(s) of concern
- b. Small group, differentiated, academic, behavioral and/or social-emotional intervention plans to address areas of concern
- c. Monthly problem-solving discussions with all of the students' teachers and support staff and experts in area(s) of concern
- d. Consistent, frequent monitoring of progress through the use of informal and/or formal assessments
- e. Teacher(s) may complete the Light's Retention Scale to offer insight into a child's likelihood to find success in retention.

All concerns regarding promotion and retention shall be communicated to the Director of Education and parents/guardians by the end of January.

If a teacher has a concern about the promotion of a student, the teacher will communicate their concern to the Director of Education by following the required steps. If necessary, the teacher, parent, student and Director of Education will meet to discuss the details of the student's academic progress and an additional intervention plan will be put in place. Any student being considered for retention must have already been referred to the MTSS Team. At the end of the school year, the Director of Education will review all of the data in the student's file and a final decision will be made about the promotion or retention of the student.

Pursuant to state law, third graders who fail to achieve reading proficiency may not be promoted unless a statutory exception applies. Parents of impacted students will be informed of the law's application. Any parent who wishes to learn more about this law and its application should contact the Director of Education.

## Acceleration Policy

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If a parent/guardian or teacher recommends a child for acceleration (skipping a grade), the following procedure will be followed:

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s), Teacher(s), and Administrator(s) will meet to discuss the rationale for the request. Current and past teachers, as well as a representative from the next grade and the support team, should be included. The staff member responsible for AIG coordination may also be consulted if the child has been tested for gifted services and may administer the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) if additional data is needed for decision-making.
2. All student data will be reviewed, including mClass (if applicable), MAP and EOG scores, as well as classroom grades and data.
3. The School Counselor, or other appropriate social-emotional support staff, will informally review the student's emotional ability to thrive in an accelerated grade with above age level peers.
4. The appointed team will meet again to discuss/review results and make a recommendation to the Director of Education. The Director of Education will make the final placement decision, which is not appealable.

## Withdrawal Procedures

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If a parent would like to withdraw their child from CFCI, they should fill out the online Student Withdrawal Form or the Paper Student Withdrawal Form. Parents are required to list their student's next school on the form at the time of withdrawal. If the student will be homeschooled, the state issued homeschool identification number must be provided for the student to be withdrawn. A records request for one of our current students from a new school will be considered a request for withdrawal, and if a records request is received, the records will be sent and that student will be withdrawn from CFCI.

## Student Files / Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

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CFCI will adhere to all federal laws relating to maintaining student files. The following information regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) comes from the US Department of Education website (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>).

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. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents and 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 his or her view about the contested information.

CFCI 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, CFCI shall notify parents/guardians and eligible students when directory information may be released and provide ample notice for parents/guardians and eligible students to decline release of directory information.

Parents/guardians or eligible students also have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning a school's compliance with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is :

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

At CFCI, access to student education records is limited to CFCI staff who have a legitimate reason to access the information in order to properly serve the student (e.g. the student's teacher, case manager, school counselor, school nurse, coordinator, director). All CFCI staff members are required to sign out physical copies of student education records (e.g. cumulative folders) from the designated locked storage area. Student education records must be returned to the same locked storage, accompanied by a signature verifying return of the record.

Digital copies of student education records include photographs, video recordings, and digital files. Digital copies of student education records shall not be created or stored on personal electronic devices. Digital copies of student education records shall not be shared with any person who does not have a legitimate reason to access the student's education records.

## Right to Know Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

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Parents of students have the right to know the professional qualifications of the CFCI's classroom teachers. Parents can ask for certain information about their child's classroom teachers, and the school will give this information to parents in a timely manner if they ask for it. Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child's classroom teachers and CFCI:

- Whether the State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects they teach;
- Whether the State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances;
- The teacher's college major;
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees;
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if they do, their qualifications;
- The School Improvement Plan;
- Qualifications of the child's teachers;
- Professional development opportunities for teachers and assistants to ensure highly qualified personnel;
- Opportunities for parent involvement and input;
- The Title I Parent Involvement Plan and School Parent Involvement Plan; and
- The School's Report Card.

## The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

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The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):

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

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:

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 the students (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law)
3. Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others

Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by a School to its students
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

The School has developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect students' privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The School will directly notify parents of these policies at the beginning of each School year and after any substantive changes. The School will also both directly notify parents through U.S. Mail, e-mail, parent meetings, or the Parent and Students Handbook at the start of each School year of the specific or approximate dates (if such events are planned and/or scheduled) of the above activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in them. 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

### Exceptional Children

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The mission of the School's Department of Exceptional Children is to ensure that children and youth with disabilities develop educationally, socially, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of a free, appropriate education and related services in the least restrictive environment. We will continue to educate, support and advocate for students with disabilities and assist them in achieving their true potential.

Through the Individual Education Program process, CFCI offers a free appropriate public education to each of its students with special needs. As required by IDEA 2004, Cape Fear Center for Inquiry will ensure that all children with disabilities within the boundaries of the public agency, including children with disabilities who are homeless or wards of the State, and children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. This will be fulfilled by the Exceptional Children's

program. The Exceptional Children's Program at CFCI is served by certified Exceptional Children's staff.

The EC Coordinator acts as the liaison between the Department of Public Instruction and the school to maintain compliance with all federal and state law.

The Exceptional Children department provides a full continuum of services which are available to all identified or suspected exceptional children, with the input and support of general education classroom teachers. Information to address student progress toward mastery or non-mastery of goals, as outlined in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), is provided at the same time student's general education classroom progress reports are sent.

The Exceptional Children program is driven by the students' Individual Education Plans as well as the team recommendations as to what is in the best interest for each particular child. CFCI follows the practice of maintaining students in the least restrictive environment appropriate for each child's needs.

The Board encourages parents, guardians, surrogate parents, custodians, and school personnel to work cooperatively to ensure that the special needs of students are met.

#### Child Find

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CFCI participates in Project Child Find, an effort coordinated with the Exceptional Children Division of the State Department of Public Instruction, to locate and identify children and youth ages birth through 21 with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services. CFCI informs parents and/or guardians of the services available from CFCI as well other state and community agencies. The children who qualify for these services have been diagnosed or are suspected to have intellectual, physical, or emotional disabilities and are unable to benefit from a regular school program without special assistance. CFCI identifies these students through our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as well as from parent and teacher referrals and provides the following help:

- A complete evaluation, and if appropriate and within the guidelines of eligibility in NC, eligibility in one of the 14 disabling conditions
- An Individualized Education Program for children with a disability
- A referral to other agencies when needed.

#### Section 504 Plan

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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law intended to protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination. Section 504 protects qualifying students by prohibiting these students from being excluded from public schools, or being denied the benefits of the public schools, because of their disability.

A 504 plan provides equal access to educational services for students with a qualified disability. It is designed to make changes, as appropriate, to the classroom environment or the delivery of instruction to provide the student with equal access to the educational curriculum. This plan is individualized to the needs of the student.

A student must have a physical or mental impairment. The Department of Education describes “physical or mental impairment” as follows:

(A) Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or

(B) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, or specific learning disabilities. 34 CFR 104.3(j)(2)(i).

[C] The disabling condition must substantially limit one or more major life activity: A “major life activity” includes (but is not limited to) learning, concentrating, thinking, communicating, reading, walking, seeing, breathing, eating, lifting, bending, and major bodily functions/systems (neurological, immune, respiratory, etc.)

## Section 504 Procedures

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Some students’ needs are not best met through an IEP, but through the designation known as a Section 504 Plan. Students who are identified as needing a 504 Plan usually have health-related issues which impact their academic progress, but which do not warrant an IEP. Some examples of these health-related issues are (but are not limited to): Attention Deficit Disorder; Diabetes, severe food allergies, physical handicaps or disabilities such as CP, sickle-cell anemia, hearing or vision-impairment, asthma, and other chronic illnesses.

A teacher who has a student with one or more of the above-mentioned conditions may feel it would be advantageous for the student to utilize a 504 plan in order to receive special modifications and accommodations to be successful in the school environment.

Section 504 is a Civil Rights statute, and comes under the auspices of the Office of Civil Rights. The federal government does NOT provide additional funding to assist schools in serving students who are identified as 504.

At the beginning of each school year, the 504 Coordinator reviews all of the students’ files that are identified as having a 504 and ensures all teachers associated with the student have access to the plan. This teacher then provides copies of the 504 accommodation plans to all regular education teachers designated to teach these students for the current academic year.

When time for annual review, the 504 Coordinator, in conjunction with the classroom teacher, will initiate a parent/guardian meeting to review the modifications and accommodations in place

for that student and determine if the strategies/modifications are working well or whether there should be changes made to the plan.

Parents/guardians or teachers may also request a meeting to review and/or revise the 504 plan at any time, but must be reviewed annually, and eligibility to be reestablished every 3 years, for the school to remain in compliance with Section 504 guidelines.

Parents/guardians or teachers may file a Section 504 grievance with the 504 Coordinator if they believe the school has been non-compliant.

The process is as follows:

1. A written grievance should be submitted to the 504 Coordinator within 30 days of the most recent meeting or discussion of the 504 issues in question. The written grievance should include names of the student, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and any others involved. It should include details of meetings, phone conversations, copies of emails and all other communications of the 504 issues in question. The written grievance should include the specific nature of the grievance and the desired resolution of the issues.
2. The 504 Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing to all named parties in the grievance. The acknowledgement will also include a plan to address the grievance.
3. The 504 Coordinator will investigate the grievance in an adequate, reliable and impartial manner. If the 504 Coordinator is a named party in the grievance, another administrator who is not named will handle the investigation. The investigator will provide the person filing the grievance the opportunity to present witnesses or other evidence. The investigator will interview the named parties in the grievance as deemed appropriate. The investigation will conclude within 30 days of the date the grievance was filed.
4. After careful consideration of the grievance, the investigator will make a written determination of resolution. A copy of the resolution will be provided to all parties named in the grievance as well as the School Director(s).
5. If there is any finding of discrimination by the investigator, a written plan to correct that discrimination will be a part of the resolution.
6. The investigator is responsible to ensure that there will be no harassment or retaliation of or by any parties named in the grievance.
7. All details, written documents, and communications regarding the grievance are confidential and should not be discussed or shared with anyone not named in the grievance. The only exception to this is that the investigator will share all materials with the School Director(s).

A grievance under this policy is not appealable to the Board of Directors.

## Specials

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At CFCI we offer several different Specials classes that students attend daily. Sixth through eighth graders are offered additional options and those courses vary from year to year. These classes follow the North Carolina Essential Teaching Standards.

## Reproductive Health and Safety Education

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Prior to the implementation of the program, parents and guardians shall be contacted and informed about the content of the program and the dates of program delivery. Parents and guardians must opt their student out of the program through the communication method designated by the School if they wish to forgo program participation for their student through written communication to the staff member teaching the content and/or the Director of Education.

## Looping

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Students in grades K-5 loop with their teachers and classmates in order to promote the development of close classroom communities. This allows teachers to know their students better and to more easily individualize instruction. Classroom dynamics, teacher strengths and individual student needs will be considerations in making decisions about looping.

## Middle Grades Structure

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The middle grades program is composed of two homerooms at each grade level. 6th graders will have two subject teachers - one for math and science and one for language arts and social studies. 7th and 8th grade students have four core teachers, one for each subject area (math, science, ELA and social studies).

## High School Registration

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The 8th grade teachers and school counselor will give students and families information about high school registration. They will support students and families in the high school transition. Families are responsible for enrolling their child in their district high school or school of choice.

## Placement Policy

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The current and prospective teachers in conjunction with support staff and school leadership decide on class placement for all students. All information available will be considered in making classroom placements for each child. Families who wish to have input regarding their child's placement should discuss concerns with the Director of Education.

Student placement/retention is taken very seriously at CFCI. The Multi-tiered System of Support that we have in place as a guiding framework automatically helps us identify students who are struggling and in need of additional support. Interventions will be put into place and followed through consistently with a team that includes classroom teachers, and other reading, math or behavioral specialists that may be best to assist the student.

## Day to Day School Operations and Procedures

### Attendance

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North Carolina Compulsory Attendance law requires that every person from seven (7) to sixteen (16) years of age attend school every day unless otherwise excused by statute or other legitimate authority. Attendance plays a vital role in education. Students who attend school on a regular basis are better able to keep up with their classes and complete assignments in a timely manner.

Being absent from school for one day, or even from one class period, without acceptable cause is truancy. Acceptable cause may include, with appropriate documentation, but is not limited to: service as a page in the North Carolina General Assembly, service on a precinct election board on an election day, subpoena to appear in court, incarceration, in-school or out of school suspension, required religious observations, hospitalization, doctor's written order for home stay, death in the immediate family.

Evidence of habitual truancy includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Failure of parent/guardian to ensure that his/her child attends school or classes as required by law
- Five (5) or more unexcused absences from classes in one grading period (trimester)
- Ten (10) or more unexcused absences from school during one school year

When children are not in the classroom, consistent and sustainable learning is impeded. CFCI staff and administration have made intentional attempts in bringing the importance of regular attendance to your attention. Our policy is as follows:

- When a child has accumulated three (3) or more unexcused absences in a school year, parents/guardians receive an attendance letter.
- When a child has accumulated six (6) or more unexcused absences in a school year, parents/guardians receive a phone call and attendance letter.
- At the discretion of the School Director(s), when a child has accumulated ten (10) or more unexcused absences and/or tardies in a school year, an attendance letter will be sent home and an attendance meeting will be scheduled.

When your child returns to school, a note signed by the parent/guardian must be sent with your

child stating the reason and dates for the absence to ensure your child's absences are recorded appropriately. The note should be turned into the front office.

If a student is habitually late or absent, a conference with the parent/guardian will be scheduled with the appropriate member(s) of the administrative team to resolve the attendance problem.

An excused absence or tardy is one for which no negative consequence is assessed against the student. Students who are absent from or late to school for a valid reason (medical or other emergency) are required to provide documentation from the doctor's office. Supporting documents may be required by the school and requested from the parent/guardian. Students must bring to the school a written excuse on the day that he or she returns to school. The note must include the date or time and a legitimate reason for the absence. Approval of excused absences is made by the administration, but the student's record is marked as absent per North Carolina law.

Students can be excused for the following reasons:

- Injury or Illness
- Local or state board of health orders the child to stay home from school (for example, lice, scabies, etc.)
- Death of an immediate family member. For purposes of this regulation, the immediate family includes but is not necessarily limited to grandparents, parents, guardians, and siblings.
- Medical or Dental appointment
- Witness in the proceedings of a court or administrative tribunal
- Religious observance. When the tenets of a religion to which a child or their families adhere require or suggest the observance of a religious event unless the religious observance or the cumulative effect of the religious observance is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the child. (S.L. 2010-112)
- Local School Board Policy. LEAs may excuse temporary or occasional absences for other reasons in accordance with local school board policies, provided that the student has been in attendance for at least one-half of a school day during the current school year.
- Absence related to Deployment Activities. A student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting for the purpose of visiting said parent or legal guardian. (G.S. 115C-407.5 Article V (E) )
- Child Care. Absences due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent/guardian are to be coded excused (lawful). (G.S.115C-375.5)

- Educational leave (this can be used once per academic year and must be approved by administration, more details below)

## Educational Leave

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Family vacations should be planned around the school calendar. Travel that has an educational value may be counted as an excused absence. **To qualify, parents/guardians need to request a form entitled “Student Leave for Educational Opportunity” excused absence at least ten (10) school days in advance of the trip.** The request should be written to the Coordinator and the classroom teacher via the Educational Leave Request Form. The request must include the date of the trip, location of the trip, daily plan of learning experiences, and the date of return to school. In addition, assignments missed during the trip must be completed in a timely manner upon return.

Students are required to submit agreed upon assignments within the specified timeframe, as indicated by the student’s teacher(s). Failure to submit assignments within the designated timeframe may result in denial of educational leave.

Families may request educational leave only one time per school year. The school can only excuse up to five (5) days per year for educational leave.

Educational leave will not be granted during the first twenty (20) days of school or during state testing windows.

## Remote Learning Protocol

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In the event that circumstances beyond the school’s control force the closure of the school during regular student attendance (ex. Severe weather, widespread illness, etc.), the school will be able to implement a remote learning plan in order to support student learning. While there is no substitute for uninterrupted personal contact between teachers and students in the classroom, scheduled student attendance is not always possible.

In an effort to provide additional flexibility for school staff and community members when making up instructional time for teachers and students due to unforeseen circumstances, school staff may create a specific plan to use in order to increase instructional time without causing unnecessary strain on community resources.

A remote learning protocol will include the following components:

1. Specific date(s) to count towards instructional time to take place after regular classes have resumed
2. Teacher assigned work for each student to complete during the remote learning date/time
3. Not to be used until students have missed two regularly scheduled attendance days
4. Work should equate to a minimum of 300 instructional minutes for each date identified

It will be the responsibility of the School Director(s) to determine when a remote learning protocol day would be appropriate and inform the appropriate stakeholders.

### Make-up Work

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Students are expected to complete all work before leaving or immediately upon their return from an absence. In the case of illness or other unexpected absence, students or their families should contact their teachers as soon as they return to school to obtain their missed assignments. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to ensure make-up work is completed.

### Tardies and Early Release

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At CFCL, we believe that building a strong community in the classroom enhances learning and teaches children to care about others and the world around them. This belief is a cornerstone of our school's philosophy. Because one of the primary ways we build community is through morning meetings, we expect all children to arrive at school on time every day. All students arriving after 8:05 a.m. must enter the main entrance and are listed as tardy as of 8:05 a.m. Parents/Guardians must park and sign children in at the main office after 8:05 am. Students will receive a late pass at the office.

Early release from school is only approved in the event of your child's illness, a medical appointment or a family emergency. Students will not be released early from school after 2:30 p.m.

### Student Release

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Each student must have on file a list of people to whom they may be released from school. If students are to be released with someone not on their list of people to whom they may be released, a signed note or email MUST be sent by a parent/guardian giving permission. Any person picking a student up should be prepared to show ID.

### Classroom Interruptions

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Every minute of instructional time is valuable at School so we do not allow class time to be interrupted for any reason. If you need to speak to your child's teacher you must make an appointment ahead of time. No visitors will be given access to any classroom unless the visitor has made prior arrangements for their visit.

### School Hours

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#### **Grades K-8**

Drop off- 7:45-8:05AM

School hours- 8:05-3:05

Pick up- 3:05-3:30

## Arrival and Dismissal

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### Arrival Procedures

- School doors will open at 7:45am. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive after 8:05am. Parents/Guardians must accompany tardy students into the building from upper/lower lots to sign them in.
- Students in grades **K-3** + any older siblings will be dropped off in the lower lot, utilizing the Wonder Way entrance.
  - Families are allowed to line up in their cars on the back side of the MPR beginning at 7:30am. Please do not arrive prior to 7:30 am, as this will block the parking lot for our staff.
  - Cars begin pulling forward at 7:45am (please do not pull forward before this time).
  - We ask that you pull all the way forward before stopping to let your child out of the car. Car greeters will be stationed to assist your child.
  - All children will walk on the sidewalk (in one direction) and enter the building using the K-1 doors (on the left side of the building).
- Students in grades **4-8** will be dropped off in the upper lot, utilizing the Shipyard Blvd. entrance.
  - Car greeters will be stationed to greet students.
  - Please do not let your child out of the car before 7:45 am.
  - Students will walk down the sidewalk and enter the building through the Middle Grades door.
  - If you arrive at 8:05am or later, your child is tardy and needs to be signed in by an adult in the front office. You may park in the upper lot and walk down, or drive around and park in the lower lot. Please do not let your child walk down after 8:05am, as the middle grades doors will be closed and locked at this time.

### Dismissal Procedures

- Students will begin exiting the building at 3:05pm.
- Students in grades **K-3** + any older siblings will be picked up in the lower lot.
- Students in grades **4-8** will be picked up in the upper lot.
- **Families of students whose last name starts with letters A-M, we kindly ask that you begin arriving at 3:00.**
- **Families of students whose last name starts with letters N-Z, we kindly ask that you begin arriving at 3:15.**

- At Open House you will also receive car signs for your family, babysitters, etc. You will write the names of the child(ren) the car will be picking up in black marker. It is important that whomever is picking up keep this car sign posted **all the way** through the carline. Please do not take them down after the caller calls their name as all staff need to see the names of students being picked up to be able to quickly identify who should be in which car. In the lower lot, you will be asked to move to Wonder Way to wait for your child if a second call is necessary and a staff member will walk them down to the car.

Please direct any individual questions or concerns to Ben Rose (brose@cfc.net - 910-362-0000).

### **Transportation Changes**

- Please notify the school **before** 2:30 PM if there are any changes in your child's method of transportation from school.
- After School Van - If your child will be riding a van to an after-school care provider, it is your responsibility to call the van service if your child will not be riding that day.

### Third Party Transportation Providers (Uber/Lyft)

CFCI does not condone students leaving campus in third-party car services (outside of child after-care providers) and, specifically, ridesharing services whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them such as Uber and Lyft. CFCI will not allow any student to be picked up from school in a third-party car service, such as Uber or Lyft, and will turn away such ride sharing services from the school.

### Parent/Guardian & Teacher Communication

#### **What Parents/Guardians can EXPECT**

- Parent/Guardian communications responded to within 48 hours, unless extenuating circumstances apply
- Parent/Guardian to be notified about serious issues or ongoing problems
- Two student-led conferences per year, other meetings and calls, as needed
- Weekly digital communication from teacher (newsletter, email, etc.)
- Regular newsletter from school
- Scheduled Parent/Guardian education nights
- Schoolwide alerts, as necessary
- Narrative, standards-based report cards
- Parent/Guardian input surveys
- Opportunities to attend Parent/Guardian Collaborative Network (PCN) meetings
- A team of support for your student(s) (teacher, support staff, and leadership)

#### **What Parent/Guardian should NOT EXPECT**

- Answering an email or returning a call in the evening/weekends
- Immediate responses to email communication during the school day
- Access to teacher's private phone number or email

**When you should contact your child's teacher/additional staff member:**

- Changes in family situation (divorce, new baby, move)
- Medical issues that arise or change
- Illness lasting longer than 3 days
- Safety issues, change in behavior at home
- Family emergencies, appointments (send a note)
- Changes in transportation arrangements (in conjunction with office communication)
- Ongoing and pervasive problems/concerns at school or home
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment
- General academic or social/emotional concerns
- Absence from school - short-term or long-term (email/call front office - cc the teacher)

**When you have last minute information for the teacher:**

- Call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

**Communication that interferes with teaching and learning:**

- Speaking to the teacher or any CFCI staff member disrespectfully or angrily. This type of behavior will not be tolerated.
- Gossiping to other people or posting on social media to communicate frustrations rather than discussing issues directly with staff members.

**To maintain mutual respect, remember:**

- Teachers will make mistakes; they're human, too.
- Teachers have their own families and lives; respect their privacy and time.
- Recognize that we won't always agree, but we promise to listen.
- Speak positively in front of your child.
- We're all on the same team – your child's support team!

## Dress Code

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The CFCI Dress Code, a part of our Community Discipline Guide, is an important aspect of our school's culture.

Students should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for the school day including learning and active play. This includes safe and comfortable clothes that are suitable for the weather and a variety of settings (outside, the playground, the classrooms - whether sitting in chairs or on the carpet, and other work spaces).

Students should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for the school day including learning and active play.

1. Apparel or jewelry should not advertise violence, tobacco or alcohol use, nor contain sexual content or profanity
2. Midriffs should not be exposed
3. Shorts and skirts must be visible
4. No flip flops are allowed for active play
5. Undergarments should not be shown at any time
6. Hats, hoods, and sunglasses are not permitted inside the building without prior approval

## School Directory

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The School 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. If a parent would prefer that the School not release directory information about his/her student, s/he must inform the Director of Education in writing.

## Lunch and Snack Guidelines

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Please pack a healthy lunch for your child, including a water bottle. **Lunch may not be brought in or delivered from outside restaurants for students.** If in need of financial assistance, please reach out to the front office.

## Food for School/Classroom Events

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When bringing food for school or classroom events, all food must be store-bought. Consideration for any additional classroom allergies must be given if outside food is to be used or eaten in the classroom by the whole class.

## Student Event and Field Trip Fees/Payments

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Throughout the year, the school holds several sponsored events as well as field trips. Payment for the field trip must be made by the deadline. If a parent indicates that their child will be attending

the trip, they will be liable for the full cost of the trip. Field trip/Overnight Trip fees must be paid by the deadline and the permission slip must be signed for the student to be able to attend the trip. There will be no exceptions to this. Cash payments can be made in the front office prior to the deadline if needed.

### Financial Assistance

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If there is a financial hardship in the family, the parent/guardian should contact the finance office to request a financial assistance application. The Front Office staff will communicate directly with the parent/guardian regarding financial assistance that can be provided for each event, fee or trip. Requests for financial assistance must be received at least two weeks prior to the payment deadline to allow for adequate planning. Any partial payment that is required for those with financial assistance will still be due by the payment deadline.

### Field Trips and Overnight Trips

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At CFCI, we believe that our students learn best through experience. Field study is an excellent way to provide these experiences. Each teacher will arrange for appropriate field studies that support and expand learning at each grade level.

#### **Expectations**

Students and chaperones are expected to follow our Community Discipline Guide and school policies during any field studies. Any violations of those expectations will be addressed by designated school personnel through the School's Student Discipline Policy.

#### **Overnight Field Trips**

Any overnight field study must be presented to and approved by the CFCI Board of Directors within 90 days of the scheduled trip unless the Board decides otherwise.

### Personal Items

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The School will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. We expect students to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education at home. Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for CFCI, or interfering with students' educational focus will be confiscated and held in the office or remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents retrieve them. Such items may be subject to search. The School shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in its possession.

### Destruction of School Property

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A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage, as determined by school officials, to school property or steal or attempt to steal school property either on school grounds or during a school activity, function or event off of school grounds. Damage or theft

involving school property will result in disciplinary action up to and including exclusion from school. The parents or guardians will be asked to pay for the property that the student has damaged or destroyed. Students who have outstanding fines may be prohibited from all non-required activities (i.e. athletics, dances, parking, field trips, etc.)

### Inclement Weather Procedures

In case of inclement weather, CFCI will announce delays or closure when deemed necessary by the School Director(s) or his/her designee. Information regarding school closings or delays will be sent directly to all families via the school's communication phone and email service, and will also be posted on the CFCI website.

NOTE: CFCI does not always follow New Hanover County School announced closings and delays; thus, it is essential that all contact information is kept up to date for families to receive timely information. Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the school of any changes to contact information.

### Emergency Data

Every family must provide Emergency Contact Information to the school. Please communicate any changes to the information throughout the year by emailing [office@cfc.net](mailto:office@cfc.net).

### Visitors

All visitors at CFCI must sign in at the front office. All visitors are required to wear a visitor tag while on campus. All visitors must abide by the policies set forth in this handbook at all times.

### Volunteers

The staff at CFCI welcomes volunteers! Parent volunteers are a huge piece to the success of our school. All volunteers must adhere to the volunteer requirements outlined below as per our Volunteer Policy. Volunteers must sign in at the front office and a volunteer visitor badge must be worn at all times if volunteering during school hours. All volunteers are expected to abide by all of the school policies set forth in this handbook.

A volunteer is anyone who provides services, without compensation or benefits of any kind of amount, on an occasional or regular basis at CFCI or school activities. CFCI strongly encourages parent, grandparent, guardian, and community involvement in our school. The following policy assists our volunteers in being effective, satisfied, and successful School volunteers while maintaining the integrity of the School and the health and safety of our students and teachers. Volunteers in large group functions may not be subject to all the same requirements to serve.

1. All volunteers at CFCI are required to:
  - a. Have a background check including a Sex Offender Registry Check performed through CFCI's third-party vendor on file dated within the last two calendar years.
  - b. Complete, sign, and date the Volunteer Agreement.

2. The Director or his/her designee will formally approve every volunteer application, and volunteers must be placed on the Authorized Volunteer list before volunteering their services at the School. All administrative staff will have a copy of the Authorized Volunteer list and will prohibit any person not on this list from volunteering at the School.
3. Information collected during the screening process for volunteers will be treated as confidential to the extent allowed by the law.
4. The Director or her/his designee will review all criminal background checks. No person who has been convicted of crimes against children, sex crimes, or serious crimes of violence will be allowed to volunteer at the School. The Director will evaluate other criminal records on an individual basis. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, the Director shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the volunteer (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a volunteer. The Director shall document the decision.
5. All volunteers must report directly to the School office when they arrive and should sign in as visitors to receive a visitor pass.
6. All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age unless they are supervised by another responsible adult as approved by the Director/designee.
7. Volunteers work in partnership with, under the supervision of, and at the request of school administration and staff. Volunteers are expected to abide by all Board policies, procedures, and school rules when performing their assigned responsibilities.
8. Volunteers will not have access to confidential information in student records except as allowed by federal and state laws and regulations. Volunteers will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen and heard while working as a volunteer. If there is a safety concern or an emergency, it must immediately be communicated to someone in authority at the school.
9. Volunteers shall not use information learned or acquired during volunteering for any reason other than in furtherance of their volunteer efforts at the school. For example, if a volunteer is a class parent and receives parent email information to communicate with parents, the volunteer shall not share parent email addresses with others and shall not use such email addresses to communicate with parents about anything other than for serving as class parent.
10. Volunteers are to serve as positive role models. School volunteers must always:
  - Use appropriate language
  - Dress appropriately
  - Discuss age-appropriate topics
11. Volunteers are prohibited from disciplining students. Behaviors requiring discipline should be reported immediately to the appropriate teacher or staff member.
12. Volunteers are prohibited from administering medications of any kind to students.
13. Volunteers should refrain from giving students gifts, rewards, or food items of any kind without the permission of school personnel.
14. Volunteers are expected to be prompt and dependable. Volunteers should notify the School office if an illness or emergency prohibits them from attending a volunteer assignment.

15. Volunteers may not take students off school property without the written permission of parents and school personnel.
16. Volunteers must leave children not enrolled at CFCI at home when volunteering.

CFCI does not tolerate any kind of racial, ethnic, disability, gender discrimination or sexual harassment by volunteers of the school and it is expected that all volunteers will comply with the school's policies related to such matters.

### Parent Concerns

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CFCI encourages the involvement of parents in their child's education. If you have a concern regarding your child, please contact your child's teacher first. As a parent, you may request a conference with the teacher at any time. Please make these arrangements directly with your child's teacher. If you feel that your concern has not been handled by the appropriate teacher, then you can contact the Director of Education/designee.

### Resolution of Student Issues

If a parent wishes to meet to resolve a classroom/student issue, we encourage them to contact the following in this order:

1. Student's Classroom Teacher
2. Coordinator
3. Director of Education

### School Parent/Student Grievance Procedures

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Grievances may only come from current students or parents of current students. It is expected that any guardian/parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is their student's Teacher. If the student/parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the Coordinator. At that meeting, the teacher, student, coordinator and parent must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed. If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Director. Similarly, if a guardian/parent/student disagree or have an issue with a policy or procedure at the School, the guardian/parent/student should set a meeting with the Director. If the guardian/parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Director and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the guardian/parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a guardian/parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or CFCI will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or coordinator.

1. **Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a guardian/parent/student stating that a specific action has violated a CFCI policy, board policy, or law/regulation. Complaints under other policies including those under Title VI, Title IX, IDEA, Section 504, the School's Non-Title IX Bullying policy, those under the Parent's Bill of Rights, and those pertaining to student discipline are not grievances and this policy does not apply to such complaints. Please refer to the School's policies and procedures for those matters.
2. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen calendar days of the meeting with the Director. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Director.
3. **The grievance process is as follows:**

Step 1: If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Director, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the guardian/parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The guardian/parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Director of Education and to the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the Director of Education is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

Step 2: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with the School's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting the Board of Directors will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email accepted) if further action is necessary. If the board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance, gather information and/or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the meeting where the board makes a decision on the grievance, the board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal notice and the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the board reaches a decision on the grievance, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five School days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final and there are no appeal rights to the Board. Notwithstanding any other provision, the Board may conduct an investigation and/or gather

additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, at any time.

### Technology Use at School

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While at CFCI, students will have access to a variety of technology. It is the expectation of the school that all school-owned tablets and laptops remain at the school. While we do not ask our families to provide or pay for their devices, we do ask that all students and guardians sign and adhere to the Technology Agreement.

### Video Monitoring

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CFCI recognizes that the use of video monitoring/surveillance systems is warranted to maintain campus security, to increase student and employee safety and to assist with the enforcement of the school's policies and rules concerning student and employee conduct, safety and security.

School buildings and grounds may be equipped with video monitoring devices, but such devices shall not be placed where there are reasonable expectations of personal privacy such as in nursing and health room areas or bathrooms.

### Use of Video Recordings

- Video recordings will only be utilized for official school business.
- A video recording of actions by students may be used by administrators or the Board as evidence in any disciplinary action brought against students arising out of the student's conduct on or about school property.
- The video surveillance recordings may not be used in connection with instructional observations of professional staff. This policy does not prohibit the administration from establishing other methods of videotaping lessons for the purpose of instructional observation.
- Video surveillance recordings of students, staff and/or others may be reviewed for the purpose of determining adherence to school policy and rules.
- Such recordings may be used to detect or deter criminal offenses that occur in view of the camera(s) and may be shared with law enforcement officials.
- Video surveillance recordings will be released to others only in accordance with applicable state and/or federal law or regulation.

## Cell Phones and Smart Devices

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All student cell phones and smart watches (or any other device with cellular or Bluetooth capabilities, including headphones) shall be turned off and stored in backpacks during school hours (7:45-3:30). These devices are not to be used on campus during school hours for any reason. Devices will be confiscated by staff if a student is found using one during school hours. If a student needs to reach a family member, they may be allowed to ask the office to make the contact. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of school staff.

Please do not call or text your child's cell phone as it is against School policy for students to use them during School hours.

The possession of such electronic devices at CFCI or during CFCI events constitutes the consent to the search (either in the presence of the students possessing the device(s) or outside that students' presence) and confiscation of the device(s) by School personnel.

## Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy

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CFCI staff members frequently use educational tools found only on the Internet. Filtered email is also used for instructional purposes in some classes. Your child shall be given access to the Internet, filtered through CFCI, and access to email. The full details are contained, as a minimum, in the Board of Directors policies online or from the CFCI Front Office. If you do not want your child to have access to the Internet or email, then you may obtain and sign an Internet/Email Opt Out form from the school's office.

It is important that you and your student are familiar with all technology expectations. Inappropriate use of technology resources may result in loss of privilege to use this educational tool. Teachers will make reasonable efforts to supervise a student's use of the Internet during the instructional time/day.

Below are some of the issues that may arise; more information can be found in the Technology Policy Series of the Board of Directors Policy Manual, located on the CFCI website.

- Users shall not attempt to access inappropriate sites or release inappropriate (personal) information in emails, etc.
- Users are prohibited from using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers or computer systems, or any form of "hacking".
- Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access.
- Users are prohibited from using or sharing another individual's computer account or files, including use of an ID and/or password not assigned to the user.
- Users shall not deliberately or negligently attempt to destroy technology hardware, software, or data of another user.

- Users shall not intentionally waste or abuse limited resources, such as unauthorized storage of files (games, music, etc.) on the computers/servers.

## Internet Safety Policy

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It is the policy of CFCI to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

### **Definitions**

#### **MINOR**

The term “minor” means any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years.

#### **TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE**

The term “technology protection measure” means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. Harmful to minors.

#### **HARMFUL TO MINORS**

The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

#### **SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT**

The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

#### **Access to Inappropriate Material**

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter internet content, or other forms of electronic communications, to prevent access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

### **Inappropriate Network Usage**

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the CFCI online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called ‘hacking,’ and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

### **Education, Supervising, Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the CFCI staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children’s Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of IT Specialist or designated representatives.

The Technology Teacher or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate training for students who access the internet. The training provided will be designed to promote CFCI’s commitment to:

- a. The standards and acceptable use of internet services as set forth in the CFCI Series 6000 of policy
- b. Student safety with regard to:
  - i. safety on the Internet;
  - ii. appropriate behavior while online, on social networking websites, and
  - iii. cyberbullying awareness and response.
- c. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”).

## Student Health and Wellness

### Prevention and Control of State Reportable Communicable Diseases

Students are excluded from school in cases of certain **reportable** communicable diseases. While the list of diseases reportable to the state Division of Public Health is lengthy, the number of such diseases common to the school age child is not. This list is available upon request from the school nurse.

When a student is suspected of having one of those **reportable** communicable diseases, it is the responsibility of the parent to take the child to the local health department or primary health care provider for verification and treatment before that student can return to school. Students should be temporarily excluded from school if presenting symptoms of a reportable disease is present. In each case, readmission to school should also take into account whether the student is able to participate in school. In some cases, a student with a disabling disease, who is no longer contagious but may require ongoing care, may be eligible for additional services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

A list of students who have not been vaccinated for bona fide religious or medical reasons or who have illnesses that cause immunosuppression will be maintained in the school health office so that appropriate action can be taken to protect these individuals when serious communicable disease outbreaks do occur.

### Head Lice

No student shall be denied an education solely by reason of head lice infestation and his/her educational program shall be restricted only to the extent necessary to expedite treatment and minimize the risk of transmitting the infestation. It shall be the responsibility of the school nurse or designee to notify the parent/legal guardian in the event a child has live lice.

Picking-up the child from school and expedited treatment will be recommended. The parent/guardian will also receive information about head lice resources. Siblings of the student with live head lice will also be checked by a school nurse/designee.

#### Procedure for a Student Suspected of Having Head Lice

1. The scalp of a student suspected of having an active head lice infestation will be inspected by a school nurse/trained designee.
2. If live (crawling) lice are noted:
  - a. The school nurse/staff designee will contact parent/legal guardian at time of discovery, discuss treatment measures, and recommend the student be picked-up so that removal of live head lice may be expedited.
  - b. A parent notification letter will be sent home with the student.
3. If nits found but no live lice are noted:

- a. The school nurse/staff designee will contact the parent/guardian to discuss treatment measures and importance of manually removing nits within 1/4” of scalp in stopping head lice reinfestation.
  - b. The school nurse/trained designee will assess the need for head lice educational material and send home literature about head lice treatment and control measures, if necessary.
4. Siblings of a student with an active head lice infestation will be identified and will be checked for live lice.
  5. The parent/legal guardian is responsible for abiding by the head lice protocol, following recommendations of the school nurse, and carrying out treatment measures to remove live lice and nits.

### Immunizations

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North Carolina law requires immunizations for every child present in this state. Every parent, guardian or person in loco parentis is responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) receives required immunizations. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis to provide the immunization record of each school age child to the school ***no later than 30 days*** after the child enters school or the child will be excluded from school until a valid immunization record can be provided.

**EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2015, THE FOLLOWING ARE REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS:**

#### Kindergarten Required Vaccines

Vaccine	Number Doses Required Before School Entry*
Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis	5 doses*
Polio	4 doses*
Measles	2 doses*
Mumps	2 doses*
Rubella	1 dose*
Haemophilus Influenzae type B (Hib)	4 doses*
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	3 doses*
Varicella (chickenpox)	2 doses*

*\* Please contact your child’s healthcare provider for further information.*

#### 7th Grade Required Vaccines

Adolescents should be up to date on all the vaccines required for kindergarten entry.

In addition:

- Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) – 2 doses
  - One dose for individuals is required entering the 7th grade or by 12 years of age whichever comes first.
  - Booster dose for individuals is required entering the 12th grade or 17 years of age beginning August 1, 2020.
  - If the first dose is administered on or after the 16th birthday the booster dose is not required
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) – Tdap
  - A booster dose of Tdap is required for individuals who have not previously received Tdap and who are entering 7th grade or by 12 years of age, whichever comes first.

***If you have specific questions regarding your child, please contact the school nurse, your child's health care provider, or your local health department.***

#### Garrett's Law

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North Carolina law mandates that at the beginning of every academic year, local boards of education shall provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis, influenza, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and their vaccines. This important information is available online for parents/guardians on our website.

#### Medication Administration

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The Board recognizes that students may need to take medication during school hours. School personnel may administer medication prescribed by a health care practitioner upon the written request of a student's parent/guardian. In limited circumstances, a student may be authorized to self-administer medications. To minimize disruptions to the school day, students should take medications at home rather than at school whenever feasible. School officials may deny a request to administer any medication that could be taken at home or when, in the opinion of the School Director(s) or designee in consultation with school nursing personnel, the administration of the medication by school personnel would pose a substantial risk of harm to the student or others.

For purposes of this policy, all references to "parent" include parents, legal guardians, and legal custodians. In addition, for purposes of this policy, the term "health care practitioner" is limited to licensed medical professionals who are legally authorized to prescribe medications under North Carolina law, such as doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathic medicine, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.

#### **Medication Administration by School Employees**

## 1. Conditions for Administering Medication

Authorized school employees may administer medication to students when all of the following conditions are met. These conditions apply to all medications, including those available over-the-counter without a prescription.

- a. Medication Authorization/Order: A health care practitioner must prescribe the medication for use by the student and complete a CFCI Physician's Authorization for Medication at School Form in which the health care practitioner provides explicit written instructions for administering the medication. Instructions must include the name of medication, medication dosage, time of administration at school, route of administration, reason for the drug or medication to be given, and any potential side effects or reactions of the medications.
- b. Proper Container/Labeling: If the medication to be administered is available by prescription only, the parent must provide the medication in a pharmacy-labeled container with directions for how and when the medicine is to be given, student's name and birthdate. If the medication is available over-the-counter, it must be provided in the original sealed container or packaging, labeled with the student's name. The directions must be consistent with the information contained in the CFCI Physician's Authorization for Medication at School Form.

Proper Administration: The employee must administer the medication pursuant to the healthcare practitioner's written instructions provided to the school by the student's parent and in accordance with professional standards. The parent will sign the CFCI Physician's Authorization for Medication at School Form to indicate permission to administer the medication as set forth on the form. The Board of Directors and its employees assume no liability for complications or side effects of medication when administered in accordance with the instructions provided by the parent and health care practitioner.

## 2. Procedures for Administering Medications

The School Director(s) shall develop procedures for the implementation of this policy. The procedures and a copy of this policy must be made available to all students and parents each school year. The School Directors' procedures should be developed according to the guidelines listed below.

- a. The health and welfare of the student must be of paramount concern in all decisions regarding the administration of medication.
- b. Procedures for medication administration must be consistent with recommendations of the School Health Unit of the Children & Youth Branch of the N.C. Division of Public Health, as described in the North Carolina School Health Program Manual.

- c. Students with special needs are to be afforded all rights provided by federal and state law as enumerated in the Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities. Students with disabilities also are to be afforded all rights provided by anti-discrimination laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- d. The Board generally encourages school personnel to administer medication from a centralized location. However, in all instances, whether administered from a centralized location or multiple locations, any medications kept at school for a student must be kept in a locked and secure place. An exception to the requirement for locked storage may be made for emergency medications that must be immediately accessible.
- e. All school personnel who will be administering medications must receive appropriate training.
- f. Only medications clearly prescribed for the student may be administered by school personnel. At the time a parent brings a medication to school for administration, if school personnel have concerns regarding the appropriateness of the medication or dosage for a student, a confirmation should be obtained from the student's health care practitioner or another health care practitioner prior to administering the medication or allowing a student to self-administer the medication.
- g. Although efforts should be made not to disrupt instructional time, a parent has the right to administer medication to his or her child at any time while the child is on school property.
- h. Written information maintained by school personnel regarding a student's medicinal and health needs is confidential. Parents and students must be accorded all rights provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and state confidentiality laws. Any employee who violates the confidentiality of the records may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Emergency Medication**

Students who are at risk for medical emergencies, such as those with diabetes, asthma, or severe allergies, must have an emergency health care plan developed for them and updated each school year to address emergency administration of medication. Students must meet the requirements of subsection A.1, above, including providing authorization and instructions from the health care practitioner and written consent of the parent, in order for emergency medication to be administered by school personnel while the student is at school, at a school sponsored activity, and/or while in transit to or from school or a school-sponsored event.

### **Student Self-Administering Medications**

The Board recognizes that students with certain health conditions like diabetes or asthma, or an allergy that could result in an anaphylactic reaction, may need to possess and

self-administer medication on school property in accordance with their individualized health care plan or emergency health care plan. As used in this section of the policy, “medication” refers to a medicine prescribed for the treatment of diabetes, asthma, or anaphylactic reactions and includes insulin or a source of glucose, a prescribed asthma inhaler, or a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector. The School Director(s) shall develop procedures for the possession and self-administration of such medication by students on school property, during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, and/or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events. Students may not self-administer any medications that are classified as controlled substances, including stimulant medications and narcotics.

#### Authorization to Self-Administer Medication

Before a student will be allowed to self-administer medication pursuant to this section, the student’s parent must provide to the School Director(s) or designee all of the documents listed below:

- a. written authorization from the student’s parent for the student to possess and self-administer the medication;
  - b. a written statement from the student’s health care practitioner verifying that:
    - 1) the student has diabetes or asthma, or an allergy that could result in anaphylactic reaction;
    - 2) the health care practitioner prescribed the medication for use on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events; and
    - 3) the student understands, has been instructed in self-administration of the medication, and has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the medication and any accompanying device;
  - c. a written treatment plan and written emergency protocol formulated by the prescribing health care practitioner for managing the student’s diabetes, asthma, or anaphylaxis episodes and for medication use by the student;
  - d. a statement provided by the school system and signed by the student’s parent acknowledging that the board of education and its agents are not liable for injury arising from the student’s possession and self administration of the medication;
  - e. any other documents or items necessary to comply with state and federal laws.
- Prior to being permitted to self-administer medication at school, the student also must demonstrate to the school nurse, or the nurse’s designee, the skill level necessary to use the medication and any accompanying device. The student’s parent must provide

to the school backup medication that school personnel are to keep in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event the student does not have the required medication. All information provided to the school by the student's parent must be reviewed by the school nurse and kept on file at the school in an easily accessible location. Any permission granted by the School Director(s) or designee for a student to possess and self-administer medication will be effective only for the same school year for 365 calendar days. Such permission must be renewed each school year.

### Responsibilities of the Student

A student who is authorized in accordance with this policy to carry medication for self-administration must carry the medication in the original labeled container with the student's name on the label.

### Consequences for Improper Use

A student who uses his or her medication in a manner other than as prescribed or who permits another person to use the medication may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school disciplinary policy. However, school officials shall not impose disciplinary action on the student that limits or restricts the student's immediate access to the diabetes, asthma, or anaphylactic medication. The board does not assume any responsibility for the administration of medication to a student by the student, the student's parent, or any other person who is not authorized by this policy to administer medications to students.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12134, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., 34 C.F.R. pt. 300; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; G.S. 115C-36, -307(c), -375.1, -375.2, -375.2A, -375.3; Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, State Board of Education Policy EXCP-00

## Anaphylaxis and Epinephrine

A strong collaboration among the healthcare community, school nurses, first responders, administrators, school staff, parents/legal guardians, students, and the community at large is crucial to establish and abide by the anaphylaxis policy and protocol and to maintain a safe school learning environment. Successful management of students with a life threatening health issue requires a team approach with involvement of parents/legal guardians, school nurses and designated school staff, healthcare providers, and students. CFCI shall develop and maintain an anaphylaxis and epinephrine protocol. Staff shall be trained on the protocol annually.

Staff and parents/legal guardians need to be made aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen free environment in any school that is open to the general community. Parents/guardians and staff should not have a false sense of security that an allergen has been totally eliminated from the environment. The school recognizes the need to adopt a range of procedures and risk minimization strategies to reduce the risk for a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including strategies to minimize the presence of the allergen in the school. Successful management of anaphylaxis in schools also requires having epinephrine auto-injectors available for immediate access in situations of severe allergic reaction to unknown allergens.

Non-patient specific epinephrine auto-injectors will be stocked and readily accessible at CFCI. First responders and other identified staff will be trained by the school nurse or designee to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and administer epinephrine via auto-injection.

Student-specific emergency medications shall be kept in a location that provides easy and immediate access and is never locked or accessible to other students. Medication storage shall be handled carefully, based on the student's individualized medical needs as well as the physical layout of the school.

## Individual Diabetes Care Plans and Diabetes Education

The Board of Directors recognizes the importance of creating a safe learning environment for all students. In compliance with State Board of Education policy, the Board of Directors shall ensure that individual diabetes care plans and diabetes education guidelines are adopted.

The guidelines adopted shall include:

- a. Procedures for the development of an individual diabetes care plan at the written request of the student's parent or guardian, and involving the parent or guardian, the student's

health care provider, the student's classroom teacher, the student if appropriate, the school nurse if available, and other appropriate school personnel.

- b. Procedures for regular review of an individual care plan.
- c. Information to be included in a diabetes care plan, including the responsibilities and appropriate staff development for teachers and other school personnel, an emergency care plan, the identification of allowable actions to be taken, the extent to which the student is able to participate in the student's diabetes care and management, and other information necessary for teachers and other school personnel in order to offer appropriate assistance and support to the student. The Board of Directors shall ensure that the information and allowable actions included in a diabetes care plan meet or exceed the American Diabetes Association's recommendations for the management of children with diabetes in the school.
- d. Information and staff development shall be made available to teachers and other school personnel in order to appropriately support and assist students with diabetes.
- e. The school nurse or designee shall ensure that all compliance reporting requirements are met.

## Concussions and Right to Learn

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The Board recognizes that concussions and other head injuries may be serious and potentially life threatening and that such injuries may result in serious consequences later in life if managed improperly. The Board is committed to practices that reduce the potential for short-term or long-term effects from such injuries. In support of this commitment, the Board directs school employees to comply with the concussion safety requirements for all students as set forth in this policy. The School Director(s) or designee shall develop a plan consistent with state requirements and shall implement and monitor compliance with this policy.

### A. Definition of Concussion

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in a loss of consciousness.

### B. Removal from and Return to Learn

Any student who is exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with a concussion must be removed from the learning environment immediately. The student will not be allowed to return to the learning environment until the student has been evaluated and has received written clearance for participating in the learning environment that complies with the requirements of any applicable law or State Board policy. School staff shall comply with the student's health plan upon return from a head injury.

### C. Record Keeping

The School Director(s) shall require the school nurse or designee to maintain complete and accurate records of actions taken in his or her school to comply with this policy and applicable legal authority. Records shall include accounts of any education or training as may be required by law or State Board of Education policy.

## Student Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policies

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### Non-Title IX Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process

The Board acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age and will provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by law. The Board will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying in any of its educational or employment activities or programs. Any violation of this policy will be considered serious and school officials shall promptly take appropriate action to address the violation.

### **A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR**

Students, school system employees, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The Board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying by students, employees, board members, volunteers, or visitors. "Visitors" includes parents and other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

Students are expected to comply with the behavior standards established by Board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, and school and classroom rules. Employees are expected to comply with Board policy, school system regulations, and school rules. Volunteers and visitors on school property also are expected to comply with board policy, school system regulations, and school rules and procedures.

This policy applies to behavior that takes place: (1) in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours; (2) on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity; (3) during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity; (4) at any time or place when the individual is subject to the authority of school personnel; or (5) at any

time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

## **B. DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any act or failure to act, whether intentional or unintentional, that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

### 2. Harassment and Bullying

a. Harassment or bullying behavior is deliberate conduct intended to harm another person or group of persons. Such conduct violates this policy when any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication:

- 1) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- 2) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits or by adversely altering the conditions of an employee's employment.

"Hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as harassment or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment or bullying. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident, if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, behavior described above that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic or motivated by an individual's association with a person who has or is perceived to have a differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, acts of

disrespect, intimidation, or threats, such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching, or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Harassment and bullying may occur through electronic means (“cyberbullying”), such as through the Internet, emailing, or text messaging, or by use of personal websites to support deliberate and repeated behavior intended to cause harm to persons or groups. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment or bullying.

Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, as described below, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

b. Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that violates this policy.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- 1) submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual’s employment, academic progress, or completion of a school-related activity;
- 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or in the case of a student, submission to or rejection of such conduct is used in evaluating the student’s performance within a course of study or other school-related activity; or
- 3) such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of (a) unreasonably interfering with an employee’s work or performance or a student’s educational performance, (b) limiting a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or environment, or (c) creating an abusive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or

demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, sexual assault, sexual violence, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with any student enrolled in the school system, whether or not the relationship is consensual. Such conduct is prohibited whether or not it constitutes sexual harassment.

c. Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment that violates this policy. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, sexual orientation, or gender identity but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

### **C. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR BULLYING**

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of this policy by any student, employee, or other person under the supervision and control of the school system, or any third person who knows or suspects conduct that may constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying, should inform a school official designated to receive such complaints.

Any employee who has witnessed, or who has reliable information that another person may have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of this policy has a duty to report such conduct. Employees who observe an incident of harassment or bullying are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator and it is safe to do so. If an employee knows of an incident involving discrimination, harassment, or bullying and the employee fails to report the conduct or take proper action or knowingly provides false information in regard to the incident, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Reports, except mandatory employee reports, may be made anonymously, and all reports will be investigated.

## **D. RESPONDING TO OCCURRENCES OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR BULLYING**

### **1. Consequences for the Perpetrator**

#### **a. Disciplinary Consequences for Students**

Students will be disciplined in accordance with the school's student behavior management plan. Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, the student will be subject to appropriate consequences and remedial actions ranging from positive behavioral interventions up to, and including, expulsion. In addition, the violation may also be reported to law enforcement, as appropriate.

Incidents of misbehavior that do not rise to the level of discriminatory harassment or bullying may violate acceptable standards of student behavior, including, but not limited to, the expectation that students will demonstrate civility and integrity in their actions and interactions with others. The consequences for such behavior will be consistent with applicable board policy and the Code of Student Conduct.

This policy will not be construed to allow school officials to punish student expression or speech based on undifferentiated fear or apprehension of a disturbance or out of a desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that may accompany an unpopular viewpoint.

#### **b. Disciplinary Consequences for Employees**

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. In addition, the violation may also be reported to law enforcement, as appropriate. Nothing in this policy will preclude the school system from taking disciplinary action against an employee when the evidence does not establish unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying, but the conduct otherwise violates board policy or expected standards of employee behavior.

#### **c. Consequences for Other Perpetrators**

Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate. A third party under the supervision and control of the school system will be subject to termination of contracts/agreements, restricted from school property, and/or subject to other consequences, as appropriate.

## 2. Consideration of Need for More Extensive Response

School administrators shall consider whether the misconduct warrants more than just a response at the individual level. Given the nature and severity of the misconduct, the administrators may determine that a classroom, school-wide, or school system-wide response is necessary. Such classroom, school-wide, or school system-wide responses may include additional staff training, harassment and bullying prevention programs, and other measures deemed appropriate by the School Director(s) or designee to address the behavior. The actions taken must be reasonably calculated to end the behavior, eliminate a hostile environment and its effects if one has been created, and prevent recurrence of the behavior.

## 3. Retaliation Prohibited

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for (a) reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, (b) supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or (c) participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy.

After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable federal, state, or local laws, policies, and regulations, the School Director(s) or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

## **E. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS**

The Board directs the School Director(s) to establish training and other programs that are designed to prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of the school community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan.

As funds are available, the Board will provide additional training for students, employees, and volunteers who have significant contact with students regarding the Board's efforts to address discrimination, harassment, and bullying and will create programs to address these issues. The training or programs should (1) provide examples of behavior that constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying; (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of discrimination, harassment, or bullying; and (3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, at school bus stops, on cell phones, and on the Internet.

## **F. NOTICE**

The School Director(s) or designee is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents, and employees of this policy and of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The School Director(s) or designee must ensure that a copy of this policy is provided to students, employees, and parents or other responsible caregivers at the beginning of each school year. In addition, both policies must be posted on the school system website, and copies of the policies must be readily available at each school and worksite. Notice of the policies must appear in all student and employee handbooks and in any school or school system publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

## **G. COORDINATORS**

The School Director(s) have appointed individuals to coordinate the school system's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under federal non-discrimination laws. These responsibilities include investigating any complaints communicated to school officials alleging noncompliance with Title VI or Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination Act, and/or the Boy Scouts Act, or alleging actions which would be prohibited by those laws. These individuals will be posted on the school's website.

## **H. RECORDS AND REPORTING**

The School Director(s) or designee shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. The records must identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The School Director(s) or designee also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the school system to provide an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

The School Director(s) or designee shall report to the State Board of Education all verified cases of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. The report must be made through the Discipline Data Collection Report or through other means required by the State Board.

## **I. EVALUATION**

The School Director(s) or designee shall evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying and shall share these evaluations periodically with the board.

Title IX provides that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

It is the policy of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry that students should not be subjected to forms of unlawful discrimination or harassment, while at school or school-sponsored activities. Furthermore, the policy’s intent is to address the issue in a proactive manner through the establishment of a system for educating students and staff at the School regarding the identification, prevention, intervention, and reporting of such antisocial acts. The School acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The School strives to model an inclusive environment and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or sex, including sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ identification. The School will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment in any of its educational or employment activities or programs based on such protected classifications.

## **B. Purpose**

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender, including any form of sexual harassment as that term is defined under Title IX, in any education program or activity of the School. The School takes seriously all reports and Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. The School does not discriminate on the basis of sex and gender in its education programs or activities, including admission and employment, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and federal regulations.

Any person with questions about this policy should contact the School’s Title IX Coordinator whose information is listed at [www.cfei.net](http://www.cfei.net).

## **C. REASON FOR POLICY**

The United States Department of Education has adopted formal rules related to sexual harassment as prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (May 2020). These new regulations require additional procedures and policies related to programs using federal funds. The new law focuses on procedures for reporting, investigating and finding illegal sexual harassment as the term is defined by the rule. The School has always prohibited discrimination based on sex/gender and sexual harassment in educational programs and activities implemented by it. This policy is intended to comply with the mandates of 34 C.F.R. § 106 and other provisions of Title IX.

## **D. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS**

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, the School expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment, based on sex or gender and prohibits sexual harassment (including sexual violence) and gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, requests for sexual favors in exchange for benefits (*quid pro quo*), and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. In accordance with Title IX, the School also prohibits gender-based harassment, which is unwelcome conduct based on a student's sex, harassing conduct based on a student's failure to conform to sex stereotypes.

Sex-based harassment can be carried out by school employees, other students, and third parties. All students can experience sex-based harassment, including male and female students, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, and students of different races, national origins, and ages. Title IX protects all students from sex-based harassment, regardless of the sex of the parties, including when they are members of the same sex.

#### **E. RETALIATION PROHIBITED**

The School prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX.

Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for policy violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation. As such, the School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy. After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations, the Director(s) or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a policy violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under Title IX does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## **F. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

This policy prohibits unlawful discrimination or harassment by students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy is intended to apply to students via a via other students, faculty, staff, volunteers/visitors, or contractors. This policy also applies to employees, volunteers/visitors, and contractors. This policy applies to behavior that takes place within the School's "education program or activity," which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, behavior:

1. in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;
2. on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. at any bus stop;
4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
5. at any time or place when the individual is subject to the oversight and authority of school personnel;
6. at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools; and
7. while using school or personal electronic communications, including employee and student emails, text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, blogging, websites and social networking websites (i.e., Snapchat or Instagram).

## **G. TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for Cape Fear Center for Inquiry and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination. Other major monitoring duties include, but are not limited to, the following recruitment and admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring and employment. Other areas of consideration include:

- Participating in the development and implementation of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry's sexual harassment policy.
- Assisting faculty, counselors and administrators in complying with Title IX, and when a need arises, planning remedial actions.
- Making your presence known in the community by disseminating civil rights information or by speaking at parent-teacher group meetings, social or professional

organization meetings, and other community functions.

- Serving as a resource on Title IX/gender issues.
- Monitoring and evaluating Cape Fear Center for Inquiry's Title IX compliance efforts and making recommendations for any appropriate changes.
- Providing updated information to the school on Title IX implementation and issues.
- Identifying and disseminating information about Title IX educational resources (organizations, individuals, print, internet, and audio-visual).

## **H. NOTICE**

The designated Title IX Coordinator is responsible for providing effective notice to job applicants, student applicants, students, parents, and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment. This policy will be posted on the School's website, and copies of the policy are available at the front office. Notice of this policy will appear in all job applicant information, admissions information, student and employee handbooks, and in any School publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

## **I. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this and all other Title IX related policies, the following definitions shall apply.

### **1. Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment prohibited under Title IX and by this policy is conduct on the basis of sex occurring in a School education program or activity that satisfies one or more of the following:

- a. an employee of the School conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the School on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- b. unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School's education program or activities. This determination requires consideration of all the facts and circumstances, including, but not limited to, the ages and disability statuses of the harasser and the victim and the number of individuals involved and their authority;
- c. sexual assault including rape, statutory rape, fondling, and incest;
- d. dating violence;

- e. domestic violence; or
- f. stalking

Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking will be defined in accordance with applicable law and the definitions will be incorporated into an Administrative Regulation developed by the Director(s).

Conduct that satisfies this standard is not sexual harassment for purposes of this policy if the conduct occurred (1) outside the United States or (2) under circumstances in which the School did not have substantial control over both the harasser and the context in which the harassment occurred.

Examples of conduct on the basis of sex that would be considered sexual harassment if the conduct satisfies the criteria above include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual; sexual assault; sexual violence; the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials; posting sexually suggestive pictures of a person without the person's consent; and forwarding pornographic material to a classmate or other member of the School community. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping may also constitute sexual harassment. Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex. Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment.

Conduct that is determined not to meet the definition above may violate other School policies or established standards of conduct and will be treated accordingly. For example, conduct that does not meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment above may nevertheless violate other School policies.

## 2. Report

A report is an oral or written notification that an individual is an alleged or suspected perpetrator or victim of sexual harassment.

Making a report initiates the interactive process with the Complainant described below. No disciplinary action will be taken against a Respondent for sexual harassment based on a report alone.

## 3. Formal Complaint

A Formal Complaint is a document signed and filed with the Title IX Coordinator by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that School officials investigate the allegation(s). Filing a Formal Complaint initiates the Complaint process. The Formal Complaint must demonstrate that at the time of filing a formal complaint, Complainant was participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the formal complaint is filed.

## 4. Complainant

The Complainant is the individual(s) who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, regardless of whether a Formal Complaint is filed. While parents and guardians do not become complainants (or respondents), parents and guardians have a right to act on behalf of parties (including by filing formal complaints) in Title IX matters.

## 5. Respondent

The Respondent is the individual(s) who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

## 6. Formal Complaint Process

Complaint process means the process for investigating and reaching a final determination of responsibility for a Formal Complaint of sexual harassment. The sexual harassment complaint process is set forth in the School's Title IX Complaint Process adopted by the Director(s), which shall comply with all Title IX requirements.

## 7. Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator is a School official who is designated to coordinate the School's response to sexual harassment and allegations of sexual harassment. Contact information for the Title IX Coordinator is posted on the School's website.

## 8. Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as 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 restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program and activities without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the School's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. The School's selection of supportive measures and remedies shall be based on what is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

The School determines which measures are appropriate for a particular complainant on a case-by-case basis. Not all of the measures listed below will be necessary in every case to keep the Complainant safe and ensure their equal access to educational programs and activities. If the Complainant or advocate identifies an interim measure that is not already provided by the School, the School will consider whether the request can be granted. In those instances where interim measures affect both a Complainant and the Respondent, the School will minimize the burden on the Complainant wherever appropriate while ensuring that the measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

Supportive measures available to the parties include, but are not limited to, counseling, mental health services referral, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring, and other similar measures determined by School officials to be necessary to protect the safety or educational or employment activities of a party.

## 9. Days

Days are school days unless specified otherwise.

## 10. Student(s)

"Student(s)" means the Student and/or the Student's parent or legal guardian unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. When the Complainant or Respondent is a Student, references to those terms also include the Student's parent or legal guardian unless the context clearly indicates

otherwise.

#### 11. Actual Knowledge

“Actual knowledge” means a School employee has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment.

### J. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The recipient, whether a School employee, staff member, contractor, or the Title IX Coordinator, must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex/gender discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the FERPA or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of Title IX, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Title IX grievance procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The records will identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The Title IX Coordinator also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the School to provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The Director(s) shall report to the Board all verified cases of unlawful discrimination or harassment under the School’s Title IX Policy.

### K. **EVALUATION**

The Director(s) or designee shall evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment and shall share these evaluations periodically with the School’s Board.

### L. **REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

#### 1. Students

Any Student who believes he or she is a victim of discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex and/or gender occurring during or as part of the School’s

educational programs or activities may report the matter to a trusted teacher or advisor, the Director(s), the Title IX Coordinator, or to any teacher, counselor, or other School employee. Likewise, a Student who has witnessed conduct amounting to sexual harassment may report such conduct.

## 2. School Employees and Board Members

Employees and Board members are required to immediately report any actual or suspected discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex and/or gender. Such a report must be made to the Title IX Coordinator, grade-level Coordinator, or Director(s), as soon as possible and within 24 hours. If the Director(s) is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Actual knowledge includes but is not limited to:

- a. a report of sexual harassment/discrimination from a Student, an employee or other person;
- b. the employee or Board member witnesses conduct that is or reasonably could be sexual harassment; or
- c. the employee or Board member discovers evidence of sexual harassment, such as sexualized graffiti on School property, or otherwise has reliable information or reason to believe that a Student, employee, or other individual may have been sexually harassed in violation of this policy, even if no one has reported the sexual harassment.

Employees who observe an incident of harassment are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator, and it is safe to do so. An employee with actual knowledge of possible sexual harassment in violation of this policy who does not promptly report the conduct and/or take proper action as required by this subsection, or who knowingly provides false information about the incident, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Any doubt about whether particular conduct is possible sexual harassment must be resolved in favor of reporting the conduct.

The mandatory reporting requirements of this Policy are in addition to required reporting under other policies, under State law, and pursuant to applicable State Board of Education Policies. In addition, School officials should report incidents to law enforcement as appropriate.

## 3. Reporting By Others

Students, parents, volunteers, visitors or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination or harassment based on sex/gender under this

policy to the Director(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.

**4. Content of the Report**

To the extent possible, reports should be sufficient to put School officials on notice of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Employees making mandatory reports should provide as much detail about the alleged sexual harassment as is known, unless such disclosure would violate law or standards of professional ethics. Reports, other than mandatory reports by employees, may be made anonymously, but anonymous reports may limit the School's ability to respond fully if the alleged victim is not identified.

**5. Methods of Reporting**

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Reporting may be made at any time, including during non-school hours.

**6. Time Period for Reporting**

- a. Students and others may make a report at any time, preferably as soon as possible after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the report.
- b. School employees and Board members with actual knowledge of sexual harassment must report that information immediately, but in any event no later than 24 hours.

**M. RESPONSE BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS WITH ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**1. Generally**

School officials must respond promptly and impartially to actual knowledge of sexual harassment and do so in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. Such response will include an interactive process and supportive measures.

**2. Interactive Process**

Upon receiving a report of alleged sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly contact the Complainant (and the Complainant's parent or guardian if appropriate). This contact must occur within three school days, excluding weekends, absent

extenuating circumstances. The Title IX Coordinator shall also notify the Director(s) of the report and, if an employee is the Complainant or Respondent, the human resources official.

When contacting the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator shall do all of the following during the contact and shall document the same:

- a. Offer supportive measures;
- b. Consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- c. Explain that supportive measures are available with or without the filing of a Formal Complaint; and
- d. Explain the process for filing a Formal Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator and the response required of the School when a Complaint is filed, including all the following:
  - 1) The filing of a Formal Complaint will initiate the Formal Complaint process;
  - 2) The Formal Complaint may be filed in person, by mail, or by electronic mail and must be filed with the Title IX Coordinator;
  - 3) The steps of the formal process include: notice to the Respondent; investigation during which both parties may present evidence and ask questions; a decision by an objective Decision-Maker; and the right to appeal the Decision;
  - 4) The approximate time frame for concluding the Complaint process;
  - 5) That School officials will treat both parties equitably;
  - 6) The possibility that Formal Complaints may be consolidated; and
  - 7) The requirement that, under some circumstances, the Title IX Coordinator may be required to file a Formal Complaint should the Complainant not choose to do so.

### **3. Supportive Measures**

After considering the Complainant's wishes, the Title IX Coordinator shall arrange the effective implementation of appropriate supportive measures unless, in the exercise of good judgment, the Title IX Coordinator determines that supportive measures should not be provided. If supportive measures are not provided to the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator shall document why supportive measures were not provided and why not providing supportive measures is not deliberately indifferent to known sexual harassment.

The supportive measures available to the Complainant and the Respondent are set forth above.

### **4. Title IX Coordinator Decision to File Formal Complaint**

- a. Complainant declines to file a Formal Complaint;
- b. Coordinator decides on case-by-case basis;
- c. Standard is based upon the obligation for School not to be deliberately indifferent;
- d. Decision must not be based upon the credibility or merit of the Complaint;
- e. Filing of Formal Complaint by Title IX Coordinator does not signify agreement or disagreement with the allegations; nor does the filing render the Title IX Coordinator a party to the Complaint; and
- f. The Coordinator must document the decision whether to file a Formal Complaint and the reasons therefor.

**5. Presumption of Non-Responsibility**

A Respondent identified in any report under this Policy is presumed not responsible until responsibility has been established by a preponderance of evidence in accordance with the Formal Complaint Procedures set forth in Administrative Regulation.

**6. Constitutional Rights.**

The School will not restrict rights protected under the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment, Fifth Amendment, and Fourteenth Amendment, when complying with Title IX.

**7. Due Process**

No discipline may be imposed upon an employee or Student without following applicable due process procedures, unless the individual agrees to disciplinary action pursuant to a settlement or mediation process; provided, however, that a Respondent may be subject to removal, suspension, or leave in accordance with State law and School Policy, including the School's Student Discipline Policy.

**8. Conflicts of Interest and Impartiality**

All Title IX personnel (Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process) shall be free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.

**9. Privileged Information**

The School's complaint process shall not use, rely on, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

**10. Equal Application and Standard of Evidence**

Any provisions, rules, or practices that a school adopts as part of its complaint process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment must apply equally to both parties (complainant and respondent).

The standard of evidence to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard for all formal complaints of sexual harassment, whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including faculty member).

## **11. Dismissal**

If the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in the School's Title IX policy, or the alleged conduct did not occur in the School's education program or activity, against a person in the United States, the School must dismiss such allegations for purposes of Title IX. However, the School may still address the allegations in any manner the School deems appropriate under the School's Student Discipline policy or other policies.

## **N. Remedies and Disciplinary Sanctions**

When a Respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment, the School will offer all remedies needed to eliminate the harm to the Complainant and the school community and prevent the recurrence of sexual harassment. Simply sanctioning a Respondent found responsible, in some cases, may be insufficient to eliminate a hostile environment. Rather, in addition to sanctions, the School may consider offering appropriate remedies for the broader student/staff population after the final outcome, including the following:

- Training or retraining school employees on the school's responsibilities to address allegations of sexual violence and how to conduct Title IX investigations;
- Developing materials on sexual harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students;
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual harassment prevention programs with students and/or staff;
- Issuing policy statements or taking other steps that clearly communicate that the school does not tolerate sexual harassment and will respond to any incidents and to any student who reports such incidents;
- Conducting, in conjunction with student leaders, a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the school is free from sexual violence, and using that information to inform future proactive steps that the school will take;
- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team);

- When a school is unable to conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

Disciplinary sanctions include:

- For Students found responsible: verbal warning, written warning, interim suspension, restitution, suspension, required participation in appropriate training, counseling, required completion of a probationary period without additional infractions, or requiring the respondent to stay away from the complainant for a period of time.
- For Employees found responsible: sanctions for violations of Title IX vary depending on severity from formal written warning to dismissal.

## **O. FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS**

The Director(s) will publish notice of and adopt procedures consistent with Title IX Regulations to ensure a prompt and equitable resolution of Student and employee Formal Complaints alleging sexual harassment under Title IX.

## **P. RECORD**

The Title IX Coordinator shall create and maintain for a period of seven years records of all reports and Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. For each report or Formal Complaint, the Coordinator shall document the following:

1. Any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to the report or Formal Complaint;
2. That School officials have taken measures that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program and activities;
3. Why School officials believe their response to the report or Complaint was not deliberately indifferent; and
4. If supportive measures were not provided to the Complainant, why that was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

In conjunction with the Director(s), the Title IX Coordinator shall also maintain for seven years all materials used to train the Title IX Coordinator, Investigators, Decision-Makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. These materials will be made publicly available on the School's website.

## **Q. POLICY APPLICATION**

This policy shall remain in effect as long as required by law.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS**

The School shall investigate the allegations in any formal complaint and send written notice to both parties (complainants and respondents) of the allegations upon receipt of a formal complaint.

**A. Investigator.** The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate an impartial individual to serve as the Investigator and conduct an investigation. The Investigator may be the Title IX Coordinator. However, the Investigator shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The School may choose an outside investigator, School employee or contractor to conduct the investigation. During the complaint process and when investigating, the Investigator shall comply with the following:

1. The burden of gathering evidence and the burden of proof must remain on the School, not on the parties.
2. The Investigator must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. The Investigator and CFCI must not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no “gag orders”).
4. Parties must have the same opportunity to select an advisor of the party’s choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney.
5. The Investigator shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
6. The Investigator shall send the parties, and their advisors, a draft investigative report, that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to respond. Thereafter, the Investigator shall issue a final report to the parties and the Decision-maker.
7. The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator or Decision-Maker shall dismiss allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment set forth in the School’s Title IX policy or did not occur in a school’s education program or activity against a person in the U.S. Such dismissal is only for Title IX purposes and does not preclude the School from addressing the conduct in any manner the school deems appropriate.
8. The School may, in its discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering

sufficient evidence to reach a determination.

9. The School shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.

10. The School may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.

11. The School shall protect the privacy of a party's medical, psychological, and similar treatment records and shall not access or use such records unless the School obtains the party's voluntary, written consent to do so.

## **B. DECISION-MAKER**

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate a Decision-maker with regard to a Title IX complaint. The Decision-maker shall not be the Title IX Coordinator or Investigator, and shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The Decision-maker shall comply with the following rules:

1. Start with the presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the complaint process.

2. All Complainants are afforded rape shield protections, deeming questions and evidence about a complainant's prior sexual behavior irrelevant, unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove consent.

3. Use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision.

4. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

5. After the Investigator has sent the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party five (5) business days to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

6. Issue a written determination regarding responsibility with findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.

7. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

## **L. GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

1. **Prompt Filing.** The Complainant must file a formal complaint within a reasonable time, ideally within 10 days of the alleged incident. A complaint will not be disallowed solely because of the passage of time. The Title IX coordinator is charged with ensuring that all such complaints are timely, impartially, and appropriately investigated in accordance with applicable law.
2. **Confidentiality.** Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the complainant. There may be times where confidentiality may not be possible for the School to conduct a thorough investigation. There may also be instances where the School has a legal obligation to report certain information it receives to state or local authorities or to protect the School community.
3. **Timeline.** While the timeframe for completing an investigation into individual complaints may vary depending on the circumstances, the Title IX coordinator will ensure that timeframes are reasonable and endeavor to complete any investigation, including any decision, within sixty (60) days of the filing of a complaint. The timeline may be extended where appropriate at the discretion of the School. Include reasonably prompt time frames for conclusion of the grievance process, including appeals and informal resolutions, with allowance for short-term, good cause delays or extensions of the time frames.
4. **Investigation.** The Title IX coordinator or other School official shall designate an impartial Investigator to conduct the investigation. The Investigator shall have full authority to investigate, including the authority to interview witnesses. The Investigator shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy in conducting the investigation.
5. **Decision-Maker.** The Decision-maker shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy and shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision. The Decision-maker shall timely provide written notice of the outcome of the complaint to the relevant parties.
6. **Appeal.** Either party may appeal the Decision-maker's decision to the Board of Directors within 14 days after a decision is made or the School dismisses a formal complaint in a Title IX proceeding, on the following bases:
  - a. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter,
  - b. Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter, and/or
  - c. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.
7. The Board of Directors will appoint a panel of three board members to serve as the impartial review panel. The review will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and the panel may, but is not required to, request information directly from the parties. The

three-member review panel will make a decision and will provide written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within fourteen (14) school days, unless circumstances require more time.

#### **M. INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS**

After a formal Complaint is filed, the School may, in its discretion, offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice, so long as both parties give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt informal resolution. The School will not require participation in an informal process. And, at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.

The School does not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to a formal investigation and adjudication of formal complaints of sexual harassment. Any person who facilitates an informal resolution must be well-trained. The School will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student. Finally, the School may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

#### **McKinney-Vento**

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As required by the North Carolina Constitution and North Carolina law, Cape Fear Center of Inquiry (CFCI) is committed to providing a free public school education to all children who are legally entitled to enroll in the school system. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the North Carolina State Plan for Educating Homeless Children, CFCI will make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and school-aged youth located within the area served by the school system, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate barriers to their receiving an education that may exist in school system policies or practices. Based on individual need, homeless students will be provided services available to all students, such as free or reduced price school meals, services for English learners, special education, and before- and after-school care.

The provisions of this policy will supersede any and all conflicting provisions in Board policies that address the areas discussed in this policy.

#### **A. DEFINITION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Homeless students are children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term “homeless student” will also be deemed to include the term “unaccompanied youth,” which includes a youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Homeless children and youth include those students who are as follows:

1. Sharing the house of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
2. Living in motels, hotels, transient trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. Living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or
7. Living in a migratory situation that qualifies as homeless because the child lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

#### B. HOMELESS LIAISON

The School Director(s) or designee shall appoint and train a school employee to serve as the homeless liaison. The homeless liaison duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Ensuring that school personnel identify homeless children and youth;
2. Ensuring school/preschool enrollment of and opportunities for academic success for homeless children and youth;
3. Ensuring that homeless families and children have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible;
4. Ensuring that homeless families and children receive referrals to healthcare, dental, mental health and substance abuse, housing, and other appropriate services;
5. Informing parents or guardians and any unaccompanied youth of available transportation services and helping to coordinate such services;
6. Ensuring that public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians and unaccompanied youth;
7. Informing parents or guardians of educational and related opportunities available to their children and ensuring that parents or guardians have meaningful opportunities to participate in their children’s educations;

8. Helping to mediate enrollment disputes, including ensuring that a homeless child or youth is enrolled immediately pending final resolution of the dispute;
9. Informing unaccompanied youth of their status as independent students and assisting in verifying such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;
10. Ensuring that school personnel providing services to homeless students receive professional development and other support;
11. Working with school personnel, the student, parents or guardians, and/or other agencies to obtain critical enrollment records, including immunization and medical records, in a timely manner; and
12. Working with the School Director(s) or designee to identify board policies or procedures that might serve as a barrier to enrollment of homeless students, including those related to immunization records, medical records, uniforms or dress codes, school fees, and school admission.

The employee serving as the homeless liaison is located on the school's website.

#### C. ACCESS TO STUDENTS' RECORDS

Homeless students transferring into the school system may provide cumulative and other records directly to school system personnel. The School Director(s) or designee shall not require that such records be forwarded from another school system before the student may enroll. However, school personnel shall immediately request the official records from the previous school.

School personnel shall immediately enroll homeless students according to NC Charter School Law, even if they do not have proof of residency, school and immunization records, birth certificates, or other documents; have missed application or enrollment deadlines during a period of homelessness; have outstanding fees; or are not accompanied by an adult. The homeless liaison shall assist the students and parents or guardians in securing appropriate records or otherwise meeting enrollment requirements.

Information regarding a child or youth's homeless situation must be treated as a student record and protected accordingly.

#### D. ENROLLMENT

A homeless student (or the student's parent or guardian) may request to attend his or her school of origin or any public school that other students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend. The school of origin is defined as the school the student attended before losing permanent housing or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a preschool. When a student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools. Unless not in the student's best interest, a homeless student who continues attending the school of origin will remain enrolled in the school of origin for the entire time the student is homeless and until the end of any academic year in which the student moves into permanent housing.

The School Director(s) shall designate the appropriate personnel to decide, in consultation with the homeless liaison, which school a homeless student will attend. The decision will be based upon the student's best interest. The School Director's designee must presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest, unless contradicted by the student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth. The School Director's designee must consider student-centered factors related to the student's best interest, including factors concerning the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students, giving priority to the request of the student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth.

If the School Director's designee determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth, he or she must provide a written explanation of the reasons for the determination to the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth, along with information regarding the right to appeal the placement decision.

## E. ENROLLMENT DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The school system will implement an enrollment dispute resolution process that is consistent with the process required by the State Board of Education in the North Carolina Administrative Code, 16 N.C.A.C. 6H .0112.

### 1. Initiation of the Dispute and Stay Put

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school for a homeless student, the following must occur:

- A. The homeless student will be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, will receive all services for which he or

she is eligible, and will be allowed to participate fully in school activities, pending resolution of the dispute.

B. The unaccompanied youth or parent or guardian of the student will be provided a written explanation of the school's decision regarding the enrollment, including the right to appeal the decision. Such information must be provided in a language that the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth can understand. The information must contain:

1. Contact information, including telephone number and address of the homeless liaison and of the State coordinator for homeless education, with a brief description of their roles;
2. The right to initiate the dispute resolution process either orally or in writing;
3. A simple form that parents or guardians or unaccompanied youth can complete and submit to the homeless liaison to initiate the dispute resolution process;
4. A step-by-step description of how to dispute the school's decision;
5. Notice of the right to enroll immediately in the school of choice or remain in the school of origin with transportation provided pending resolution of the dispute;
6. Notice that immediate enrollment includes full participation in all school activities; and
7. Notice of the right to obtain assistance of advocates or attorneys.

C. The student or parent or guardian will be referred to the system's homeless liaison, who shall carry out the appeal process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute.

## 2. Homeless Liaison Review

A. Any parent or guardian or student initiating an enrollment dispute (hereinafter "complainant") is encouraged to attempt to resolve the

dispute informally through discussion with the homeless liaison. If the dispute cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may present a formal complaint orally or in writing to the homeless liaison either directly or through the School Director(s) of the school at which enrollment is sought.

B. The complaint should include the date of the filing, a description of the disputed enrollment action, the name of the person(s) involved, and a description of the relief requested. The complainant must be informed of the right to provide supporting written or oral documentation and to seek the assistance of an advocate or attorney.

C. Within five school days after receiving the complaint, the homeless liaison shall provide a written decision, including the reasons for the decision, to the complainant and the School Director(s).

### 3. Appeal to the School Director(s) of the Liaison's Decision

A. Within five school days of receiving the liaison's decision, the complainant may appeal the decision to the School Director(s) in writing. The homeless liaison shall ensure that the School Director(s) receives copies of the written complaint and the response.

B. The School Director(s) or designee shall schedule a conference with the complainant to discuss the complaint.

C. Within five school days of receiving the appeal, the School Director(s) or designee shall provide a written decision to the complainant including a statement of the reasons for the decision.

#### 4. Appeal to the Board of the Director's Decision

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the School Director's decision, he or she may file a written appeal with the Board of Directors. The Board will provide the complainant with a written decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal. The Board's decision will constitute the final decision of the school system. The written statement of the Board's opinion will include the name and contact information of the State coordinator for homeless education and will describe the appeal rights to the State coordinator.

#### 5. Appeal to the State Coordinator of the Board's Decision

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the action taken by the Board of Directors, he or she may file an appeal with the State coordinator for homeless education, who will issue a final decision on the complaint. Within five school days following a request from the State coordinator, the homeless liaison shall provide the record of complaint and a copy of the Board's decision along with any other information requested regarding issues in the appeal.

### F. TRANSPORTATION

The school will provide homeless students with transportation services comparable to those of other students. In addition, at the parent or guardian's request (or at the request of the homeless liaison for unaccompanied youth), the Board will provide transportation services to/from the school of origin. The School Director(s) or designee and the homeless liaison shall coordinate homeless students' transportation needs, based on the child's best interest. In situations in which a student attends school in this system but his or her temporary housing is in another system (or vice versa), the School Director(s) or designee shall work with the other system to share the cost and/or responsibility for transportation. If an agreement cannot be reached between the systems, the cost of such transportation will be divided evenly.

If a homeless student becomes permanently housed and chooses to remain in his or her school of origin, the Board will provide transportation to the student for the remainder of the school year.

## G. TITLE I

Homeless students are automatically eligible for Title I services. The homeless liaison and the Curriculum Coordinator shall collaborate to identify the needs of homeless students.

Legal References: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431, et seq.; Non Regulatory Guidance on Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program, U.S. Department of Education (July 2016); G.S. 115C-366(a2); 16 N.C.A.C. 6H .0112; State Board of Education Policy SPLN-000

**School McKinney-Vento Liaison:** Olivia Horne, School Counselor

### **Student Discipline Policy**

CFCI is committed to giving every student the opportunity to reach his or her full potential by providing a rigorous academic program, character education, and meaningful family participation. In order to fulfill this mission it is important that we provide a positive, safe, and orderly environment for our students, staff, and families. CFCI believes that a common and consistently applied discipline policy is a critical tool in building that environment. It reflects what the school believes to be reasonable expectations of conduct for all members of our student body.

The importance of a discipline policy is reinforced in North Carolina state law (G.S. 115C-288) stating, “The director or designee shall have the authority to exercise discipline over the pupils of the school under policies adopted by the local board of education in accordance with G.S. 115C-390.11 through G.S. 115C-390.12.”

The school’s discipline policy identifies those behaviors that are detrimental to our goal of a positive, safe, and orderly environment. Specifically, it identifies behaviors which interfere with the learning process or disrupts the educational environment for any student at any time. The identified consequences are designed to deter students from engaging in behavior which are counter to the school’s mission, and, in the event that violations do occur, discourages students from committing further violations.

The discipline policy contains CFCI’s Community Discipline Guide. Each violation contains comparable consequences. While these consequences reflect what School believes to be fair and reasonable for that class of violations, the school also recognizes that there are times where there are mitigating or aggravating factors which may result in a change in consequences. The School Director(s) or their designees have the authority to assign any alternate reasonable consequence based on either mitigating or aggravating factors. Finally, engaging repeatedly in behaviors may

result in additional and/or more severe consequences. This is intended to reinforce the importance of learning from mistakes.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**365 Day Suspension** - This is out of school suspension for 365 calendar days. It is the maximum allowed by North Carolina law.

**Aggravating Factors** - Facts of a discipline incident which suggest consequences beyond what is recommended in the discipline policy. These are determined by the School Director(s) or their designees, and may include, but are not limited to, repeated violations, lying or refusing to cooperate with school officials in an investigation, severity of any injury sustained during the incident, and imminent danger to self or others.

**Exclusion** - This consequence prohibits a student from continuing to attend School, although the student may attend another school.

**Expulsion**- Is the permanent termination of the student-school relationship. This applies only to students 14 years of age or older whose continued presence constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or school staff. Students considered for expulsion are entitled to a hearing before the School's Board of Directors as set forth in North Carolina statutes.

**Long-Term Suspension** - This is an out of school suspension lasting greater than 10 consecutive days, but less than 365 days.

**Short-Term Suspension** – An out of school suspension lasting fewer than 10 consecutive days.

**Mitigating Factors** - Facts of a disciplinary incident which suggest consequences that are less severe than what is recommended in the Code of Conduct. These may include, but are not limited to, self-defense, provocation, student record, and other factors identified by the school director or designee or director.

**Out of School Suspension** - This consequence is the prohibition of a student from being on school campus, at school events, or participating in school functions, whether on or off campus.

## **General Information**

The information contained in this section is designed to address common questions and confusions regarding the discipline policy. Providing further clarification on these issues will help parents and students successfully navigate the requirements of the CFCI discipline policy.

The discipline policy applies to all students at any time they are present on school campus, at any school event, or during any school sponsored activity, including school events or activities that are held off campus. Additionally, it applies to students at any time or any location whose behavior interferes with the learning process, causes serious safety concerns, or disrupts the educational

environment. CFCI approaches student discipline in a developmentally appropriate way, which is reflected in the Community Discipline Guide.

School Leadership will follow investigatory procedures and make a reasonable attempt to contact parents/guardians after it has been concluded that a violation has occurred. During the investigation, students will be interviewed in order to determine what may have occurred. A student will be notified of the consequence of a violation as long as notification of the student does not pose a risk to the safety and security of other individuals on campus.

If a student is suspended out of school, the student may not be present on the campus of School, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event, whether off or on campus, without the permission of school leadership.

If a student is attempting to engage another student in a fight, it is our expectation that the other student will make every reasonable attempt to walk away and notify a school employee.

Cubbies, desks, school issued technology, and other school property remain at all times the property of the school and are subject to search at the discretion of the School Director(s) or their designees.

Corporal punishment is not permitted at school, but there may be times when school employees need to use reasonable force to control behavior or to remove a person from the scene. These situations include:

- To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others.
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student.
- For self-defense
- For the protection of persons or property
- To maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a school related activity on or off school property

### **Student Expectations**

Treating others with respect and being responsible for one's own actions are the goals of the social curriculum at CFCI. We want our students to learn how to interact in a supportive, cooperative learning environment. Through the social curriculum, Responsive Classroom, students internalize rules and procedures and develop self-control and self-confidence. Students are taught and encouraged to learn the principles of cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and compassion as part of their social-emotional learning (SEL) and growth.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) are leading experts in the field of social-emotional learning and define SEL as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy

identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.” CFCI utilizes this framework in conjunction with the Responsive Classroom approach, as the foundation of our language and instruction when addressing student strengths and needs. Vital to creating this climate is our social/emotional curriculum delivered during Morning Meetings, Closing Circles, and throughout the school day utilizing Responsive Classroom practices and techniques. It is CFCI’s intention to use positive reinforcement and to promote ethical responsibility.

CFCI is not required to engage in progressive discipline. Some offenses are so serious they warrant more severe consequences including, but not limited to, immediate suspension and/or recommendation for longer-term consequences.

This student discipline policy is not to be seen as all-inclusive. The leadership team reserves the right to amend or add to these lists as unique situations arise. The leadership further reserves the right to deviate from the stated disciplinary action(s) based on unique or aggravating factors.

### **Disciplinary Process**

Upon receiving a report of a potential occurrence of any of the violations outlined, school leadership will begin an investigation. An investigation may include interviewing witnesses, reviewing camera footage, speaking with staff members, and a search of a student, or a student’s belongings. Refusal to permit the search will result in the assignment of consequences that are commensurate with the suspected violation. School leadership will speak with the student and give the student an opportunity to deny or explain the violation.

Upon completion of the investigation, school leadership will determine if the preponderance of the evidence weighs in favor of the violation occurring. This means that it is more likely than not that the student committed the violation. If that is the conclusion, the student will be notified of the consequence of the violation as long as notification of the student does not pose a risk to the safety and security of other individuals on campus. If the violation is an offense which requires a report to law enforcement, the appropriate agency will be notified.

The school leader will make a reasonable attempt to contact the student’s parent or guardian by telephone to communicate the results of the investigation and the assigned consequences. The leadership shall also notify the parent or guardian in writing that the student has been suspended from school. The school leader shall provide a description of the incident or incidents that resulted in the short-term suspension. Short-term suspensions shall be handled in accordance with [§ 115C-390.6](#).

There is no appeal of an out of school suspension that is 10 days or less. If a student is determined to have committed a violation for which the possible consequence is exclusion or long-term suspension, the school leader will follow the procedures outlined in the section below.

### **Long-Term Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion Procedures**

If the Director of Education determines that an infraction falls into the category for which a long-term suspension and/or exclusion is appropriate, they will notify the student's parents/guardian consistent with NC General Statute § 115C-390.8. The notice shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian by the end of the school day during which the long term suspension or exclusion was recommended when reasonably possible or as soon as practicable. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have two school days to appeal the Director of Education's decision to a panel of the board of directors. This hearing request must be submitted in writing to the Director of Education. The parent or guardian must notify the Director of Education at least five school days in advance of the hearing if they are bringing an advocate to the meeting, and of the advocate's role (for example, legal representation). The board panel's decision is final and there is no appeal to the full board. The school will follow the requirements set forth in North Carolina's General Statutes for any such appeal and hearing.

If the parent or guardian either refuses the hearing or fails to attend the hearing, the recommendation for exclusion or long-term suspension will stand and the student will be long-term suspended or excluded.

For expulsion, the School will follow the requirements set forth in North Carolina's General Statutes and any other applicable laws.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

The obligation and the responsibility to attend school regularly and to comply with the school's discipline policy applies to all students. When appropriate, a director or designee may discipline a student with a disability who has not complied with the school's discipline policy. Exceptional Children's education services will be provided to a student with a disability if the student has been removed from school for more than ten school days. The school will follow all applicable state and federal laws when disciplining students with disabilities.

### **[COMMUNITY DISCIPLINE GUIDE](#)**

## General School Policies

### Animals on School Property

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Cape Fear Center of Inquiry is dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of our community. In the interests of safety and health, family pets of any kind are not allowed in school buildings, property, or in school vehicles. Pets are not allowed at school sponsored events.

Exemptions:

1. While serving as a certified service or guide dog under ADA guidelines.
2. While assisting a Law Enforcement Officer engaged in law enforcement duties.
3. Animals brought into the classroom for instructional purposes. These must be approved by the School Director(s) or designee and adhere to CFCI Policy 4330 Animals in the Classroom.

### Posting or Publishing Student Pictures and Information

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The School reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page or for any other School purpose. Parents who do not wish to allow CFCI to use their child's picture or image must send a letter to the Director.

### Security Cameras

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CFCI employs the use of security cameras to maintain safety across the campus. No security cameras will be installed in restrooms or classrooms.

### Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act

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The School does not discriminate against any group officially affiliated with either the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within an open forum. The School does not deny such access or opportunity or discriminate for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or the oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or the youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

### Gender Equity Policy (Title IX)

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The School certifies compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C 1681 et seq. (Title IX), and its implementing regulation, at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. The School, as a recipient of federal financial assistance

from the United States Department of Education, is subject to Title IX and does not discriminate based on gender in employment or any educational program or activity it operates.

For complaints or grievances regarding discrimination based on gender, please refer to the School's Reporting and Grievance Policy.

### Admissions and Enrollment Policy

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This policy is in place to address the process for handling admissions at Cape Fear Center for Inquiry. The goal of this admissions policy is to declare the process and methods that will be used to admit students in a fair and consistent way that does not offer priority to any student except those specifically noted as required by North Carolina law.

Students will be admitted to Cape Fear Center for Inquiry as described below.

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry is a K-8 tuition free public school. Any child who is qualified under the laws of North Carolina for admission to a public school is qualified for admission into a charter school. To qualify to attend a North Carolina public school, a student must be a resident of North Carolina. Cape Fear Center for Inquiry does not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race or ethnicity, creed, gender or gender identity, national origin, religion or ancestry.

Length of the open enrollment period (may not be less than 30 consecutive days per CHTR-003)

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry application period will be open for a minimum of 30 days. Applications will be available online or can be filled out in our front office beginning at least 30 days prior to the end of January.

During the month of January, CFCI will conduct Parent/Guardian Education meetings which give parents/guardians the opportunity to tour the school, meet the faculty, and learn about our school.

The lottery date, time, and location will be published on the school's website by January 1st each year. The lottery date will be on or before the third Wednesday of February. All applications, once received, are reviewed by the front office staff for necessary information.

Procedure for the lottery - including date, process, accepted applicants, waitlisted applicants.

#### Application Content

No criteria for admission will be used except the completed application. The application may be completed online through our website, [www.cfi.net](http://www.cfi.net), unless a family is unable to access the site. In that case, parents/guardians are welcome to come to the school for assistance in applying. The

application will include the student's name, parent/guardian names, current address of student, phone number of parent/guardian, email of parent/guardian, county of residence, current grade level, their grade level for the coming year, student's date of birth, the name of any siblings already enrolled at the school, or any priorities that would apply, declaration of the student's residence in the state of North Carolina.

#### Grade Level for the Lottery Application

Parents/Guardians will be asked to confirm both their student's current grade as well as the grade for the coming year. Parents/Guardians may not choose which grade they would like their child enrolled in for the coming year, they must enter the actual current grade and the next year's grade as confirmation. If a student's current school recommends retention or promotion after acceptance, the parent/guardian must notify CFCI immediately to determine appropriate placement and availability of a spot in that grade level.

#### Lottery Process

On the Lottery Day, the third Wednesday of February, all applicants will either receive notification of a spot in the grade level they applied for or receive notification of their number on the waitlist.

Maximum class size limits are 20 students in each K and 1st grade class, 22 in each 2nd and 3rd grade class, and 24 in each 4th-8th grade class. A waitlist will be established using the lottery system whenever capacity is exceeded. Students on the waitlist will be contacted if and when openings occur in the applied school year only.

#### Lottery priorities and a rank in order of priority being used

Cape Fear Center for Inquiry may give priority in the Lottery in certain instances as stated in G.S. 115C-238.29F(g). The Board offers the following priorities and will implement them in the order and manner described below:

**PRIORITY #1**, Currently enrolled students. Current students at Cape Fear Center for Inquiry will not be required to re-enroll. In order to properly plan, the school will routinely inquire of parents through a letter of intent to ascertain if students will return to Cape Fear Center for Inquiry the following year.

**PRIORITY #2**, Children of fulltime CFCI faculty/staff members so long as that total does not exceed 15% of the school's enrollment (unless a waiver is sought from the State Board of Education). Full time faculty/staff that are hired after the lottery may have their children added to the top of the waiting list or administratively enrolled, up to the 20<sup>th</sup> day of school.

**PRIORITY #3**, Siblings of currently enrolled students. Siblings are defined as brother or sister, half-brother, half-sister, stepbrother, stepsister or foster child who resides in the same household as the currently enrolled student.

PRIORITY #4, Siblings of students who have completed eighth grade at CFCI and who were enrolled in at least four grade levels.

PRIORITY #5, Students who were enrolled in CFCI within the two previous school years but left the school to participate in an academic study abroad program or a competitive admission residential program or because of the vocational opportunities of the student's parent/guardian (must have documentation of program).

#### Siblings

It is the intent of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry to support families and create a school community. All families with new siblings of currently enrolled students must submit an application. Siblings of enrolled students will receive priority for admission during the lottery process if their applications are received by the designated deadline.

If multiple birth siblings apply for admission under G.S. 115C-238.29(g), they will be considered one application and all multiple birth siblings will be given spots.

#### Waitlist

The waitlist does not roll over to the following school year. A new application must be completed each school year to be included in the following year's lottery. Lottery procedures will comply with the North Carolina Open Meetings Law provided in G.S.143-218.10(a). The school will publicize the date, time, and location of the lottery and allow anyone to apply.

After the lottery process is complete, parents/guardians of all applicants will be contacted via email or phone and notified if their child(ren) is eligible for admission and enrollment, or what number they are on the waitlist(s). Families who are eligible for admission will have 48 hours to provide CFCI with confirmation (verbal or written) of their intent to accept the slot for which they are eligible. If there is no confirmation of acceptance, CFCI will move to the next person(s) on the waitlist until there is acceptance of the slot.

#### Timeline and Procedures for Collecting Enrollment Documents

##### Formal Enrollment

Once a student has accepted a spot to attend CFCI, formal enrollment is required to finalize the student's space in the school. The enrollment procedures will ensure that the school has information necessary to acquire student cumulative records which are needed to meet State Board of Education records requirements for charter schools. This information includes, but is not limited to:

Birth certificate

Enrollment form

All kindergarten enrollment forms must have a copy of the birth certificate and Home Language Survey attached. In addition, immunization record & transfer records from previous schools (public, private or home schools) including grades, test scores, IEP/504 records, discipline, and attendance records are required prior to the start of school. These records are not needed during the enrollment period, but we must receive the enrollment form and birth certificate to reserve the space.

Applicants drawn during the lottery process and before May 1st must reply to accept or decline admission to Cape Fear Center for Inquiry within 2 days and complete all enrollment paperwork within 10-business days. If a student is admitted after July 1st, they will have 2 business days to accept or decline admission to Cape Fear Center for Inquiry and complete all enrollment paperwork. Should a parent/guardian decline the enrollment offer or not respond before the deadline, the school may offer admission to the next name on that specific grade's waiting list.

Waiting lists will be maintained from the time of the lottery through the 20th day of school of the school year. If and when an opening in any grade should occur, the next child on the waitlist will be offered a spot. No new students will be admitted after the 20th day of school.

Applicant Eligibility (reference G.S. 115C-218.45) including provision around expulsion or suspension

### **Students Entitled to Admission**

Students are entitled to admission to Cape Fear Center for Inquiry if they meet the following requirements:

The student meets legal age requirements and has not completed the prescribed course of study for graduation from high school.

The student has satisfied North Carolina immunization requirements and the student is domiciled within North Carolina.

The student is not presently under suspension or expulsion from a private or public school in North Carolina or any other state.

The admission of a student who meets the qualifications of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act will not be denied or delayed due to the absence of required records or documents.

Verification of Age

The parent/guardian of a child who is making initial entrance into school must furnish a valid copy of the child's birth certificate or other acceptable proof of age. CFCI follows

state law regarding Kindergarten age as follows: If the child reaches the age of five years on or before August 31st of the year presented for enrollment, the child is eligible to apply. If the fifth birth date falls on or after September 1st, the child is not eligible to enroll.

#### Verification of Permanent Residency

The parent/guardian of a child who is enrolled in school must furnish proof of permanent residency documentation that can be examined to determine domiciliary. Documentation can include, but is not limited to the following: 1) Copy of deed or record of most recent mortgage payment; 2) Copy of lease agreement; 3) A utility bill dated within the past

30-days, including: gas, water, electric, landline phone, cable, or satellite; 4) A valid North Carolina driver's license or North Carolina photo identification card; 5) A vehicle or property tax bill (dated within the past year) and 6) A bank or credit card statement with a North Carolina address (dated within the past 60-days)

#### School's Right to Refuse Enrollment

The school reserves the right to refuse to enroll any student currently under a term of expulsion or suspension by his or her school until that term is over. The school reserves the right to refuse to enroll a student if a parent/guardian willingly and knowingly provided incorrect information on the enrollment application.

The school will make adjustments for students that are classified as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act.

#### Handling of Errors

##### School Errors

If any mistake is made by CFCI in administering the lottery (or if any discrepancy occurs in the lottery process as a result of the actions of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry that is not corrected during the lottery), such mistake or discrepancy will not invalidate the lottery and the lottery results will stand with respect to all applicants who were admitted at the appropriate grade level through the lottery. The mistake or discrepancy will be corrected at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors (after recognition of the mistake).

##### Parent/Guardian Errors

If a student name is duplicated in the lottery and school administration determines that the student was intentionally registered more than one time, the student will be assigned the lowest priority placement number assigned to the student in the lottery.

If an applicant has been incorrectly placed in a grade because a parent/guardian wishes to have their student retained, the applicant will not be admitted but may submit a corrected

application, which will be subject to the process followed for students applying after the enrollment period.

#### Applicants After Open Enrollment Period

#### Students Applying After the Open Enrollment Period

Any students applying after the open enrollment period will be placed in their respective grade if there is space available. Otherwise, they will be placed directly after any waitlisted students from the lottery in order that the application was received.

**\*YOUR CHILD MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.** It is important that students who have been enrolled be present on the first day of school. If your child is not in school on the first day of school, the school will make reasonable efforts to contact the student's family via phone call and email. If the school has not heard from the family within 72 hours, the seat will be offered to the next student on the waitlist, and the student will be withdrawn from enrollment.

#### Distribution of Materials by Students

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Students and the educational program must be the focus of schools. It is, therefore, the policy of Cape Fear Center for Inquiry to create a non-public forum for distributing materials from outside organizations to be taken home by students.

Staff shall be required to distribute only four types of materials to students to be taken home:

1. Materials from the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry
2. Materials from agencies/departments with the towns, county, state or federal government and the state university system
3. Materials from CFCI's Partnership
4. Nonprofit organizations providing programs for youth that are primarily designed to promote fitness, cultural arts or academics consistent with the N. C. Standard Course of Study. Materials that primarily promote fund-raising activities by these nonprofit groups will not be approved

Materials distributed through students shall contain no commercial advertising unless sponsored by groups identified in numbers 1 – 4 above. No other organizations may require school staff to distribute materials to be taken home by students. The distribution of non-school materials should not interfere with instructional time. The School Director(s) or the Director's designee

shall approve materials from all other school-related groups, as well as agencies, government branches and nonprofit organizations before distribution.

Staff members may share information with individual students to inform them about community resources to supplement the education provided by the school. Other than as authorized above, no materials shall be distributed or made available to students on CFCI grounds or using any mode of communication operated by the CFCI, except materials as may be allowed under Policy 467 Distribution of Materials By Students. This Policy shall not be construed as creating a limited public forum or a public forum. The decision of the School Director to disallow or restrict distribution of materials is final and is not appealable to the Board.

### Smoking or Vaping on Campus

CFCI is a smoke free campus. In keeping with CFCI's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking is prohibited on CFCI property at all times. This policy applies equally to all employees, parents, students, volunteers and visitors. This policy also includes the use of e-cigarettes.

### Weapons

Weapons of any kind are expressly prohibited on school grounds or during school events. Weapons are defined to include firearm, knife, destructive device, and/or any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm.

### Student Drug and Alcohol Policy

CFCI is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment. To that end, CFCI has implemented a drug and alcohol-free school policy, which prohibits anyone from being under the influence of alcohol or illegal/misused drugs on school grounds or attending a school related event. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed on School grounds, or during field trips. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed in vehicles of transportation owned or operated on behalf of the School, or by their drivers while they are responsible for the operation of such vehicles. The use, sale, transfer or possession of alcohol, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on CFCI property, at CFCI events or on field trips is prohibited. This includes the misuse of prescription drugs, including medical marijuana, or any mood-altering substances while on School property, at a School event, on field trips or in circumstances the School believes will adversely affect School's operation or safety.

CFCI is a tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free campus. Any possession, use, or sale of these substances is strictly prohibited. Possession of these substances with the intent to distribute or sell will result in possible expulsion. Drug paraphernalia, whether possessed for use or with the intent to sell or distribute, will be seen as an attempt to promote the distribution and use of illegal drugs and will result in suspension or expulsion.

A student's involvement with alcohol or other drugs can interfere not only with their academic and co-curricular activities, but also with the student's emotional, physical, mental, and social development. It is the board's goal to create a supportive, drug-free school environment. Unauthorized or illegal drugs and alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. Students and their families are encouraged to voluntarily seek help with any type of substance abuse problem.

This policy applies to students while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity (whether on or off school property) and at any other time or place where the conduct is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment. A Director or their designee may develop and oversee procedures to implement this policy.

#### A. Prohibited Behavior:

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, sharing, providing, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any of the following substances:

- narcotic drugs;
- hallucinogenic drugs;
- amphetamines;
- barbiturates;
- marijuana, CBD, Delta 8 or any related product;
- anabolic steroids;
- synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., "bath salts"), and synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., "Spice," "K2");
- any other controlled substance;
- any substance containing any amount of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), Delta 8, CBD, regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law;
- any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified, or unfortified wine or other intoxicating liquor; or
- any chemicals, substances, or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior.

Students are prohibited from being at school with the odor of alcohol or illicit drugs about their person.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, sharing, delivering, or manufacturing counterfeit (fake) drugs.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, sharing, selling, delivering, or manufacturing drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to rolling papers, roach clips, lighters, matches, vaping devices, vape liquid containers, pipes, syringes, and other delivery devices for prohibited substances.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, or sharing prescription or over-the-counter drugs. A student who possesses or uses a prescription or over-the-counter drug in accordance with the School's medication policy does not violate this policy.

A student is not in violation of this policy for being under the influence of a prohibited substance following its proper use as a medication lawfully prescribed for the student by a licensed health care practitioner.

Students may not conspire to sell or deliver prohibited substances or participate in any way in the selling or delivering of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or delivery ultimately occurs on school property.

The Academy Director may authorize lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.

## B. Consequences

As required by law, the Director must report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who has used or possessed a controlled substance in violation of law while on school property. The disciplinary consequences for drug and alcohol violations are described in the School's Code of Student Conduct. After completing substance abuse treatment, a student will be provided the opportunity to be included in the school-based student support group upon re-entry to school. This is an essential component in the recovery process.

## Threats and Violence

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Our policy is to strive to maintain a school environment that is free from intimidation, threats or violent acts. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening or hostile behaviors, physical abuse, vandalism, arson, sabotage, use of weapons, carrying weapons of any kind onto school property, or any other act, which, in the School's opinion, is inappropriate to CFCI. In addition, jokes or offensive comments regarding violent events will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures.

## School Safety

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CFCI has a Safety Team that will create and manage the following procedures by outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

- Evacuation Fire
- Evacuation Non-Fire
- Hazardous Materials
- Lockdown-Perimeter
- Lockdown-Full
- Serious Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather (tornado; hurricane; etc.)
- Public Health Emergency

- Student in Crisis

The Director of Operations oversees the Safety Team and it is the responsibility of the Director of Operations to ensure that the procedures are current and applicable and that all applicable parties are aware of the procedures.

The Director of Operations is also responsible for ensuring drills occur on a regular basis. These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Safety Team and any changes or revisions will be made by the Director of Operations. The Director of Operations is responsible for communicating these procedures to the Board of Directors.

### Corporal Punishment

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The CFCI Board of Directors prohibits the use of corporal punishment in any form.

For the purpose of this policy, corporal punishment shall be defined as any kind of physical punishment inflicted upon the body of the student.

Any employee shall be responsible for notifying the CFCI School Director(s) of any observed or suspected incidence of corporal punishment

### Seclusion and Restraint

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CFCI complies with all applicable laws governing seclusion and restraint. The School has established guidelines for the use of restraint and provisions for training the staff in the management of student behavior in accordance to North Carolina General Statute, 115C-391.1, also known as House Bill 1032 – Deborah Greenblatt Act. This law took effect July 1, 2006 and requires the School to inform parents of the existence of the law, the definitions for the following terms and how the School will use these forms:

- a. Physical Restraint is the use of physical force to restrict the freedom of movement of all or a portion of a student's body. The School will use a trained crisis team to physically restrain a child only as the last resort to protect the health and safety of the child and others in the area.
- b. Mechanical Restraint is the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts the freedom of movement. The School will use a trained crisis team to mechanically restrain a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. The School will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.
- c. Seclusion is the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space from which the student is prevented from or not capable of leaving. The School will use a trained crisis team to seclude a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. The School will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.

- d. Isolation is a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is not prevented from leaving. The School will use isolation to help a child get their behavior back under control before allowing them to rejoin their classmates. This space will follow the guidelines set forth in the law.
- e. Time-out is a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from others for a limited time in a monitored setting. The School uses the time out system to manage student behavior. The new law does not regulate the use of time out.

Aversive Procedures are a systematic physical or sensory intervention program for modifying the behavior of a student, which causes physical harm and long-term psychological impairment. The School will at no time use aversive procedures to modify a student's behavior.

#### Unsafe School Choice Option

Title IX, Section 9532 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provides that a student attending a "persistently dangerous School" or a student who is a "victim of a violent criminal offense" on School property, as defined by law, has the right to transfer to another safe School in the district, if his/her parent requests a transfer. If there is not another safe School in the district providing instruction at the student's grade level, the School shall contact neighboring districts to request that the students be permitted to transfer to a School in one of those districts.

#### Asbestos Management Plan

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires us to annually notify parents, students, staff members, and others who regularly occupy the School building of compliance with AHERA. An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been developed for the School and is on file in the School office. Parents may schedule an appointment with the Director if they wish to review the AMP.

## Pesticide Notification

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The School aims to control pest populations and to reduce the use of active pesticides throughout the School by implementing an integrated pest management program. The health and safety of all persons within the School's facilities are of primary concern. The School will notify parents in advance of pesticide applications. Notice will be posted on the front door of the School and in the School newsletter. A parent can also request to be notified by letter 48 hours before the application is to take place. Please contact the School office if you wish to be notified by letter or wish to review the School's integrated pest management program or records.

## Hazardous Chemicals

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The School will take all necessary steps to protect its students and staff from hazardous chemicals or other potentially dangerous materials, and it will comply fully with all required inspections, laws, ordinances, and regulations regarding hazardous chemicals.

## Fire and Safety Regulations

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The School will submit to all fire and safety inspections by state, county, and municipal authorities as required by law. The School will also obtain all necessary certificates and licenses prior to opening for each School year.