

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

East Campus Family and Student Handbook

School Code of Conduct
Agreements, Expectations, Rights & Responsibilities



2024-2025

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Newark, DE 19711
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Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Mission Statement

To educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities.

East Campus Family and Student Handbook

2024-2025

This document is not all-inclusive nor does it restrict *Las Américas ASPIRA Academy* and/or *Board of Director's* authority to take actions that are appropriate to maintain a safe and orderly educational environment. This handbook does not take into account special circumstances such as COVID-19, which may require amendments to our policies and procedures.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Student records maintained by Las Américas ASPIRA Academy are subject to the protections, restrictions, and potential penalties mandated by FERPA: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa>

Child Abuse and Neglect

All ASPIRA team members are mandated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family Services. Staff who suspect child abuse or neglect will immediately report this to DFS and report the incident to the school nurse.

Nondiscrimination in Services

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, national origin, or other legally protected categories in its educational programs, activities, employment, or student admissions policies, or practices. Inquiries regarding compliance with the above can be directed to:

Section 504: Contact Kim Whyte, Director of Education Enrichment, Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, 326 Ruthar Drive, Newark, DE 19711

Section 504 Coordinator's Responsibilities: To coordinate Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's efforts to comply with the disability discrimination laws.

Title IX: ASPIRA Delaware prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator, De'Yanna Yancey- Harris, at 326 Ruthar Drive Newark, DE 19711 or deyanna.yancey@laaa.k12.de.us. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to ASPIRA Delaware's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. The notice of nondiscrimination is located at <https://aspiraacademy.org/>.

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

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Board of Directors

Chairperson: Guillermina Gonzalez, DBA

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Teacher/Staff Representative: Keaira Faña-Ruiz

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Director: Ruth Miranda

Director: Pedro Viera

Director: Carlos Dipres

Ex-officio Board member: Margie López Waite (Chief Executive Officer)

Ex-officio Board member: Greg Panchisin (Chief Operating Officer)

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SECTION I: LAAA AGREEMENTS

ASPIRANTE AGREEMENT

Dear ASPIRANTE,

Welcome to *Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA)*! We are excited to have you join our school. You are now part of a great organization that has been working to improve the future of students, just like you, for over 50 years. Our mission is to educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities. Your character is not just a reflection of you, but of the entire school and organization. We expect all of our students to follow our guiding principles – **Accountability * Social and Emotional Intelligence * Positive Mindset * Inquiry * Resilience * Appreciation**. As a caring learning community, we will work with you and your family to help you achieve success. It is important that you do your part and that all of us work together. We have prepared this agreement to inform you of your responsibilities and commitments as an ASPIRANTE. It is important that you take time to read this agreement and the Code of Conduct carefully and share it with your parents/guardians. If you or your parents/guardians have questions, feel free to contact your teacher. **Return the signed agreement to your teacher by Thursday, August 29, 2024.**

As an ASPIRANTE, I share the responsibility to improve my academic achievement, achieve the State's high standards, as well as to build and become part of a positive community.

I can:

- **Take care of myself**
- **Take care of others**
- **Take care of our classroom and materials**
- **Take care to do my best work**

Responsibilities:

Accountability

- Be present and punctual
- Be in control and purposeful with my emotions and actions
- Take responsibility for my actions
- Strive for mastery of academic skills while at school and at home
- Abide by the school uniform policy and Code of Conduct

Social and Emotional Intelligence

- Work with peers and ASPIRA team members to accomplish assigned tasks
- Respect others and school property
- Manage conflict in a manner that demonstrates empathy
- Participate in service to the school and community

Positive Mindset

- Approach learning with enthusiasm
- Motivate myself and others to achieve our personal best
- Realize that new learning is always possible and I can approach it with a growth mindset

Inquiry

- Actively engage in learning
- Make connections between learning and its impact on our global community
- Develop a passion for intellectual curiosity

Resilience

- Persevere when something is difficult and practice until I succeed
- See obstacles as opportunities to become the best version of myself

Appreciation

- Show gratitude toward others and opportunities presented to me
- Embrace differences in others

FAMILY AGREEMENT

Dear Family,

Thank you for choosing *Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA)* for your child. We look forward to working with you to create a positive learning environment in our school. Our Mission is to educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities. As parents/guardians, you play an integral part in your child's education. The teaching you do by example and by direct involvement is extremely important to your student's development and success. Working as a team, we can help LAAA achieve a high level of excellence. The primary purpose of school is to learn. In order to provide the best atmosphere for learning, specific policies have been established for your child's benefit. Please review the Student Agreement and the Code of Conduct with your child and have a discussion with them about their responsibility as a student at LAAA. In addition, please sign this agreement to acknowledge that you have received it and are agreeing to the commitments asked of you. **Return the signed agreement to your child's teacher by Thursday, August 29, 2024.**

As a Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Family Member, I agree to the following responsibilities:

Accountability

- Plan accordingly to ensure my child attends school regularly and punctually
- Take an active role in supporting my child's mastery of academic skills
- Comply with the LAAA Code of Conduct and school uniform policy
- Take responsibility for my child's actions and work with the school on disciplinary matters
- Be prepared to provide official photo identification BEFORE entering the school building
- Respond promptly to all calls, inquiries, concerns, and requests for information from the school
- Notify the school by 11:00 am (grades 6-8) or 12:00 pm (grades K-5) about any changes in mode of transportation. Notification from the parent/guardian may be provided via phone call, email, or a written note to the main office lobby. Inform the school promptly of any change in address or emergency contact information (and provide required documentation).
- The primary form of communication from school in case of emergencies will be via School Messenger.
- Comply with the Parental Involvement Policy, which includes:
 - Attendance at Student Success event or the student/parent/teacher conference for 1st trimester
 - Complete a minimum of five (5) hours of volunteer time during each school year (July 1-June 30)
 - Pay all obligations to the school (i.e., school meal fees*, replacement of lost or damaged school materials or property) within the required timeframe.

*All school meals are pre-paid.

Social and Emotional Intelligence

- Collaborate with my child's educators to support their academic and social development
- Support a positive relationship with my child's educators and school administration

Positive Mindset

- Support the philosophy and mission of LAAA
- Encourage my child to approach learning with enthusiasm
- Motivate my child to achieve his/her personal best

Inquiry

- Support my child to:
 - Make connections between learning and its impact on our global community
 - Develop a passion for intellectual curiosity
- Strive to learn about and advocate for the school and its educational approach

Resilience

- Encourage my child to persevere when something is difficult and practice until they succeed
- Help my child to view obstacles as opportunities to become the best version of themselves

Appreciation

- Help my child understand the importance of showing gratitude toward others
- Model an attitude of acceptance and belonging



Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

FAMILY AND STUDENT HANDBOOK CODE OF CONDUCT

AGREEMENT SIGNATURE PAGE

*This form must be signed and returned to your child's teacher by **Thursday, August 29, 2024.***

ASPIRANTE AGREEMENT

I have received access to the ASPIRANTE Agreement and Code of Conduct, and I agree to abide by its terms. It is my responsibility to read and understand the information.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Grade: _____ Teacher: _____ Homeroom#: _____

FAMILY AGREEMENT

I have received access to the Family Agreement and Code of Conduct, and I agree to abide by its terms. It is my responsibility to read and understand the information.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher: _____ Homeroom#: _____

SECTION II: STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

AFTER-SCHOOL / EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students at LAAA must understand that their academic and behavioral performance will impact their participation in school-sponsored events. The school administration has the right to evaluate, limit, and determine whether a student is not meeting the school's expectations. If such a determination is made, the student may not be permitted to participate in the activity or event. Students must be in school for at least half of the day (minimum of 3.5 hours) in order to participate in after-school activities. In the event that school is closed or that students are dismissed early from school, (for example, but not limited to inclement weather) all activities for that day will be canceled.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Our primary goal is that students arrive safely to and from school. Bus transportation is available within New Castle County. Routes are established to maximize safety and minimize travel time. The Transportation Manager carefully considers these factors when creating bus routes.

Riding the bus is a privilege and considered an extension of the classroom. The bus driver has the authority of a classroom teacher. In order to keep that privilege, students must abide by our school rules while waiting for the bus at their designated bus stop, on the bus, and exiting the bus to return home:

- *Take care of myself*
 - Listen to the bus driver/bus aide and follow the driver's/aide's directions.
 - Look both left and right for cars, make sure the RED lights are flashing, and wait for the driver's signal when crossing the street to board the bus. Always cross the street in front of the bus.
 - Keep a safe distance (at least 10 feet) from the bus before boarding and after exiting the bus.
 - Enter the bus promptly, immediately take my seat, and remain seated at all times.
 - Conduct myself on the bus in such a way that will not distract the driver. Distracting the driver puts everyone's safety on the bus at risk.
 - Remain properly seated at all times.

- *Take care of others*
 - Keep hands and feet to myself.
 - Use language that is appropriate and demonstrates care towards others.

- *Take care of our bus (classroom) and materials*
 - Keep hands and feet away from the emergency equipment on the bus (emergency doors, windows, roof hatches, body fluid/first aid kits, two-way radios, etc.) except when directed by the driver or during an actual emergency.
 - Keep the bus windows closed unless driver grants permission to open them.
 - Finish and dispose of all food and drinks before entering the bus.
 - Keep all objects inside the bus.
 - Keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly.

- *Take care to follow all bus safety rules and regulations*
 - Stay inside the bus at all times, except upon arrival at my assigned bus stop or at school.
 - Ride my assigned bus to and from my assigned stop. Switching buses for any reason is prohibited unless a note is written from both parents/guardians and approved by the administration of LAAA.
 - Be at the bus stop on time (at least 15 minutes prior). Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must pick up their student(s) promptly at the bus stop. Failure to pick up students promptly may result in loss of bus privileges.

***Please read Section VIII: "Following the Bus Safety Rules and Regulations will ensure safety, prompt arrivals, and departures of buses. This requires positive attitudes on the part of students. Students who struggle to follow the reasonable requests of the bus driver jeopardize their riding privileges. Bus misbehaviors will result in an incident report which will then be handled by the administration. Subsequent bus misbehaviors will result in suspension of bus riding privileges for a period of time determined by the administration and the bus company; other consequences might be applicable, including but not limited to consequences described for Level 2 and 3 offenses. Continual bus misbehaviors and failure to pick up student(s) on time at the bus stop could lead to permanent revocation of bus riding privileges."**

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Communication devices such as, but not limited to, cellular phone, wearable technology, and/or electronic signaling devices, may not be used at school, on field trips, and/or on the school bus without permission from an LAAA team member.

- The device must be turned off and left in their locker or secured in their homeroom teacher's cell phone lockbox. The device will be returned each day to the student.
- Students are prohibited from recording anyone without their permission. Students violating this policy will have the item confiscated and turned over to an administrator.

A parent/guardian will have to make arrangements to pick up the device in the Main Office. LAAA is not responsible for lost, stolen and/or damaged personal property.

Wearable technology examples are, but not limited to, airpods, smart watches, wireless headphones.

The following consequences will be applied if students do not follow the wearable technology expectation and are found with their device during the school day. This expectation will also be followed during our aftercare.

1st offense - The device will be confiscated and locked in the main office safe. An authorized family member will be required to pick up the phone from the main office.

Subsequent offenses - The device will be confiscated and locked in the main office safe. A \$10 fee must be paid before the phone will be returned and an authorized family member will be required to pick up the phone from the main office.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Disciplinary actions by the school also applies to behaviors outside of school in which the school believes the student presents a threat to the health, safety or welfare of other students and staff. In such cases, the school may take appropriate action including expulsion. Such out of school conduct shall include, but is not limited to:

- Acts of violence which are punishable by law.
- Sexual offenses which are punishable by law.
- The sale and transfer of drugs/alcohol that would constitute an offense punishable by law.
- Use of technology and/or social media platforms which have an adverse effect on the learning environment.

LAAA students who have been charged with or convicted of serious crimes and whose presence represents a potential threat to the health and safety of students and staff will be subject to expulsion.

CUBBIES AND LOCKERS

Students in Kindergarten through 5th grade will have an assigned "cubbie" located inside or outside their homeroom. Each student in grades 6th - 8th will be assigned a locker. It is expected that students in grades 6th - 8th use the assigned locker to secure their personal items. Students are responsible for keeping their cubbies/lockers neat and orderly. Student cubbies/lockers are the property of LAAA and may be subjected to search at any time with or without reasonable suspicion.

All students in grades 6th - 8th will need to purchase a lock for their assigned locker. **Students will not be assigned a locker until they have purchased a lock.** Students will have the opportunity to buy a lock from LAAA for \$5.

LAAA is not responsible for any items that get lost or stolen if a student chooses not to use a lock.

EXTENDED CARE

LAAA's Extended Care Program is a license exempt child care program open from 6:45 am – 8:00 am (before care) and 2:15 pm – 6:00 pm (after care). The Extended Care Program offers an array of after-school programs, competitive and non-competitive, that speak to a variety of interests. For more information, please visit our website under "Families-Extended Care."

FIRE/EMERGENCY/LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire/Emergency/Lockdown drills are held throughout the year at unspecified times. It is important that students learn the correct procedure in each of their classes. Students should walk quickly and quietly from the building using the exit designated for each room or the first available exit in order to exit the building in a safe and timely manner. We will conduct at least one drill each month during the school year.

FOOD AND DRINK/WELLNESS POLICY

Breakfast and lunch are to be consumed in the ASPIRA Café. If buying breakfast and/or lunch from our cafeteria, meals must be **paid in advance**. **Please visit our website to review the meal charge policy.** Breakfast will not be available after 7:05 am (grades 6-8) or 8:25 am (grades K-5).

We encourage students to bring a water bottle and snack (both labeled with the student's name) to be consumed during specified snack times in the classroom. Gum chewing may be permitted based upon teacher discretion.

The educators at LAAA would like to promote healthy eating habits. Please review the wellness policy located on the school website for items allowed for lunch, snacks, special events or birthdays. The wellness policy includes information about nutrition and physical activity, including recess. For more information, please review the policy here: <https://aspiraacademy.org/policies-procedures/>.

***Reminder: We are a nut-free facility. Please make sure to check food packaging for any traces of peanuts and/or tree nuts.**

HEALTH SERVICES/ACCIDENTS/SAFETY AND SANITATION

A nurse is on duty every school day. If a student becomes ill, the student should get permission from their teacher to report to the nurse. If a student is not in class or there is a real health emergency, the student may report directly to the nurse. Parents/guardians should report to the Main Office to pick up a child who is ill. Parents/guardians should only respond to the school nurse's recommendation for a student to be sent home. **Students running a fever or vomiting should stay at home until 24 hours after symptoms have ended.** Any student returning to school after having a communicable disease or after having a limb cast must first see the nurse before proceeding to a classroom.

In addition, the school nurse is available to assist when injuries/accidents happen (those requiring a Band Aid, ice pack). If applicable, you will receive an accident report. For more serious injuries where emergency action is needed, an LAAA team member will provide immediate care, contact the nurse and/or 911, and notify a parent/guardian as soon as possible. An accident report will be signed and kept on file.

Parents/guardians must complete the Medical sections of the LAAA Registration Form prior to the start of the school year. This information enables the nurse to notify parents or guardians in case of illness or injury. Please note that parents/guardians need to inform the school nurse and Main Office if anyone other than those listed on the form will be sent into school to pick up a child. Upon arrival, a picture ID will be required before that person will be allowed to leave with the child.

If a student requires special medication, the parent/guardian must sign in the medication with the school nurse in the nurse's office. The student must take the medicine in the presence of the nurse in the nurse's office. All prescription medication must be in the original container with clearly labeled directions and accompanied by a parent's/guardian's note. A student may have an asthmatic inhaler in his or her possession for self-medication as long as it is a prescription drug and a parent/guardian permission slip for the student to self-medicate is on record in the school nurse's office. The inhaler **MUST** be used in the nurse's office and an asthma action plan must be kept on file.

Chronic illnesses must be documented with yearly physician updates. All emergency medications require current directives from a doctor and will be stored in the nurse's office. The nurse must be informed of any chronic conditions or life-threatening allergies and provided with appropriate medication. Any student who has sustained an injury requiring doctor's care must have written permission to resume gym class or other physical activity. In addition, readmission to school from the emergency room requires written clearance from that student's health care provider. Please note that if you are new to the public school system, a new physical and TB test are required upon enrollment at LAAA. This is the law.

**Please refer to the policies section on our website for more information about Responding to Reports of Possible Suicide Risks.*

***LAAA strives to maintain a clean and hazard-free environment. If at any time you have a safety issue or concern, please report it immediately to our staff. Because of allergies and medical issues of different children, we are a peanut and tree nut free facility. Please do not bring nut products to school. Team members and our facilities team maintain, and keep our school-furnishings, floors, and other items clean. In addition to our school-wide efforts, our Early Childhood Development Center uses a daily and weekly cleaning chart to make sure all toys, tables, cots, etc. are sanitized using an EPA registered cleaning product.*

INCLEMENT WEATHER

During snow or other inclement weather, SPIRA Academy will independently announce its school closings or late starts. When weather forecasts indicate the possibility of hazardous driving conditions or impassable roads, the decision whether to close the school or open late will be made prior to 5:00 a.m. the day of closing. The decision will be posted on our school website (www.aspiraacademy.org), our social media page(s), sent via our text/phone system, and periodically

announced on WJBR (99.5 FM Radio). You can also contact the school at 302-292-1463 for a recorded message on any emergency closings or delays. In the event it is necessary for an early dismissal, a voice alert and text message via School Messenger will also be sent to the phone number of the primary contact for each student.

We also recommend using the following resources provided by the Delaware Department of Education.

- Look up school closing/late start information by visiting: <http://schoolclosings.delaware.gov>
- Receive an automatic notification through email by registering at <https://denotificationservices.portal.finalsiteconnect.com/>.

Important Information Regarding School Hours and Activities/Services

Listed below is information specific to the typical types of weather delays:

<u>Elementary (K-5)</u>	<u>Middle School (6-8)</u>
<p>1-Hour Delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7:45AM – Before Care available • 7:45AM - Main Office opens • 9:00AM – Breakfast available for students • 9:15AM – School opens 	<p>1-Hour Delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7:45AM – Before Care available • 7:45AM - Main Office opens • 7:45AM – Breakfast available for students • 8:00AM – School opens
<p>2-Hour Delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:45AM – Before Care available • 8:45AM - Main Office opens • 10:15AM – School opens (Breakfast will not be served; lunch will be provided at its regularly scheduled time.) 	<p>2-Hour Delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:45AM – Before Care available • 8:45AM - Main Office opens • 9:00AM – School opens (Breakfast will not be served; lunch will be provided at its regularly scheduled time.)

Listed below is information specific to an Early Dismissal:

- Lunch will be provided on a modified schedule.
- No After Care. Students must be picked up from school or sent home on the bus.
- Offices will close and activities/services will be cancelled.

Listed below is information specific to School Closing:

- Offices are closed and no activities/services available.

LOST AND FOUND

We urge families to label all articles of clothing, especially LAAA books and school uniform items, as well as items that students may own such as calculators and musical instruments. Students are encouraged not to bring large sums of money or items of great value to school. LAAA team members cannot be responsible for the loss and/or damage of any item. LAAA will follow the lost item procedure listed below. If an item is not in the lost and found, a student or parent/guardian should report the missing item to an LAAA team member in the office.

Lost Items Procedure

- Step #1: When clothing and other items (ex. lunchbox, water bottle, etc) are found within the school premises, ASPIRA team members will deliver the collected items to Café Uno and hang them on designated racks. All clothing hung on these racks will be on display for two weeks. These items are being strategically displayed in Café Uno to allow students the opportunity to claim them. All school team members are instructed not to bring lost items directly to the lost and found closet.
- Step #2: After two weeks, the clothing and other items will be transferred to the “Lost and Found” closet located in the Family Resource Center in the main office. The items will **be** stored there for an additional 2 weeks. Students and parents are encouraged to go through the closet to retrieve their lost items.
- Step #3: After the items have been stored/displayed for a total of 4 weeks, all unclaimed items will be placed in the donation bin.

MEDIA CONSENT

From time to time, Las Américas ASPIRA Academy may receive requests from the media to publicize its educational programs and student activities. In addition, your child's teachers and/or administrators appreciate the opportunity to photograph, quote and record our students for use in the school newsletter, calendar, website and other promotional or training/educational materials. **Please review our Media Consent Form (Media Consent Opt-Out Form) for more information located on our school website.**

RELEASING STUDENTS TO PERSONS OTHER THAN PARENT / GUARDIAN / CAREGIVER

If someone other than a parent, guardian, or relative caregiver (as identified on the Registration Form submitted at the beginning of the school year) requests a student to be released to their care, a notification from the student's parent or guardian is required. Notification from the parent/guardian may be provided via an email or a written note to the Main Office. The person picking up the student will be asked to show photo identification. LAAA may call the phone numbers listed on the Registration Form, and/or eSchool, to verify information. If verification cannot be ascertained to the satisfaction of LAAA administration, the student will not be released.

SCHOOL MATERIALS AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are recommended to handle school materials/property with care. Students are responsible for the replacement cost of any school property that may be damaged, lost, or stolen. The responsible person (i.e., the student and their parent/guardian) must make restitution to the school in the amount of the full replacement cost.

Students should not bring expensive clothing, valuables or large amounts of money to school. Students should not share their personal property with other students. Keep in mind that LAAA is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen personal property. In addition, LAAA can't force one student's family to pay for another student's damaged, lost, or stolen property.

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy recognizes the serious problem of youth suicide and acknowledges that providing a policy related to youth suicide recognition and prevention is very important. Please review the suicide prevention policy located on our school website: <https://aspiraacademy.org/policies-procedures/> .

TECHNOLOGY: ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The use of technology at LAAA is a privilege – not a right. Inappropriate use or vandalism by students will result in disciplinary action and limitation/cancellation of user privileges appropriate to the offense. If damage occurs due to willful or neglectful misconduct, the user may be permanently restricted from the use of technology and charged for the cost of repair or replacement for such damage.

Before students are permitted to use LAAA technology, all students and their parent/guardian must accept the Technology Agreement, Acceptable Use Policy, and Internet Safety Policy. These documents will be sent to families from PermissionClick as part of the insurance policy purchase. The purchase of insurance through the school - either through PermissionClick, in person, or via any other means - is considered acceptance of these policies.

CHROMEBOOK INSURANCE

In order to receive a Chromebook, parents/guardians must first purchase insurance through the school each school year.. This insurance will cover repairs for accidental damages only. Please note, this insurance does not cover damage caused by abuse or neglect or the Chromebook charger. A \$25 fee will be charged for all lost or damaged chargers. Families will receive an email from PermissionClick to purchase the insurance fee. If purchasing insurance online is not possible, please stop by the main office (East or West Campus) during normal business hours to purchase the insurance in person.

LAAA strongly recommends that families purchase a durable Chromebook case for their student's chromebook. Here is the website link to a recommended Chromebook case: [Amazon.com: UZBL 11-11.6 Inch Chromebook Case Protective Laptop Hard Cover](#)

Families do not have the option to bring a personal device to school. The personal device will not be allowed on the school's networks and will not work with our systems. Any personal devices found on the networks will be blocked. Additionally, LAAA is not responsible for theft and/or damages to any personal devices.

SECTION III: ATTENDANCE

ABSENTEEISM/ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Delaware Board of Education and Delaware state law requires all students between the ages of 5 and 16 to attend school every day of the scheduled year and to be punctual for all assigned classes. Attendance is more than just a legal requirement. Regular attendance is critical to academic achievement, social development, and overall well-being, which provides the foundation of future success. Our attendance policy is a reflection of ASPIRA's commitment to education.

Lateness/Tardy: Students are expected to arrive on time to school each day. A student will be marked Absent if they are in attendance for less than 50% of the scheduled school day. This also applies to days with modified schedules such as delayed openings or school closing early.

Middle School Hours- 7:10 am -2:15 pm

Students in grades 6-8 are considered late/tardy if they arrive after 7:10 am.

Elementary School hours- 8:30 am-3:30 pm

Students in Kindergarten - grade 5 are considered late/tardy if they arrive after 8:30am.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following are considered excused absences:

1. Illness of child (including physical, behavioral, and mental health symptoms).
2. Scheduled appointments with doctor, dentist, orthodontist, or other physical or mental health provider.
3. Contagious disease within the home of a student.
4. Death of a family member or of a close friend.
5. Legal business.
6. Observance of a religious holiday.
7. Emergency situations (for example, a parent's/guardian's work requiring a temporary transfer or sabbatical out-of-state, a family emergency in another country, etc.) as determined by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School.
8. Suspension from school.
9. Authorized school-sponsored activities

Following an absence, a written note must be submitted to the school office within 3 days of the student's absence. Notes should include the student's name, reason for the absence, dates of the absence(s). It must be signed by the parent/guardian or a medical professional.

Note: A doctor's note is required for any absences of 3 or more consecutive days. Notes may be handwritten, emailed or faxed to the main office:

East Campus KN-Grade 8 aspira.mainoffice.K-8@laaa.k12.de.us Fax- 302-292-1291

Students who are marked absent, may not participate in extracurricular activities, (i.e., sports, performing arts, clubs) that day.

Excused Absences Due to Behavioral and Mental Health

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy recognizes that students have mental health, just like physical health. At times, students may miss school for reasons related to their mental health, which may be difficult for school personnel to detect based upon observation. **In the 2024-2025 school year, families can submit a written note (submitted electronically or on paper) to excuse up to 3 absences due to behavioral and/or mental health reasons.** When a student misses school for these reasons, it is essential to connect the student to the resources based on their needs.

The following information explains behavioral and mental health, as well as how to support your students' social, emotional, and behavioral well-being.

Definitions

Behavioral Health encompasses mental health and relates to habits that have an impact on overall mental and physical health. Behavioral health issues may include, but are not limited to, examples such as impaired coping that may lead to substance abuse, eating disorders, self-harm, and addiction.

Mental Health is the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of a person. Mental health issues may include but are not limited to, moodiness, low frustration tolerance, anxiousness, and difficulty sleeping.

Connecting with Supports and Resources Within the School

It is important to establish and maintain communication with the student's school counselor when absences are related to social, emotional, or behavioral wellness. The school counselor can assist with supporting the student in school, as well as connect them to additional supports outside the school. School counselors can also help students communicate with teachers as well as return to school successfully. The school counselor can be reached by calling the school directly.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Vacations and other outside activities scheduled during the school year ARE NOT considered an excused absence. Vacations and other activities should be scheduled outside of the academic calendar.

Missed Work: Parents/guardians should not expect teachers to pre-assign work and/or lesson plans that will be covered during a student's absence. Missed work will be placed in a file for students to complete once they return. Students are responsible for making-up and submitting all missed classwork, homework assignments and/or tests. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing any instruction necessary for their child to complete their work. The time allowed for turning in missed work is equal to the number of days absent. For example, if the student was absent 2 days, they have 2 days to complete & submit their missed work. However, teachers may choose to extend the time for making up work if they believe the circumstances merit such action. Any work not received by the due date will receive a zero in the gradebook, negatively affecting a student's academic standing.

Delaware Law: Compulsory Attendance Laws of the State of Delaware mandates daily attendance for children between the ages of five (5) through sixteen (16) as specified in Title 14, Delaware Code, Chapter 27. **As the parent/guardian, you are responsible to insure your child(ren) attends school on a daily basis. Failure to comply with Delaware Law will result in court proceedings.** Truancy charges filed against parents/guardians are considered criminal charges. Truancy charges can also be filed against children over age 12. These charges are considered misdemeanors.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION PROCEDURE

LAAA has implemented the following procedures for addressing unexcused absences:

5 Unexcused Absences: Parental Notification

If a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences within a school year, the school will formally notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) through a letter mailed to their residence. A copy of the Attendance Policy will be included with the letter.

10 Unexcused Absences: Parental Notification, Parent Contact and Meeting with Student (grades 6-8)

- Upon reaching 10 unexcused absences, the school will formally notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) through a letter mailed to their residence. A copy of the Attendance Policy will be included. Additionally, a school representative will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) in an attempt to understand the reasons for the absences and to discuss possible interventions and/or supports. Students in grades 6-12 will also meet with the school social worker.

15 Unexcused Absences: Parental Notification, Parents are required to meet with Attendance Team, Student will be placed on an Attendance Contract

- If a student accumulates 15 unexcused absences within a school year, the school will formally notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) via letter. At this time, the parent(s) /guardians(s) will be required to meet with the Attendance Team to develop an Attendance Contract. The purpose of the Attendance Contract is to:
 - Identify the reasons for the student's absences.
 - Work with the family to develop a plan to improve attendance.
 - Implement interventions or support services as needed.
 - Clearly list the responsibilities of the student, school, and parents to improve attendance.
- After the student is placed on an Attendance Contract, the school will monitor the student's attendance. If attendance has improved, no further action is taken.

20 Unexcused Absences: Parental Notification, Refer Case for Prosecution/Truancy Charges filed

- Following the 20th day of an unexcused absence, the school may refer the case for prosecution.
NOTE: Truancy charges filed against parent/guardian are considered criminal charges. Truancy charges can also be filed against children over age 12. These charges are considered misdemeanors.
 - Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a written letter from the court informing them of their court date.
 - Failure of the student to return to school within five days of their court appearance may result in:
 - Grade retention.

- The school may deny the student reenrollment.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCESS FOR REGULAR SCHOOL DAYS

Please note the changes outlined in the Inclement Weather section for school delays or early dismissals.

Morning Schedule

- **6:45 am – Before Care Program begins**
- 6:50 am – School opens for all middle school students; breakfast served in the cafeteria
- 7:05 am – Breakfast ends
- 7:10 am – School begins for all middle school students; Morning announcements
- 8:00 am – School opens for breakfast for elementary Before Care Program participants only; Breakfast served in the cafeteria
- 8:10 am – School opens for all elementary students; Students report to cafeteria for breakfast or homeroom
- 8:25 am – Breakfast ends
- 8:30 am – School begins for all elementary students; Morning announcements
 - **NOTE: All students arriving at the school after 7:10 am (grades 6-8) or 8:30 am (grades K-5) are considered late and must be accompanied and signed into the Main Office by an adult.**

Afternoon Schedule

- 1:30 pm - MS students (grades 6-8) with early dismissal must be picked up from the Main Office by this time. ***If a student is not picked up by 1:30 pm, families will not be able to pick students up after that time through the Main Office. Car rider procedure will need to be followed.**
- 2:45 pm – ES students (grades K-5) with early dismissal must be picked up from the Main Office by this time. ***If a student is not picked up by 2:45 pm, families will not be able to pick students up after that time through the Main Office. Car rider procedure will need to be followed.**
- 3:30 pm – End of school day; Car Rider dismissal begins; After School Program begins
- 3:35 pm – Bus Rider dismissal begins
- 3:45 pm – Dismissal completed
- **4:00 pm – After Care Program begins**
- **6:00 pm – After Care Program ends**

Car Rider **Dismissal** Procedure Using CarRider Pro Hangtags

- Parents **MUST** display their CarRider Pro hangtag in their car's rear-view mirror for student(s) to be dismissed in the order the car enters the school.
- Students will be dismissed at the door between the Pond View entrance and the ECDC Playground (back parking lot).
- **Access to the back parking lot for dismissal will start at 3:00 pm.** The CarRider Pro hangtags will not be read if the car enters the school before 3:00 pm. As a result, student(s) will not be dismissed in the order the car entered, students will be dismissed last.
- If parent does not have the CarRider Pro hangtag, the student(s) assigned to that tag will not be dismissed in the order the car entered the school. These students will be dismissed last.

A map outlining the following information is available on the school website.

Phase 1:

- Vehicles will enter school property at the Ruthar Drive entrance and drive straight down to the rear parking lot.
- Vehicles will make the first right and start forming lanes by the ECDC. Note: Lane 1 will consist of 3 sub lanes.

Phase 2:

- After the area for lane 1 is full, cars will start forming lanes 2, 3, 4 and 5 (if needed). For lane 4, vehicles will start parking in the parking spaces between the parking lot islands. The vehicles will pull to the first available parking lot space facing the building. Please be sure to pull in behind a vehicle before going to the next available row.

Phase 3:

- **All vehicles must leave the parking lot immediately after picking up student(s).** Once students are seated safely inside the vehicle, please exit the parking lot. Please follow LAAA team members' instructions to use the exit to Ruthar Drive or the exit to Red Mill Rd. **Failure to follow team members' directions may result in a ban from school premises.**

NOTES

- All vehicle engines **MUST** be turned off - No idling.
- Visitors will not be permitted to enter the school through the dismissal doors.
- **No pets** are allowed on school premises (outside of vehicle).

***Parents/Guardians must notify the Main Office prior to 11:00 am (grades 6-8) or 12:00pm (grades K-5) of any transportation changes effective the same day. Early dismissal notes must be turned in to the Main Office before homeroom (7:15 am or 8:30am).** In addition, any student not picked up by 2:30 pm (grades 6-8) or 3:45 pm (grades K-5) will be sent to the After School Care program and charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute unless the student receives Purchase of Care.

LATE FOR SCHOOL / EARLY DISMISSAL

At LAAA, we believe that coming to school on time and remaining in school for a full day is imperative for a successful educational career. Every effort should be made to assure that students arrive at school on-time and stay in school until dismissal (7:10 am - 2:17 pm or 8:30 am - 3:30 pm). If a student is late to school or has an early dismissal, they must present a note stating the reason for lateness or early dismissal. For early dismissals, the Main Office must be notified **before 11:00 am (grades 6-8) or 12:00 pm (grades K-5)**. This notification should include your child's name, the time your child will be picked up, reason for early dismissal, and the name of the person who will be picking up your child. Written notification with a parent/guardian signature is required if someone other than an authorized contact is picking up the child. Students with early dismissal must be picked up from the Main Office by 1:30 pm (grades 6-8) or 2:45 pm (grades K-5). **If a student is not picked up by 1:30 pm/2:45 pm, families will not be able to pick students up after that time through the Main Office. Car rider procedure will need to be followed.** After 1:30 pm or 2:45 pm, students are expected to be dismissed as a car or bus rider.

Instructional time is lost when a student misses any portion of the academic day. When a student accumulates any combination of five or more unexcused late arrivals and/or unexcused early dismissals, parents/guardians will be notified to address the matter. A committee will review their attendance records for compliance with school policy. Consequences for excessive unexcused tardies/early dismissals will be at the discretion of the Head of School or his/her designee.

Students and parents/guardians must recognize that a parental note of explanation does not automatically excuse the lateness or early dismissal. Reasons such as car trouble, personal business, heavy traffic, needed at home, etc. are not acceptable excuses, and will be listed as unexcused. Reasons such as personal illness, medical or other physical or mental health care appointments and appearances in court will be considered as an excused lateness when verified by a document.

SECTION IV: DRESS CODE/UNIFORM POLICY

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DRESS CODE

The purpose of the School Uniform Policy is to promote school pride and safety, improve discipline and enhance the learning environment. At ASPIRA Academy, we believe a school uniform helps create a culture of unity among students, staff and families. It allows students to focus on academic achievement. Students are expected and required to wear the prescribed uniform each day. Personal appearance that constitutes a distraction is not permitted. The consequences for non-compliance with the school uniform policy is addressed at the end of this section. Final approval/disapproval is at the discretion of the Head of School. Please refer to the school website or the Main Office for uniform vendor information.

REGULAR SCHOOL DAY UNIFORM

TOP Options	
<p><u>Elementary (Grades K-5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Polo shirt with school logo if worn alone or without logo if worn under a sweater or fleece with school logo (short or long sleeve)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Light blue● Collared shirt with school logo if worn alone or without logo if worn under a sweater or fleece with school logo (short or long sleeve)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Light blue● White or navy gym t-shirt or sweatshirt with school logo. LAAA Spirit t-shirts are also allowed.● Navy sweater or fleece (cardigan, sweater vest, V-neck or crew neck pullover style) with school logo.● <i>Hooded sweatshirts with a school logo can be worn in school for added warmth/comfort as long as the hood is not worn up.</i>● <i>A top with the school logo must be visible at all times inside the school building.</i>	<p><u>Middle School (Grades 6-8)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Polo shirt with school logo if worn alone or without logo if worn under a sweater or fleece with school logo (short or long sleeve)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Light blue○ white○ navy○ light yellow● Collared shirt with school logo if worn alone or without logo if worn under a sweater or fleece with school logo (short or long sleeve)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Light blue○ white○ navy○ light yellow● White, grey heather, or navy gym t-shirt or sweatshirt with school logo. LAAA Spirit t-shirts are also allowed.● Navy sweater or fleece (cardigan, sweater vest, V-neck or crew neck pullover style) with school logo.● <i>Hooded sweatshirts with a school logo can be worn in school for added warmth/comfort as long as the hood is not worn up.</i>● <i>A top with the school logo must be visible at all times inside the school building.</i>
BOTTOM Options	
<p><u>Elementary (Grades K-5)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Shorts, pants, skort or jumpers (no shorter than 4 inches above the knee); .<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Navy○ school plaid● Navy gym shorts or sweatpants with or without school logo (Other logos such as Adidas, Nike, Hollister, etc. should not be visible on uniform bottoms.)● Black or navy blue belt – only if pants or skort have belt loops. Not required for Kindergarteners.	<p><u>Middle School (Grades 6-8)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Shorts, pants, skort or jumpers (no shorter than 4 inches above the knee); .<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Navy○ school plaid○ Khaki● Navy gym shorts or sweatpants with or without school logo (Other logos such as Adidas, Nike, Hollister, etc. should not be visible on uniform bottoms.)● Black or navy blue belt – only if pants or skort have belt loops.
FOOTWEAR Options	

All Grades (K-8)

- **Student can wear only sneakers/athletic shoes that are any color and must be non-marking*** (See page 21 for additional guidelines on footwear.).
 - Low, medium or high top sneakers permitted for all grades.
 - **NEW for the 2024-2025 School Year: No rubber/foam shoes are allowed (ex. Yeezys).**

**To determine if your sneakers or shoes are non-marking, try one of these techniques:*

- *Flip one sneaker/shoe over and press your thumbnail or fingernail into the sole. If the sole is dented from the pressure, then the sole is considered soft and is likely a non-marking shoe.*
- *Place a piece of clean white paper on a table or floor. Rub the sole of the shoe against the paper with force, but don't tear the paper. Also, write with the sole at the heel on the paper. If you see scuff marks, the shoes are not acceptable. If you don't see any, they are non-marking.*

PE and ART Class Suggestions: Please note it is recommended that students are dressed comfortably and/or appropriately for days when they have either PE and Art class. Please choose a top for Art class that you do not mind your student getting dirty (ex. with paint, marker, etc). Since PE class has physical movement, it is suggested that students wear a gym t-shirt or LAAA spirit shirt and navy gym shorts or sweatpants.

UNIFORM DESCRIPTION

Students are expected to wear the prescribed uniform in a neat and clean condition each day, which is described as follows:

Shirts

- No more than the top two buttons of the shirt may be left open.
- The school logo must be visible at all times if wearing a shirt as an outer garment.
- Altering of required school shirts and/or logo is not permissible. Tops cannot be cinched, tied, or clipped in the back.
- Long sleeve garments may be worn underneath school shirts that have short sleeves.

Sweaters and Sweatshirts

- Coats, fleeces, jackets, sweatshirts, etc. (without the school logo), may not be worn in class.
- School sweaters are available in a cardigan, sweater vest, V-neck, or crew neck pullover style, and hooded sweatshirts (see above).
- Outer garments (coats, fleeces, jackets, sweatshirts, etc) without the school logo must be stored in the student's cubbies or lockers and may not be worn around the school.

Pants

- Pants must be solid in color with no design or patterns.
- Pants should fit appropriately. Pants should be worn at the natural waist at all times.
- Jeans of any style, color, or fabric are not permitted. No denim or denim-like material, regardless of color, is allowed. Ripped/distressed jeans are not allowed.
- No leggings are allowed to be used as pants.

Skorts and Shorts

- Must be solid in color or approved school plaid.
- May not be shorter than four inches above the knee.
- Only navy or white leggings may be worn under skorts or shorts.

Jumpers

- Jumpers are available in the approved plaid.
- A short or long sleeve collar shirt is to be worn under the jumper.
- May not be shorter than four inches above the knee.

Jewelry, hairstyles, and accessories

- Students are permitted to wear jewelry; however, LAAA discourages wearing any type of valuable articles of jewelry and/or accessories that could represent hardship if lost or stolen. Expensive articles are worn at your own risk. LAAA does not assume responsibility for articles that are lost or stolen.
- Head coverings based on religious beliefs are permitted.
- Students are allowed to wear headbands, bows, hair clips/barrettes, and hair ties only.
- Hats and sunglasses are all considered inappropriate for regular school wear.

- Students in grades 5 through 8 will be allowed to carry a handbag, fanny pack, or small purse in school. The bag must be no larger than 9 inches (length) by 6 inches (height).
- Students may be informed if an item is deemed excessive or distracting to the educational environment by administration.

Tights/Knee-High Socks with skorts and jumpers

- Must be solid navy or white only.
- Leg warmers, printed patterns, or leggings are not permitted.

Shoes

- Only non-marking sneakers/athletic shoes may be worn all year round. Sneakers/athletic shoes can be any color.
- Footwear should be secured on the foot (ex. laces tied, Velcro fastened).
- No Crocs, Uggs, boots, sandals, slides, slippers, cleats, Heeleys (shoes with wheels), etc. are permitted for regular school wear.
- **NEW for the 2024-2025 School Year: No rubber/foam shoes are allowed (ex. Yeezys).**

DRESS-DOWN GUIDELINES

- Collared shirts, turtlenecks, and crewnecks, long and short-sleeved are all appropriate.
- Tops must be long enough to cover the chest and midriff (when hands are raised). A student's midriff must be covered at all times.
- Tops cannot be cinched, tied, or clipped in the back.
- Shorts, skorts, skirts, and dresses should be no more than 4 inches above the knee.
- A student's undergarments should be covered at all times.
- No tight leggings unless covered by a tunic/skirt/dress.
- No yoga pants or biker shorts.
- Ripped/distressed jeans are not allowed, unless the student wears an undergarment (i.e. leggings) that prevents skin from showing.
- Hooded sweatshirts are allowed only if the hood is not up.
- Hats are allowed.
- No Crocs, sandals (ex. flip flops, slides, etc), cleats, slippers, or Heeleys. *If P.E. occurs during a student's dress-down day, he/she must bring approved non-marking sneakers/athletic shoes to be allowed to participate in class.
- Students are not permitted to wear clothing that includes inappropriate messages and/or images as determined by school administration and/or designee.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING DRESS CODE

The administration reserves the right to determine whether a student is in compliance with the dress code and to specify consequences for non-compliance. Any inappropriate or distractive appearance will be addressed by the administration on an individual basis, even on dress down or casual days.

Minor dress code violations, such as a sweatshirt without a logo, will result in a verbal warning and will be considered a Level 1 misbehavior (FYI). Failure to follow repeated requests for compliance might be considered insubordination and coded as a Level 2 offense.

Students who do not dress in accordance with the dress code may not attend classes until correction is made. This will be considered a Level 1 misbehavior (FYI). If correction is not practical, parents/guardians will be contacted and will have to provide appropriate clothing for their child before he/she is permitted to attend classes.

Repeated failure to conform to dress code (3 or more times in a school year) may result in an escalation to a Level 2 offense. Continued failure to conform to the dress code is considered defiance and could jeopardize a student's enrollment at ASPIRA Academy. The following are examples of dress code violations:

1. Non-school shirt, nonconforming pants, shorts or skorts.
2. Shorts or skorts that are more than four inches above the knee.
3. Clothing that is overly tight or baggy.
4. Defiance to adhere to dress code (e.g., refusing to take off a sweatshirt without a logo).
5. Any major inappropriate or distractive appearance as deemed by the administration.

SECTION V: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

At LAAA, we believe that the following statement by Martin Luther King, Jr. embodies our philosophy of education: *"Intelligence plus character-that is the goal of true education."* Our approach to learning includes the measurement of academic growth, as well as character growth. This is reflected in our philosophy of mastery learning and character education based on the Responsive Classroom approach.

MASTERY LEARNING, REPORT CARDS, AND ASPIRANTE PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

In the State of Delaware, all public schools and districts are required to base their instruction on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and Delaware Content Standards. In **mastery learning** classrooms, the focus is on a student's performance over multiple opportunities, not simply the grading and averaging of tests and quizzes. Standards are specific learning goals applied to all students and provide consistent targets for students to meet. Standards provide a focus for aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment. They are the general categories that organize knowledge within a discipline, describing both content (what we want students to learn) and performance (what we want students to be able to do) in a particular area of study.

Mastery learning is designed to stimulate an ongoing conversation between teachers, parents/guardians and students about what is expected of students in a rigorous academic program. At LAAA, we strive to provide a clear and accurate description of each child's progress in three areas:

- Performance relative to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), NGSS, and Delaware Content Standards.
- Academic performance relative to LAAA's curriculum, grade level benchmarks and expectations.
- Demonstration of the characteristics of a successful learner.

Grades K-5: At LAAA, we want to foster critical, independent thinkers who develop their own beliefs about the world and see themselves and their classmates as valuable. We want students to develop a love of learning that will last a lifetime. We believe the best way to support students is to meet them where they are and foster growth from there. Kids who feel like they are learning, who feel like their ideas are valued, who feel like their hard work is helping them grow--those are the kids who develop the tools and motivation they need to succeed in the long term. We believe that the traditional grading system incentivizes short-term compliance at the expense of a child's long-term interest in learning.

Instead of issuing a traditional report card with letter or number grades, we are going to have a conversation during conferences with parents/caregivers in November where we will showcase and discuss their child's work, share students' self-reflections on how well they feel they are doing both academically as well as socially, and we will talk about their growth as well as any concerns we might have either academically or socially. In the spring, we will work with each student to create a portfolio where they will similarly share with parents/caregivers work they have done during the second half of the school year as well as their updated self-reflections.

Each trimester provides students multiple opportunities to practice, attain, and demonstrate proficiency on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and Delaware Content Standards. Through the identification of clear benchmarks, a student's knowledge and skills are measured on a continual basis, stretching students to perform at their highest level of potential. Teachers collect evidence of a child's achievement through careful observations, the examination of the student's work, discussions, projects, performance tasks, quizzes, and tests. Teachers record information about each child's progress on a frequent basis, analyze and compile that information, and finally use the data to evaluate each child's progress.

Grades 6-8: Middle School students and families will use the eSchool Home Access Center (HAC) to view academic progress in students' classes, upcoming and/or missing assignments, as well as Interim and Trimester Progress Report Cards. Report cards will be available each trimester (3 times a year). The trimester reports will indicate the performance and accomplishments of the student during that trimester. The final report (T3) will be available on HAC by the last day of school.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) is to reinforce classroom learning, develop independent study habits, and foster a sense of responsibility among students. Our homework policy seeks to strike a balance between academic enrichment and allowing time for family, extracurricular activities, and rest.

At Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, we believe that homework should complement and enhance classroom learning, promoting academic growth while fostering responsibility and independence in our students. By following these guidelines, we aim to create a supportive homework environment that benefits all learners.

Assigned homework/projects in Kindergarten through fifth grade, will follow an outlined list of homework guidelines. Click the link to access the K-5 homework policy: https://aspiraacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/LAAA-Homework-Policy-2024_Eng_Span.pdf.

In Middle School, assigned homework/projects receive a grade in the individual teacher's gradebook in eSchool. A copy of the MS grading policy will be reviewed with students in the first weeks of school, as well as sent home with the student.

- Middle School (6th–8th Grades) – Homework may be assigned 4 to 5 times a week for 35-45 minutes; 45 minutes daily reading with reading log. Students may turn in work via Schoology and check reminders for assignment due dates.

*Please keep in mind that individual differences in students may alter the time spent in certain subject areas. Additional time may also be required for completion of special projects. **It is especially important that homework be completed and handed in on-time.**

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The educational philosophy at LAAA is that all students can learn. We believe that each student is an individual who grows and matures within his/her own unique pattern of development. Varying rates of time are, therefore, needed to accommodate differing developmental growth patterns, which may at times necessitate a retention. In retaining students, decisions for placement will support the opportunity for maximum growth and development of all students.

Decisions will be based upon a careful study of individual student needs. A decision will be reached through conference procedures with a standing committee of teachers and administrators. A parent/guardian communication plan will be established to inform parents/guardians of the student's progress throughout the year and strategies that support learning. The areas of student growth which must be considered before recommending retention are academic progress, social development, emotional development, and physical development.

ASPIRANTE EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION

Students will be recognized for their accomplishments throughout the year. In middle school, students will be recognized at the end of each trimester. To be named to the Principal's List Honor Roll, students must earn all A's (90%) or higher in all subjects. To be named to the Honor Roll, students must earn a grade of B (80%) or higher in all subjects.

SECTION VI: CODE OF CONDUCT

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT?

The success of our school requires the cooperation of the entire team – school, family and student. At LAAA, we expect that our students and their families will embrace our philosophy and policies. The following rules and guidelines have been established to set high standards for student conduct. With the cooperation of our parents/guardians and students, these expectations will lead to a safe and positive learning environment. The Code of Conduct applies to all students (K-8th). Because developmental levels vary greatly in the earlier grades, discretion is used when working with our early childhood students (K-1). Sometimes, students in this age group will receive modified or more gradual consequences as we work with them to build the skills needed for self-control and responsibility.

LAAA will abide by all state and federal regulations related to Code of Conduct issues. Regulations also pertain to special education students. Due process will always be followed in the event that the student's infraction is related to the disability. The school will also establish behavioral guidelines to maintain an environment that is conducive to education without stifling expression and appropriate social interaction. As a student of LAAA, you are responsible for your actions both in and out of school. Any serious violations of school policy and/or any illegal or immoral behavior could result in serious disciplinary action. This is especially true in cases where the good reputation of the school within the neighboring community is compromised or jeopardized. Forming responsible habits regarding attendance and punctuality is important. Families are expected to support the learning process by having their children arrive on time, remain in school for the full day, schedule appointments after school hours, and vacations when school is not in session.

WHEN IS THE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT ENFORCED?

The School Code of Conduct is enforced:

- On school property prior to, during and following regular school hours, including but not limited to, when school is in session or when school activities are in operation.
- On school buses, which includes, but it is not limited to, students at a bus stop.
- At all school-sponsored events and other activities where school administrators have jurisdiction over students.
- When a student's out-of-school conduct indicates that the student presents a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of other students and staff.

***The School Code of Conduct is not all-inclusive and a student committing an act of misconduct not listed may be subject to the authority of the Head of School, Assistant Head(s) of School, or designee. Please refer to additional behavioral guidelines if enrolled in our Extended Care program.**

HOW IS THE CODE OF CONDUCT ADMINISTERED?

All teachers are expected to use a Responsive Classroom Approach (<https://tinyurl.com/jek9cpg2>) to address misbehavior in the classroom prior to referring a student to a building administrator for disciplinary action, except in cases of severe or emergency circumstances. An administrator or designee enforces the School Code of Conduct when a student has been referred for disciplinary action. Identifying the specific School Code of Conduct violation and corresponding disciplinary action is the responsibility of the administrator or designee.

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

It is the philosophy of the school that students and staff should be proactive in their approach to behavior management. Proactive strategies will be used to assist students and staff in addressing conflict and discipline issues. LAAA supports the implementation of *Responsive Classroom* which embraces a fostering of community, based upon teaching socially responsible behaviors, as well as promoting the use of proactive strategies at the building, classroom, and individual level. This approach offers clear expectations for behavior and actively teaches children how to live up to those expectations.

ESTABLISHING A POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

The Code of Conduct recognizes the need for a working, cooperative relationship among students, families, and school personnel. These are our guiding principles:

STUDENTS:

Accountability

- Be present and punctual
- Be in control and purposeful with my emotions and actions
- Take responsibility for my actions
- Strive for mastery of academic skills while at school and at home
- Abide by the school uniform policy and Code of Conduct

Social and Emotional Intelligence

- Work with peers and ASPIRA team members to accomplish assigned tasks
- Respect others and school property
- Manage conflict in a manner that demonstrates empathy
- Participate in service to the school and community

Positive Mindset

- Approach learning with zest and enthusiasm
- Motivate myself and others to achieve our personal best
- Realize that new learning is always possible and I can approach it with a growth mindset

Inquiry

- Actively engage in learning
- Make connections between learning and its impact on our global community
- Develop a passion for intellectual curiosity

Resilience

- Persevere when something is difficult and practice until I succeed
- See obstacles as opportunities to become the best version of myself

Appreciation

- Show gratitude toward others and opportunities presented to me
- Embrace differences in others

FAMILIES:

Accountability

- Plan accordingly to ensure my child attends school regularly and punctually
- Take an active role in supporting my child's mastery of academic skills
- Comply with the LAAA Code of Conduct and school uniform policy
- Take responsibility for my child's actions and work with the school on disciplinary matters
- Be prepared to provide official photo identification BEFORE entering the school building
- Respond promptly to all calls, inquiries, concerns, and requests for information from the school
- Notify the school by 11:00 am (grades 6-8) or 12:00 pm (grades K-5) for any change in the mode of transportation. For early dismissals, students must turn in a note to the Main Office before homeroom (8:30am). Inform the school promptly of any change in address or emergency contact information
- Comply with the Parental Involvement Policy, which includes:
 - Attendance at Student Success event or the student/parent/teacher conference for 1st trimester
 - Complete a minimum of five (5) hours of volunteer time during each school year (July 1-June 30)
 - Pay all obligations to the school (i.e., school meal fees, replacement of lost or damaged school materials or property) within the required timeframe.
 - The primary form of communication from school in case of emergencies will be via School Messenger.

Social and Emotional Intelligence

- Collaborate with my child's educators to support their academic and social development
- Support a positive relationship with my child's educators and school administration

Positive Mindset

- Support the philosophy and mission of LAAA
- Encourage my child to approach learning with enthusiasm
- Motivate my child to achieve their personal best

Inquiry

- Support my child to:
 - Make connections between learning and its impact on our global community
 - Develop a passion for intellectual curiosity
- Strive to learn about and advocate for the school and its educational approach

Resilience

- Encourage my child to persevere when something is difficult and practice until they succeed
- Help my child to view obstacles as opportunities to become the best version of themselves

Appreciation

- Help my child understand the importance of showing gratitude toward others
- Model an attitude of acceptance and belonging

SCHOOL PERSONNEL:

Accountability

- Be present and punctual
- Be prepared to perform their duties with appropriate working materials
- Abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the school and the Board of Directors

Social and Emotional Intelligence

- Respect all persons and property
- Dialogue with parents/guardians, students, and other employees in a manner that reflects professionalism and care
- Maintain an atmosphere which encourages good behavior and active learning

Positive Mindset

- Support the philosophy and mission of LAAA
- Approach responsibilities with enthusiasm
- Use Responsive Classroom strategies to model desired student behavior
- Refrain from using profanity, abusive language or inflammatory actions in personal interactions
- Conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner

Inquiry

- Seek changes in an orderly and approved manner
- Implement a diversified curriculum to meet the needs of all students

Resilience

- Encourage parents/guardians to maintain regular communication with the school
- Provide opportunities for parent/guardian participation in affairs of the school
- Encourage the school staff, parents/guardians, and students to use the services of community agencies

Appreciation

- Develop good working relationships among staff and with students
- Utilize good guidance procedures and practices

SECTION VII: VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

DISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Misbehaviors vs. Offenses: Discipline issues are categorized in three levels:

Level 1 Misbehaviors: These are behaviors that will be managed by the staff member who is a witness, or is notified of the misbehavior; i.e., classroom teacher, bus driver, lunchroom staff. An incident report, also called an FYI, will be generated and families will be contacted by the staff member, usually via email, phone call, or text via School Messenger. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Calling names
- Dress code violations (less than 3)
- Inappropriate language/gestures
- Excluding others
- Food/ Drink/ Gum (see pg. 11 for guidelines)
- Inappropriate use of electronic and/or communication device (also known as technology misuse)
- Late to class (less than 3)
- Minor misbehavior
- Public display of affection (PDA)
- Teasing

*3 or more documented Level 1 Misbehaviors in one day may be escalated to a Level 2 offense; **some misbehaviors may be escalated to a Level 2 offense automatically, both based on administration's discretion.***

Level 2 Offenses: These are incidents that are reported as referrals and require administrative intervention. They may result in one of the following consequences: in-school detention, after-school detention, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. Please see Section VII for a listing of these offenses.

Level 3 Offenses: These are incidents that are reported as referrals, require administrative intervention, and may result in dismissal (suspension or expulsion). Please see Section VII for a listing of these offenses.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- A. For disciplinary reasons, the Head of School, or designee, may suspend and/or change the placement of a student with a disability to an alternative school/program for up to ten days, if the total days suspended in the current school year do not exceed ten school days, in accordance with guidelines for disciplining students without disabilities.
- B. The Head of School, or designee, may also change a student's placement to an alternative setting selected by the student's school-level individualized educational plan (IEP) team, for up to 45 days if:
 1. The student carries a weapon to school or to a school function; or
 2. The student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of controlled substances while at school or a school function.
- C. The administration may seek the determination of an impartial hearing officer that a student with a disability should be removed from LAAA. A hearing officer may order that the student be placed at an alternative school/program for up to 45 days if the officer determines that maintaining the student at his/her current school is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.
- D. If the school contemplates expulsion, alternative placement (with or without expulsion), or suspension (inside or out of school) of a student with a disability in excess of ten (10) school days cumulatively in one school year, a special education team meeting at the school will be convened to discuss the student's discipline. The meeting may be held up to ten (10) days after the removal of a student from school under paragraphs A or B above.
- E. The special education team will determine whether the alleged conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. The team will determine if (1) the alleged conduct was related to the student's disability; or (2) the student was inappropriately placed at the time of the offense and the likelihood that a change in the student's program and / or placement would alleviate the misconduct leading to the discipline proposed. If the special education team (IEP) team determines that none of the above standards are met, the student may be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct, except that a student is eligible for special education or related services under the I.D.E.A. may not be denied a free appropriate public education. If any of the standards are met, the student may not be suspended, expelled or moved to an alternative placement for longer than ten (10) days in one school year, but may be disciplined in accordance, with the student's IEP, and the team should review the student's IEP or 504 Plan and placement.
- F. Families who disagree with the special education (IEP) team's determination or the school director's disciplinary decision may request a meeting to review the decision. If the student has been placed in an alternative school/program, the student will remain in the alternative placement until the due process hearing officer renders a decision or for 45 days, whichever occurs first, unless the school and parent(s) / guardian(s) agree otherwise.

- G. A student identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and who is currently engaging in illegal use of drugs or use of alcohol, may be disciplined to the same extent that students without disabilities are disciplined.
- H. Nothing stated herein shall preclude an IEP team from placing a student with a disability, determined to have brought a firearm or weapon to school, in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with State and Federal law.

Definitions Used in this Section:

"Student with a disability" refers to a student eligible for special education or related services under either: (1) the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.), as implemented by state regulations compiled in the Administrative Manual: Programs for Exceptional Children (AMPEC); or (2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

SECTION VIII: ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR LEVEL 2 AND 3 OFFENSES

REVIEW BOARD

The Review Board is an advisory group to the Head of School made up of the Assistant Head of School, Director of Education Enrichment, Director of Culture & Climate, School Counselor(s), and/or other staff members. Not all advisory members need to be present for the Review Board to meet. The Review Board may convene with families and the student whenever a serious offense has been or may have been committed by the student, or when a student reaches 10 or more incident reports, excessive absences, or when referred by the administration for repeated classroom misbehavior, behavior referrals, and/or violations of school regulations. This decision will be at the discretion of the Head of School or designee. A serious offense is one which can result in a dismissal (examples would be: involvement with drugs, alcohol, or weapons at school or at school sponsored events, vandalism, stealing, false alarms, etc.) A student is suspended from school from the date of administrative action until the date of the Review Board hearing. The Review Board determines the facts, reviews the student's cumulative performance, and recommends specific action to the Head of School. One or two alternate staff members will be selected in the event that a Review Board member is absent or has a conflict of interest.

Any expulsion action taken by the Head of School may be appealed to the school's Board of Directors. While an appeal is pending, the Head of School's expulsion action is not considered to be final; however, the student remains suspended until final determination of the appeal. The appeal must be made in writing to the Head of School within five business days of the hearing. It must include the grounds for the appeal. Within one week a committee of no less than three members of the Board of Directors selected by the Chairman of the Board of Directors will meet with the family, student, and school officials. After the hearing, the committee, by majority vote, will determine whether or not to affirm the dismissal.

EXAMPLES OF LEVEL 2 AND LEVEL 3 OFFENSES

ABUSIVE/INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE/GESTURES (Level 1 or 2)

Student uses, or threatens to use, written or spoken language, gestures, electronic images, photos or actions, which are offensive, obscene, and/or vulgar.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND/OR PLAGIARISM (Level 1 or 2)*

Grades 3-8

Claiming or using someone else's work without directly acknowledging the source of that information.

(ACADEMIC) CHEATING (Level 1 or 2)*

Grades 3-8

- Using or copying another student's test answers or class/homework assignments or providing, without coercion, another student test answers or class/homework assignments.
- Using unauthorized electronic device (ex. artificial intelligence) to calculate or create summative assessment answers or complete class/homework assignments.
- Using unauthorized material to answer test questions or complete class/homework assignments.

*A student in violation of these two policies will be required to complete an additional, alternate or redo of the assignment. It is up to the teacher to decide if the student will receive full credit for the work. Incidents of academic dishonesty, or cheating in any class will result in a referral where a more serious disciplinary action will be taken (Level 2).

ALCOHOL/DRUGS (Level 3)

Possession, use or distribution of alcohol and/or drugs at ASPIRA Academy is absolutely forbidden. Students may not use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs during school time, on the school property, on a school bus and/or bus stop, or at activities sponsored by the school. The student will be suspended immediately. The student will be required to appear before the Review Board. Recommendation for expulsion may be considered.

ARSON (Level 3)

Arson is when a student damages school property by starting a fire, causing excessive fire, or causing an explosion of any type. If guilty of arson, the student (and/or families) will be required to pay for the damages and be referred to the administration for further disciplinary action. The student may be suspended and brought before the school's Review Board. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the police. Recommendation for expulsion may be considered.

ASSAULT (Level 3)

An assault is when a student intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes physical injury to another. Students who violate this will be immediately suspended, the Police will be contacted (ages 12 and up), and a Review Board hearing will be conducted. Referral to a Police Agency is required for students upon a showing of intentionality or malice for assault against a staff member. Recommendation for expulsion may be considered.

BULLYING (Level 2 or 3)

A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed **repeatedly and over time**, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. A negative action occurs when a person knowingly inflicts, or attempts to inflict, physical or emotional injury or discomfort upon another person. According to Delaware Code, Title 14, section 614, "Bullying" means *any intentional written, electronic, verbal or physical act or actions against another student, school volunteer or school employee that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of: (1) Placing a student, school volunteer or school employee in reasonable fear of substantial harm to his or her emotional or physical well-being or substantial damage to his or her property; or (2) Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating or abusive educational environment due to the pervasiveness or persistence of actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the target; or (3) Interfering with a student having a safe school environment that is necessary to facilitate educational performance, opportunities or benefits; or (4) Perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause emotional, psychological or physical harm to another student, school volunteer or school employee.* There is no excuse for watching a fellow student get harmed and do nothing. Therefore, when it is learned that a student has witnessed an act of bullying and has not done anything to intervene or report it, an incident report of the bystander's inaction will be submitted and families will be notified.

According to state law and Department of Education (DOE) regulations, when a situation rises to bullying, as defined above, it must be reported to the appropriate authorities. The Bullying Prevention HB 268 requires that all alleged and all substantiated instances of bullying be reported to DOE, as well as to the Department of Justice. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension and/or a Review Board hearing leading to possible expulsion.

Some student misconduct that falls under a school's anti-bullying policy may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Please refer to:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>

BUS MISBEHAVIOR (Level 2 or 3)

Following the bus safety rules and regulations will ensure safety, prompt arrivals, and departures of buses, and positive attitudes on the part of students. Students who do not follow the reasonable requests of the bus driver jeopardize their riding privileges and will be referred to the school administration for disciplinary action. Fighting on the bus will result in, at the minimum, a 5 day loss of bus privileges for all those involved, including retaliation. Repeated misbehavior will be referred to the Review Board for further action and possible permanent loss of bus privileges.

Consequences for Level 2 bus misbehavior:

- 1st offense: bus incident report, family contact, and may result in at least 1-day loss of bus privileges.
- 2nd offense: bus incident report, family contact, and may result in at least 2-day loss of bus privileges.
- 3rd offense: bus incident report, family contact, and may result in at least a 3-day loss of bus privileges.

Consequences for Level 3 bus misbehavior:

- Possible permanent loss of bus privileges.

Subsequent offenses will result in a conference, automatic suspensions and/or permanent revocation of bus riding privileges. Consequences mentioned above for bus misbehaviors may warrant a consequence impacting more than just bus privileges, examples include, but are not limited to, school suspension and/or expulsion. Students found to be vandalizing or causing damage to the school bus in any way will be responsible for any fees associated with repairing the damage.

CYBERBULLYING (Level 2 or 3)

Bullying of any person **by use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network or other electronic device is prohibited.** All forms of harassment in cyberspace, often called *cyberbullying*, are unacceptable. *Cyberbullying* includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages (including text messages), or Web site postings (including blogs). Often the author (sender or poster) of the inappropriate material is disguised (logged on) as someone else. Students who feel that they

have been the victims of such misuses of technology should not erase the offending material from the system. They should print a copy of the material and immediately report the incident to the Assistant Head of School and/or the Head of School. All reports of harassment in cyberspace will be investigated fully. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, suspension and/or Review Board hearing leading to possible expulsion.

Social media refers to any electronic outlet of communicating with another person. The following social mediums where posting of speech will be presumed to be available to a broad audience within the school community, regardless of privacy settings or other limitations on those postings, shall include: TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Google Drive, MySpace, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest, Secret, or similar types of social media applications. This is not considered exclusive and any social media outlet or electronic communication, such as email, texting, recording audio or video, instant messaging, which allows for communications that may be viewed by the intended victim shall be considered as an electronic medium for the purposes of enforcing the electronic bullying aspects of the LAAA Bully Prevention Policy. Please refer to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites. Internet sites such as “blogs” which may be created or used by individuals for the specific purpose of bullying as defined above shall also be treated in the same manner as other publicly-accessible internet portals.

DEFIANCE OF SCHOOL AUTHORITY/INSUBORDINATION (Level 1 or 2)

Shall mean not obeying authority and/or refusing to follow orders. A verbal or nonverbal refusal to comply with a **reasonable request** from school personnel, or refusal to identify oneself at the request of school personnel, and/or refusal to comply with disciplinary action, is an act of defiance. Defiance of school personnel's authority also refers to a verbal or non-verbal display of disrespect and/or uncivil behavior toward school personnel. Defiance/insubordination may result in a conference, creation of an incident report, may lead to possible suspension, and/or a Review Board hearing.

DEFAMATORY OR DEMEANING ACTIONS - ETHNIC INTIMIDATION (Level 3)

Actions of this type are defined as follows:

1. Actions or remarks, spoken or written, by students that defame or demean the dignity or self-esteem of individuals or groups on the basis of their grade, status, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, physical and mental disability, physical appearance, political or religious beliefs, family, sexual orientation, social or cultural background.
2. Cellular phones or other devices capable of transmitting an audio signal or electronic image may not be used on school premises to take pictures of persons or record their conversations without prior approval from school administration.

Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension and/or Review Board hearing leading to possible expulsion.

FIGHTING (Level 2 or 3)

Fighting in school will result in immediate removal from the building of all parties. During this time, the administration will attempt to ascertain who was at fault. If the fault can be determined, further action (suspensions and/or appearance before the Review Board) could result. In addition, depending on the severity of the fight, a longer suspension period and police contact may result. In many situations, a student has the opportunity to walk away and report an incident involving physical contact. However, if a student retaliates to the initial physical contact, he or she could be held culpable for fighting. Students who witness a fight are responsible for leaving the area to get help. Spectators who encourage fighting will be subject to disciplinary action and students recording a fight will receive a 1-3 day suspension.

Referral to a Police Agency is required for students who intentionally and offensively touch a staff member who is attempting to break up a fight or who is attempting to keep a student from injuring him/herself or others. Suspension, and/or recommendation for expulsion may be considered.

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Minimum Consequence</u>
K-2	1 day in school suspension
3-5	1 day out of school suspension
6-8	3 day out of school suspension

The following interventions will be implemented following a fight.

<u>Occurrence</u>	<u>Grades K-4 Interventions</u>	<u>Grades 5-8 Interventions</u>
1st	student conference and follow-up with the family (ex. email, phone call, etc)	family meeting with an administrator

<u>Occurrence</u>	<u>Grades K-4 Interventions</u>	<u>Grades 5-8 Interventions</u>
2nd	family meeting with an administrator	behavior contract and family meeting with an administrator
3rd	behavior contract and family meeting with an administrator	transition to alternative placement
4th	transition to alternative placement	

FORGERY / FALSIFICATION (Level 2)

- A. Creating a false document to be used for school purposes (i.e. school passes, legal guardian or custodian notes).
- B. The willful act of imitating or counterfeiting the signature of a legal guardian or custodian, teachers, or administrators, for the purpose of deceiving an LAAA employee.
- C. Providing false accusations attempting to defraud school personnel.

Incidents of forgery in any class will result in a referral (Level 2) to an administrator where more serious disciplinary actions may be taken.

GAMBLING (Level 2 or 3)

Gambling of any kind is prohibited at the school. Money and paraphernalia will be confiscated when the activity is discovered. The student may also be required to appear before the Review Board for further disciplinary action.

HARASSMENT (Level 2 or 3)

Any actions or statements made with the intent to trigger, provoke, or alarm another person. A person is defined as another student, ASPIRA team member, or school visitor. A student who violates this policy will receive a referral to an administrator. The student may also be required to appear before the Review Board for further disciplinary action.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: CARELESS/RECKLESS (Level 1 or 2)

Intentional/unintentional behavior that has the potential to or causes personal injury or property damage. For example: shoving, horseplay, instigation.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: CLASSROOM DISRUPTION/INTERFERENCE (Level 1 or 2)

Language, behavior, gestures or actions, which seriously disrupt, produce distractions, frictions or disturbances that interfere with effective functioning of the teacher, another student, a class, or any school activity.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: INAPPROPRIATE ITEM/MATERIAL (Level 1 or 2)

Any item or device that may be deemed by building staff as disruptive or having the potential for causing disruption (not a weapon) to include, but is not limited to laser pointers/pens, hoverboards, and skateboards.

Students are prohibited from bringing to school any personal music playing devices, toys, or any other items which are distracting to the educational atmosphere, including but not limited to slime, laser lights, fidget spinners, and/or bottle-flipping. Pre-approved recess items may be brought to school. However, LAAA is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal property. Students violating this policy will have the item confiscated and turned over to an administrator who may return the item to the student at a later date. Subsequent violations may result in an incident report being issued, family contact, permanent confiscation, and additional consequences. A student who refuses to turn over a distracting item to a staff member will be considered to be insubordinate/defiant and may be liable for additional disciplinary action. Using the distracting item in a manner that intentionally or recklessly presents a risk of injury to another individual may carry more serious consequences.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: INSUBORDINATION (Level 1 or 2)

Shall mean not obeying authority and/or refusing to follow orders. A verbal or nonverbal refusal to comply with a **reasonable request** from school personnel, or refusal to identify oneself at the request of school personnel, and/or refusal to comply with disciplinary action, is an act of defiance. Defiance of school personnel's authority is the same as insubordination and may result in a conference, creation of an incident report, may lead to possible suspension, and/or a Review Board hearing.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: SEXUAL (Level 2 or 3)

Inappropriate sexual behavior are acts of affection or intimacy inappropriate to an educational setting. The first offense of any act of inappropriate sexual behavior will result in detention and/or suspension (1-2 days), family notification, and possible cancellation of privileges such as, but not limited to, before/after school activities. Any subsequent offenses will result in suspension (1-3 days), family notification and conference with school administration. Additional consequences may include cancellation of privileges such as, but not limited to, before/after school activities, as well as a behavior plan/contract.

INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, TOUCHING AND/OR EXPOSURE (Level 3)

The following definitions should be considered:

Unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favors, or inappropriate touching of a sexual nature; Inappropriate oral or written statements of a sexual nature, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats; The display of pictures or other items of a sexually explicit nature; Repeated remarks or jokes with sexual or sexually demeaning implications; any act which would be considered sexual harassment under Delaware Code Title 11.

Any act of inappropriate sexual behavior, sexual harassment, touching and/or exposure will be treated as criminal offenses and will be reported to the appropriate authorities. The student will also be required to appear before the Review Board.

INFLAMMATORY ACTIONS (Level 2 or 3)

Inflammatory actions are language, gestures or actions which might create or are intended to create a disturbance. Inflammatory actions on the part of a student will lead to a family conference, creation of a referral and possible suspension from school.

LEAVING SCHOOL WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION (Level 2 or 3)

LAAA is a closed campus. Students are not permitted to leave campus during school without legal guardian or custodian permission and administrative approval. The "campus" refers to the school building, and outside areas utilized regularly during recess and physical education. Students arriving by bus or other means of transportation are to proceed directly to the school. Students are not permitted to loiter in non-school areas (including the parking lot) either before or after school. Failure to follow this expectation will be considered a Level 2 or Level 3 offense and students will be subject to consequences aligned to these offenses.

LOITERING AND CUTTING CLASS (Level 2)

Loitering is a student's unauthorized presence in an area. A student is considered to have cut class when he/she does not report to their designated area and/or arrives or leaves their designated area for an unreasonable amount of time. An incident report for administrative action will be created when a student violates this policy.

OFFENSIVE TOUCHING (Level 2 or 3)

Offensive touching is intentionally touching another person, either with part of the body or with any instrument, thereby causing offense or alarm to the person. A student guilty of offensive touching may be subject to suspension and possible police involvement. Expulsion may be considered depending on the severity of the incident.

POSSESSION OR USE OF TOBACCO AND TOBACCO-RELATED PRODUCTS (Level 3)

As per ASPIRA Academy's official tobacco policy, possession or use of tobacco and tobacco related products by students is not permitted in the school buildings, on school grounds, in leased or owned vehicles, even when they are not used for student purposes, and at all school affiliated functions. A student violating this policy will be suspended from school. Subsequent violations will result in longer suspensions and may involve more serious disciplinary measures including an appearance before the Review Board for possible dismissal.

POSSESSION AND/OR CONSPIRING TO CONCEAL A FIREARM* OR WEAPON/DANGEROUS INSTRUMENT OR LOOK ALIKE WEAPON/DANGEROUS INSTRUMENT (LEVEL 3)

A weapon/dangerous instrument is defined as any instrument from which a shot may be discharged; a knife of any sort; switchblade knife; box cutter, razor; or any other article commonly used or designated to inflict bodily harm or to intimidate others, or using articles commonly used for other purposes in an aggressive and threatening manner.

Dangerous instruments may also include any disabling chemical spray, or any electronic control devices including but not limited to a neuromuscular incapacitation device designed to incapacitate a person. Sanctions may include, but are not

limited to, suspension and/or Review Board hearing leading to possible expulsion. A student violating this policy will immediately be suspended* from school and the police will be contacted. In addition, the student will be required to appear before the Review Board.

*Possession of a firearm, or deadly weapon, as defined by Federal and/or State law, and in the Gun-Free Schools Act, on school property, in a school bus, or at any school-sponsored event or activity, shall result in **expulsion** for a period of no less than one year. The possession of a BB gun or knife will require a recommendation for expulsion. The Board of Directors may modify such expulsion requirement to the extent a modification is required by Federal and State law. **This provision is in compliance with the Federal Gun Free School Act of 1994, Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code, and Possession of a weapon in a Safe School and Recreation Zone, Section 1457 of Title 11, Delaware Code.**

STEALING, POSSESSING, TRANSFERRING STOLEN GOODS (Level 2 or 3)

Taking, possessing or transferring the property of another without consent of the owner is considered stealing. Students who steal, possess or transfer stolen goods jeopardize their privilege of attending the school. Each case will be reviewed by an administrator who may then refer the matter to the Review Board to determine the appropriate penalty. Proper restitution must always be made.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (Level 3)

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy that safe learning environments are necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. LAAA strives to provide safe learning environments for all students and all employees. The Head of School shall ensure that all requirements of 14 Del. C. § 4112E in regards to School Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Assault are included in the Student Code of Conduct and are reviewed annually and updated as needed. Although this Policy is established to comply with Title 14, § 1312E, School Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Assault Act, it also overlaps with Title 14 § 1312, Reporting School Crimes. Please refer to the copy of the Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Harassment policies found on the school website (<https://aspiraacademy.org/policies-procedures/>).

TERRORISTIC THREATENING - including false alarms (Level 3)

1. A threat or attempt to do bodily harm to another without physical contact
2. Any act leading to a full or partial evacuation or lockdown of a building
3. Possession or use of firecrackers, pepper spray, mace, or stink/smoke bomb starting a fire in the lavatories or any other part of the building.

Terroristic threatening will result in suspension and a report will be made to police and/or fire authorities. In addition, the student will be called before the Review Board. Referral to a Police Agency is required for students upon showing of intentionality or malice for terroristic threatening against a staff member. Recommendation for expulsion may be considered.

UNACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY (Level 2)

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) is pleased to offer teachers and students the opportunity to access and utilize a vast range of technological tools (includes, but not limited to computers, laptops, netbooks, Chromebooks, iPads, and connectivity to the Internet for educational purposes only). This includes the use of non-school approved communication devices (see pg. 11). To maintain the utmost professional use of this equipment, all teachers and students must abide by the guidelines set by LAAA's Technology Department. The Acceptable Use for Technology form must be signed and returned each academic year.

VANDALISM / DESTRUCTION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY (Level 2 or 3)

The school cannot tolerate vandalism of any kind. If guilty of vandalism/destruction of school property, the student's family will be required to pay for the damages and the student will be referred to the administration for further disciplinary action. The student may be suspended and brought before the school's Review Board. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the police.

***In addition to any action taken by school officials the school will comply with the notification requirements of House Bill 322 which includes notification of police.**

RESOLUTIONS TO MISBEHAVIORS (LEVEL 1) AND OFFENSES (LEVELS 2 AND 3)

PEER MEDIATION

Peer Mediation is a process that helps students who are having trouble solving their disagreement independently. Trained student mediators serve as an impartial third party to help those students through a process of listening, problem-solving, and communicating to positively resolve their differences.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Restorative Practices hold students accountable for their actions by involving them face-to-face with people they have harmed through mediation. Simply put, to be “restorative” means to believe that decisions are best made and conflicts are best resolved by those most directly involved in them. These practices seek to develop good relationships and restore a sense of community in the classroom and the school-setting. They are based on the notion that through discussion about the impact of the incident on others and by seeking a way to correct things, or make things right again, relationships, behavior and decorum will be improved.

Restorative Practices follow a continuum which allow for incidents to be resolved through discussions using affective statements and questions, small impromptu conferences, via community circles, or a formal conference. Restorative Practices will be a resource used inside the classroom whenever possible, or mediated outside the classroom by the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Director of Culture & Climate or a member of the School Culture and Climate team. Restorative Practices may occur in lieu of a detention or suspension, or in addition to these, whenever deemed appropriate by the Culture and Climate team.

DETENTIONS

In-school Detention

In-school detention is an established time outside of the regular instructional time when a student is assigned to a supervised area. An in-school detention may be assigned for Level 1 or Level 2 misbehaviors and will be assigned by the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, or a member of the School Culture and Climate team. An example includes, but is not limited to, a lunch detention.

After-school Detention

After-school detentions may be issued by the administration when a student reaches four (4) Level 1 Misbehaviors, or one (1) occurrence of a Level 2 Misbehavior. After-school detentions are assigned and served outside of a student's regular instructional time. Detentions will be assigned by the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, or a member of the School Culture and Climate team. Students and their families will be provided with a 24-hour notice of detention. Students are required to serve the detention on the assigned date. Detention is one hour in length and is held immediately after school.

The only acceptable excuses for missing a detention are medical or family emergencies, excused absence from school, medical or dental appointments (must be verifiable and on the doctor's letterhead), or extreme unforeseen circumstances. The student must reschedule the detention on the first day of return. Unacceptable excuses for missing detention include, but are not limited to: forgetting, lack of transportation, and athletic or other extracurricular events. A student who misses a detention due to an unacceptable excuse will be considered to be in defiance of school regulations and be required to serve an additional detention and/or serve a suspension.

If the student shows up after the designated start of detention without a valid excuse for the lateness, they will not be permitted to serve detention on that day. The student will then be subjected to serve two detentions. Students may do school work during detention but may also be required to do a written assignment that relates to the misbehavior.

Students are not permitted to sleep, read magazines, talk, play cards or other amusements, utilize personal music playing devices or otherwise disturb the detention proctor or other students serving detention. Students who misbehave during detention will be removed and will be required to serve an additional consequence (ex. in-school detention, after-school detention, etc). Subsequent misbehavior during detention may result in suspension.

SUSPENSIONS

In-school Suspension (ISS)

In-school suspensions can be issued for a Level 2 or 3 offense. Students assigned in-school suspension will remain in school, but will be assigned to a designated, supervised area within the school. Students with a disability serving an in-school suspension will be afforded the necessary instruction to allow them to continue making progress on their IEP goals

and will receive all accommodations. Students assigned to in-school suspension are not permitted to participate in any extra-curricular activities during the length of their suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension(OSS)

Out-of-school suspensions are administered for serious infractions of the rules such as fighting, smoking in the building, being in unauthorized areas, major disruptions, repeated misconduct, and vandalism. While serving an out-of-school suspension, a student may not be on school property for any reason during the school day. The student may not attend nor participate in any school-sponsored activities (plays, concerts, athletic events, rehearsals, practices, etc.) While suspended any work missed should be made up according to guidelines under make-up work.

Any behavioral infraction resulting in suspension will be recorded using a behavior referral. When a student is suspended, the family is contacted immediately. A student is not permitted to leave the building until an authorized pick-up person arrives. Notification of suspension will be provided via a telephone call, or other written notifications such as a letter or email.

After a suspension occurs, a conference between the offender(s), the impacted parties, and in some cases, the families of both the offender(s) and the impacted parties, might take place if deemed necessary by the Culture and Climate team, as a form of restoration following Restorative Practices. The approach is known as Restorative Justice Conferencing and it emphasizes repairing the harm by addressing the emotional and material needs of victims.

EXPULSIONS

There are certain offenses that when committed by a student may result in dismissal (expulsion). The following are dismissible offenses:

- Arson
- Defiance of School Authority
- Disorderly Conduct
- Unacceptable Use of Technology
- Offensive Touching
- Any involvement with drugs or alcohol at school or at a school-sponsored activity
- Any possession of a weapon at school or at a school sponsored activity
- Assaults or Fighting (depending on the circumstances)
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Ethnic Intimidation
- Harassment (physical, sexual, or verbal harassment)
- Stealing (This could be handled by administration depending on circumstances; restitution must always be made)
- Terroristic threatening (including false alarms)
- Vandalism

*Any of these infractions may also result in suspension. In addition to any action taken by school officials, the school will comply with the notification requirements of H.B. 322, which includes notification of police when appropriate.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT

A charter school, subject to the limitations of 14 Delaware Code 504A(8), shall pursue referral of any student meeting the requirements of Section 1.2 into a Consortium Discipline Alternative Program pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 16 of Title 14 of the Delaware Code. Except as otherwise provided in the Delaware Code 600 §611 regulation, any student who is expelled by a local school district, who is subject to expulsion or who otherwise seriously, or chronically, violates the district discipline code shall be eligible for placement at a Consortium Discipline Alternative Program site.

DEFINITIONS

Delaware code Title 14 §614 provides uniform definitions of student conduct which MAY result in expulsion or alternative placement. Please refer to the following link for specific information:

<https://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/600/614.shtml>

Delaware code Title 14 §614 provides Due Process Procedures for Alternative Placement Meetings and Expulsion Hearings. Please refer to the following link for specific information:

<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/600/616.shtml>

DUE PROCESS AND GRIEVANCES

LAAA students and families have rights and responsibilities, including the right to know about any violation of the Code of Conduct and the assigned consequence. Students and families have the right to be heard, also called due process. Students and families should try to resolve their complaints through discussion first.

When a student or family believes that they have been unfairly treated or have not been afforded due process, a grievance must be filed within five (5) school days from the time of the alleged incident. While an appeal is pending, the student must serve the consequence given (ex. in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, etc).

When a grievance procedure is used, these steps should be followed:

1. The grievant shall request a conference with the person (s) who allegedly treated the student unfairly – teacher(s) and/or other team members.
2. If the conference fails to resolve the issue, the grievant shall discuss the problem with the Head of School's designee: Amina Baaith (Assistant Head of School).
3. The grievant will, upon request, be given a written notice by the designee stating the resolution, or decision, to the complaint. Such notice will be provided within five (5) school days. If the discipline will result in a consequence that is less than an out-of-school suspension, the decision is final.
4. If a decision at the designee's level is not acceptable and the appeal will result in an out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, the designee's decision may be appealed to the Head of School. A grievant wishing to appeal the designee's decision must file a written appeal with the Head of School no later than ten (10) school days from the date of receipt of the designee's written decision.
5. The Head of School shall schedule a conference, in person or via other communication modes, to hear the grievance no later than five (5) school days following receipt of the notice of appeal and shall issue a decision in writing, no later than five (5) school days following the grievance conference.
6. The decision of the Head of School shall be the final decision of Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA). A copy of the Head of School's decision shall be sent to all involved parties not later than ten (10) school days following receipt of the appealed decision.