Student/Family Handbook

2026-2027

The purpose of the School Handbook is to provide students and families with information about the policies and procedures which govern academic and student life at the Springfield International Charter School. The policies and procedures set forth in the handbook are designed to promote a rigorous, safe, and nurturing environment for students that enable the school community to focus on the learning process.

SICS reserves the right to make changes in the school handbook at any time and without notice.

If you wish to have this handbook translated into the following languages: Spanish, Arabic, Haitian Creole,Vietnamese, Twi or other language, please contact the school at 413-783-2600.

Si desea que este manual se traduzca en español o vietnamita, comuníquese con la escuela al 413-783-2600.

Nếu bạn muốn dịch cuốn sổ tay này sang tiếng Tây Ban Nha hoặc tiếng Việt hoặc ngôn ngữ khác, vui lòng liên hệ với
trường theo số 413-783-2600.

SPRINGFIELD INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

Student/Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Dear Students and Parents:

Please sign below as acknowledgement that you have read and understand the policies and information stated in the 2026-2027 Student/Parent Handbook. This form must be returned to the attention of the homeroom teacher.

Sincerely,

Justin Baker Director

****

We have read, discussed, and will abide by the Student/Parent Handbook.

Student Name:_____Homeroom: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Use of Internet Acknowledgement

Parent and Student retain this copy

I, (Student/Please Print name)_____, have read the school's policy for Student Use of Internet Connection, accept it and agree to abide by all rules.

Student's Signature:_____Date: _____

I, (Parent/Guardian of the above/Please Print name)_____, agree to indemnify, protect and hold harmless the school, its employees and agents, and all other organizations related to the school's internet connection from any claim or liability whatsoever, whether in contract, or otherwise, that may result from my child's use of the internet and email. I agree that any computer equipment brought to school is done so entirely at my child's risk and that the school is not liable for damage, loss or theft of any student's personal computer equipment.

Parent/Guardian Signature_____Date:_____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you may know, technology is an integral part of the SICS School's unique curriculum, and we strive to use technology in ways that will assist learning and prepare students for life after graduation. SICS's students, teachers, and staff use Google Apps for Education to allow students to collaborate on school projects, communicate with their teachers and one another, and continue learning regardless of their location. Google Apps for Education are provided without advertisements and include the following online services for students:

- **Email** – an individual email account for school use, managed by SICS
- **Calendar** – an individual calendar used to record and collaborate on assignments, educational activities, or project schedules
- **Google Classroom** - a cutting-edge online learning management system designed by Google.
- **Drive** – a set of tools providing for the creation and storage of word processing documents, spreadsheets, presentations, etc.
- **Sites** – allows the creation of shared online workspaces for classes and projects
- **Shared EDU apps** - applications hosted on Clever

To set up the necessary Google Apps for Education account for your child, SICS provides Google only with a username, and no other personal information is required to open the account. However, given the nature of the services being provided, your student's email, assignments, projects, and other classwork stored in Google Apps for Education will likely include personal information about your child. Google has agreed to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects the confidentiality of student educational records and personally identifiable information, and to adhere to industry standards with respect to the security of the information. You can read more about Google's privacy practices on their website at http://www.google.com/policies/privacy/. The terms of Google's agreement with SICS are at: http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/terms/education_terms.html.

We believe that your child's use of the Google Apps for Education is important to his or her success and involvement in SICS. However, we recognize that as a parent, you may be concerned about the inherent risks present in any online environment. To help protect the safety of your student while online, SICS provides training to all students regarding online security, the sharing of personal information online, and other appropriate online behavior. As is the case with all online activity in SICS's program, student use of Google Apps for Education is governed by SICS's Acceptable Use Policy & student/parent handbook, both of which are available at: Student & Parent Handbook.

SICS needs your written consent for your student's use of Google Apps for Education. Please sign and

return the attached form at your earliest convenience, indicating your receipt and understanding of the information contained in this letter and your agreement that your child be given access to the technology described above

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the attached letter and agree to all of the following:

- SICS may give my child access to, and my child may use, Google Apps for Education pursuant to SICS's agreement with Google. This means my student will be assigned a Google Apps for Education account managed by SICS and will be granted access to the applications and tools available through these services.

- The electronic collection and storage of personal information about my child by Google is a basic element of Google Apps for Education. Google has agreed to abide by federal student confidentiality law regarding this information and to follow industry standards with respect to the security of this information. I understand that the information stored in Google Apps for Education will be subject to Google's privacy practices as indicated on their website.

- While a number of security controls are in place pursuant to Google's agreement with SICS, due to the nature of this online environment and the risks inherent in the online exchange of information, SICS cannot guarantee that my child's personal information will never be accessed by parties other than those authorized to access it.

I give consent for my child to use Google Apps for Education.

Student's Name (Printed): _____ Student's Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) Release of Student Directory Information &
Photo Release "Opt Out" Form

2026-2027

This form will be kept on file

PARENTS: ONLY FILL OUT IF ELECTING AN OPT-OUT OPTION.

Student's Name: _____Grade: _____

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Parents and eligible students have a right to opt-out of the disclosure of directory information as well as from the release of student photos/images and student work. If you wish to opt-out, you must check the box(es), below and return this form to the Director no later than September 30, 2026, or ten days following the student's enrollment in the district, whichever is later. This election is good for the remainder of the current school year.

If you are uncomfortable with your child's directory Information, image and/or schoolwork and/or image being released/disclosed for any of the purposes identified below, you can choose to opt-out. To opt out, please complete and return this form.

Parent, please **check** all that apply:

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE MY STUDENT'S DIRECTORY INFORMATION WITHOUT MY CONSENT, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

☐ YEARBOOKS

☐ NEWSLETTERS

☐ BROCHURES

☐ AWARDS

☐ DISTRICT CALENDAR

PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH MY STUDENT'S PHOTO/IMAGE AND/OR STUDENT WORK.

Parent/Guardian's Name (Please Print):_____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

About Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Massachusetts has similar regulations that protect student records 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Individual student records are developed and maintained for each student in the system in accordance with federal and state regulations, board policy and administrative procedures. These records provide the data needed to plan and implement legitimate and recognized educational goals for each student. The school principal or their designee is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained in the school. A student's record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, according to 603 Code of Massachusetts Regulations, Chapter 23.00. It includes all information, regardless of form or characteristics, concerning a student that is organized based on the student's name or in such a way that the student may be individually identified.

State and federal laws give parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect, review and have access to the student's education records maintained by the school. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided in 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Upon request for access, the entire student record, regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged if to do so would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records. Additionally, the parent or eligible student has the following rights:

- Any student, regardless of age, shall have the right pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 34A to receive a copy of his/her transcript.
- The eligible student or the parent shall have the right upon request to meet with professionally qualified school personnel and to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.
- The eligible student or the parent may have the student record inspected or interpreted by a third party oftheir choice. Such third party shall present specific written consent of the eligible student or parent, prior to gaining access to the student record.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school corrects a record which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading in accordance with the applicable federal and state statutes and regulations. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record. However, state and federal law allows schools to disclose student directory Information, without prior written consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest

- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- Appropriate parties in connection with a student juvenile justice system pursuant to specific state law
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school

Upon a student's enrollment in any other elementary or secondary school, all records, excluding those in the limited access folder, will be transferred to that school upon written request for records from the school. The transfer of any additional data to other institutions or schools requires the written informed consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. A record will be kept of all such requests and transfer of records.

Personally identifiable information may also be disclosed without written consent to those federal, state, and local authorities listed in Section 99.31 of the regulations of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

Personally identifiable information may be disclosed to appropriate persons without parent/guardian consent in an emergency if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of the student or other persons.

Student Directory Information

Public Disclosure of Student Directory Information – (For ALL Students Grades K-12) In accordance with federal and state laws, SICS may release student directory information for various purposes. Student directory information is defined by the school's Board of Trustees, and may include:

- Student name, address, and telephone number
- Dates of attendance
- Honors, awards & degrees received
- Post high school plans
- Major field of study
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Public disclosure of student directory information may occur in many ways, such as:

- School yearbooks (including photos)
- Articles about school activities
- Team rosters and class lists
- athletic events
- Graduation, theater, athletic, and music

- School honor roll, scholarships, programs and other awards
- Video performances, school activities
- Releases to media and other third athletic events

The temporary record of each student shall be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school district. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent/guardian of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. During the time a student is enrolled in a school, the principal or their designee shall periodically review and destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record.

SICS hereby gives notice on an annual basis that temporary records are reviewed and destroyed at the end of each school year as deemed appropriate. Parents/guardians wanting an opportunity to receive the information or a copy prior to its destruction should contact the principal by June 1st of the school year.

Publication of Pictures, Videos & Student Art/Work

Springfield International Charter School celebrates the achievements of our students and staff. Throughout the year, SICS may take photographs of students and school activities. These photographs may appear in various school materials, including the school's website and/or SICS official social media pages (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or LinkedIn), yearbooks, brochures, district calendar, etc. We, at times, may also publicize student work.

Springfield International Charter School Mission Statement

The Springfield International Charter School (SICS) is a college preparatory school that provides top-quality education on a non-selective basis to all students. It teaches these students to perform to the best of their ability, to achieve academic excellence in a global context, and prepares graduates to attend colleges and universities. School develops and strengthens students' ethical, moral, and civic values, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, and social judgment they will need to face the challenges of the times. The school believes that students with a Springfield International Charter School education, especially in a multicultural setting, will be able to provide leadership throughout the world.

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Springfield International Charter School Contact List

Director- Justin Baker

Deputy Director K-5-Shirley Vazquez

Deputy Director 6-12- Brendan Dwyer

Director of Special Services- Cynthia Miller – Grades K-12

Director of Operations- Derek Conway

Director of IT- Manny Class

Human Resources Director- Rochelle McCarthy

Athletic Director- Ryan Gaebel

Nurse Leader- Kathleen Dupuis, R.N.

Student Records- Kirsten Drungo

For a copy of this Handbook in Spanish, please contact Home Liaison Nivia Concepcion at 783-2600. Springfield International Charter School WEBSITE ADDRESS: For more information, visit sics.org

Springfield International Charter School Board of Trustees

Wilfredo Lopez –Chair

Freda Malone-Vice Chair

Todd Fairman – Treasurer

Sonja Shaw-Secretary

Features of Springfield International Charter School

College Preparation for All Students

The school strives to prepare all its students to enter the colleges and universities that are of the best quality and "fit." We believe that a college education is accessible to all students who are enrolled at Springfield Charter School. The record of college placement by SICS students bears this out.

SICS currently accepts students from kindergarten through 12th grade. In addition, the student should be prepared for assessment measures that are used for college admissions, such as the SAT and ACT, as well as the subject-content achievement tests (now called "SAT II") and the appropriate Advanced Placement exams.

The school is highly academically oriented without being selective and requires only two things:

Students must have a minimum basic knowledge in English and mathematics (as determined by diagnostic tests); those lacking this knowledge must be willing to attain it through help and hard work.

Parents and students must want an excellent education, and students must be willing to make the effort required to achieve academic success.

Cultural Diversity:

SICS believes it is necessary to have cultural diversity in its student body and staff. The diversity of the student body gives students the experience of interacting with children and adults from a variety of backgrounds, providing them with an opportunity to closely relate to people of different cultures, religions, and races. It fulfills one of the goals of the school's philosophy, which is "to help students develop a true understanding of the differences as well as the similarities" of others.

Accountability:

We believe that high efficiency and good standards are achieved if people are held responsible for their actions and decisions. Hence, every individual at the school is accountable. Administrators bear the responsibility for setting, achieving, and maintaining high standards. The administration sets the syllabi for all classes and measures the attainment of objectives through independent testing. Teachers are held accountable for student achievement and for fostering a safe and supportive school climate.

Non-discrimination Policy:

SICS is committed to ensuring equal educational and extra-curricular opportunities for all students, on a space available basis, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the

English language or a foreign language, and academic achievement. SICS may limit enrollment to specific grade levels and may structure curriculum around areas of focus such as mathematics, science or the arts. M.G.L. c. 76, § 5.

Springfield International Charter School Enrollment Policy

Springfield International Charter School (SICS), located in Springfield Massachusetts, is a public K-12 college preparatory school that provides top-quality education on a nonselective basis to all students, on a space available basis, and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. The school will implement and follow their Student Recruitment and Retention Plan as submitted, as outlined in M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 89(f); CMR 603

1.05(f). Springfield International Charter School's application process is integrated with that of the school district, as outlined in 603 CMR 1.05(11). All applicants will be notified in writing of the rights of students with diverse learning needs to attend the SICS and to receive accommodations and support services, including students who may have disabilities, require special education, or are English language learners, as outlined in 603 CMR 1.05(4). The availability of services offered by the school will be posted on the school website, the SICS Student/Parent Handbook and in outreach materials available to the public. SICS does not charge an application fee for admission or use financial incentives to recruit students. Springfield International Charter School, upon request, will provide names and addresses of students to a third-party mail house for mailings, unless the parent or legal guardian requests that the school withhold their child's information. The "Opt Out" Form for release of student directory information is found in the Student/Parent Handbook found on the SICS website.

Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment

- A student applying for enrollment must be a resident of Massachusetts at the time of application and at the time of his/her acceptance.
- Proof of residency will be obtained as part of the enrollment process, except in the case of homeless students. Examples of residency proof will include:

  a) A Utility Bill (not water or cell phone) dated within the past 60 days.

  b) A Deed, Mortgage Payment dated within the past 60 days, or Property Tax Bill dated within the last year.

  c) A current Lease, Section 8 Agreement, or Landlord Affidavit, dated within a year.

  d) A W2 form dated within the year, or a Payroll Stub dated within the past 60 days.

  e) A Bank or Credit Card Statement dated within the past 60 days

  f) A Letter from an Approved Government Agency* dated within the past 60 days

*Approved government agencies: Departments of Revenue (DOR), Children and Family Services (DCF), Transitional Assistance (DTA), Youth Services (DYS), Social Security, any communications on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Letterhead.

- A child who is homeless is considered eligible to apply to the SICS lottery regardless of

residency documentation, and the application of a homeless applicant will not be dependent on the submission of required documentation. Homeless applicants must provide reasonable proof (depending upon the circumstances or via an affidavit) of residency to receive an admission preference based on where they are currently or temporarily living. Homeless applicants will receive a residency preference based on their current or temporary residence within the City of Springfield; however, Springfield as a prior permanent residence does not provide a residence preference for admission. The school will work with applicants who may be considered homeless on a case-by-case basis to determine proof of current or temporary residence.

- Students entering kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1st in order to attend.
- Parents/guardians must complete an application for admission and present the student's birth certificate and proof of residency.
- SICS does not administer tests to potential applicants or predicate enrollment on results from any tests of ability or achievement (603 CMR 1.06(2)).
- SICS does not require potential students or their families to attend interviews or informational meetings as a condition of enrollment (603 CMR 1.05(3). Informational meetings will be scheduled for parents/guardians who want to visit the school; attendance at these meetings will not influence the enrollment process.
- Enrollment shall not exceed the maximum cap allowed by the school's charter.

Enrollment Process

- Springfield International Charter School will hold an annual enrollment period for students who are seeking enrollment at SICS. The enrollment period will be advertised widely throughout the sending district and will include public information sessions and school tours for interested families. Attending information sessions/ tours are not required as a condition of enrollment. Applications will be available at the school during the enrollment period.
- The date of the enrollment period and the date of the application deadline will be publicized at least one month in advance of the enrollment period. The annual enrollment period will last a minimum of one month. Applications submitted after the deadline for any enrollment period must be resubmitted in the next enrollment period.
- The enrollment process will take place every January for children who will be eligible to start Kindergarten the next school year. The enrollment period will be advertised widely throughout the sending district and will include the dates for public information sessions and school tours for interested families. Attending information sessions/ tours are not required as a condition of enrollment. The dates of the enrollment period and the dateof the application deadline will be publicized at least one month in advance. For Kindergarten through Grade 12, enrollment parents/guardians will be required to fill out an application for admission and provide the school with the child's birth certificate and proof of residency.
- SICS will enroll new students in grades K-12, following Certified Massachusetts Regulation

(603 CMR 1.06(4) (d) requirements.

- Any information that is requested on the application form, such as language spoken or race/ethnicity will not be used to discriminate and will not be used for selection purposes. This information will help us evaluate the effectiveness of our enrollment process.

- Students who are offered enrollment will be contacted by phone and will then have three days to accept or decline the offer. Parents are encouraged to update their contact information by calling the school with any changes.

- Applications will be accepted for any child meeting the school's age requirements and residing in Massachusetts.

- Applications will be available at the school during the enrollment periods.

- Students must begin attending SICS within 10 days of their anticipated start date, e.g., the first day of school, in accordance with the school's attendance policy. Failure to attend will result in the school rescinding the student's offer of admission, being unenrolled, and their seat offered to the student at the top of the waitlist. The student must reapply for admission in a future application cycle if they are to be considered again for enrollment.

Lottery Procedures

- All eligible applications received by the deadline will be entered into a public lottery. Applicants will be placed in the lottery by their grade as of the next school year.

- SICS will determine the number of seats available each year by grade level prior to the start of the new school year.

- The number of seats available for kindergarten, in the next school year, will be determined prior to the kindergarten lottery. That number will be based on the number of siblings that register for kindergarten and the number of attending kindergarteners that may not be promoted to grade one and will repeat kindergarten.

- Notice of the lottery will be publicized at least one week prior to the lottery.

- A lottery, for every grade, will be held at the end of each enrollment period if there are more applicants than seats available, or if there is a waiting list at any grade level.

- Students who have completed the enrollment process will be separated into one of the below groups:

    a) Siblings (students who share a common parent, either biologically or legal adoption) of students who are already in attendance at SICS in the year of application, will be given preference for admission over non-sibling students. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to inform SICS of any sibling(s) currently on the wait list.

    b) Residents of Springfield will be given preference for admission over nonresident students.

    c) Non-residents will be defined as students who live in Massachusetts but reside out of the City of Springfield.

- All students who submitted an application prior to the application deadline will be included in a single lottery for each grade. The random lottery will be drawn by hand to establish the initial random rank order. After the initial random rank order has been created, preferences for admission will be applied in the following order:

    a) Siblings (students who share a common parent, either biologically or legal adoption) of students who are enrolled at the time an offer of admission is made (either during the lottery or off the waitlist) will be given preference for admission over non-sibling's students. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to inform SICS of any sibling(s) currently on the wait list.

    b) Residents of Springfield will be given preference for admission over nonresident students.

    c) Non-residents will be defined as students who live in Massachusetts but reside outside of the City of Springfield.

- Each Application for Admission will be assigned a random identification number for the lottery. The parent/guardian completing the Application will also be given a copy of the identification number for their child prior to the lottery. As each student number is drawn, he/she will be assigned the next available opening for his/her grade, or placement on the appropriate waiting list. The lottery will establish a fair and random list of students by grade ranked in ascending numerical order according to their lottery draw.

- An unbiased person will draw these numbers by grade at a publicized, public meeting at the school, 160 Joan Street, Springfield, MA 01129.

- If the principal enrollment process fails to produce an adequate number of enrolled students, the lottery process may be repeated if a waiting list does not exist and the required lottery process is strictly followed, including public notification and deadlines (603 CMR 1.06(5)).

- Once a student is attending the school, they may remain at the school even if their town of residence, within Massachusetts, changes.

- In cases where offering admission to a student, who is not a sibling of another student who is currently attending the charter school, from the waitlist would exceed the district charter tuition cap, the student should be skipped but kept on the waitlist. In cases where the enrollment of a student, who is a sibling of a student already attending a charter school would exceed the district charter school tuition cap, and the school has not admitted other students prior to admitting the sibling, the sibling may be admitted, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will provide tuition for the sibling, subject to appropriation. G.L. c. 71, § 89(i); 603 CMR 1.05(10)(b).

Waiting list Policy

- Students who are not selected for admission during the lottery will be placed on the waitlist in the order that their names were drawn. SICS will also take into consideration sibling and residential preferences for admission, both of which may change over time, when creating and maintaining the waitlist.

- If a student stops attending SICS or declines admission, the next available student on the Waiting List for that grade will be offered admission until the vacant seat is filled.

- No student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students on the waiting list unless said student is either a sibling of an enrolled student or a resident of Springfield.

- Students on the waiting list will be contacted by phone with an offer of admission to the school. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any change of contact information.

- Any student who is offered a seat at SICS and declines admittance will need to reapply and proceed with the lottery process.

- Any student who signs up for enrollment will be part of a lottery, if a seat is not available, to determine their placement on the waiting list. Those who are on the waiting list as non-siblings and become a sibling, due to the acceptance and attendance of their brother/sister, will be given sibling status. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school if this occurs.

- SICS will keep accurate and secure electronic and paper records of their waiting list. The waiting list will contain the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, grade levels and sibling status of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission.

- When a student stops attending the school for any reason, the school will attempt to fill vacant seats up to February 15th.

- SICS must replace any student who leaves the school in grade K-12 with a student in the same grade level, if the replacement takes place on or before February 15th. If a student in grade K-5 leaves the school after February 15th that vacancy will be filled the following school year with a new student in the subsequent (next) grade level.

- Parents/guardians who have a child on the waiting list are encouraged to contact SICS once a year to update their child's information and track their child's movement on the waiting list.

Application for Admission to SICS

- Attached is a copy of the application for admission.

The application does not require dual parent/guardian signatures.

Academic Procedures

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) strives to prepare all its students to enter colleges and universities that are of the best quality and "fit." We believe that a college education is accessible to all students who are enrolled at Springfield Charter School. The following are unique learning opportunities that are critical for students to be prepared for higher learning.

Literacy and Math Universal Screener

The Springfield International Charter School implements a districtwide K-12 comprehensive literacy and math universal screener that will be used as an assessment tool for all students, including those identified as needing special education and academic interventions.

The Star Assessments by Renaissance are computer-adaptive assessments that will provide teachers with current, reliable, and valid data quickly so they can target instruction, monitor progress, provide students with appropriate instructional materials, and intervene with at-risk students. This system of assessments will be used not only to inform data-based decisions but to support instructional frameworks such as Response to Intervention (RtI) and/or Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS). Additionally, the data will allow for targeted intervention lesson ideas linked to diagnostic data and designed to address student misconceptions in grades K-12 mathematics and reading, with built-in progress- monitoring tools.

SICS will be administering the Star Assessments four times during the school year. The following provides parents with more information on the Star Assessments and how they are used. Additionally, the attached video link and Parent Guide links below provide a brief description of the Star Assessments:

https://play.vidyard.com/25xSruV2D28uKPS1JPRNTD

Project Based Learning

SICS incorporates Project-based learning (PBL) into our daily curriculum. PBL gives students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging projects set around challenges and problems they may face in the real world.

Missing Projects

At each teacher's discretion, for each day that a project is late, points will be subtracted from the grade received on the project. Parents may request homework or classroom assignments only if students are absent for three or more days or serving a short-term suspension from school. In all situations of absences of less than three days, students are responsible for requesting missing assignments from their teachers.

Homework

To reinforce concepts from class and to give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned, students are expected to complete homework, which will count towards a student's grade. Homework is an important aspect of each student's educational experience and a major factor in their academic success. Homework is assigned to students as an outgrowth of classroom instruction. It is the responsibility of the student and should reflect their work. Incomplete or outstanding assignments represent a serious threat to learning.

Homework is designed to:

- Reinforce classroom instruction by providing practice, drill, and application.
- Build students' self-reliance and sense of responsibility.

- Broaden the student's experiences for increased participation.
- Build time management skills and positive learning habits.

Students are expected to:

- Use student agendas daily and take home needed materials.
- Budget time to complete homework.
- Show thought, effort and neatness in their work.
- Return assignments on the due date.

What parents can do to help:

- Provide students with an appropriate place to do homework.
- Schedule student and family activities to allow for homework completion.
- Emphasize the importance of responsibility and the need for a thorough, careful approach to assignments.
- Encourage independent work while providing the student with appropriate support when necessary.

It is expected that all students will have some form of homework every night whether it is a math exercise, silent reading or studying in preparation for an upcoming exam. The amount of homework will increase as the student progresses through the grades. A general rule is to expect that a student will have a minimum of 10 minutes of homework per grade level. For example, a student who is in the 4th grade should have approximately 40 minutes of homework per night.

These guidelines have been established and are subject to individual student learning styles and abilities. Consequently, some students may require less or more time than the guidelines would indicate for each grade level.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Communication between the home and the school helps bind the student, parents, teachers, and administration into a team, working toward a common goal of development and growth for the student. Conferences allow the people most directly involved with the student to become involved in the process of his or her education. Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress at school. Conferences with members of the administration may also be arranged. Parents and guardians are encouraged to call the school whenever there is a question or concern.

Parent visits to school without an appointment for impromptu conferences with staff are discouraged.

A parent who has been denied physical custody of his/her child ("non-custodial parent") is required to submit a written request to access his/her child's student record information before

the parent will be allowed to participate in parent teacher conferences or to access information regarding the child's attendance, performance or progress. M.G.L. c. 71, §34H.

Student Classroom Placements

Classroom placements shall be at the sole discretion of the school administration. Parental requests for specific faculty members for their children will not be honored.

Report Cards

Report cards are mailed out (4) times a year at the end of each quarter. They include the student's numerical grades for each subject, and attendance records. Comments regarding attitude, behavior, and progress may also be included on the report card. Kindergarten report cards are standards-based.

Books

Several books are assigned to students during the year. It is expected that students will treat all books with respect and keep them in good condition for return at the end of the year. Students should not write in books unless explicitly instructed to do so by a teacher. If a student loses or damages a book, parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of the replacement book. The school office will provide information about the costs for a book should a problem arise. Students with outstanding bills for books will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, athletics, and end-of-year activities. The school will provide students with certain academic supplies. They will be responsible for replacing them if they are lost or destroyed.

Promotion/Retention and Placement of Students

Consistent with laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability, the principal, acting reasonably and in good faith with input from relevant educational staff, have the final decision regarding the promotion or retention of a student, and the placement of a student in a designated course at a specific level of academic sophistication and/or one that has specific prerequisite requirements. At the discretion of the school administrators, diagnostic testing will be administered for any student to determine academic placement. While Principals are encouraged to involve parents whenever feasible in significant decisions that affect their children, the ultimate authority concerning promotion, retention, and placement of students rests with the school officials.

- There are 3 components to all SICS Seniors being able to graduate:

    a. Meeting All Credit and Course Requirements:

(Class of '2027, students will need 32 credits to graduate.)

Subject	Required Credits
Math	4 Years ***This includes successful completion of MCAS Prep Math in Grade 10 and taking the MCAS Exam***.
ELA	4 Years ***This includes successful completion of MCAS Prep ELA in Grade 10 and taking the MCAS Exam***.
Science	3 Years of Lab Science ***This includes successful completion of MCAS Prep Biology or Physics in Grade 9 or 10 and taking the MCAS Exam***.
History	3 Years including One US History Course
World Language	2 Years*
Physical Education and Health	4 Years
Music and Art	1 Year
Senior Project Completion* (See below)	1 Year (Senior Year)

*The principal may waive or adjust this graduation requirement for students with learning disabilities or substantial academic needs requiring intervention.

b. Senior Project Completion: All Seniors will be enrolled in a Senior Project course and will be assigned a Senior Advisor. They will work to complete a Senior Project throughout the year, which must be successfully completed and submitted no later than 2 weeks before commencement as determined by their advisor.

c. Attendance Requirement: No Senior may graduate if they end their Senior Year considered to be chronically absent (18 or more missed days of school, excused or unexcused), without having made up their missed days through our Attendance Recovery Academy.

Seniors who have not met 1 or more of these requirements will not be eligible to attend our Commencement Ceremony or walk with their class. They will have the opportunity to graduate in the summer if they successfully complete our June or July Summer School Programs.

High School MCAS Policy

- All High School students must take and pass 3 MCAS prep courses to graduate from Springfield International Charter School.
- These classes include: Grade 10 Math (Integrated Math II), Grade 10 ELA, and either Biology or Physics in Grades 9 or 10.

- To pass these MCAS Prep Courses, students must: Earn a 60% or greater in the course, take and fully participate in all MOCK (practice) exams, and take and fully participate in the State MCAS exam.

- Students who do not pass any of the MCAS Prep Courses will need to retake the course in Summer School and pass with a 70% or higher to advance to the next grade.

- Students who do not pass the MCAS exam (results are typically received in the late summer or early fall), will be entered in a skill-remediation course the following year to address gaps in their learning as reflected by the test data. This will be a required semester-long course.

- Please note, students do not need to pass the MCAS exam to graduate, but do need to complete the related requirements above to earn their SICS diploma in a timely fashion.

- This policy was approved by the SICS Board of Trustees in March 2025.

High School Summer School Policy:

- In High School, students are earning credits toward graduation.

- High School students must take and pass the following core classes during the Academic Year: Math, English, Science, and History. To earn a passing score, students must have a 60% or above in the course.

- Students who fail one or two core courses with a 50% to a 59% overall average are eligible to attend Summer School.

- Students who fail more than two core courses will need to repeat the previous grade.

- To pass a Summer School course and recover credits, students must attend all Summer School sessions **(there are no excused absences for Summer School**), and pass the course with a 70% or above. Students must arrive on time and stay for the entire session each day to be considered present.

- Non-Core classes are not offered during Summer School. Students who do not pass any of these courses will need to complete them the following school year through our Credit Recovery Program to stay on track for timely graduation.

- Transportation for Summer School is not provided.

Food Delivery (High School)

- Students may choose to eat the lunch provided in the school cafeterias or bring their own lunch each day.

- Families may also bring food to their student during the day. The family member will need to sign-in in our Main Lobby, and present proof of identification in the Main Office, and leave food for their student.

- High School lunch is from 11:40 a.m.-12:10 p.m. each day. Any food delivered from a family member to the Main Office after 12:00 p.m. will be delivered to the student at the end of the day (2:20 p.m.).
- For safety reasons, families are not allowed to order food for their student from an outside vendor such as Doordash, Uber Eats, or any restaurant which makes deliveries.
- Also, for safety reasons, students are also not allowed to order food for themselves to school.
- While our school will not discard food which has been paid for through a delivery service, it will be kept in the Main Office until dismissal (2:20 p.m.) and then given to the student. Students will then receive a disciplinary consequence for violating this expectation (first offense= after school detention, all subsequent offenses= Saturday detention.

Field Trips

Field trips are held to help support the school's curriculum. They are academic in nature and involve pre- and post- activities. Some field trips require a fee for participation. Field trip fees are non-refundable. Any family that experiences financial need should contact the Director or designee for a fee waiver. Students who receive two or more academic, disciplinary or bus behavior referrals within 20 school days before the field trip may not be permitted to attend. However, student attendance on field trips remains subject to the discretion of the Director/Designee. Students are required to be in school uniforms for all field trips unless otherwise noted.

CORI Requirements / Field Trip / Activity Chaperones

Pursuant to Chapter 71, section 38R of the Massachusetts General Laws, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, chaperones, school transportation providers, and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children must submit to a search of Criminal Offender Record Information with the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board. Chaperone service shall be at the discretion of the school administration and remains subject to criminal record information review. CORI information is not subject to the public records laws and shall be kept in a secure administrative office for not more than three (3) years. Access to this information is restricted to an administrator certified to receive such information. SICS must obtain this information at least every three (3) years during an individual's term of employment. For further information regarding this CORI policy and procedure, please contact JoAnn Laflamme, H.R. at 413-783-2600.

K-5 Field Trips are not optional. Parent/Guardian consent on permission slip is an acknowledgment of their student's participation in the off-campus curriculum for that day's event. Student absences will be unexcused unless proper documentation is received.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Participation in extra-curricular activities, including but not limited to athletics, athletic spectatorship, club memberships, field trips/outings, dances, proms, and graduation exercises while encouraged, is a privilege, not a right. Any student whose conduct in and out of school is inconsistent with the school mission and Code of Conduct may be denied the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities. Additionally, SICS provides extracurricular services and activities in such manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities and equal opportunity for participation.

- On and off-campus events, including but not limited to: Field trips, pep rallies, clubs, activities, school-based incentives, Homecoming, dances/Prom, attendance at athletic events as a spectator, and all Senior class and Spirit Week events are a privilege for High School students.
- Any student who owes a disciplinary consequence which has not been served or is failing a course will not be allowed to participate or attend any of these events or activities until they have served the consequence and/or raised the grade in question above passing.
- School administration will notify staff in charge of monitoring these events and activities of which students have temporarily lost eligibility weekly throughout the school year.
- A student's removal from extracurricular activities and attendance at school sponsored events is not subject to the procedural requirements of M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H¾ (Principal's Hearing). The

removal is not a suspension for the purpose of counting the school days that a student is suspended.

Academic Competition

The school is involved in several academically oriented competitions with area schools, such as:

- Model Congress at American International College
- Model UN at University of Massachusetts-Amherst

Some of the club offerings may include, but are not limited to: Gospel Choir, Urban Dance, Drama Club, Nursing Club, Web Design, Business Club, Poetry Club, National Honor Society, Hackie Sack Club, Massachusetts Mutual Academic Achievers Club, Video Gamers Club, Peer Mediators, and GSA Club.

General Eligibility Requirements

For participation in sports, academic competitions, field trips, and other school-sponsored activities, all prerequisite paperwork including, but not limited to, parental consent/indemnification, forms, and/or fee waiver forms must be completed before a student can participate in an extracurricular activity in any manner. Current physical examination forms must be completed before a student may participate in any interscholastic athletic activity.

Additionally:

- A student who is suspended from school, inclusive of a full day in-school suspension, loses all privileges of participation in or attendance at extracurricular activities during the term of suspension.
- A student who is absent from school may not participate in or attend any extracurricular activities held on the dayof the absence (a Friday absence would nullify eligibility for participation in a Saturday contest or activity).
- A student must be in attendance for minimally six (6) academic periods of the school day to be eligible to participatein or attend extracurricular activities held on that day.
- Students who receive two or more disciplinary referrals within twenty (20) school days before the extracurricular activity may not be permitted to participate in the activity subject to the discretion of the Director/Designee.
- Students lose the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities if outstanding disciplinary consequences (detention or Saturday detention) have not been fulfilled.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted for court appearances, bereavement, or medical appointments. Restriction or loss of participation privileges in any extracurricular activity may be determined by the administration due to violations of the school's code of conduct (see "Code of Conduct" section).

Athletics Program

Students in grades 7-12 are eligible to try out for athletic teams and must have a current physical on file, be academically eligible and signed up on familyid.com.

We offer the following sports:

Fall: Girls and Boys Soccer, Golf (COED), Football, Cheerleading, Girls Volleyball, Girls and Boys Cross Country and E- Sports

Winter: Girls and Boys Basketball, Wrestling, Cheerleading, Girls and Boys Indoor Track, and Bowling

Spring: Softball, Baseball, Boys Volleyball, Girls and Boys Track and Field, Girls and Boys Tennis, Girls Flag Football and E- Sports

Athletic Eligibility Policy

Athletic Academic Eligibility Policy

Fall Athletics:

- Students' eligibility for Fall Athletics is based on their Spring 2026 Report Card.
- Students who pass all core subjects (End of Year average) are eligible.
- Students who failed any required classes in 2025-2026 but attended Summer School in July 2026 and passed them are eligible.
- Students who failed any required classes in 2025-2026 and did not attend Summer School, or attended Summer School and failed any of them are ineligible.
- Students who are retained are ineligible for Fall Athletics but could become eligible for the Winter.

Winter Athletics:

- Students' eligibility for Winter Athletics is based on their Quarter #1 Report Card.
- Students who passed all core classes are eligible.
- Students who failed 2 or more core classes or failed any core class with less than a 45% are ineligible.
- Students who failed one core class with a 45%-59% are eligible.
- Grades are checked again in late January with the Quarter #2 Report Card.

Students who passed all core classes are eligible.

- Students who failed 2 or more core classes, or failed any core class with less than a 45% are ineligible.

Spring Athletics:

- Students' eligibility for Winter Athletics is based on their Quarter #2 Report Card.
- Students who passed all core classes are eligible.
- Students who failed 2 or more core classes or failed any core class with less than a 45% are ineligible.
- Students who failed one core class with a 45%-59% are eligible.
- Grades are checked again in mid-April with the Quarter #3 Report Card.
- Students who passed all core classes are eligible.

- Students who failed 2 or more core classes, or failed any core class with less than a 45% are ineligible.

PVIAC and MIAA Eligibility Standards

SICS is a member in good standing of both the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference (PVIAC) and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). In addition to the rules regarding eligibility outlined above, eligibility for students to be considered for competition in interscholastic athletic contests is governed by the rules of the PVIAC and the MIAA.

All PVIAC and MIAA eligibility requirements for participation in interscholastic athletic competitions are available in the athletic office. Any questions regarding the MIAA's rules and regulations should be directed to the Athletic Director.

School Policies for Athletes/School Clubs

Some of the reasons a participant may be dismissed from an athletic team, academic team, and/or school-based club are:

- Failure to comply with eligibility requirements.
- Excessive excused absences.
- Unexcused absences from practices and/or games/events.
- Inappropriate or unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to use of profanity at practice or events, insulting, harassing, derogatory language to teammates, opponents, coaches, spectators, or officials, actions showing intent to do physical harm, hazing, displays/actions showing a lack of emotional stability.
- Failure to comply with team, school, or M.I.A.A. rules.
- Drug/Alcohol violations
- Being charged with a felony or being the subject of a felony delinquency complaint
- Violations of school rules as determined by the school administration.

Conduct at Athletic/Extra-curricular Events

SICS has an extensive athletic program allowing our students interscholastic experiences with many area schools. When visiting teams play at SICS, the administration expects that our students and fans will treat these visiting teams and their fans with the utmost respect as would be expected with any guest in our school. Inappropriate or rude behavior from any student before, during, or after an athletic event will result in that person being removed from the event and exclusion from future events, as well as possible disciplinary actions. Students who are suspended or who are absent from school on the day of the event are not permitted to attend athletic events at any venue.
These behavior guidelines and consequences pertain to all home and away contests/events.

Academic Support

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

If a student experiencing academic, attendance, and/or behavioral challenges can be referred to the MTSS Team for problem-solving and to meet needs of the student within the school setting. This team may include the principal, counselor, nurse, teachers, as well as any other support staff, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student. Through the MTSS process, instructional and curriculum accommodations support, and strategies are recommended to develop a plan to support the student in the classroom setting.

Tutoring Program

Peer Tutoring - The Student Leadership Organization has set up a system to match students needing help in specific subject areas with other students who volunteer to be tutors. The peer-tutoring program offers satisfaction to the students offering the help and provides academic support to those students who can benefit from coaching by a student with a firm grasp of the subject. Peer tutoring occurs during Student Leadership periods.

Faculty Tutoring - A faculty tutoring program assigns teachers to tutor students who need more intensive help, but who are not sufficiently behind their classmates to need the support of an Intensive Program class.

Special Education (603 CMR 28.00)

Special Education services are provided to all SICS students grade Kindergarten through age 22 due to an educational disability, are unable to progress effectively in regular education programs even with accommodations and require specialized instruction.

A disability shall mean one or more of the following impairments:

- Autism
- Developmental Delay (applies to ages 3-9)
- Specific Learning Disability • Intellectual Impairments
- Deaf-Blind
- Hearing
- Vision
- Neurological
- Emotional
- Communication
- Physical

- Health

A specialized screening program for all kindergarten students is conducted annually to detect potential handicapping conditions early in the student's educational career. Based on the student's needs as determined by the screening TEAM, a student may be recommended for special education services in accordance with Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) developed by an IEP Team, of which the parents and/or guardians are key members.

SICS recognizes a continuum of settings and provides a full array of services to support academic success for students with disabilities. The continuum of settings ranges from general education support, related services, or resource room support. Determination for services and placements must abide by the legal requirements of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the provision of a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE).

At all levels, students with disabilities participate in the full range of specific areas of study and all testing programs.

Special Education Referral/Evaluation (603 CMR 28.00)

Special education services are available to SICS students from kindergarten through age 22 who are eligible under the special education process. Eligibility is based on the presence of one or more of the following disabilities: Autism, Developmental Delay (ages 3-9), Specific Learning Disability, Intellectual Impairments, Deaf-Blindness, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Neurological Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Communication Disorders, Physical Disabilities, and/or Health Impairments.

To qualify, a Team must also determine that as a result of their disability, a student is not making effective progress in school and requires specially designed instruction or related services to access the general education curriculum.

SICS uses several systems for identifying children who may need special education services, including a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), kindergarten screenings, and referrals from school personnel or parents. When a child is referred for evaluation by someone other than a parent, the parent is notified and asked to consent to the evaluation. The crucial role of the evaluation Team Leaders (ETLs) in coordinating the referral and evaluation process and acting as liaisons between parents and the school regarding special education matters is paramount.

The evaluation involves a team of qualified professionals, including the student's teachers, who assess all areas related to the suspected disability. Parents are integral members of this evaluation team, providing valuable insights about their child. The team, known as the TEAM, comprises the ETL, the student's teacher(s), evaluators, an administrator or a designee authorized to allocate services, the parents, a parent advocate (if desired by the parent), and the student (if 14 years or older). The TEAM reviews all assessments to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

For students deemed eligible, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is created, outlining the student's needs and the services to be provided, contingent on parental consent. Parents can request copies of evaluation reports two days prior to the meeting. Additionally, parents receive a Notice of Procedural Safeguards, informing them of their rights under state and federal law.

SICS offers a continuum of settings and services to ensure academic success for students with disabilities. This continuum includes general education support, related services, and resource room support. Service and placement determinations must comply with the legal requirements of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Students with disabilities participate fully in all academic subjects and testing programs across all levels.

Section 504 - Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act

The SICS Public Schools adhere to the mandates of Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA, 2008) across all academic and extracurricular programs. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law designed to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities in institutions that receive federal funding. Its goal is to ensure qualified students with disabilities have access to educational opportunities and benefits equal to those of non-disabled students.

Under Section 504, school districts must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students whose physical or mental impairments substantially limit one or more major life activities. SICS employs several methods to identify students requiring accommodations under Section 504, including the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), screenings, and referrals from school personnel or parents.

If you believe your child may qualify for a 504 plan to access school programs or activities, please contact the Special Services Department. While providing medical or other documentation regarding the disabling condition is helpful, a medical diagnosis is not mandatory. A consent to evaluate form will be provided, and upon your consent, the 504 team will convene to assess whether and how your child's impairment substantially limits a significant life activity.

The evaluation process involves collecting and analyzing data on how the disability impacts the student's ability to access the educational program's curriculum, learning, and social and enrichment opportunities. The 504 team, which includes relevant school personnel, will determine the student's eligibility under Section 504 and, if eligible, will develop a plan detailing appropriate accommodations.

A student qualifies for Section 504 if they:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Have a record of such an impairment.
- Are regarded as having such an impairment.

Major life activities include but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

If your child is deemed ineligible for Section 504 accommodations, you will receive written notification of this decision along with information about your procedural rights.

504 Eligibility

If you believe that your child may qualify as a child with a disability and requires a Section 504-plan to access programs or activities, please notify the Special Services Department. If you have medical or other documentation about the disabling condition, it is helpful to include, although a medical diagnosis is not required.

A consent to evaluate will be generated and once you consent to the evaluation the 504 team will meet to determine how and whether your child's impairment substantially limits a major life activity. The evaluation will consist of the collection and analysis of data relevant to the impact of disability on the student's functional access to curriculum, learning, social and enrichment opportunities that comprise the educational program. The 504 team will meet to determine the student's eligibility under Section 504 and if applicable develop a plan of appropriate accommodations for your child. If it is determined that your child is not eligible, you will be provided with this decision in writing and receive information concerning your procedural rights.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) encompasses self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills. Springfield International Charter School (SICS) utilizes the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS), a brief, norm-referenced tool, to screen all students and identify those at risk for social-emotional behavior (SEB) problems.

Students in grades K-12 will participate in the SAEBRS screening three times a year: in the fall, winter, and spring. Teachers will complete the ratings for grades K-5. Additionally, grades 2-12 students will reflect on and report on their skills and experiences. Access to screener data is restricted to teachers, administrators, and staff with legitimate educational interests. This data is securely stored and maintained in protected files and databases.

The screener results, combined with other data, will inform practices for SEL skill development and mental wellness. This data will also aid staff in planning interventions for students with identified needs. To opt your child out of the SEL screening, please complete the form below and return it to your child's principal by September 30, 2026. Opt-Out Form Please note: this form should only be returned if you do not want your child to participate in the SEL screener this year.

Child's Name: _____

Grade/Teacher: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Adjustment Counseling

Springfield International Charter School provides a comprehensive school counseling program (K-12) that promotes academic, college/career, and social/emotional growth for all students.

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, families, community stakeholders and other educators to create an environment resulting in a positive impact on student achievement. Education professionals, including school counselors, value and respond to the diversity and individual differences in our societies and communities in culturally sensitive and responsive ways. We are committed to ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to be effective and responsible citizens, productive workers, and life-long learners as members of a changing society. School counselors focus their skills, time and energy on direct and indirect services to students.

Direct Services with Students

Direct services are face-to-face interactions between school counselors and students and include the following:

- School counseling core curriculum
- Individual student planning
- Responsive services
- Short-term individual counseling
- Small group counseling

Indirect Services for Students

Indirect services are provided on behalf of students because of the school counselors' interactions with others including:

- Referrals for additional assistance
- Consultation and collaboration with families, teachers, other educators and community organizations
- Other activities that fall in line with the appropriate duties of a school counselor

The following programs also fall under the School Counseling and Clinical Services Department:

- Social-Emotional Learning
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance
- Home/Hospital Instruction and Re-Entry
- Community Counseling Information

- · Family Resources

For more information about Social Emotional Learning please see the following:

https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/

English Language Learner Program

The ELE Department continues to enhance the academic and social experiences of incoming students in the district. We aim to ensure that students with limited English language proficiency and English language learners are embraced and can fully access the general education curriculum. English language learners participate in the regular classroom, where teachers adapt instruction, materials, and assessments to make grade-level content comprehensible. In addition, ESL teachers promote English language development in a one-on-one or small group setting. When needed, the district provides bilingual translators or interpreters to facilitate communication between ELL families and the school. SICS seeks to enrich the relationships with their English Learner (EL) families. Springfield International Charter School strives to recognize, embrace, and welcome multilingual and non- native English speakers from all cultures as a school district and community.

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) assesses all incoming students who identify a language other than English on the Home Language Survey (HLS) upon district school registration per federal and state guidelines. The assessment may also be administered to any incoming student identified as a potential English Learner who needs obtainable school records from their previous school.

When SICS screens a student for ELE to determine if they are an English learner and are found eligible for placement in an ELE program, caregivers will receive further notification about their child's English proficiency test results and program placement information. School districts, including SICS, must provide notice within 30 days from the beginning of the school year to all caregivers of EL students regarding their identification and placement in a language instruction educational program. School districts, including SICS, must, to the extent practicable, translate such notices in a language that the parents can understand. The notification letter informs the parent or guardian of their right to decline or "opt out" of EL services at the school. The form to opt out of the program must be written and sent to the ELE Coordinator.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Services

By law, all children in Massachusetts, including homeless children, have the right to free public education. Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, homeless children are given special protection including the right to continue to attend their previous school district even if they no longer live in the district, free transportation to school whether
they live within or outside of the district and enrollment in school even if they don't have all required documentation. Homeless children also do not must apply for free school meals as this can be authorized by homeless shelter directors or education liaisons.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless children and youth as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence" (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)). This includes children/youths who are sharing housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship, living in motels/hotels/campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations, living in emergency or transitional shelters, abandoned in hospitals, or awaiting foster care placement. It also includes children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings such as those who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings (McKinney-Vento Act sec. 725(2); 42 U.S.C. 11435(2)).

Any questions or concerns regarding homeless services should be forwarded to Cynthia Miller, Homeless Education Liaison at (413)-783-2600

Books

Several books are assigned to students during the year. It is expected that students will treat all books with respect and keep them in good condition for return at the end of the year. Students should not write in books unless explicitly instructed to do so by a teacher. If a student loses or damages a book, parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of the replacement book. The school office will provide information about costs for a book should a problem arise. Students with outstanding bills for books will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, athletics, and end-of-year activities. The school will provide students with certain academic supplies. They will be responsible for replacing them if they are lost or destroyed.

The Student Leadership Organization

An Overview of the Organization

The Student Leadership Organization is an organization that is run by the students for our school community. The Student Leadership Organization involves all students to assist with the running of their school to achieve the following goals:

- Help every student achieve the highest levels of academic and behavioral excellence set out by SICS.
- Promote a positive attitude.
- See the value of student success through involvement in their own education.
- Raise, encourage and uphold the highest standards of ethical and moral values.
- Hold students accountable through real-life experience and responsibility.
- Create a positive school culture.

Community service is an important component at SICS. Students are involved in several initiatives to give back to their local and global community.

The National Junior Honor Society

The NJHS is a co-curricular activity that supports the mission of the school and upholds the NJHS Constitution. The five obligations of NJHS members are paying annual dues, maintaining the standards by which they were selected, attending meetings when called, and participating in individual and Chapter service projects. The community service requirement involves fundraising to financially support a local charity chosen by the rank-and-file members.

Membership in the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is a privilege granted to students by the Middle School Faculty Council. The SICS Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society promotes the recognition of students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of academics, character, leadership and service.

Criterion for membership in NJHS includes an overall grade point average of at least 87% or more and an evaluation of the prospective member's leadership ability and willingness to serve others. In addition, the ethics and standards of all prospective members are surveyed through their teachers and then evaluated by the faculty council. Prospective members are interviewed by the faculty council, and, after deliberation, selection and non-selection letters are sent to the student's homes via U.S. Mail. A formal induction ceremony takes place each year to welcome new members into the SICS Chapter of the NJHS.

Student Success and Motivation

Every person at SICS is expected to treat every other person with dignity and respect. Staff and students will work together to help every person in the school reach his or her full potential. Any behavior or action which helps someone grow and mature will be encouraged. Any behavior or actions that interferes with another person's growth or the student's own growth will prompt immediate disciplinary consequences. Students will be encouraged to remember to: Strive for excellence and help others achieve this goal.

SICS Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program

At SICS, we believe every student is a valued member of our school community. To ensure that our environment is safe, respectful, and supportive for everyone, we use a school-wide PBIS framework. This proactive approach teaches, models, and reinforces positive behaviors that help students succeed both academically and socially.

Our shared values are at the core of everything we do:

- **Be Safe**

- **Act Responsibly**

- **Respect Everyone**
- **Kindness Matters**
- **Show Effort**

These expectations are taught explicitly across all settings—from classrooms and hallways to recess and the cafeteria—so that students understand what positive behavior looks like in every part of the school.

A Community Built on Responsibility and Respect

We emphasize that responsibility is an extension of respect. As Thomas Lickona said in *Educating for Character*, "If we respect other people, we value them. If we value them, we feel a measure of responsibility for their welfare."

In this spirit, we expect all students to take ownership of their actions, with their most important responsibility being to learn. This means:

- Coming to class prepared
- Completing assignments
- Paying attention
- Managing behavior to create a positive learning environment for all

A Unified Approach

At SICS, every staff member—whether a teacher, administrator, counselor, assistant, or custodian—plays a vital role in supporting a positive school climate. All adults are responsible for modeling expected behaviors, reinforcing positive actions, and addressing concerns consistently. Students are expected to show the same respect to all adults and peers alike.

Clear Expectations, Supportive Interventions

We recognize that clear rules and expectations help our community thrive. Our handbook outlines these expectations to provide structure and consistency. While some language may be corrective, our goal is always growth. When misbehavior occurs, we use restorative and instructional responses that help students reflect and re-engage with the community in meaningful ways.

Together, through our PBIS approach, we are building a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment where every student can thrive.

General School Rules

Civility Policy

Civility/Conduct of Parents, Visitors, and School Employees

It is the intent of the SICS to promote respect, civility, and orderly conduct among students, school employees, parents, and the public. It is not the school's intent to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of speech or expression. The intent of this policy is to maintain, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, harassment-free workplace for teachers, students, administrators, staff, parents, and other members of the community. The school encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions.

Expected Level of Behavior:

- School personnel will treat parents and other members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Parents and other visitors will treat teachers, administrators, and other school employees with courtesy and respect.
- School personnel and visitors shall follow all traffic laws on public and private ways while travelling to and from campus.

Unacceptable and Disruptive Behavior:

- Using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays of temper.
- Threatening to do physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee, or student.
- Any other behavior that disrupts the orderly operation of a school, classroom, administrative functions and a safe campus environment.
- Any conduct that creates a hostile environment.
- Abusive, threatening, or obscene letters, e-mail, or voice mail messages.
- Violations of traffic laws/directives on public, private and campus ways.

Parent Recourse:

- Any parent or student who believes he or she was subject to unacceptable or disruptive behavior on the part of any staff member should bring such behavior to the attention of the staff member's immediate supervisor, appropriate administrator, and/or the Director.

Authority of School Personnel:

Any individual who acts as follows may be directed to leave the school premises by any school administrator, including the Director, and school security personnel. If the person refuses to leave the premises as directed, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement personnel to take such action as is deemed necessary:

- Disrupts or threatens to disrupt school operations
- Threatens or attempts to do or does physical harm to school personnel, students or others lawfully on school premises
- Threatens the health or safety of students, school personnel, or others lawfully on school premises
- Fails to follow campus / public / private way traffic and safety directives
- Intentionally causes damage to school property or the property of others lawfully on school premises
- Uses loud or offensive language
- Comes onto school premises without authorization; or
- Engages in unauthorized audio/videotaping or still photography.

If there is a threat of harm to student(s) or school personnel, the school may issue an Order of No Trespass prohibiting the individual making said threat from entering on school property**.**

Authority to Deal with Persons who are Verbally Abusive:

- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a loud demanding, insulting and/or demeaning manner, the employee to whom the remarks are addressed shall calmly and politely warn the speaker to communicate civilly.
- If the verbal abuse continues, the employee may, after giving appropriate notice to the speaker, terminate the meeting, conference, or telephone conversation.
- If the meeting or conference is on school premises, any employee may request that an administrator or other authorized person direct the speaker to promptly leave the premises.
- If the person refuses to leave, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement personnel to take such action as is deemed necessary. If the employee is threatened with personal harm, he or she may contact law enforcement.

Should an individual persist in violating the terms of this policy, the school may limit and restrict the methods of communication that may be used by said individual.

Safe and Secure Building Policy

To maintain safe and secure school buildings and grounds, SICS requires that all visitors report to the Security Officers or receptionist in the respective lobby to secure guest identification badges. All visitors must properly wear to display guest credentials for all school appointments/visits. All visitors are required to legibly print their names, their arrival time, their departure time and their destination when signing into the building. Visitors must be informed before receiving directions to their destinations.

- All District employees, students, parents, and visitors by entering onto SICS property impliedly consentto videotaping for safety and security purposes.
- Impromptu parent visits for faculty conferencing are discouraged.
- Any or all audio/videotaping or still photography must be pre-approved by administration.
- Cafeteria visits by parents with food from outside vendors for their children are also discouraged.
- All parents/guardians are directed to drop off all students in respective school lobby areas, and refrain from walking students to their rooms or cafeterias.
- All service animals must be appropriately secured with a leash.

Visitation privileges may be limited or revoked for any reason at the discretion of the School Director or designee. Persons trespassing upon school properties will be reported to the Springfield Police Department.

Video Surveillance

It is the policy of SICS to utilize video surveillance on school property to promote the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff and lawful visitors, to deter theft, vandalism, and other negative behavior, to safeguard school buildings, grounds, and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals on school property.

All students, parents, and visitors by entering onto SICS property impliedly consent to videotaping for safety and security purposes.

Requests by parent(s) and/or students to view a video recording must be in writing to the Director. The

The Director’s decision to honor or deny the request is not appealable.

Personal Belongings

The school will attempt to create an environment which will prevent personal items from being lost or stolen. However, SICS cannot be responsible for lost or stolen property. Students bring personal belongings at their own risk.

The best protection against loss or theft is to clearly mark all clothing and equipment with the student's name. There is a "Lost and Found" box located in the Student Leaders Organization room and in the Primary building lobby.

Students may not wear any headwear or accessories that obscures the face, ears and/or full head. The following items may not be brought to school:

- Cameras, recording devices, CD players, I Pods, MP3 players or electronic games
- Playing /trading cards
- Laser pointers
- Toys
- Skateboards
- Athletic equipment other than for school athletic teams
- Wallet chains
- Tobacco products
- Electronic cigarettes/ Vaporizers or related paraphernalia
- Powdered caffeine
- Hover Boards
- Knives and other dangerous weapons or materials or toys that resemble these items
- Alcohol / Controlled Substances

Prohibited articles/property will be confiscated by school administrators and will require parental pickup for the first offense. Subsequent offenses may result in the school keeping prohibited item for an extended period. After a reasonable period, unclaimed property will be disposed of or donated to charity.

Students found in possession of prohibited items may be subject to discipline including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in academic assignments or assessments. Students who conspire with other students to cheat (ex. stealing exams, providing term papers, etc.) will be subject to school discipline.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized use of aids such as but not limited to notes, text, the Internet, artificial intelligence, chatbots, cell phones, etc. to complete an academic assignment

- Copying from another student's current or past academic work
- Unauthorized communication during an examination
- Storing notes on paper, or in a portable electronic device for use during an assessment or examination

Plagiarism is taking someone else's work, ideas, writings, etc. and passing them off as one's own without attribution. Any assignment that contains even a small portion that has been plagiarized will be a violation of the code of conduct.

The following sources require citation:

- Word-for-word quotations from a source
- Paraphrasing (using the ideas of others in your own words)
- Unusual or controversial facts not widely recognized
- Audio, video, digital, or live exchanges of ideas, dialogue, or information
- Charts, diagrams, graphics, and images

Misuse of Artificial Intelligence – Students should check with their teachers before using AI for coursework. Students must follow these guidelines for acceptable use of AI:

- Give credit to AI tools (ie; ChatGPT, OpenAI, PhotoMath etc) whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations.
- When using AI tools (ie; ChatGPT, OpenAI, PhotoMath etc) on assignments, add an appendix showing
    (a) the entire exchange, highlighting the most relevant sections;
    (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used (e.g. ChatGPT private subscription version or DALL-E free version),
    (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, turns of phrase, elements of text, long stretches of text, lines of argument, pieces of evidence, maps of conceptual territory, illustrations of key concepts, etc.);
    (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to handle mounting stress, to clarify prose, to translate text, to experiment for fun, etc.).
- AI tools are not to be used during in-class examinations or assignments, unless explicitly permitted and instructed.
- Teachers may use AI detection software on assignments.

Any form of cheating or plagiarism is an act of dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. All parties involved will be found in violation of the student code of conduct and are subject to disciplinary action. Students who are found to be in violation of the code of conduct for cheating or plagiarism will face the following consequences:

Telephone Use/Student Messages

Telephone messages will only be delivered through the respective administrative offices from a parent to a student on an emergency basis. Please remember that SICS grade level offices serve

more than 1500 students, and students should make certain that they have all necessary instructions before leaving for school. Parents should only telephone with messages for students on an emergency basis. With administrative permission, students may use the security desk telephones to make a telephone call during school hours. If a student has an emergency, he or she may report to the front office where a staff person will assist the student.

Cell Phone Policy Grades K-5

Cell phones, smart watches, and Bluetooth devices may not be used during classes. If a student must have a cell phone, it must remain in their backpack or locker – not in clothing pockets – TURNED OFF while in class. Texting and videotaping are not permitted anytime during the school day. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in confiscation of the phone. The cell phone may be retrieved by the student at the end of the academic day for the first violation. The parent must retrieve the phone for a second or subsequent violation of this policy.

This policy is in effect throughout the entire academic day. Communication devices may be used at the conclusion of the academic day to coordinate transportation and may be used during interscholastic athletic activities as directed by the coach or activity supervisor. The use of any of these devices for videotaping or recording is strictly forbidden at all times and violation of this may be grounds for legal action.

Emergency requests to use a phone or cell phone during the academic day will be screened and the conversation monitored.

Cell-Phone Policy Grades 6-12

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) recognizes the need for students and families to have access to reliable communication to ensure their students safety during the school day. With administrative permission, students may use the security desk telephones to make a telephone call during school hours. If a student has an emergency, he or she may report to the front office where a staff person will assist the student.

To encourage maximum time-on-learning and academic engagement, **our school will be a phone-free space to improve teaching and learning**. Yondr *pouches* will be provided to all students to support this goal.

Cell phones <u>will not</u> be used during the school day. Every student will be assigned a personal Yondr *Pouch*. While the Yondr Pouch is considered school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

Daily Process

As students **arrive to school**, they will:

- Turn their phone off
- Place their phone inside their *Pouch* and secure it in front of school staff.
- Store their *Pouch* in their backpack or locker for the day.

At the end of the day, students will open their *Pouch*, remove their phone, and put their *Pouch* in their backpack. Students must bring their *Pouch* to school with them each day.

*Students arriving late or leaving early will *pouch*/un*pouch* their phones in the **Main Office**.

Exceptions

With prior approval administrators may allow cell phone usage for class projects.
This policy is in effect throughout the entire academic day. Communication devices may be used at the conclusion of the academic day to coordinate transportation and may be used during interscholastic athletic activities as directed by the coach or activity supervisor.

Irresponsible cellular phone usage such as but not limited to filming or taking pictures of students or staff, sharing videos or photographs of students or staff, or recording students or staff is prohibited and may result in legal consequences. These actions may also result in school consequences including external suspensions.

VIOLATIONS

Using Phone or burner phone during school

- **First Infraction:** Phone taken, returned at the end of the day. After-School Detention owed within 48 hours.
- **Second Infraction:** Phone taken, returned at the end of the day. Saturday Academy owed (upcoming Saturday.)
- **Third Infraction/Each Subsequent Infraction:** Parent/Guardian pick up of phone. Saturday Academy owed (upcoming Saturday.)

Pouch* damage / lost *Pouch

If a student damages their *Pouch*, administration will collect the phone/*Pouch* and call home to notify parents or guardians. Students will need to do community service and/or pay $5.00 for a replacement *Pouch.*

Forgotten Pouch

If a student forgets their Pouch, **their phone will be collected, and admin will call home to remind the parent of the policy**. The phone will be returned to the student at dismissal.

If a student consistently forgets their *Pouch*, it is considered lost. **Refer to the lost Pouch policy above**.\

Bathroom Policy

Except in cases of emergency, students may not use the bathroom during the first twenty (20) minutes of class or during the two (2) or three (3) minute transition between classes. Only one student per class may visit the bathroom at the same time. All students in the upper and lower schools must sign in and out of their classrooms.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §5, all students will be provided with access to bathroom facilities consistent with the student's gender identity.

Attendance Policy

Massachusetts General Laws and SICS require children to attend school regularly from the ages of six to sixteen. The law provides various penalties for persons who obstruct or prevent children from attending school. Parents are subject to court action and a fine should their child be absent in excess of seven-day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within a six-month period. Parents and guardians are essential to good attendance and are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly and on time.

SICS expects students to attend school daily in order to receive the maximum benefits of instruction. Students who regularly miss school may be at risk for other problems.

SICS does not follow an open campus policy. Therefore, all students are expected to remain on campus for their entire school day.

Definitions

School absence: To be considered present in school, a student must be in attendance for a minimum of four (4) academic periods in each school day.

Class absence: To be considered present in class, a student must be in attendance for more than twenty-five (25) minutes in each class period.

All absences will be counted and considered accruing toward SICS academic consequences and truancy as defined in the Massachusetts statutes.

It is the responsibility of parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students, whenever possible, to make personal appointments that do not conflict with regularly scheduled classes or school activities. SICS will not tolerate “skip days.” Absence from school “with parent permission” is not an acceptable excuse and disciplinary action will occur. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Attendance Procedures

Attendance will be taken in each homeroom or 1st period class pursuant to the respective bell schedules. Students MUST report to and be present in their homeroom to be recorded as present in school and to avoid being recorded as absent. Before reporting to their respective classrooms, all tardy students must register their arrival time in the logbooks in the respective upper school and lower school offices/lobbies.

Any student leaving the building for early dismissal must also register their departure time in the front office logbook. Paper log books will be kept by the respective upper and lower school offices for 1 year following the distribution of end of year report cards. Digital records will be kept for no less than 7 years.

At the start of each individual class, teachers or instructional assistants/paraprofessionals will take classroom attendance. Records of missed classes, due to absences, late arrivals, early dismissals or disciplinary referrals, will be referenced for course failure deliberations and/or disciplinary consequences.

Springfield International Charter School strives to take accurate attendance each day and has internal checks and balances to try and ensure as such. In addition to internal checks and balances, SICS sends out a daily robocall/text message/email to parents/guardians when their student has been marked absent to school. Should a student accidentally be marked absent, parents/guardians should call SICS immediately after receiving the robocall/text message/email so the correction can be made. If an absence error is noticed more than 48 hours following the infraction K - 8 parents must fill out the attendance correction form (see below) and return it to SICS. SICS will then investigate and make a decision on changing/updating the attendance record. After 2 weeks (10 academic days) the absence/tardy will not be changed and will be part of the student's permanent record. For grades 9 - 12, the student must have their homeroom and class teachers fill out the Grade 9 - 12 Attendance Correction Form (see below) and return it to the 9 - 12 attendance coordinator.

Grade Kindergarten - 8th Grade Attendance Correction Form

Student Name: ___Grade:_____

Date(s)to be corrected	Period (if applicable)	Student was present but tardy	Student was present

Note: Absences MUST be corrected within TWO weeks of the date in question. After two weeks the absence/tardy will not be changed.

Grade 9 - 12 Attendance Correction Form

_____was in school/my class on _____

Teacher Name & Class	**Teacher Signature**
Homeroom Teacher (required or the student will be marked tardy):	
1st period:	
2nd period:	
3rd period:	
4th Period:	
5th Period:	
6th Period:	
7th Period:	

8th Period:	

Note: Absences MUST be corrected within TWO weeks of the date in question. After two weeks the absence/tardy will not be changed.

Attendance Intervention Measures and Consequences

Children Requiring Assistance (CRA) report to the Trial Court and/or a 51A report of Educational Neglect to the Department of Children and Families may be filed for students who are chronically absent and/or tardy and whose parents have failed to fulfill their responsibility to ensure their child's attendance in school.

Students 16 years of age or older who are absent from school without authorization for ten (10) consecutive school days or more are subject to disenrollment. If a student is absent without excuse for ten (10) consecutive school days, a notice will be sent to the parents and student within five (5) school days of the student's 10th consecutive unexcused absence offering at least two (2) times for an exit interview between the Director, or a designee, the student and the parent or guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving or being administratively unenrolled from the School. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within ten (10) days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and no extension shall be for longer than fourteen (14) days. The Director, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent or guardian if the Director/designee makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. During the exit interview, the student and parents will be given information about the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school, the benefits of earning a high school diploma and the alternative education programs and services available to the student. M.G.L. c. 76, §18.

Excessive Absenteeism-Term Failure/Appeal Procedure K-8

A student who accumulates (6) or more unexcused absences in a given semester may fail any

course/courses. Parents will be informed of the student's course failure due to absenteeism and will be given the opportunity to appeal the determination of the School.

The appeal shall be made in writing to the School Director or designee within five (5) school days of receipt of the parental notice. Upon receipt of the written appeal and documentation, a meeting shall be promptly held with parents, appropriate school administrators, counselors and faculty. A final decision on an appeal with the reasons will be given to the student and parent/guardian.

The following reasons for absences, tardiness, and early dismissals may be excusable and considered as part of the appeal process:

- A doctor, school nurse, or independent medical practitioner-verified illness, injury or disability that prevents the student from attending school.
- A death in the immediate family.
- Court appearances, DYS confinement.
- Religious Observance.
- Displacement by natural disasters.
- School sponsored/approved activities (including field trips, athletic contests, etc.).
- Suspension from school.

Family vacations are not considered to be excused absences. Although appreciated, a parent note, phone call or email to notify an absence are not considered an excused absence.

Student work completed at home may receive a different credit/grade than work completed in the classroom. Therefore, requests for extra class work for vacation are not the equivalent of attending school. Requests for class work for vacations burden teachers unnecessarily; therefore, depending on the time frame, they may not be honored.

Chronic Absenteeism Policy for High School

In high school (Grades 9-12), students earn course credits toward graduation based on both attendance and grades. A high school student will fail to earn course credit if they do not meet expectations in either category.
In regards to attendance, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences.
For each Academic Marking Period, any student who is absent 4 or more academic days has lost academic credit in each class of the respective Marking Period.
DESE categorizes a student as chronically absent if they have missed 10% of all possible school days (excused or unexcused) at any point of the academic year (example on Day 50, any student who has missed 5 or more total days for any reason is Chronically Absent). Once a student is considered chronically absent they will need to attend Attendance Recovery Academy (see below)
Please note: Schools are able to retain students for chronic absenteeism.

SICS Attendance Recovery Policy

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) has implemented the 90% attendance policy that is

aligned with DESE protocols and requires students to maintain an attendance rate of 90% or higher (having no more than 1 absence for every 10 academic days attended) at all points of the school year, Students who fail to meet this threshold, for any reason, are required to attend Attendance Recovery Academy which takes place on Saturdays and school vacations (non-academic days) from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Every time a student completes 4 consecutive hours of Attendance Recovery Academy, they will be credited one day back toward their attendance. This policy is based on research that showcases the strong relationship between attendance and academic achievement, where students who are absent for 10% or more of school for ANY reason are more likely to fall behind in their academics and risk retention. As such SICS believes that by implementing this attendance policy all students will be allowed to reach their full potential. The Attendance Recovery Academy is a program designed to help students make up for missed school days and get back on track with their studies.

While this program is a valuable resource for students who need to improve their attendance, and potentially grades, it's important to note that it is NOT a substitute for regular school attendance. Furthermore, SICS encourages all students to make every effort to attend school every day. The SICS Attendance Recovery Academy should not be used in advance of family vacations planned during the academic year. By following the 90% Attendance Policy, students can set themselves up for success both in school and beyond.

Attendance Consequences

High school students who have missed 4 or more days/academic classes and/or do not maintain an attendance rate of 90% or better and/or have not attended SICS Attendance Recovery Academy to earn back time will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. This includes, but is not limited to: athletic practices and competitions, attending school sponsored activities as a spectator, field trips, pep rallies, open campus privileges, or any school sponsored club activity and more.

At the end of the academic year, students who have missed 10% or more school days and have not recovered them through Attendance Recovery Academy will need to earn their time back through successful completion of summer programs to advance to the next grade.

Seniors will not be able to graduate and participate in end of year activities on time if they end the year chronically absent.

Dismissal Policy Procedures

For safety and security purposes, SICS requires that parents/legal guardians make all requests for early dismissal of students in writing on the day of such request. Parents/ guardians are discouraged from picking up their children for early dismissal without prior written notice. Phone calls to dismiss students early will not be honored except for an emergency.

All parental requests for early dismissal of Lower School students must be given to the homeroom teacher for administrative review and processing. Lower School students will receive an approved dismissal request from their homeroom teacher. Upper School students must bring parental notes, when they arrive at school, to the main office for processing. A contact number should be provided on all notes for verification.

All early dismissal students must record their dismissal time in the main administrative office logbook.

SICS requires that parents/ guardians provide written notice if other individuals are providing for their child's early
dismissal and transportation. Those individuals will be **required to show identification**.

Walkers and students are to be picked up by parents outside the main building at respective dismissal times for the Upper and the Lower Schools.
We will not disturb any class for early dismissal requests during examination and testing times. These testing periods include but are not limited to MCAS Testing, AP Testing, and final exams.

Tardy to School - High School

Beginning on the first day of the school year, students who are tardy unexcused to school will be assigned a lunch detention to be served that day.
If a student fails to serve their lunch detention that day, they will be assigned and after school detention.

Once a student is tardy to school a 5th time, they will need to make up the day through our Attendance Recovery Academy program which runs on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (even if they have served previous detentions).

As with all infractions, students who have unserved consequences cannot participate in all extracurricular activities. This includes, but is not limited to: athletic practices and competitions, attending school sponsored activities as a spectator, field trips, pep rallies, open campus privileges, or any school sponsored club activity and more.

Transportation Policies

Campus / Neighborhood Traffic Control:

To control vehicular traffic and to provide for student and neighborhood safety, visitors must follow posted speed limits and park in the designated campus parking areas. Violators of neighborhood/campus traffic control or parking directives will be reported to the Springfield Police Department.

For the safety and welfare of our students and staff, parents are reminded that Massachusetts law prohibits the idling of motor vehicles on school grounds in excess of five (5) minutes. M.G.L. c.90, §16B. Violators will be subject to a fine.

Bus transportation is provided by the Springfield Public Schools Transportation Department, at 413-787-7150. The company contracted to provide all transportation services is First Student at 413-736-6781.

Due to transportation budget issues and bus safety concerns, all SICS school transportation services will be TO and FROM the DESIGNATED AM/ PM bus stop which is closest to the student's permanent residence.

NO BUS CHANGE REQUESTS WILL BE PERMITTED AT ANY TIME FOR ANY PURPOSE.

A change of bus assignment will occur only if a family changes its residence.

NO STUDENTS ARE TO BOARD ANOTHER SCHOOL BUS FOR ANY ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION PURPOSE. VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUS TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEDGES.

Students may get off only at their scheduled afternoon bus stop or at an established

afternoon daycare facility on a designated bus route. Parents with work commitments should contact the SICS Extended Day Program if they require afternoon daycare services. Upper School students staying after school for any reason are not permitted to ride the Lower School buses.

An adult must meet all kindergarten students at designated afternoon bus stops. If an adult is not present to meet the kindergarten student, the child will be returned to Rebecca M. Johnson School at 55 Catherine Street after completion of the full bus route. All returning students will be supervised at this location. Identification credentials must be presented at this location for student pick-up. Students must be secured before 6:00 PM or the Springfield Police and Department of Children and Families will be contacted. Information about such students at Rebecca Johnson School can be secured by telephoning 413-787-6859.

Riding the bus is a privilege and demands HIGH STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR. If bus rules are broken, students may be removed from the bus and progressive disciplinary consequences will occur.

In all bus suspensions, parents are responsible for their child's morning and afternoon transportation to and from school. Chronic disregard for bus rules will prompt indefinite suspension from bus privileges.

Lower school students removed from the bus will be placed in the Extended Day Program. Parents will be charged the appropriate fee for supervision. A parent/guardian must pick up these students before 6PM or the Department of Children and Families and the Springfield Police Department will be notified.

- Students must fully cooperate with bus drivers/monitors and follow all adult instructions
- Students must comply with all school rules while on the school bus and at school bus stops
- Stand back until the bus door opens, then board single file
- Take your seat promptly and REMAIN seated
- Do not expose any parts of your body outside the windows
- Do not throw objects from or at the bus
- Do not smoke, use alcohol, or use drugs on the bus
- No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus
- Do not push, fight, harass, or engage in "horseplay"
- Cell phones, CD/iPod players, sporting equipment (i.e. footballs, basketballs), laser pointers, or electronic game articles will not be permitted on the bus
- Vandalism to bus property will result in suspension of privileges and financial restitution
- Before leaving your seat to exit the bus, the bus must come to a complete stop

- After exiting the bus, exercise caution when crossing the street

Student Parking Policy

The school parking lot is a private lot open to the public. Consequently, the school is not responsible for damage done to personal property and/or vehicles when parked in the lot. Parking permits are a privilege, not a right. Parking privileges will be honored only to those students who are academically and behaviorally accepted. Parking permits may be revoked at any time at the discretion of our Director of Operations. SICS students in grades 11 and 12 have the privilege to park on a permit basis only. The number of permits is based upon the number of available student parking spaces and are distributed on a space available basis, with seniors first followed by the juniors. An assembly will be held the first week of school with grades 11 and 12 and applications will be distributed at this time. Any car found parked on school property during the school day that is not registered will be towed at the owner's expense.

Driving Privileges

- Only Juniors and Seniors with valid, school-issued parking passes may park on campus.
- These students must park in assigned locations only and visibly display their parking pass at all times.
- To maintain this privilege, student drivers must be to school on time.
- Upon the 3rd Tardy to School infraction, a student driver loses their parking privilege for 2 weeks.
- Upon the 2nd infraction of a 3rd Tardy to School infraction, a student driver loses their parking privilege for a month.
- Any subsequent Tardy to School Infractions will result in a student's parking privileges being revoked for the remainder of the school year.
- Any student suspended for a drug or alcohol-related offense will have their parking privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year.
- Any student parking on campus without a valid and current parking pass will risk having their vehicle towed at the owners' expense.
- Irresponsible and unsafe driving on campus will result in loss of parking privileges and may result in suspension. Students are permitted to drive and park under the following conditions:

A student parking application must be obtained, completed with a copy of proof of insurance and returned to the main office.

- Students must present their student I.D., car registration, and a valid driver's license, to receive a parking application prior to a parking permit being submitted. During the year, any vehicle change must be reported to the main office. The parking permit must be displayed at all times. There are no exceptions.

- Students may not sell, loan, duplicate, or give their permit to any other student.
- Any student driving in a careless or negligent manner likely to endanger any person or property will be subject to criminal prosecution and/or loss of parking privilege.
- All vehicle accidents should be reported immediately to the Springfield Police Department, Traffic Division.
- SICS assumes no responsibility for the student's vehicle, including but not limited to, damages, theft, injuries, and vandalism.

Upon arrival, students must enter the building immediately. Loitering or gathering in the parking lot will not be permitted. Students cannot return to their vehicles until dismissed from school for the day or have permission from the Director of Operations Office. Automobiles not registered, without a permit properly displayed, or parked in an
improper area shall be towed at the owner's expense. Subsequent violations may result in loss of parking privileges.

11th and 12th grade students in good academic and behavioral standing will be eligible to apply for parking privileges on campus at the start of each academic year.

Students who are tardy to school for unexcused reasons more than 3 times per term will lose their parking permit for the remainder of the term. They will be eligible to reapply for parking privileges at the beginning of the next term.

Due to neighborhood and public safety concerns, the parking of any student motor vehicle on adjacent public or private ways is prohibited. Student motor vehicles are not allowed in the faculty/staff visitor parking lot.

Excessive speed or disregard of traffic signs in our neighborhood or on our campus will prompt the revocation of parking privileges. It is mandatory that student drivers strictly adhere to all city, neighborhood, and campus traffic and speed limit signs.

Uniform/Dress Code Requirements

General Uniform Policy: Students are required to meet and follow SICS uniform policy. Ultimately, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to carefully plan and monitor his/her child's attire prior to his/her arrival at school each morning. Should your child fail to meet any of the uniform standards below, a phone call shall be made home to review the uniform policy and to make arrangements for the appropriate uniform item(s) to be delivered to school. Students who fail to meet the uniform policy shall be subjected to disciplinary action.

The school has a uniform/dress code policy which requires students to always arrive at school in uniform. The most important element of the uniform/dress code policy is student compliance and parental support.

- **Shirts-Grades K-12**

    a) Long or short sleeved solid white, gray, black or maroon collared shirts without logo/lettering (school branding permitted)

    b) Visible undergarments/tee shirts must be white without lettering

- **Sweaters/Sweatshirts-Grades K-12**

    a) Solid white, gray, black or maroon sweaters/sweatshirts without a hood and without logo/lettering (school branding permitted)

    b) Solid white, gray or maroon collared shirt, MUST be worn under a sweater or sweatshirt

- **Pants/Shorts-Grades K-12**

    a) Khaki/Tan or black colored, no jean material

    b) Knee length shorts

    c) Leggings, pajama pants, athletic pants and jeans are not permitted

- **Jumpers/Dresses/Skirts-Grades K-12**
    a) Knee length, khaki (tan) maroon or black colored only

- **Legwear Grades 6-12**
    a) Solid maroon, gray, black or white tights/socks/nylons

    b) may only be worn under jumpers, dresses, skirts or shorts

- **Footwear-Grades K-12**

    a) Closed toed/closed-heel shoes only (no sandals, flip-flops, slides, slippers, moccasins). Crocs are permitted

    b) No high heels are allowed

******Grades K-5 ONLY******

- Gym Day-solid gray sweatpants may be worn.

******Middle School/High School athletes ONLY******

- Sport issued collared polo shirts, jackets & senior Booster Club jackets (white, gray & maroon with team/school logo only)
- White, gray, black or maroon shirt MUST be worn under the team issued jacket
- Visible undergarments/tee shirts must be white without lettering
- No hooded sweatshirts

******School academic and club sanctioned shirts******

- School issued white, gray, black or maroon polo shirt with club/school logo only
- Visible undergarments/tee shirts must be white without lettering

PERSONAL DRESS AND APPEARANCE WHICH violates reasonable standards of health, safety and cleanliness or IS VULGAR, TATTERED, RIPPED OR PLAINLY OFFENSIVE IS PROHIBITED.

Important Note:

If your student does not come to school wearing the proper uniform, the student will be requested to remedy the noncompliance immediately. Parents/guardians will also be contacted to bring proper uniform clothing to the school.

Students awaiting proper uniform clothing will remain in the In-House Alternative Room and will be subject to Attendance Policies/Consequences.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Uniform must cover a student's chest, mid-section and buttocks
- Outerwear (vests, jackets, coats) are not to be worn in the classroom. All exterior wear clothing is to be secured in student lockers.
- All headwear articles including, but not limited to scarves, headbands, bandanas, hats or visors of any kind are NOT allowed inside the building other than for religious or medical purposes.
- Tattoos or body markings which are deemed offensive, vulgar, gang-related or which disrupt or interfere with the educational process are prohibited and must be covered while at school.
- Personal accessories (e.g. jewelry, hair tinting, styling, or body piercing) which are offensive, vulgar, proves to be disruptive to the academic environment, or which may endanger the child's safety are prohibited.

Violations of the uniform/dress code policy may result in disciplinary action and consequences.

If your student does not come to school wearing the proper uniform, student will be requested to remedy the noncompliance immediately. A loan of uniform clothing may be offered from the limited supply of clean, surplus uniform items. The loaned clothing should be laundered and returned to the school the following day.

If properly sized clothing is refused or unavailable for loan to students, then parents/guardians will be contacted to bring proper uniform clothing to the school. Students awaiting proper uniform clothing will remain in the In-House Alternative Room and will be subject to Attendance policies/consequences.

Chronic disregard for the uniform/dress code policy will result in progressive disciplinary consequences. THE FINAL DECISION ON ANY SPECIFIC ARTICLE OF CLOTHING WILL BE MADE BY THE PRINCIPAL.

On designated Theme Days, students have the option of wearing clothing designated to the theme or the school uniform.

The following clothing and personal accessories are not allowed on Theme Days:

- Tank tops
- Skirts or shorts shorter than 3 inches above the knee or with slits 3 inches above the knee.
- Bandanas, visors, slippers or pajama-style pants.

- Flip flops and shower sandals

Bicycle Policy

Students under the age of 18 years must submit a written permission document from a parent/guardian to ride a bicycle to school. These permission slips must be submitted to the school office.

A student must be in grade 6 or above to ride a bicycle to school. Bicycles must be stored in the bicycle rack at the school and secured to the rack with a lock. Students ride their bicycles to SICS at their own risk. The school is not responsible for any injuries incurred or any damage to or theft of bicycles while on the school property.

If a student fails to observe responsible bicycle riding standards, he/she may face the loss of this privilege to ride a bicycle to school. Since the Commonwealth of Massachusetts adopted a mandatory bicycle helmet law in May 1994, all students are required to wear a helmet on rides to and from school.

Student Employment

Employment of students under the age of 18 is restricted to before and after school and days when school is not in session. Students between the ages of 12 and 16 may sell or distribute newspapers. Students ages 14 and 15 with working permits may engage in certain non-hazardous work but may not work before 6:30AM or after 6PM. Students 16 and 17 years of age may engage in certain specified non-hazardous work, but they may not work before 6AM or after 10PM except if employed in restaurants until, but not after, 12:00 in the evening on Fridays and Saturdays and during school vacation periods.

Work permits may be obtained through the guidance office. Whenever possible, SICS will offer a limited number of students the opportunity for employment in their educational setting.

Student Speech

Students have a right to express their thoughts and opinions at reasonable times and places. The SICS expressly reserves the right to exercise pre-publication review of both school sponsored publications and speech, and non-school sponsored publications and speech when such publication or speech is

disseminated in or through our school district. SICS also reserves the right to impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of dissemination of any type of publication or speech which is disseminated through the school district.

School sponsored publications include but are not limited to student newspapers, periodicals, yearbooks, or theatrical productions, which the school lends its resources or name or publication or speech which is included as part of the curriculum or other activities which the public might perceive to bear the imprimatur of SICS.

With regard to non-school sponsored publications or speech which is sought to be disseminated through the SICS, approval of the administration must be obtained prior to dissemination.

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the administration of a non-school sponsored publication, the student may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees within five (5) school days after the date of the administrative decision. The student shall have the right to appeal and to present the student's case, supported by relevant witnesses and material, as to why the distribution of the publication is appropriate.

Students, parents, or legal guardians should immediately report to administrators any incident of improper fraternization or inappropriate postings, texts or e-contacts by staff members to students or students towards staff.

Privacy Rights, Searches, and School Property Students and Student Property

Students are subject to searches of their person and personal property, including vehicles parked on school grounds, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will reveal evidence of the student's violation of school rules and/or applicable laws.

If there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search of a student's cell phone or electronic devices will lead to evidence that a student has violated the law or code of conduct, administrators may search the contents of said device(s).

If a search of an electronic device is found to contain evidence pertinent to a school-based investigation, the school administration has the sole discretion to hold on to the device, download the evidence, notify the police, and/or give the device to law enforcement officials.

School Property

Student lockers, desks, computers, etc. are for the use of students but remain the property of SICS. The school exercises exclusive control over school property, and a student should not have an expectation of privacy regarding items placed in school property. School property shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to a search for any reason at all times.

SICS ADVISES ALL STUDENTS THAT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS INTEND TO CONDUCT PERIODIC, UNANNOUNCED LOCKER, BACKPACK, AND DESK INSPECTIONS TO ENSURE CLEANLINESS, SAFETY, ADHERENCE TO FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS, AND ADHERENCE TO SCHOOL RULES.

Use of Student Photographs

Children's photographs may be taken, reproduced, and used for various purposes, including but not limited to temporary student records, school publications, yearbooks, classroom pictures, television news, newspapers, periodicals, and school functions, etc. With the exception of photographs for individual student records, if a parent/guardian does not want their child's photograph and/or picture used in any manner the school must be notified in writing within the first twenty (20) days of the school year.

Student Conduct

The following matters are taken very seriously. Rules apply anywhere on school grounds, on school transportation, at any off-site school-sponsored functions, and while students are

participating in remote (online) instruction. Consequences for violating rules are outlined in the next chapter, “Code of Conduct.”

Classroom Expectations:

- Students are expected to be respectful of teachers, classmates, and themselves at all times. Followingthe classroom rules will help create an environment intended to maximize learning. Each teacher will discuss classroom policies and expectations.
- Be Safe
- Act Responsibly
- Respect Everyone
- Kindness Matters
- Show Effort
- No violence or threats of violence will be tolerated at the school. Violent or destructive acts, or threatsto commit such acts, may result in severe consequences as determined by the Administration.
- Discriminatory slurs, harassment, verbally abusive language, or bullying will not be tolerated.
- Dishonesty (such as cheating, plagiarism, and stealing) will be handled with severe consequences.
- **Plagiarism**—taking ideas or writings from another person and offering them as original ideas, will not be tolerated. Repeated offenses of academic dishonesty shall prompt full scrutiny of all student grades and may result in re-testing of previous examinations.
- Students are expected to be in homeroom and in class on time. Repeated tardiness will prompt disciplinary consequences.
- Students must be fully prepared for all classes. Repeated instances of unpreparedness will prompt disciplinary consequences.
- All lockers should remain tidy, and able to be closed for proper storage of school materials, and personal belongings. Only unframed, collapsible book bags will be permitted.
- Littering of any kind is not allowed.
- Food and beverages are restricted to the cafeteria.
- Older students are expected to model good behavior for younger students.

No tobacco products or paraphernalia are allowed on school property. Alcohol and chemical substances are strictly forbidden. Students in possession of illegal items will be subject to suspension and possible expulsion from school. Students found under the influence of alcohol or chemical substances while at school must be picked up by parents or guardians and will be subject to suspension and/or possible expulsion. Law enforcement officials may also be notified.

Hallway Expectations

As in every part of the SICS, students are expected to behave in the halls. Everyone in the School should make an effort to control noise. Students should not shout or slam lockers. When classes are in session, students, teachers, and parents passing in the hallway are expected to keep their voices low.

Running in the hallway is prohibited. Safety for all students is important at school. Students are asked to stay to the right when traveling through the hallways or on the stairs.

Student Locker Policy

Students will be issued assigned lockers, with or without school issue combination locks, at the opening of the school. No sharing or swapping of assigned lockers is permitted. All student lockers must remain tidy and be able to be closed for proper storage of materials and belongings. For safety issues, only unframed, collapsible book bags will be permitted to be stored in school lockers.

For security purposes, no outside locks will be permitted at any time.

The Student Success Coordinator and Principal will assign school issue combination locks to students in grades 6-12 for their lockers. Lost locks can be replaced for a $5.00 fee. At all times, student locks must remain affixed to school lockers.

Disciplinary Procedures

Safe and Secure Environment Policy

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment, SICS reserves the right to immediately remove a student from the school property on an emergency/immediate basis when the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school. All such emergency removals shall be implemented in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations including, but not limited to, 603 CMR 53.07.

Office referrals An “office referral” is the consequence for inappropriate behavior. Office referrals document behavior that is a violation of school rules and provides information after the matter has been referred to the Student Success Interventionist (SSI), Assistant Principal and/or Principal. If a student is disrupting a class, teachers may provide one warning before issuing an office referral. If the student continues to misbehave, he or she will be given an office referral and is sent to the SSI and Principal’s office for a review of the referral with the student. Parental contact and notice of appropriate disciplinary action is then taken. If a student commits a serious offense (e.g., physical violence), office referrals can be issued immediately without going through the warning process.

Students who receive two (2) or more academic, disciplinary or bus behavior referrals within twenty (20) school days before the field trip may not be permitted to attend. (i.e., field day, talent show, dance, High Meadows may not be permitted to attend.) In the case of an educationally based field trip, a child may be permitted to attend if the parent assumes full transportation and personal chaperone responsibilities for their child. Siblings of school children will not be permitted to accompany them as chaperones on school field trips.

After-school Detention

After-school detention is given to students in grades 1 – 12 for a variety of disciplinary reasons. When a student receives after-school detention, the SSI and Principal contacts the student's

parent/guardian to inform them of the detention. Once the student receives notification of a detention, attendance at school events or participation in extracurricular activities is prohibited until the detention is served.

Detention for Grades 1–5 is from 4-5 PM and Grades 6-12 is from 2:30 - 3:30 PM. Failure to attend after school detention assignments will result in an automatic Saturday detention. Consistent failure to attend detention assignments may result in external suspension from school. It is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up their child immediately following the detention. Students with detention may not take a later bus departing from the school or remain unsupervised in the school or on the campus property.

Saturday Detention

Saturday detention is held each Saturday from 9 AM to noon. Students are to report promptly and dress in the school uniform. Students are also expected to possess academic materials for their study period.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for student transportation to and from Saturday detention. If parents cannot arrange transportation, PVTA transportation is available. Tardiness will result in additional school detention. Those students who are later than 30 minutes will receive an additional Saturday Academy assignment. If students are ill, or if an emergency arises, students may reschedule. The student should bring a note from the parent or guardian explaining the circumstances when he or she returns to school.

Failure to attend Saturday detention will result in an automatic assignment of 2 consecutive Saturday detentions.

Students with unfulfilled detention and /or Saturday detention assignments may not attend school events or participate in extracurricular activity. Parents/Guardians and students who fail to acknowledge detention obligations shall be reported to the School Director or designee for administrative and parental conferencing. Students with outstanding detentions will not participate in end-of-year activities.

Consistent failure to attend detention assignments may result in external suspension from school.

Code of Conduct

Purpose

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive school environment where all students can learn and thrive. The Code of Conduct establishes clear expectations for student behavior and outlines disciplinary procedures in alignment with Massachusetts law and DESE regulations.

SICS emphasizes prevention**,** positive behavioral supports**,** and restorative practices to promote student growth and accountability.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Follow school rules and staff directions
- Attend school regularly and be prepared for learning
- Maintain a safe and orderly environment
- Use appropriate language and behavior at all times

Prohibited Conduct

Students may be subject to disciplinary action for behavior, including, but not limited to:

- Violence**,** threats, or assault
- Possession or use of weapons
- Use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol
- Bullying, harassment, *or* discrimination
- Disruption of the educational environment
- Destruction of property
- Violations of civil rights
- Idling of motor vehicles on school grounds

Disciplinary Procedures

Disciplinary responses will be fair, consistent, and aligned with M.G.L. c.71 §§37H, 37H%, and 37H3⁄44.

Students have the right to:

- Notice of the charges
- An opportunity to respond to the allegations
- Parent/guardian notification
- Interpreter services, if needed; appeal rights, where applicable

Types of disciplinary actions include:

In-School Suspension: Removal from regular classroom activities but remaining in school, for up to 10 school days.

Short-Term Suspension: Removal from school for 10 school **days or** fewer.

- A hearing will be held with the principal or designee
- The student may explain the incident and present information
- The parent/guardian will be notified and may participate

Long-Term Suspension: Removal from school for more than 10 school days or a pattern of removals totaling more than 10 days.

To review the student record and evidence

- To be represented by counsel (at family expense)
- To present witnesses and evidence
- To cross-examine witnesses
- *To* request an audio recording of the hearing

Appeals Expulsion: Removal from school for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted by law.

Students and families may appeal long-term suspensions to the Director:

- A written appeal must be submitted within 5 calendar days (extensions may be granted)
- A hearing will be scheduled
- The Director's decision is final

All disciplinary actions are documented by the school.

Emergency Removal

A student may be removed from school immediately if their presence:

- Poses a danger to persons or property**,** or
- Causes a substantial disruption

Emergency removal:

- May not exceed 2 school days
- Requires immediate parent notification
- Must be followed by a hearing

Grounds for Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may result from behavior that:

- Threatens the safety of students or staff
- Disrupts the learning environment
- Violates school rules or expectations
- Infringes upon the rights of others, including civil rights

Serious offenses under Massachusetts law may include:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession or distribution of **controlled** substances
- Assault on school staff
- Felony charges or convictions

Notice and Hearing

Before suspension:

- The student and parent/guardian will receive oral and written notice of the charges
- Notice will be provided in English and the primary language of the home, when applicable
- The student will have the opportunity to present their version of events

Use of Alternative Remedies Prior to Suspension or Expulsion

Prior to imposing a long-term suspension or expulsion, the principal or designee will consider and document the use of alternative remedies, including**:**

- Restorative practices
- Mediation

- Counseling
- Behavioral interventions and supports
- Conflict resolution
- Family engagement strategies

The principal or designee shall determine whether the student's continued presence in school would pose:

- A specific, documentable concern regarding the infliction of serious bodily injury to another
- person**;** or
- A serious disruption to the educational environment

Students will not be suspended or expelled until alternative remedies have been considered and documented, unless immediate removal is necessary to maintain safety.

Continued Access to Education

Students who are suspended or removed from school will be provided the opportunity to:

- Make academic progress
- Access assignments and instruction
- Receive support to successfully return to school

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of any decision to change the placement of a student with a disability, the IEP Team will determine whether the conduct:

1. Was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to**,** the student's disability; or W
2. as the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP

If the behavior is a manifestation:

- The student will not be disciplined in the same manner as peers
- A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) will be conducted A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be developed or modified

- The student will return to their placement unless otherwise agreed

If the behavior is not a manifestation:

- The student may be disciplined similarly to peers
- The student will continue to receive services to:
    - Participate in the general curriculum
    - Progress toward IEP goals
    - Address the behavior

Parents/guardians will receive written notice and procedural safeguards no later than the date of the decision.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES)

A student with a disability may be placed in an IAES for up to **45** school days if the student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon
- Uses or possesses illegal drugs
- Sells or solicits controlled substances
- Inflicts serious bodily injury

During this time**,** the student will continue to receive general education curriculum access**,** IEP services and behavioral supports.

Students Not Yet Determined Eligible

A student not yet identified may be protected if the district had prior knowledge, including:

- Parent written concern
- Request for evaluation
- Staff documented concerns

Exceptions apply if evaluation/services were refused or eligibility was denied.

If an evaluation is requested during disciplinary action**,** an expedited evaluation will be conducted.

Equity in Discipline

Disciplinary practices at SICS are applied equitably and without discrimination. The school is committed to ensuring that no student is disciplined differently based on race, disability, gender, or other protected characteristics.

Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination

SICS prohibits discrimination, harassment or bullying, and retaliation based on:

- Race, color, or national origin
- Sex**,** gender identity, or sexual orientation
- Disability Religion

All students have equal access to school programs**,** services, and activities.

Students and families may report concerns to school staff *or* administration. All reports will be promptly investigated**,** and appropriate action will be taken.

The school maintains a designated Civil Rights/Title IX Coordinator. Contact information **is** available through the main office.

Retaliation against **any** individual who reports concerns is strictly prohibited.

School-Wide Education Services Plan

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L. **c**. 76, § **21**), Springfield International Charter School (SICS) maintains a School-Wide Education Services Plan to ensure that students who are suspended or expelled from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days continue to have access to educational services.

During any period of removal, students will be provided the opportunity **to** make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements through access to assignments, instruction**,** and other educational supports.

At the time a suspension *or* expulsion **is** imposed**,** the school will notify the student and parent/guardian**,** in writing and in the primary language of the home where applicable, of:

- The opportunity to receive educational services
- The specific services available to the student
- How to access those services
- A school contact who can provide additional information

If a student withdraws from the school during the period of suspension or expulsion, the district of residence or receiving school will be responsible for providing educational services in accordance with state law.

Documentation and Review

The school documents disciplinary actions, interventions, and supports. Data is reviewed to ensure consistency, effectiveness, and alignment with school expectations and legal requirements.

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PARENT'S AND STUDENT'S RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504, TITLES II, IV, VI, IX AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Parent's and Student's Rights Under Section 504, Titles II, IV, VI, IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) 's policy is to comply with all relevant provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Titles II, IV, VI, IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA). These laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, pregnancy, or disability in any program that receives federal funding.

Compliance Contacts: Cynthia Miller, Director of Special Services

Contact Information: Address: 160 Joan Street, Springfield, MA 01129 Phone: (413) 783-2600

Civil Rights Grievance Procedure:

The school has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Title II, Title IV, Title VI and Title IX, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reports or complaints alleging sexual harassment as Defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 shall not be subject to this grievance procedure and shall be addressed through SICS' separate Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

Title II states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in programs or activities" sponsored by a public entity.

Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts provides that no person shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participating in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

Section 901(a) of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits any educational program or activity from discriminating on the basis of sex.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities within the work and school setting. Section 504 is a federal civil rights statute.

Section 601 of Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

(Note: complaints that do not allege discriminatory conduct should be directed to the SSI and Principal)

CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

A. DEFINITIONS

A **"Grievance"** is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, SICS obligations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II, Title IV, VI, Title IX (discrimination), the Americans with Disabilities Act, and applicable state statutes and regulations prohibiting harassment and discrimination. An "Aggrieved Party" is a person or persons making the complaint.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable solutions to grievances, which may, from time to time, arise pursuant to Section 504, Title II, Title IV, and the ADA.

C. GENERAL

No aggrieved party will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or discrimination for registering a complaint or for assisting in the investigation of any alleged complaint within the context of this grievance procedure.

All documents, communications, and records dealing with the filing of a grievance will be kept confidential to the full extent provided by law.

Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by the Schools' Section 504, Title II, Title IV, and ADA District Coordinator whose address appears above.

D. PROCEDURE

When the aggrieved party is a student or student's parent/guardian:

The aggrieved party should complete the Grievance Form (See Appendix F) and return it to the respective principal at the school in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. (Allegations of discrimination occurring before this grievance procedure was in place will be considered on a case-by-case basis). Assistance will be provided upon request, to enable an individual to complete the Grievance From and pursue the grievance process.

Within ten (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the principal shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Section 504 Coordinator.

Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Section 504 Coordinator and SSI will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures, including:

- the opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner.
- the right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer.
- the right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense (the aggrieved party should notify the Section 504 District Coordinator if he/she will be represented by counsel)
- the right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.

A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Section 504 Coordinator and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after its filing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.

The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written determination to the Director of The School.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and assure that the school complies with the ADA and implementing regulations.

Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the director.

Confidentiality

Any action taken by the SICS in the application of the disciplinary policy shall be documented in the student's temporary cumulative record. Disclosure of this information without the prior written consent of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or the student if he or she is fourteen or older is prohibited except as allowed by law.

Student Records

The privacy of student's records and personally identifiable information is protected under federal and state laws. These laws include the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), found at 20 U.S.C. §1232(g), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), found at 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. and M.G.L. c.71 §§ 34A, B, D, E, and H, as well as the regulations promulgated under these statutes.

A student's record is maintained by the school and contains all information concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified. Eligible students and custodial parents/legal guardians have the right to see their own/ their child's student records. Access to and copies of any information in the record may be obtained upon request. For access and/or copies of student records, please allow ten (10) calendar days from the date following the date of a request. Please also note that public records regulations permit SICS to charge a fee for the actual per page copying costs for copies of any records requested.

Pursuant to state and federal statutes and regulations, no third party, other than authorized school or Department of Education personnel, shall have access to information in or from an education record without the specific informed consent of the eligible student or the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), subject to certain exceptions. A student's record is available to school personnel that work directly with the student. This includes administrators, teachers, counselors, office staff and clerical personnel who require access in performance with their job. They do not need permission to see student records.

No information in a student's records, other than Directory Information as defined below, is available to anyone outside the SICS district without the written permission of the student and or parent/legal guardian. Court officers, health officials, DCF, and authorized school personnel may have access to school records of students without "the specific informed consent" of the student of his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s) as provided under Massachusetts regulations.

These laws include the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), found at 20 U.S.C. §1232(g), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), found at 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. and M.G.L. c.71 §§ 34A, B, D, E, and H, as well as the regulations promulgated under these statutes.

FERPA also allows disclosure of education records without the consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or students to any school officials, including teachers, who have a legitimate educational interest in them; and/or during lawsuits brought against the school by a student or against a student by the school; or in the event of a health or safety emergency; and, among other exceptions, upon receipt of a Court Order or lawfully issued subpoena, or upon receipt of a request from a court, DCF, or the Department of Youth Services for information regarding a student. Prior to compliance with the Order, subpoena, or request, the school shall notify the eligible student or parent(s)/guardian(s) of the Order, subpoena, or request in such reasonable time that he/she may seek to have the process quashed. Other exceptions may be found by reviewing the statute. In the case of a student, fourteen through seventeen (14-17) years of age, or of one who has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or either one acting separately, shall exercise these rights. Any student eighteen (18) years of age or older may exercise these rights alone. (603 CMR 23.01)

Both FERPA and Massachusetts law also provide for a school's release of student's Directory Information without the prior written consent of an eligible student or a parent/guardian.

Directory Information include the following: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under and allows eligible students and parents/guardians a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian.

This privacy protection also means that if parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or students wish transcripts or records forwarded to school, colleges, or prospective employers, a written release must be delivered to the school or the appropriate custodian of the student's school records.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students are guaranteed the right under state and federal law to inspect as well as seek addition to or deletion from all records which are kept or requested to be kept by the school

Department concerning individual students. The term "education records" is defined as records that are "directly related to a student" and "maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution." 20 U.S.C. 1232g (a) (4) (A). They include the "student record" – a student's transcript and any other recorded information which is identified by the student's name, as well as the "temporary record," which contains all other information such as evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff. A signed log is kept for cumulative records of students identifying all persons who have obtained access to the student record.

Under FERPA, certain records are excluded from the definition of "education records" and are not subject to access by parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and other individuals. These records include personal notes kept by instructional and administrative staff in their own files, employee records, records kept by school law enforcement officers, and medical treatment records of students over the age of 18.

If a parent/legal guardian or student wishes transcripts or records forwarded to schools, colleges, prospective employers, or a branch of the armed services, a written release must be delivered to the Guidance office and the appropriate custodian of the student's school records.

In the case of a student, fourteen through seventeen (14-17) years of age, or of one who had entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or either one acting separately, shall exercise these rights. Any student eighteen (18) years of age or older may exercise these rights alone. (603 CMR 23.01)

Federal law requires that SICS provide a list of student names, addresses and telephone numbers to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning when they request such information, unless parents or students request that information be withheld. 20 U.S.C. §7908. A parent who elects not to have this information disclosed to military recruiters and/or institutions, must send written notice thereof to the Director within the first twenty (20) school days of the start of the school year.

In the absence of such timely written notice, the school will consider there to be no objections to the release of this information, and such information will be forwarded to BOTH military recruiters and institutions of higher learning.

In addition, SICS may be required to provide student record information relating to enrolled students to students' resident school districts and or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education either directly or through submission to a third-party clearinghouse.

Student Record Amendments

A parent/ guardian or eligible student has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student record. The parent/guardian or eligible student should submit the additional information to the Director along with a written request that the information be added to the student record.

A parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to request in writing the deletion or correction of any information contained in the student record, except for information which was placed in the record by a special needs student's TEAM. Any such information inserted by the TEAM will not be subject to a request for deletion or correction until the Individualized Education Plan for that student has been accepted or, if rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process.

Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the following procedure

- If a parent/guardian is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent/guardian shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to confer with the SSI and Principal to make the objections know.

- The Director/designee shall within one (1) week after the conference or receipt of the written objection(s), inform the parent/guardian of a decision in writing, stating the reason(s) for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent/guardian, the Director/designee shall promptly take steps to put the decision into effect.

- If the Director/designee's decision is not satisfactory to the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian may file an appeal in writing, with the Director. This appeal must be made within five (5) school days of the SSI and Principal decision. The Director shall render a written decision within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.

- If the Director's decision is not satisfactory to the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian may file a written appeal with the Board of Trustees within five (5) days of the receipt of the Director's decision. The Board of Trustees shall conduct a hearing on the appeal as required by 603 CMR 23.09(4).

School District Transfer of Records

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), SICS hereby gives notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) and eligible students that it forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. While consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student is not required, it is the policy of SICS that it will not forward records to the receiving

district without the signature of the parent/guardian or eligible student.

Destruction of Student Records

Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from school. If the parent/guardian or eligible student wishes to have the temporary record, they must request in writing prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student prior to the destruction of such records.

In addition, SICS may destroy the following documents, which are considered part of the temporary record, on a yearly basis: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions and /or expulsions), any notes from the parent/guardian concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the parent/guardian or eligible students want those records, they must request so in writing prior to the last day of school.

Non-Custodial Parents Access to School Records

In order for SICS to release student information to a non-custodial parent, the directives of Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 Section 34H must be satisfied. Section 34H requires that the school provide information to a non-custodial parent only if the noncustodial parent is eligible to receive information pursuant to this section.

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (a parent without physical custody of the child) of a student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, progress, behavior, attendance, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to access student record information shall submit a written request annually to the Director. Upon receipt of such a request, the Director shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first- class mail that the student's records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall also be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school.

Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H and/or 603 CMR 23.07(5), the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

PREVENTION AND CRITERIA FOR USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT, SECLUSION AND TIME-OUT OF STUDENTS

SICS complies with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (hereinafter "MA DESE") regulations governing the use of physical restraint, seclusion and time-out,

which can be found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. (hereinafter "the Regulations"). According to their terms, the Regulations apply at school and also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. Additional information, including a copy of the Regulations, may be obtained from the Student Services Office or at https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all.

PURPOSE. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every student attending SICS is free from the use of physical restraint, seclusion or time-out that is inconsistent with the Regulations.

Consistent with the Regulations, nothing in this policy shall preclude a teacher, employee, or agent of SICS from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm or to implement school-based discipline (such as in school suspension) in accordance with due process and state laws/regulations. In addition, nothing in this Policy or the Regulations prohibits law enforcement or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including physical detainment of an individual alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk.

DEFINITIONS. (603 CMR 46.02)

Mechanical Restraint: the use of any physical device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement.

- Mechanical restraint does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student, which have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

Medication Restraint: the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior.

- Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

Physical Escort: a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Physical Restraint: direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement.

The following are not physical restraints:

- Brief physical contact to promote student safety.
- Providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill;
- Redirecting attention
- Providing comfort
- Physical escort (as defined above)

Principal: the instructional leader of a public education school program or designee.

Prone Restraint: a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position. SICS does not use prone restraints.

Seclusion: involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area, with or without adult supervision, from which the student is not permitted to leave.

The following are not seclusion:

- A classroom or school environment where, as a general rule, all students need permission to leave the room or area, such as to use the restroom;
- Placing a student in a separate location within a classroom with others or with an instructor, so long as the student has the same opportunity to receive and engage in instruction;
- Time-out as a behavioral support strategy (as defined below)

Time-Out: a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member in an unlocked setting from which the student is permitted to leave. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES

Use of Restraint (603 CMR 46.03)

Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs, including all District programs, **except when:**

a. the student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others; and
b. the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

Physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. School personnel shall use physical restraint to prevent or minimize any harm to the student. The staff member administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation, subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05.

Prohibitions

Physical restraint shall not be used:

a. as a means of discipline or punishment;
b. when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, cardiac conditions, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
c. as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a policy or directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or

d. as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. *Physical restraint is only an emergency procedure of last resort.*

Prone restraints as defined by state regulations are not used in District programs.

Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, prone restraint, seclusion (unless permitted under the conditions described below) and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 are strictly prohibited at SICS.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint

Only District personnel who have received training pursuant to the 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) (i.e., Required annual training for all staff or In-depth staff training, respectively) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. As stated explicitly in the Regulations, however, the training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 - and described in this policy - shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
When administering a physical restraint, trained staff shall comply with the requirements regarding use of force, method, duration of the restraint, and safety, as set forth in the Regulations. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm, as well as the safest method available and appropriate to the situation, subject to the safety requirements in the Regulations. In terms of duration of restraint, all physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing. Additional safety requirements for the use of physical restraint include:

a. No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
b. Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress, including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
c. If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the Principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint, justifying the need for continued restraint.
d. Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
e. After the release of a student from a restraint, program staff shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who

administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed; and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Staff Training

All school staff must receive annual training regarding the District's Prevention and Criteria for Use of Physical Restraint, Seclusion and Time-Out of Students when restraint is used. Staff training must occur within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. The schools should maintain documentation of the training.
Training shall include:

- Information on the role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;
- The District's Prevention and Criteria for Use of Physical Restraint, Seclusion and Time-Out of Students and procedures, including the use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
- Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation techniques and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;
- Types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information about the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;
- Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
- Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training in the use of physical restraint and who may serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint and implementation of the Regulations.

EMERGENCY SECLUSION PROCEDURES

Use of Seclusion (603 CMR 46.07(2))

Seclusion shall not be used in a public education program except in an emergency situation as a last resort on an individual student basis, where a student's behavior poses an imminent threat of assault, or imminent serious physical harm to self or others.

Prohibitions

Seclusion may not be used in an emergency situation unless all of the following conditions are met:

a. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
b. The student is not responsive to directives or other less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances;
c. Other forms of intervention have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or others;
d. There are no medical contraindications, as documented by a licensed physician;
e. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of seclusion and no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
f. The program has obtained consent from the student's parent and, if appropriate, the student, to use seclusion in an emergency situation and such use has been approved in writing by the Principal;

g. Any individual using seclusion has received training about alternative behavior interventions and management techniques; and
h. The program has documented compliance with (a) and (d) through (g) above in advance of the use of seclusion and maintains the documentation.

Proper Administration of Emergency Seclusion

At all times during the emergency use of seclusion, a staff member must continuously and actively monitor and observe the student who must be observable in all parts of the room or area being used. The staff member must be immediately available to the student, and continue to use de-escalation and calming strategies with the student, unless it is unsafe or counterproductive for the purpose of calming the student.

The emergency use of seclusion must cease as soon as the student's behavior no longer poses a threat of assault or immediate serious physical harm to the student or others, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress such as having difficulty breathing.

No written individual behavior plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) may include use of seclusion as a standard response to any behavior.

The Principal's approval must be obtained if the emergency seclusion is used for a period longer than 30 minutes.

Any program of the SICS that uses the emergency intervention of seclusion, consistent with the requirements above, must examine and adopt alternatives and strategies for reducing and eliminating its use no later than 3 years from the effective date of the Regulations (Regulations effective date is August 17, 2026).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTRAINT AND EMERGENCY SECLUSION

Staff must report the use of **any** physical restraint or emergency seclusion as specified in the Regulations.

Reporting to Principal: The staff member who administered the restraint or emergency seclusion shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint or emergency seclusion as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day. If the principal administered the restraint or emergency seclusion, the principal shall prepare the written report and submit it to the individual or team that the superintendent designates for review. The principal shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint and emergency seclusion of the individual student, which shall be made available for review by the individual student's parent or MA DESE upon request.

- **Maintain Ongoing Record:** The principal also shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint and emergency seclusion data regarding all students (the "Physical Restraint Log" and "Seclusion Log").
- **Weekly Review:** The principal shall conduct **a weekly review** of the Physical Restraint Log and Seclusion Log to identify students who have been restrained and/or emergency secluded multiple times during the week.

- If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams, as the principal deems appropriate, to assess each student's progress and needs. If the principal directly participated in a restraint or emergency seclusion, a duly qualified person designated by the superintendent shall lead the review team's discussion.
- The review team's assessment shall include at least the following:
  - review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with the Regulations and any comments the student and parent provided about the reports and the use of the restraints or emergency seclusion;
  - an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint or emergency seclusion, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
  - consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint or emergency seclusion, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint or emergency seclusion in the future; and agreement on a written plan of action by the program.
- The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review team is maintained and made available for review by MA DESE or the parent, upon request.

- **Monthly Review:** The principal shall conduct **a monthly review** of the Physical Restraint Log and Seclusion Log. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints and emergency seclusion by similarities in the time of day, day of week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of restraints and emergency seclusions school-wide and for individual students; the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from use of restraint or emergency seclusion. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school district's policy, conduct additional training on restraint or emergency seclusion reduction/prevention strategies (e.g., positive behavioral interventions and supports) or take such other appropriate action necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints or emergency seclusion.

Reporting to Parents: The principal shall make reasonable efforts to inform the student's parent of the restraint or emergency seclusion within 24 hours of the event and shall notify the student's parent by written report sent within three school working days of the restraint or emergency seclusion either to an email address provided by the parent for communication about the student or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint or emergency seclusion. The written report must contain the information set forth in 603 CMR 46.06(4). The principal must ensure that the written restraint or emergency seclusion report provided to the student's parent is provided to the parent in the language in which report cards and other necessary school-related information are customarily provided to the parent. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint or emergency seclusion and on information in the written report.

Reporting to MA DESE: When a physical restraint or emergency seclusion has resulted in an injury

to either a student or staff member, the District shall send a copy of the written report (or electronic version if approved by MA DESE) of that restraint or emergency seclusion to MA DESE no later than three (3) school working days of the administration of the restraint or emergency seclusion, along with a copy of Physical Restraint Log and Seclusion Log, if any, for the 30-day period prior to the reported restraint or emergency seclusion.

Additionally, the District must collect and annually report data to the MA DESE regarding the use of physical restraints and emergency seclusion. SICS shall report the data in the manner and form the MA DESE directs.

TIME-OUT PROCEDURES

Use of Time-out (603 CMR 46.02, 46.04(1)(j))

Time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member in an unlocked setting from which the student is permitted to leave. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

If a program uses time-out as a behavioral support strategy, the program must have a procedure for the use of time-out that includes a process for obtaining principal approval of time-out for more than 30 minutes based on the individual student's continuing agitation. Time out strategies and usage shall be used in accordance with DESE guidance and regulations. Each school that utilizes time out as a behavioral strategy will have written procedures consistent with state laws and regulations.

SAFEGUARDS FOR AREAS USED FOR TIME-OUT OR EMERGENCY SECLUSION

Any room or area used for time-out or emergency seclusion must be clean, safe, and sanitary; appropriate for the purpose of calming students, including, but not limited to, being of appropriate size for the age and the needs of the student; appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled (consistent with the remainder of the building); free of objects or fixtures that are inherently dangerous to the student; and in compliance with any applicable local fire and building code requirements and any other standards listed by the MA DESE in guidance.

Twice a school year, the school principal and the District's Director of Student Services (or their designees) shall inspect any room or area used for time-out or emergency seclusion, with one inspection occurring at the beginning of a school year. Additionally, any time a room or area actually is used for emergency seclusion, the school principal (or designee) must inspect the room or area a minimum of one time per week during which the room or area actually is used for emergency seclusion.

PREVENTING STUDENT VIOLENCE, SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR, AND SUICIDE

As set forth in the Regulations, the District shall develop methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Regulations, the District shall engage parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure of last resort. SICS will post this policy regarding the Prevention and Criteria for Use of Physical Restraint, Seclusion and Time-Out of Students on the school district's website and will include the policy in school handbooks. SICS welcomes parents to request a meeting with their child's principal or IEP Team Chair to discuss any individual use of physical restraint or emergency seclusion or physical restraint, time-out procedures, and emergency seclusion in general.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

SICS will consider and investigate any complaints that the school district receives regarding the school district's physical restraint practices, including, but not limited to, complaints related to time-out and emergency seclusion practices.

SICS has developed a complaint form to assist individuals with sharing their concerns. The District accepts online submissions of this complaint form as well as complaints submitted via fax, email, US mail, and in-person. Anyone who prefers or needs a paper copy of the complaint form, has difficulty accessing the online form, has additional questions or requires assistance with submitting a complaint may contact the District's Student Services office at:

Director of Student Services
Cindy Miller, Director of Student Services, cmiller@sics.org

Complaints must be filed within sixty (60) school days of the event giving rise to the complaint.

SICS will investigate the complaint, including interviewing any witnesses deemed necessary and appropriate and reviewing relevant written documentation and data related to the concern. The District's investigation generally will be completed within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint. If this general timeline is not met, the District will document the reason(s) for not meeting the timeline. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the determination following the investigation, the complainant may appeal to the Director of Schools who may be reached at **Justin Baker, Director, jbaker@sics.org**

Chemical Health Policy

Purpose

Springfield International Charter School (SICS) is committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. We recognize the significant risks associated with the use of tobacco, nicotine, alcohol, and other harmful substances, and the impact these behaviors can have on personal health, academic achievement, and the overall school climate.

Aligned with our mission and educational values, SICS has developed a comprehensive **Chemical Health Policy** grounded in prevention, education, accountability, and support.

Definition of Chemicals and Prohibited Substances

For this policy, "chemicals" and "prohibited substances" include, but are not limited to:
Tobacco Products: Cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any associated paraphernalia.

- Vaping Devices: E-cigarettes, vaporizers, JUULs, or any similar electronic nicotine delivery systems, regardless of nicotine content.
- Alcohol
- Illegal Drugs: Including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and other controlled substances.
- Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medications for Intoxication.
- Inhalants: Any chemical or household product intentionally misused to induce intoxication or euphoria.

Chemical Use Policy

The use, possession, distribution, or sale of any prohibited substances is strictly forbidden:

- On all school property, including buildings, parking lots, athletic fields, and playgrounds.
- On school buses and in vehicles used for school-related transportation.
- At any school-sponsored event or activity, whether held on or off school grounds.
- By **any individual**—students, staff, or visitors—regardless of age or intent.

Student Response Protocol for Chemical Use

SICS understands that substance use may indicate deeper personal or social concerns. As such, we are committed to a balanced response that incorporates both accountability and support through a **three-step intervention model**:

Educational Course

- The student must complete a virtual substance use education program within **two weeks** of the incident.
- The course will cover the health, academic, emotional, and legal consequences of substance use.
- A **behavioral support plan** may also be developed, outlining specific goals and restorative expectations.

Counseling Support

- The student will engage in **three to five sessions** with a qualified mental health or addiction counselor.
- Sessions will focus on self-reflection, developing coping strategies, and setting positive behavioral goals.
- **Parent/guardian communication** will be maintained throughout the process, with appropriate respect for student confidentiality.

Restorative or Community-Based Action

- The student will complete up to **10 hours** of school-based or community service, or engage in restorative practices, such as:
- Volunteering at SICS programs (e.g., **SICS Cares Closet**).
- Assisting with school events or projects.
- Participating in **peer-led education or reflection activities** to share lessons learned.

Additional Guidelines

- A **personalized support plan** will be developed in collaboration with the Assistant Principal to guide the student's progress.
- **Family engagement** is a key part of the intervention and recovery process.
- When appropriate, students may be referred to **external supports**, including substance abuse treatment or mental health services.
- **Non-compliance** with this protocol may result in additional disciplinary consequences as outlined in the SICS Student Handbook.

Staff and Visitor Expectations

All SICS employees and visitors are required to adhere to this policy. Violations by staff members will be handled in accordance with the procedures described in the **SICS Employee Handbook**.

Conclusion

SICS is committed to helping students make informed, healthy, and responsible choices. By combining high expectations with meaningful support, we aim to safeguard the well-being of our school community and empower every student to achieve academic, social, and emotional success.

BREATHALYZER PROTOCOL FOR DANCES AND SOCIAL EVENTS / ACTIVITIES

The possession, sale, distribution or use and/or abuse of alcohol is not only illegal on school property and at school events and activities but is also in violation of SICS's policy and SICS's code of conduct and core values.

When determining possible alcohol possession, sale, distribution or use by a student at any school related event or function, the administration's primary concern is always student safety and well-being. In assessing a student's possible alcohol use, administration may use a breath alcohol testing device, which indicates the presence or absence of alcohol.

SICS administration also reserves the right to randomly screen students or screen all students at school events/functions with proper notice to students and their families.

The purpose of having breath alcohol testing is to deter alcohol possession, sale, distribution and/or use and encourage all members of the student body to make healthy, positive choices.

Students who attend any school dance, social event, or school activity will be required to observe the rules of behavior that are in effect during the school day.

SICS dances and social activities are planned for members of our school; attendance by non-school members is by invitation only. When guests are permitted, a student is restricted to one guest at a dance or social, and approval must be given in advance by the administration.

Students will not be permitted to enter the dance or activity thirty minutes after it has started, unless approval has been obtained by the administration. Should an attendee leave the activity for any reason without an adult escort, he/she will not be permitted to return.

Each student entering a school sponsored dance or activity may be required to submit to a Breathalyzer test.

When possible, and at the discretion of the administration, a police officer will be present at functions in the event of any law enforcement issues that may arise. A student whom the administration has determined to have violated the school's substance abuse and code of conduct policies will be sent home with a parent or turned over to the police for protective custody or arrest.

It is the responsibility of the administration/faculty advisor(s) to ascertain that the following is carried out:

- A goal of four faculty chaperones and at least two sets of parents to volunteer their services.
- Only the area of the building in which the event is to take place and the lavatories immediately adjacent may be available.

- Policy for students leaving the building: Only during intermission may students go outside.
- Anyone with the appearance of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs shall not be admitted and are subject to a breathalyzer test.
- No guest below grade nine may attend a senior high school dance.
- Prior to the event, the names of guests must be approved and recorded with the administration before the close of school.

Part I: School Sponsored Events

- The administration will determine at which school-sponsored events the breathalyzer will be used. These events will include, but not be limited to, proms, dances, concerts, overnight activities, optional field trips, athletic events, etc.
- The administration will determine the manner by which the students will be tested: entire group, pre-determined random selection, or based on an individualized reasonable suspicion. The administrator or staff member present at such events has the authority to test and retest any individual suspected of being under the influence of alcohol even if the student has a negative test upon entering the event.
- Students attending these events may be required to take a breathalyzer test administered by a member of the staff or administration prior to entering the event.
- Any student who tests positive will be given a second test after a waiting period of twenty (20) minutes. If this test is positive, the student will be denied entrance to the event, detained by school officials until parents/guardians arrive and an investigation will be conducted.
- The student will be sent home and, subject to disciplinary procedures, may be suspended in accordance with the SICS Handbook.
- Whether school officials are testing students randomly or testing the entire group, a student who tests positive or refuses to be tested may be prohibited from participating in future extra-curricular activities.
- A student already in attendance at a school sponsored event who is suspected of being under the influence will be tested or retested. If this test is positive, the student will be detained until parents/guardians arrive.
- If the student is determined to be a risk and/or in need of medical assistance, emergency personnel will be contacted, and parents/guardians will be notified. Disciplinary action will be taken consistent with the SICS Handbook.
- If a student, already in attendance, who is suspected of using alcohol as described herein, refuses the test, that student will be detained and sent home with a parent/guardian.
- The student's conduct will be considered comparable to being under the influence and

disciplinary action will be taken consistent with the SICS Handbook.

- The Breathalyzer Protocol shall apply to all students and guests.

PART II: During the School Day

It may be necessary during the school day or during a school related event to administer a breathalyzer test to a student whose demeanor may give reasonable suspicion that they are under the influence of and/or has consumed alcohol. If an administrator reasonably suspects or receives a report that a student may be under the influence of alcohol, then they may use a breathalyzer as a part of the investigation. To the extent possible under the circumstances, the test will be administered in a private location by an administrator in the presence of a second staff member.

- A student who tests positive will be given a second test after a waiting period of twenty (20) minutes. If this test is also positive, school officials will detain the student until parents/guardians arrive, and subject to disciplinary procedures, the student may be suspended.

- A student who is determined to be under the influence as described herein and who refuses the test will be detained until parent/guardians arrive. The student's conduct will be considered comparable to being under the influence and disciplinary action will be taken consistent with the SICS Handbook.

Part III: Training and Maintenance

- Training in the operation of the breathalyzer will be performed and updated annually, according to the recommendations of the manufacturer or sales agent of the breathalyzer.

- A list of trained personnel will be on file in the school office.

2.3.3 Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure

Harassment of individuals by students, employees, vendors, and third parties will not be tolerated at Springfield International Charter School. Alleged harassment must involve conduct that occurred within the school's programs or activities, such as incidents occurring at locations or under circumstances where the school owns or substantially controls the premises, exercises oversight, supervision, or discipline, or funds, sponsors, promotes or endorses the event where the alleged harassment occurred, involving a person in the United States. This policy applies while individuals are on school grounds, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district, school buses, or attending or engaging in school-sponsored activities. Harassment prohibited by the district includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on race, traits historically associated with race, sex, gender identity, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, disability or ability, ancestry, athletic performance, homelessness, socioeconomic status, pregnancy or pregnancy- related condition, proficiency in the English language, or academic performance. Individuals whose behavior violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, or termination pursuant to disciplinary policy.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Written, verbal, or physical harassment or abuse, including texting, blogging, or other technological methods.
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature.
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matters.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at an individual.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. Individuals should consider how others view their words and actions. Any school community member who believes (he/she) or another school community member has been the victim of any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, should file a complaint. Individuals may report to any school faculty, staff, or administrator. Reports or complaints by any other school community member should be to the designated official specified in the applicable policy or grievance procedure or to Cynthia Miller, Director of Special Services. This will trigger a prompt response and/or investigation which includes all reports or complaints, formal or informal, written, oral, or otherwise given notice, of any discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violation of civil rights. SICS will investigate all reports or complaints promptly and in an impartial and as confidential a manner as possible to ensure prompt and appropriate action. Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any

form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, against another member of the school community will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and corrective action. Additionally, appropriate remedial action will be taken as necessary.

The Board of Trustees of Springfield International Charter School are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the Board of Trustees, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Springfield International Charter School.

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT UNDER TITLE IX: Sexual harassment under Title IX means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
(1) An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
(2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
(3) "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

The District takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Sexual Harassment complaints will be responded to in accordance with Springfield International Charter School: Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Springfield International Charter School - SEXUAL HARASSMENT/TITLE IX POLICY
The Board of Trustees and Springfield International Charter School are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the Board of Trustees, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Springfield International Charter School.
DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT UNDER TITLE IX: Sexual harassment under Title IX means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
(1) An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
(2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
(3) "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).
Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the

student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families.

For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The district takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment, and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

A recipient with actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an education program or activity of the recipient against a person in the United States, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. A recipient is deliberately indifferent only if its response to sexual harassment is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. For the purposes of this section, §§106.30, and 106.45, “education program or activity” includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the recipient exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs, and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting an environment that is free from sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Retaliation against a complainant, because they have filed a sexual harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. A student or employee who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination.

The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

RESPONSE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS

The regulations require a school district to respond when the district has actual notice of sexual

harassment. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint. Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment complaints will be responded to in accordance with Springfield International Charter School: Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

The regulation highlights the importance of supportive measures designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the regulation would require remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

In some instances, the conduct may not meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX but may meet the definition of harassment under state law. In these instances, the complaint will be addressed through the District's Civil Rights Policy (AC) and accompanying Civil Rights Grievance Procedures (AC-R). This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Springfield International Charter School to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

Cindy Miller, Title XI Coordinator, cmiller@sics.org, 413-783-2600, ext. 0102

Please note that the following entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

- The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 601
  Boston, MA 02108.
  Phone: 617-994-6000

- Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)
  5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
  Boston, MA 02109
  Phone: 617-289-0111

- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
  John F. Kennedy Bldg
  475 Government Center
  Boston, MA 02203.

LEGAL REF.:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Springfield International Charter School, Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

DESE 603 CMR 26:00

34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)

34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)

34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

Note: A summary of the attached Policy, as adopted, must be sent to parents/guardians, students, employees, unions, and prospective employees of the school district including Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s) and the decision-maker. The above referenced employees

must attend training sessions on the implementation: Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The following grievance procedures apply to all complaints made by students or staff of sexual harassment, sexual assault or sexual violence under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and in accordance with School Committee Policy ACAB.

A recipient with actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an education program or activity of the recipient against a person in the United States, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. A recipient is deliberately indifferent only if its response to sexual harassment is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. For the purposes of this section, §§106.30, and 106.45, "education program or activity" includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the recipient exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs, and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution.

I. Reporting of Sexual Harassment Complaints

A. How to Report a Complaint of Sexual Harassment

Students and employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment should notify the district's designated Title IX Coordinator, **Cindy Miller, Title XI Coordinator, cmiller@sics.org, 413-783-2600, ext. 0102**

If the complaint concerns allegations against the Title IX Coordinator, then the complaint should be filed with the Superintendent or designee.

Employees who witness sexual harassment or have a reasonable belief that it is occurring, are required to report it immediately to the Title IX Coordinator.

Reports of sexual harassment may also be made by employees to their direct supervisor and by students to a teacher, counselor, school nurse or building administrator, who shall immediately bring such report to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator.

The complaint may be filed by the alleged by the victim or any other party. Any person filing a complaint is encouraged to do so within a short time after the occurrence giving rise to the complaint, to assure a prompt investigation and fair resolution.

B. Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

All complaints shall be processed in a fair, expeditious and confidential manner. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the complaint response, including implementation of supportive measures and the grievance/appeal process. In doing so, the Title IX Coordinator may delegate certain duties to a designee. Complaints can be investigated by a building administrator, district-level staff member, or the Title IX Coordinator. The decision-maker must be a separate individual from the investigator. The Title IX Coordinator (or designee), investigator and decisionmaker shall not have a conflict of interest or bias. All Title IX personnel shall receive appropriate training in accordance with Section VIII below.

II. Supportive Measures and Filing of a Formal Complaint

A. Supportive Measures

Once a report of sexual harassment has been received, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the alleged victim (the "Complainant") to discuss the availability of supportive measures and consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. The District must inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint, and explain to the Complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. Supportive measures shall also be offered to the Respondent as necessary to ensure continued and equal access to the education program and/or activity during any investigation.

"Supportive measures" are individualized services reasonably available that are nonpunitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures must be offered to both the Complainant and the Respondent, and may include, but not be limited to" no contact orders, change of class schedules, modifications of assignments/work, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other appropriate measures.

In addition to the above supportive measures, the District, in its discretion, may consider the emergency removal of a student in accordance with applicable student discipline regulations. The District may place an employee on paid administrative leave during the course of an investigation of sexual harassment allegations against said employee as determined appropriate and consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

B. Filing a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint may be filed in writing by the Complainant or presented verbally and put into writing and signed by the Title IX Coordinator or designee. The District will respect the wishes of the Complainant with respect to whether the District investigates a report of sexual harassment, unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the Complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

C. Contents of a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint is signed by a Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator or designee alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the District. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator or designee in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth herein.

The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. If the allegations in the formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as set forth under Title IX, or did not occur in the District's education program or activity, the District must dismiss such allegations for the purposes of Title IX, but may still address the allegations in any manner that the District deems appropriate consistent with its policies, procedures and code of conduct, including but not limited to its anti- bullying policies and plan

III. Informal or Formal Resolution of Complaint

The district must offer the Complainant a formal resolution process and may offer an informal resolution process. If the District does not provide the option of informal resolution, the formal resolution process shall be followed.

A. Informal Resolution Process

If the District elects to offer an informal resolution process, such process shall be offered and implemented at the election of the Complainant and only after receipt of voluntary, informed, written consent of both the Complainant and the Respondent. The Complainant may elect informal resolution of a complaint at any time prior to a final determination by the decisionmaker. This may include conciliation and/or mediation by an individual trained to conduct such processes. At any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, either party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the formal complaint grievance process. The District shall not offer an informal resolution process when a student alleges sexual harassment by staff.

B. Formal Resolution Process

The formal complaint process will comply with the grievance procedures outlined below.

IV. Grievance Procedure

In accordance with Title IX and its supporting regulations, the District shall implement the following process when investigating formal complaints of sexual harassment:

A. The Complainant and Respondent will be treated equally throughout the investigation process and be provided with written notice of the allegation (including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview), the grievance process, the range of possible remedies the District may provide a Complainant and disciplinary sanctions the District might impose on a respondent, following determinations of responsibility. Both parties have the right to have a representative/advisor participate in the process on their behalf.

B. Any interim supportive measures, as appropriate, will be offered to both parties.

C. The investigator will conduct an objective evaluation of all available evidence. This shall include an interview of both the Complainant and the Respondent, during which each party shall have a full opportunity to state their case through the presentation of witnesses and other evidence. Witnesses and other persons relevant to the complaint, if any, may also be interviewed. Please note that, during the investigation, rape shield protections apply to the Complainant and Complainants may generally not be asked about their prior sexual behavior.

D. During the investigation process, the parties shall not be prohibited from discussing the complaint or collecting evidence.

E. The investigation shall be completed in a reasonable time frame within thirty (30) school days except for good cause. Good cause may include, but not be limited to, unavailability of a party, concurrent pending law enforcement investigation, or need for interpreter or accommodation of any party or witnesses' disability.

F. During the investigation, there is a presumption that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

G. The investigator will make findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

H. The investigator will not request or solicit information from any party or witness that constitutes disclosure of information that is protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the holder of the privilege voluntarily waives the privilege.

I. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, and at least ten (10) calendar days prior to completion of the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent will both be provided a copy of the investigation report and an opportunity to submit any additional information they would like considered by the investigator before their report is finalized. Both parties shall be provided the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

J. Once the investigation has been completed, the investigator will submit their investigation report, with recommendations with regard to responsive measures, to the decisionmaker. The Complainant and Respondent shall also be advised, in writing, of the investigator's findings and recommendations.

K. The decisionmaker will review the investigation report and hold a disciplinary hearing with the Respondent, in accordance with applicable procedures (for student or employee).

L. The decisionmaker will advise both parties of the final determination and any related remedial/responsive measures in a manner that complies with applicable laws regarding student confidentiality and appeal rights. The Respondent will be notified of any disciplinary action and other remedial measures, if the complaint is substantiated. Notice of such final determination will be made in writing and sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

V. Disciplinary Action

If a complaint is substantiated, the District will act promptly to eliminate the behavior and will refer the matter to the proper supervisor or administrator for appropriate responsive measures, including but not limited to disciplinary action and restoring a sense of safety for the Complainant. For students, discipline will be imposed consistent with the Code of Conduct and Massachusetts Student Discipline Law.
Discipline of employees will be consistent with collective bargaining procedures, if applicable, and may include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
Responsive measures will also include any steps necessary to prevent the recurrence of any discrimination and/or harassment and will include corrective action aimed at eliminating any discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, as appropriate.

VI. Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation in any form against any person because of or related to a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, or because of or related to cooperation with an investigation of a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, is unlawful and prohibited. Retaliation is also prohibited against any individual that participates or chooses not to participate in the grievance process.
If retaliation occurs, it could be considered grounds discipline, up to and including suspension and/or discharge for employee(s), and appropriate disciplinary action for students.

VII. Appeal Procedure

Both parties have the right to appeal the decisionmaker's determination to the Superintendent or designee. Any appeal should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the final determination.

The Superintendent or designee in reviewing the appeal may consider the following factors:

A. Was there any procedural irregularity with the investigation process?

B. Is there any new evidence not reasonably available at the time of the investigation?

C. Did the Title IX investigator have a conflict of interest?

The decision of the appeal process is final and is not subject to further review by the Board of Trustees.

VIII. <u>Training Requirements</u>

All Title IX personnel including Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process shall receive training as required by Title IX and its supporting regulations. All training materials shall be made available to the public for inspection upon request.

SOURCE: SC January 2025

- **Other Civil Rights Harassment Grievance Procedures**

a. The *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure* is adopted to assist school staff to respond to claims of discrimination and/or harassment based on protected categories including, but not limited to, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability, including those claims brought under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff-1; M.G.L. c. 76; M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L. c. 151C, and 603 C.M.R. §26.00 This policy applies to all students, and staff, as well as members of the general public.

b. The *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure* shall not apply to reports of sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and its implementing regulations ("Title IX") effective August of 2020. Allegations of conduct that could, if proven, meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall be addressed through the District's *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*. Similarly, allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the *2.3.1 Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure.*

For the purpose of this procedure:

- **Complaint** is defined as an allegation that a student, employee or other individual has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or other statutorily protected category.

- **Discrimination** means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or other statutorily protected

category, by which an individual is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school.

- **Harassment** means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability religion or other statutorily protected category, that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off-color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct, which rises to the level of a hostile environment. A hostile environment is one which unreasonably interfered with an individual's participation in, denied the individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjected the individual to discrimination under any program or activity of the school. Any student, employee or other individual who believes they have been discriminated against or harassed, should report their concern promptly to the School Director, or to the Civil Rights Coordinator. If the School Director receives the report, the Director will notify the Civil Rights Coordinator of the Complaint. Students, employees or other individuals who are unsure whether discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the School Director.

  Civil Rights Coordinator: Ms. Cynthia Miller
  413-783-2600
  cmiller@sics.org

  School Director: Mr. Justin Baker 413-783-2600
  jbaker@sics.org

- Staff are expected to report incidents of discrimination or harassment of students and fellow employees. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students, employees or other individuals which have allegedly occurred on school grounds, at school-related events, or actions which occurred outside of school that may possibly create a hostile environment for a student or employee while at school.

- Students, employees and other individuals are encouraged to utilize this Grievance Procedure. However, individuals are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to: The United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02110-1491, Telephone: (617) 289-0111, Fax: (617) 289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172; or Program Quality Assurance Services, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: (781) 338-3700, TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 800-439-2370, Fax: (781) 338-3710. Employees also have the right to seek a remedy at any time to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203-0506, Telephone: (800) 669-4000 or (800) 669-6820 (TTY) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) at One Ashburton Place, Suite 601, Boston, MA 02018, Telephone: (617) 994-6000 or (617) 994-6196 (TTY)

Complaint Handling & Investigation

- The School Director shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator and the person(s) who is the subject of the Complaint that a Complaint has been receive

- Under the formal resolution procedure, the Complaint will be investigated by the School Director or other individual designated by the School Director or Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority.

    a. The Complainant shall have the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.
    b. The person who is the subject of the Complaint will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
    c. The privacy rights of all parties to the Complaint shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
    d. The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.
    e. The investigator may take interim remedial measures to reduce the risk of further discrimination or harassment while the investigation is pending.
    f. The investigation shall be completed within fifteen (15) school days of the date of the receipt of the Complaint.
    g. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond fifteen (15) school days due to extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If the investigator extends the investigation, they will notify the Complainant of the extension.
    h. If a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment is received after June 1 of a given school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the investigator will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced timeframe but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, they will notify the Complainant of the extension and make reasonable efforts to interview the witnesses during the summer vacation period.
    i. Nothing in this procedure will preclude the investigator in their discretion from completing the investigation sooner than the fifteen (15) school days described above.

- If the investigator determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the school shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory hostile environment, which may include, but is not limited to:

    a. Determining what disciplinary action should be taken against the person(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment, if any.
    b. Determining what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and
    c. Informing the Complainant and the person(s) who was the subject to the Complaint of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws)

within twenty (20) school days of receipt of the Complaint, unless the investigation is extended under the procession described above.

- If the Complainant or, in the case of a student, the student's parents/legal guardians, is/are dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator within ten (10) school days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation. In the appeal, the appellant should identify any specific alleged factual or legal errors and explain why the errors should result in a different conclusion. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall review the investigation and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate. Within seven (7) school days of receipt of any such appeal, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall decide whether or not to reopen the investigation, uphold the School Director or designee's determination, or reverse the School Director or designee's determinations. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall provide written notification of that determination to both the Complainant and the accused. The Civil Rights Coordinator's decision shall be final, subject to further appeal to the school director.

- If the Complainant or, in the case of a student, the student's parents/legal guardians, is/are dissatisfied with the decision of the Civil Rights Coordinator, an appeal may be submitted to the School Director within seven (7) school days after receiving notice of the Civil Rights Coordinator's decision. The School Director will consider the appeal. The School Director's decision shall be final.

Employees in Massachusetts may report illegal workplace harassment to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination:

https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts- commission-against-discrimination 1 Ashburton Place, Suite 601, Boston, MA, 02108 Telephone: 617-994-6000
Fax: 617-994-6024
Email: mcad@mas.gov

Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing is a term to define any harmful conduct or abusive method of initiation into any student organization. Any instances of hazing will be immediately reported to the SSI and Principal team who will determine the consequences to be issued.

A law prohibiting hazing, Chapter 269, Sections 17 – 19, was enacted in 1985 and amended in 1988 by the General Court. The laws state that each student be informed of the law's content and intent. 269, Sections 17-19: Section 17:

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

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

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18:

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section 17 and is at the scene of such a crime shall, to the extent that such a person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crimes to an appropriate law enforcement official as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than $1000. Section 19:

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team, or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team, or student organization, a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with these sections require that an institution issue copies of this section and sections 17 and 18 to unaffiliated students groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution’s recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organization.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections 17 and 18 to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team, or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institutions and attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections 17 and 18, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions with this section and sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student group, teams, and organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and Sections 17 & 18 and also certifying that said

institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policy to its students. The board of regents and in the case of secondary institutions, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution that fails to make such report.

Homeless Students

To the extent practical and as required by law, SICS will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided the same district services on the same terms as families residing in the district.

- Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

    a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing or economic hardship;

    b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

    c. Living in emergency or transitional shelters.

    d. Being abandoned in hospitals.

    e. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.

    f. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings.

    g. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples. The Director shall designate a district liaison for homeless students and their families. To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school or origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parents or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student

shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist.

Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. Homeless students are entitled to the same transportation programs, on the same terms, as families resident in the district.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and such.

CHROMEBOOK/TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Please note: No student will have access to school technology until this agreement is signed by a parent/guardian and the student and is submitted to the school. A copy of this document will be made available to you.

Right to Update this Acceptable Use Policy Because technology, and our intended use of technology are continually evolving, SICS reserves the right to change, update, and edit its technology policies at any time in order to meet procedural and instructional needs, while protecting the safety and well-being of our students and community. To this end, SICS may add additional rules, restrictions, and guidelines at any time.

Students and staff have an unparalleled opportunity to participate in a global community of information and learning. With such an opportunity comes responsibility. Students and their parents/guardians are reminded that use of technology is a privilege and not a right and that everything done on any school issued device, network, or electronic communications device will be monitored by the school at all times. Inappropriate use of the technology can result in limited inspect grade, and/or legal action.

CHROMEBOOK OWNERSHIP: SICS retains sole right of possession of the Chromebook. SICS administration and faculty retain the right to collect and/or inspect Chromebooks at any time.

CHROMEBOOK & TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBILITY:

- Personal electronic devices are at an increased risk of being stolen, misplaced, or damaged, SICS is not responsible for any damage or theft of personal property.
- Students are solely responsible for the Chromebooks issued to them.
- Students must comply with the Chromebook Acceptable Use Policy and all policies of the school when using their Chromebook.
- Students will not use email to bully, harass, or threaten other students or individuals.
- Students must treat their device with care and never leave it unattended.

- Promptly report any problems with Chromebooks to the teacher.
- Students may not remove or interfere with the serial number or other identification tags.
- Do not attempt to remove or change the physical structure of the Chromebook, including the keys, screen cover or casing.
- Do not attempt to install or run any operating system on the Chromebook other than the ChromeOS operating system supported by the school.
- Students will not circumvent security measures on school or remote computers or networks.
- Students may not sign into any account other than their own SICS account on their Chromebooks and may never use another person's account. The student is solely responsible for what happens on their own account.
- No food or drink is allowed next to your Chromebook while the screen is open.
- Chromebooks should be shut down when not in use to conserve battery life and device longevity.
- Broken or non-working Chromebooks should be reported to the IT Department by the teacher through established protocols provided to the teacher.
- Student must not vandalize school technology by causing physical damage, reconfiguration of any technology system, attempting to dispute the system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses and malware by any other technological or non-technological means

RESPONSIBILITY for ELECTRONIC DATA: Users of school technology have no rights, ownership, or expectations of privacy to any data that is, or was, stored on the Chromebook, school network, or any school issued applications and are given no guarantees that data will be retained or destroyed. The school uses third party applications to monitor content and use of student Chromebooks.

- **FILTERING:** The school adheres to the requirements set forth by the United States Congress in the Children's Internet Protection Act. This means that all access to the Internet is filtered and monitored. The school cannot monitor every activity but retains the right to monitor activities that utilize school owned technology. By filtering Internet access, we intend to block offensive, obscene, and inappropriate images and content including pornography.
- **NETWORK ACCESS AND SECURITY**: Students will log into their Chromebooks using their school issued account (username@sics-mail.net) and their assigned password. Students should never share their account passwords with others, unless requested by an administrator.
- **COPYRIGHT AND FILE SHARING:** Students are required to follow all copyright laws around all media including text, images, programs, music, and video. Downloading, sharing, and posting online illegally obtained media is against the Acceptable Use Policy
- **MANAGING YOUR FILES AND SAVING YOUR WORK:** Students may save documents to their Google Drive which will make the files accessible from any computer with Internet access. Students using Google Drive to work on their documents will not need to save their work, as Drive will save each keystroke as the work is being completed.

- **ORIGINALLY INSTALLED SOFTWARE:** Chromebook software is delivered via the Chrome Web Store.

These are web-based applications that do not require installation space on a hard drive. The software originally installed on the Chromebook must remain on the Chromebook in usable condition and easily accessible at all times. From time to time, the IT Department may add software applications for use in a particular area of study. Students are not permitted to add apps or extensions to their Chromebooks and are blocked from this type of function.

- **INSPECTION**: Students Chromebook may be selected at random for inspection. The purpose for inspection will be to check for proper care, maintenance and inappropriate use.

- **TRANSFERING/WITHDRAWING STUDENTS**: Students that transfer out of or withdraw from SICS must turn in their Chromebooks, charger and case on their last day of attendance. Failure to turn in the Chromebook will result in the being charged the full replacement cost for each missing asset (chromebook, charger, case). SICS may also file a report of stolen property with the local law enforcement agency.

- **SPARE EQUIPMENT AND LENDING**: If a student's Chromebook is inoperable, the school has a limited number of spare devices for use while the student's Chromebook is repaired or replaced. This agreement remains in effect for loaner Chromebooks. Loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action may result for failure to turn in the Chromebook.

- **LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE:** In the event that a Chromebook is lost or stolen, students should notify their teacher and the Information Technology Department immediately. The Chromebook will have absolutely no value to anyone but the student it is assigned to. The device will not allow any other user to log in

Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. These guidelines are provided so that students and parents are aware of the responsibilities required to use technology. Please read this document carefully. Computer, Chromebook and internet use may be revoked if a student does not adhere to the following guidelines.

CHROMEBOOK & TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY SIGNATURE FORM

By signing below, the student and their parent/guardian understand, accept, and agree to the following:

1. Chromebook and Technology Acceptable Use Policy
2. Website and Social Media Guidelines (Below)
3. The Chromebook and software are owned by SICS WEBSITE and SOCIAL MEDIA

GUIDELINES:

THINK before you act because your virtual actions are real and permanent!

GUIDELINES

Student Initials _____

Parent Initials _____

Be aware of what you post online. Website and social media venues are very public. What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see.

Do not post anything you wouldn't want friends, parents, teachers, future colleges, or employers to see.

Follow the school's Code of Conduct when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with other's opinions; however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.

Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birthdates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teachers and parent

How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identify.

Students are responsible for following school and classroom specific guidelines and expectations for use. This means following instructions, guidance, and protocols regarding when and how to use the technology in the instructional setting

We understand that SICS is loaning the student a Chromebook that is only to be used for academic and educational purposes pertaining to coursework.

We understand that it is our responsibility to use the device and the Internet appropriately for school related work only.

We understand that the SICS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan applies to online behaviors, and student must comply with all provisions of that policy.

By signing below, I agree to follow Springfield International Charter School (SICS) Technology Usage and Safety and the Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Technology by Students. I understand my use of school technology resources is a privilege and requires proper online behavior.

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

General Policies

SICS, the Springfield Police Department and Hampden County District Attorney's Office agree to develop and coordinate their response to violent, delinquent or criminal acts by students, including possession or use of weapons and alcohol and other drug use, that occur on school premises, school buses, or at school-related events. (Additionally, the policies and procedures developed will pertain to non-students and other visitors on school premises or at school related events.) To promote a safe educational environment, this cooperative effort between the school administration and law enforcement agencies supports "zero tolerance" for violence, weapons, drugs, harassment and civil rights violations, in accordance with Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act.

M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H, requires each school district to have a Code of Conduct contained in student handbooks, setting forth, among other things, standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel. The Code of Conduct should include standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel. The Code of Conduct should include standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students pertaining to disciplinary measures and due process rights in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, violations of criminal law and the school's discipline code. In addition, reference to this Memorandum should be made in these handbooks.

Participating agencies agree, within the statutory authority of its agency, that every effort will be made to share information, so as to provide a safe and violence-free educational setting.

- **Reporting Process**

Between SICS and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Under M.G.L. Ch.119, Section 51A, school personnel (mandated reporters) who, in their professional capacity, have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, (including sexual abuse) or from neglect, shall report such condition to the Department of Children and Families. "Reasonable cause to believe" means known or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect, regardless of whether the person or persons responsible for the abuse or neglect was in the position of caretaker.

Included within this definition are incidents of abuse by other students, as well as school personnel. If the incident involves criminal conduct, including physical abuse, violation of a restraining order, assault and battery, indecent assault and battery, rape, forcible rape of a child under 16 or rape and abuse of a child under age 16 (so-called "statutory rape"), school officials shall also report the incident to the police.

During the 51A investigation (Section 51B) school personnel are required to disclose to DCF any information that such personnel determine is relevant to the investigation, including student record information. School staff is expected to cooperate with DCF during this investigation, especially when circumstances of the case necessitate interviewing the child at school. It is suggested that such interviews be conducted in the presence of teacher or other school personnel, without prior notification to parents or guardians if notice could put the child at further risk.

- **Reporting Process**

  Between the School and Police. It is understood by the parties that school officials are not agents of the police or the District Attorney's Office and that the District Attorney's Office and police are not agents of school officials.

  School officials retain their sole prerogative to impose any disciplinary sanctions for infractions of school rules and policies in addition to any police involvement or investigation that may be warranted.

  School officials or their designee are responsible for reporting criminal activity to the police department to ensure a coordinated response. For any life-threatening or emergency situations, calls should be made to 911. Other calls needing an immediate (but non-emergency) response should go to the main police department. Follow-up and on-going communication will be provided.

  When the school has reported an incident to the police, the police will be responsible for making the decision as to the course of the criminal or delinquency investigation.

  In pursuit of the goals of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 370(d), the SSI and Principal shall provide immediate notification to the local law enforcement agency if there is a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator. The SSI and Principal of the school shall inform the student and his/her parent or guardian that, upon report, the police may conduct an investigation independent of school discipline. The SSI and Principal shall also report to the police the existence of any physical evidence related to the incident. All contraband (e.g., drugs, alcohol, firearms, dangerous weapons and stolen goods) or any other physical or documentary evidence found by the school shall be immediately shown to and made available to the responding police department.

  Any teacher or other school employee who has witnessed or become aware that a student has committed a violation of the school's discipline code or an act where criminal charges may be pursued against a student which was committed on school premises, school buses or at school related events shall report such incident to school officials or designee pursuant to the school's discipline reporting procedures.

  In addition, the SSI and Principal shall comply with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37L, concerning any incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises, regardless of whether it occurred during school hours, and whether or not the student has been excluded from school. Consistent with the law, the Director or designee shall file copies of the "weapons" report with the police chief, the Department of Children and Families and the Board of Trustees.

- **Search and Seizure**

  It is the policy of SICS to subject a student to a search of his or her person and/or personal possessions, including clothing, gym bag, purse, backpack or motor vehicle, if the authorized school personnel have, independent of information provided by the police, a reasonable suspicion to believe that such student is carrying or concealing material, the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state or local law, or by the provisions of the school discipline code (e.g., alcohol, drugs, illegal substances or weapons, or any other object which may result in physical

injury or harm to students on the school grounds or in the school building). Lockers and desks used by students remain the property of the school and may be opened without notice at any time as part of non-investigatory school practices. The contents of personal items found in desks and lockers may be searched, as provided by law. The SSI and Principal shall include this practice in the student handbook or inform students in writing at the beginning of each school year. If material, the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state or local law, or by the provisions of the school discipline code is discovered and or seized, school officials or designee shall keep a record of such search and seizure, which should include the date, the reason(s) for the search, the witnesses to the search, what or who was searched, and what was found. If contraband or evidence of a crime is found, the police shall be notified at once.

The Police will communicate regularly with the school administration to share information with the school on felony arrests and other community concerns that affect the safety and general welfare of all students. When requested, the police will provide to the school administration a copy of the daily police log. The appropriate police department designated liaison will inform the appropriate school designated liaison, subject to applicable statutes and regulations governing confidentiality, specifically including M.G.L. Chapter 12, Section 32, Chapters 71, Sections 37H and 37H1/2.

The police and/or the District Attorney's Office shall provide notice to the school when a student:

a) Has been charged or convicted of a felony offense.

b) Has been charged or convicted as a youthful offender; or

c) Has been charged or adjudicated as a delinquency where the underlying offense is a felony.

If requested by the Director, the police may provide notice regarding felony offenses of a transfer student in order to assess and evaluate the background of the transfer student.

The SSI and Principal who receive confidential delinquent or criminal information shall be CORI certified or have executed an Agreement of Non-Disclosure.

The school agrees to notify the police department when suspending a student under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H1/2, if the suspension is based on information received by the school of a pending felony charge or felony disposition.

- **Role of the Hampden County District Attorney**

The Hampden County District Attorney will maintain a Community Based Juvenile Justice Program as mandated by ad included in M.G.L., Chapter 12, Section 32, an Act Relative to Community Based Juvenile Justice Programs, in participation with SICS in providing a safe environment for learning, in accordance with the legislative mandate set forth in M.G.L.c. 71, Sections 37H and 37H1/2.

Community Based Juvenile Justice Meetings/School Safety Meetings may be conducted, under the authority of the District Attorney, to allow the undersigned to discuss and assess specific events or particular individuals whose conduct may pose a threat to the safety of the school community.

Any information shared by police or the Hampden County District Attorney's Office and provided to any school or other agency, employee or representative may only be used for purposes described in M.G.L., Chapter 12, Section 32 and in accordance with the legislative mandates of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H and 37H1/2.

The Hampden County District Attorney agrees to provide training to his staff to inform them of their roles and responsibilities under this agreement. On an on-going basis, the same training will be provided to new staff members.

- **Prosecutorial Alternatives**

  a) Juvenile Diversion

  When appropriate, first-time offenders under age 17 who commit minor misdemeanors will be referred to the Hampden County District Attorney's Juvenile Diversion Program. The Juvenile Diversion Program is an alternative to the court system. The District Attorney's Office will determine whether such offender will be offered this alternative. Participating youth may be required to attend and complete counseling/education programs, perform community service and, when applicable, pay restitution. Youth who successfully complete the Juvenile Diversion Program prior to arraignment may have no court record. Those cases deemed inappropriate for Juvenile Diversion will be prosecuted through the Juvenile Justice System.

  b) Truancy Prevention

  Truancy is a problem that has long-term effect on children, families and the community. The district Attorney's Office agrees to work with SICS to reduce truancy among its students.

  c) Health and Wellness Policies and Procedures

  SICS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff.

  School immunization mandates are under the authority of 105CMR220.00. School immunization requirements exist to protect students and members of their community from serious vaccine preventable disease by ensuring high vaccination rates. SICS follows the Massachusetts Immunization Requirements for students entering and attending school. Medical documentation of immunization administration dates are needed for each student. The annual state immunization chart can be found on the school website, sics.org in the Health Services section.

  A copy of a completed physical exam is required for kindergarten students and new incoming students. An updated PE is required for students in grades 4,7, and 10. Parents should send in a copy of any annual PE to the school nurses for a health record update.

  d) Health Screenings

  School-based health screenings are mandated by M.G.L. chapter 71, section 57, and by the Department of Public Health. They are conducted to detect concerns that may require further medical consultation. The screenings are conducted by the school nurse or a trained staff member. Vision, hearing, postural, BMI and SBIRT screenings are conducted during the school year depending upon the student's grade

Parents will be notified of any concerns in writing and recommended that they consult their health care provider for consultation.

Kindergarten screenings must include a vision screening conducted by a physician.

e) Illness and Exclusion Policy

If a student shows symptoms of illness such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or severe sore throat, the student should not come to school until the seriousness of the condition has been determined or they are symptom free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. If a student shows such symptoms at school, the student will be sent to the Health Office for assessment. Parents will be contacted to have the student picked up at school.

f) Return to school

Parents should notify the school nurse immediately if a student has been diagnosed with an infectious illness. The school nurse will work with the parents to create a 'return to school' plan based on the diagnosis and current symptoms. School staff will be notified on an as needed basis.

SICS follows isolation and quarantine guidance as prescribed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. There are disease/condition specific guidelines that apply to how long a student needs to be out of school should a communicable disease/condition occur. For more information, please contact your physician or the school nurse.

g) Doctor/Dentist Appointments

Parents must come to the school office to remove a student from school for a medical or dental appointment. Students cannot be released from class unless a parent or guardian is present.

h) Administration of Medication

Prescription medication is administered at school only when a doctor's written order and a parent's written consent is obtained. Medication is dispensed in the nurse's office. An adult should deliver the medication to school in the original pharmacy bottle with the student's name on it. Narcotics will not be dispensed in the school setting. Students requiring this level of pain relief should remain at home. The only exception is children with a documented chronic illness whose physician has reported that Tylenol with Codeine is indicated during school. This will be discussed and approved on an individual basis with the school nurse. Students may carry certain prescribed medication with MD, parent and school nurse approval.

Medications left in the health office at the end of the school year will be disposed of.

i) Over the counter (OTC) medication:

For students in grades 6 through 12 only, the school physician authorizes the periodic use of Tylenol, antacids, cough drops, and Bacitracin ointment. The school nurse, at her discretion, dispenses these over-the-counter medications. The OTC form will be sent home at the beginning of the school year and must be returned, signed by a parent, before OTC medication can be administered.

Any other over-the- counter medications cannot be dispensed without a physician's order and parent consent.

For students in grades K through 5, the school nurse can only dispense over-the-counter medication (Tylenol, cough drops, cold/allergy medications, etc.) with a physician's order and written parent consent. These medications must be dispensed in the health office.

j) Wellness Policy

Policy Intent

SICS strongly believes that students and staff need access to healthy food choices and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive. There is a growing concern about childhood obesity and related diseases. The New Massachusetts School Nutrition Regulations for Competitive Foods and Beverages, 105 CMR 225.000, is an initiative that aims at combating childhood obesity by offering students/staff, foods and beverage choices that will enhance learning, contribute to their healthy growth and development and cultivate life-long healthy eating behaviors.

In compliance with Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 of the Child and WIC Reauthorization Act, we believe community participation is essential to the development and implementation of a successful wellness policy. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

SICS will strive to meet the following goals:

- Maintain a Wellness Team
- Compliance with Nutritional Guidelines and Standards for Schools
- Compliance with Nutritional Education for staff, students, parents/guardians, and the community
- Maintain Physical Education and Physical Activity opportunities
- Promote a healthy lifestyle for staff, which promotes a healthy school climate
- Compliance with Policy Review and Monitoring
- Compliance with Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals
- Compliance with Standards for competitive foods and beverages sold or provided during the school day
- Recommendations/Guidelines for competitive foods and beverages sold outside school at concession stands or school sponsored events.

References:

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204, P.L. 108-265. Healthy Students,

Healthy Schools: Guidance for implementing the MA School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages. Developed by: MA Department of Public Health, MA DESE, John Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health and Boston Public Health Commission The Child Nutrition Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C. 1771-1789
www.fns.usda.gov/end/goverance/legislation/implementation timeline.pdf
www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-inmotion/school-nutrition-guide.pdf
www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/nprograms/nslp.html
www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/goverance/legislation/Pricing-Equity-Facts.pdf

k) SICS Wellness Protocol

1. SICS will strive to maintain a Wellness Team

The main purpose of the Wellness Team is to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, make recommendations on revisions to the Wellness Policy.

2. Nutritional Guidelines and Standards for School Meals- The Food Service

Program will continue to follow the USDA requirements for the Federal School Meals Program and the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children.

3. The nutritional requirements for school lunches:

    I. Must provide 1/3 the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for:
    - Calories
    - Protein
    - Vitamin A
    - Vitamin C
    - Calcium
    - Iron

4. No more than 30% of an individual's calories will come from fats and less than 10% of the calories will come from saturated fats.

    - Meals will be appealing and attractive to students
    - Meals will be served in a clean and pleasant setting 145
    - Meals will meet nutritional requirements established by local, state and federal regulations
      wwfns.usda.gov/end/goverance/legislation/implementation/timeline.pdf

5. Implementation of most meal requirements in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was issued during the 2012-2013 school year.

    * Fiber rich fruits, vegetables and whole grains will be offered (see timeline link for grains component) SICS currently participates in the Massachusetts Farm-to-School Program and purchases fresh produce directly from a Massachusetts farmer.

    * Milk served will contain less than 2% or less of fat. (See timeline link for new milk guidelines) This nutritional information will be available on menus, the district website and menu boards.

6. Mealtimes and scheduling

    * Twenty minutes per day will be provided to students for lunch time

    * Lunch periods are scheduled mid-day

    * Tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities will not be scheduled during mealtimes, unless student is able to eat during the activity

    * Students will have access to hand washing before they eat meals or snacks

    * Students with oral health needs, if appropriate, will have access to care.

- **Requirements of Food Service Staff:** Qualified nutritional professional will serve the school meals and have access to continued professional development opportunities. These programs will include appropriate certification or trainings for the Food Service Director, school cafeteria managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility. Annual training will include Life Threatening Allergy Awareness, Choking and Medical Emergency Protocol training.

- **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**: SICS will follow the district wide policy of "no sharing" of any foods or beverages, given concerns about allergies and some diet restrictions.

- **Compliance with Nutritional Education** for staff, students, parents/guardians and the community

    a) Communication with Parents/Guardians:
    SICS will support parent/guardian's efforts to provide healthy meal choices and daily physical activity for their children. School staff will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks.

    SICS will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day; and support parent/guardian's efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity, healthy food choices and physical education through a website, newsletter or other take-home materials, special events or physical education homework.

b) Food Marketing:

School-based food marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. Schools will promote food and beverage marketing that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will not promote low nutrition foods and beverages. Health foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products will be encouraged.

Marketing techniques that are unacceptable include: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low nutrition food products.

- **Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

a) **Physical Education** (P.E) K-12: All students in grades K-12 will be offered physical education and will be taught by certified physical education teachers.

b) **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**: Students needopportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. The nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity is at least 60 minutes per day. Therefore:

1. classroom education should complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to decrease screen time and sedentary activities.

2. opportunities for physical activity should be incorporated into other subject lessons.

3. classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

c) **Daily Recess:** All elementary students will have supervised recess, preferably outdoors, weather permitting, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity is encouraged.

d) **Promote a healthy lifestyle for staff:**

SICS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will encourage activities that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Healthy students and healthy staff promote a healthy school climate.

1. Encourage all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness

2. Improve staff morale

3. Create a positive role model for the students

4. Encourage the commitment from staff to promote the health of students

5. Encourage the commitment from staff to help improve school nutrition and a physical activity environment

e) **Nutrition and physical activity educational resources** will be available to all staff. This may include the distribution of educational materials and access to presentations and workshops that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles, fitness activities and other appropriate nutrition and physical activity related topics.

1. Compliance with Policy Review and Monitoring:

    * Monitoring: The Director or designee will ensure compliance with the current SICS nutrition and physical activity wellness policy and protocol as well as ensuring compliance with this policy. School food service staff, at the individual schools and the district level, will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and protocol within food service areas and report any concerns to the Food Service Director.

The Director or designee will develop a summary report every three years regarding districtwide compliance with the current wellness policy.

    * Policy Review: The Health Advisory Council will assess and review the wellness policy and protocol as needed.

2. Compliance with Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals:

    * Free and Reduced Meals: SICS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to students that are eligible for free/reduced school meals. Electronic identification and a payment system promote the availability of school meals to all students. Applications for free/reduced lunch are available at school. Local school food authorities set their own prices for full-priced meals. www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/legislation/Pricing-EquityFeds.pdf)

    * In addition to cash reimbursements, schools are entitled, by law, to receive commodity foods. Under the School Meals Initiative, USDA also provides schools with technical training and assistance, to help school food service staff prepare healthy meals, and nutrition education to help children understand the link between diet and health. (www.doe.mass.edu/cap/nprograms/nslp.html)

3. Compliance with Standards for Competitive Foods and beverages sold or provided during the school day:

    * All foods and beverages sold individually (foods or beverages sold outside of reimbursable school meal program: a la carte, vending machines accessible to students, fundraising activities, snacks, rewards and celebrations) The regulations apply to competitive foods and beverages sold or provided to students thirty (30) minutes before the beginning of the school day until thirty (30) minutes after the school day ends. However, foods and beverages sold in vending machines, accessible to students, must comply

with the standards at all times. School districts are encouraged to go beyond the minimum standards to establish local protocols that apply the food and beverage standards at all times to promote a healthy school environment throughout the entire day. All vending machines, accessible to students, will only offer water, 100% fruit juice or vegetable juice and milk or milk substitutes.

4. Foods & Beverages: Water must be made available to all students during the day without charge. Fresh fruits and non-fried vegetables will be for sale where food is sold. The use of a fry-olator is prohibited.

Nutrition information will be available for non-prepackaged competitive foods and beverages served in the cafeteria.

- 100% fruit and vegetable juice, with no added sugar and 4 oz. serving or less
- Low-fat and fat-free milk; 8 oz. serving or less.
- Flavored milk with no more than 22 grams of sugar per 8 oz.
- Water may contain natural flavorings and/or carbonation but should not contain added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners.
- Flavored milk or milk substitutes that have the same amount or less sugar than plain, fat-free or low-fat milk are allowed.
- Other beverages like soda, sports drinks, teas, etc. are not allowed. Only 100 % fruit/vegetable juice, milk, milk substitutes and water may be sold or provided.
- Foods should be 200 calories or less per item.
- A la carte entrees should not exceed the calorie count of entrée items of the equivalent portion size offered as part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- Foods should have less than 35% of their total calories from fat.
- Foods should have less than 10% of their total calories from saturated fat.
- All foods should be trans fat-free.
- 1 oz. serving of seeds and reduced-fat cheese are exempt from the fat standards.
- Foods should have less than 200 mg of sodium per item.
- A la carte entrees should have a maximum of 480 mg of sodium per item.
- All breads of grain-based products should be whole grain (whole grain should be listed as the first ingredient) this includes crackers, granola bars, chips, bakery items, pasta, rice
- Trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine (such as that found in chocolate) are allowed as long as the item complies with the rest of the nutrition standards.
- Artificial sweeteners in foods are, also, not permitted.
- Ice cream and yogurt products will meet new competitive guidelines.

- A packaged item may contain no more than one serving per package.
- All foods and beverages sold or provided to students will meet all applicable state and federal food safety requirements.

Springfield International Charter School is committed to providing a safe and healthy school environment for all students. Food allergies can be an emergency for both individuals with known allergies and those having an allergic reaction for the first time. According to FARE (Food Allergy Research and Education), 1 in 13 students have a food allergy.

To decrease the risk of allergy emergencies, we have changed our **K-5** protocol for classroom celebrations. Food-related classroom celebrations will now be managed by SICS. We will not allow outside food to be brought into school for any special occasions. Food brought into school will be held and returned as time allows. SICS will provide a monthly food-based celebration for each **K-5** class. This will acknowledge special dates for the students. Student allergy needs will be addressed with the nursing staff prior to classroom celebrations. Students will still be allowed to bring in their individual daily snack.

- Guidelines for Competitive Foods & Beverages sold outside of school hours: School districts are encouraged to apply the nutrition standards at all times. It is important for schools to be consistent in promoting a healthy school environment and implementing the standards 24/7 prevents sending mixed messages to students. SICS promotes healthier choices for the consumer at sporting events concession stands and various Parent Connection fundraising projects. For example, offer foods and beverages that meet the new competitive al a carte and beverage regulations, in addition to the regular food and beverage items sold. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be offered.

- **Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Policy Purpose**
  An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is used to treat victims who experience sudden cardiac arrest. It is only to be applied to victims who are unconscious, not breathing, and have no pulse or signs of circulation. The AED will analyze the heart rhythm and advise the operator if a shock able rhythm is detected. If such rhythm is detected the AED will charge to the appropriate energy level and deliver a shock. SICS utilizes the Samaritan PAD. 911 should be called and an AED should be present at any suspected cardiac arrest.

- **Location of AED units**
  AEDS are located in the Main building lobby, Primary building lobby, Primary gym, HS 2nd floor atrium and concession stand (seasonally). The Athletic department manages their own AEDS. AEDs are kept in a central, accessible location identified by a sign. Designated staff will be trained and certified through The American Heart Association to provide CPR and AED use as needed. Staff shall use the AED solely in the manner that they were trained. Certification is valid for 2 years.

- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):**
  The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a complex federal law passed in 1996, which was intended to reform the health insurance market and simplify health care administrative procedures. This legislation addresses many issues, but the issue with the most potential impact upon

SICS involves privacy provisions which protect the confidentiality of "protected health information." At this time, however, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees HIPAA, has not determined the exact status of public schools with regard to the Act and whether or not they must comply with its provisions. In general, HIPAA's privacy rule requires that health care providers obtain the authorization of a patient's parent or guardian prior to the disclosure of protected health information.

One important exception to the privacy rule allows physicians to disclose immunization information to schools so that they may comply with Massachusetts regulations which state that all children must be immunized in order to be admitted to school, found at 603 CMR § 18.05, 105 CMR § 220.000. In addition, "protected health information" may be disclosed without authorization for public health purposes such as the reporting of disease or injury, child abuse, birth, death, public health surveillance, or public health investigation or intervention.

Most importantly for school districts, students, and parents/guardians, however, is that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has ruled that education records that are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are not considered "protected health information" under HIPAA. Both FERPA and the IDEA provide their own privacy protections to which schools must adhere. Please refer to the handbook sections regarding student records for further information regarding these Acts.

- **Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities Policy Purpose**

  The purpose of the Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities Policy (Policy) is to provide standardized procedures for the school governing the prevention, training, management and return to activity decisions relating to students in grades 7-12 who participate in extracurricular athletic activities and to comply with Massachusetts regulation, 105 CMR 201.000: Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities (Regulations).

- **School Policies**
  This Policy addresses sports-related head injuries sustained by grade 7-12 student-athletes who participate in extracurricular athletic activities as defined by the Regulations but may be applied to all head injuries in students.

  The Athletic Director or other designated school administrator shall be responsible for the implementation of this Policy and related protocols.

  Annual training, approved by the Department of Public Health (DPH), will be provided to coaches, physical education teachers, school nurses, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers and the Athletic Director, in the prevention and recognition of sports-related head injury and associated health risks. Documentation of each person's training shall be recorded and kept on file at the school.

  The following concussion related forms will be used and kept in the student's school health record until the year the student graduates:

  - verification of the completed annual student and parent training.
  - DPH approved Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form (See Appendix I, attached.)

- DPH approved Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form (See Appendix I, attached).
- DPH approved Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (See Appendix I, attached).
- graduated re-entry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

An annual report to include the total number of Report of Head Injury During Sports Forms received and the total number of student athletes with diagnosed or suspected head injuries that occurred during extracurricular athletic activities will be kept on file with the School Nurse and Athletic Director.

The Policy will be reviewed annually and as needed.

Information regarding this policy will be available in the school's Student/Parent Handbook and on the school's website www.springfieldinternationalcharterschool.org

- **School Procedures**

  Prior to participating in school sports, the following persons shall annually complete a DPH approved head injury training program: athletic director, coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, physical education teachers, school physician, school nurses, student athletes, and their parents/guardians. All other school personnel may elect to complete the DPH approved program.

  Educational training is required for all student athletes and their parents/guardians before they are allowed to practice. The school will provide a list of DPH approved online training courses that meet the annual training requirement. If the family cannot access the online trainings, DPH approved training forms will be available in the Athletic Office.

  If the student athlete returns a completed form regarding training, and the parent/guardian of the student does not return completed forms, the school will contact the parent/guardian to request the required forms.

  The DPH approved written training materials are available in English and Spanish. At the written request from a parent/guardian, the school will provide written training materials in the language of the student athlete's parent/guardian.

  Annually, the school will maintain records of completed training for all persons specified by the Regulations through either of the following:

  - certification of completion from a DPH approved online course.
  - a signed acknowledgment that the individual has read and understands the DPH approved written materials.
  - Documentation and Review of Head Injury and Concussion History
  - Prior to the start of each sport's season, the student athlete and the parent/guardian shall complete and submit a current Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form.

- Prior to each sport season, coaches will review all Pre-participation forms in order to identify student athletes who are at greater risk of repeat head injuries.
- Prior to each sport's season, the school nurse will review all Pre-participation forms indicating a history of head injury.
- The school will use a student athlete's history of head injury or concussion as a factor to determine degree of participation and/or specific modifications of participation in an extracurricular athletic activity.

The Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form will be available in the Athletic Office, the Nurse's Office, or from the school coaches. This form will be completed by coaches if a head injury occurs during practice or competition. The form is also used by parents if the student athlete's head injury occurs during the sports season but not while participating in a school sporting event.

Emergency Referral/Exclusion from Play

Any student athlete, who during a practice or competition sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, will be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to practice or competition that day.

Any student athlete will be transported to the nearest medical facility if any of the following signs and or symptoms are noted:

- loss of consciousness
- unsteady gait
- decreasing level of consciousness
- abnormally unequal, dilated or unreactive pupils
- suspected neck/spine injury
- mental status change- lethargy, confusion, agitation, weakness/numbness, slurring of speech
- headache that worsens over time
- nausea or vomiting

The coach will communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent/guardian in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which the student athlete has been removed from play for a head injury or symptoms of suspected concussion. The coach must also provide this information to the parent/guardian in writing, either paper or electronic, by the end of the next business day. This can be in the form of a Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form. The coach will complete a Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form upon identification of a student athlete with a head injury or symptoms of a suspected concussion. This form will be turned into the Athletic Director by the end of the next business day.

The coach will communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Athletic Director and School Nurse that the student athlete has been removed from practice/competition for a head injury or symptoms of suspected concussion.

Medical Clearance and Authorization to Return to Play

Each student athlete who has been removed from practice/competition for a head injury or symptoms of suspected concussion will obtain and present to the Athletic Director or School Nurse, the DPH approved Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form, prior to resuming extracurricular athletic activity.

Only a duly licensed physician, a duly licensed athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician, a duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician, or duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the student athlete's physician managing the recovery, may complete, the Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form, authorizing a student athlete to return to play.

The final return to play decision is a medical decision, made in consultation with a parent/guardian, the primary care provider, the school nurse and additional school staff as appropriate.

Graduated Reentry Plan

Every student athlete who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion will have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academics and extracurricular activities. The student athlete must be completely symptom free and medically cleared in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities.

The written Graduated Reentry Plan will be developed by a school-based team including but not limited to the principal guidance counselor, school nurse, athletic director, certified athletic trainer (if on staff), parent/guardian and the student's physician. The plan will include instructions and recommendations for the student, the parent/guardian, and school personnel, addressing but not limited to:

- A plan for communication and coordination between school personnel, the parent/guardian and the student athlete's physician.
- Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate.
- Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations and modifications as needed.
- Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities.
- Frequency of assessments by the student athlete's physician, school certified athletic trainer or school nurse, until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized.

Information concerning a student's athlete's history of head injury and concussion, recuperation, graduated reentry plan, and authorization to return to play and academic activities will be shared with all necessary academic staff and coaching staff.

Responsibilities of the Athletic Director

1. Complete the annual training requirement.

2. Participate in annual review of this Policy.

3. Ensure that all student athletes meet the physical examination requirements consistent with Massachusetts regulations 105 CMR 200.00 prior to participation in all extracurricular athletic activity.

4. Ensure that annual training requirements for student athletes, parents, staff, coaches and volunteers are met, recorded and maintained.

5. Ensure that all student athletes have completed and submitted Preparticipation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Forms prior to each season.

6. Ensure that Pre-participation Forms are reviewed according to the Policy.

7. Ensure that Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Forms are completed by the parent/guardian or coach, and reviewed by the coach, school nurse or certified athletic trainer, or school physician.

Responsibilities of the Coach

1. Complete annual training requirements.

2. Record and review the Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Forms with prompt transmission to the school nurse for review.

3. Complete a Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form upon identification of a student athlete with a head injury or suspected concussion that occurred during practice or competition.

4. Receive, review and share with the Athletic Director, Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form completed by a parent/guardian after an incident outside of an extracurricular athletic activity.

5. Teach techniques aimed at minimizing sports-related head injuries while discouraging and prohibiting student athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous techniques.

6. Identify student athletes with suspected head injuries which occur in practice or competition and remove them from play.

7. Have prompt communication with the parent/guardian of any student removed from practice or competition due to head injury or suspected concussion.

Responsibilities of a Certified Athletic Trainer

1. Complete annual training requirement.

2. Participate in the annual review of this Policy.

3. Review Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Forms and Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form to identify student athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

4. Identify student athletes with suspected head injuries that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play.

5. Participation in the Graduated Reentry Plan and implementation for student athletes who have been diagnosed with a concussion or head injury.

Responsibilities of the School Nurse

1. Complete annual training requirement.

2. Participate in the annual review of this policy.

3. Review Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Forms and Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Forms to identify student athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

4. Maintain all DPH forms in the student health record.

5. Participate in the Graduated Reentry Plan for student athletes who have been diagnosed with a concussion or head injury, to discuss any necessary accommodations or modifications with respect to academics and other aspects of school activities and revise the health care plans as needed.

6. Monitor recuperating student athletes with head injuries and collaborate with teachers, staff and student athlete to ensure that the Graduated Reentry Plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities is being followed.

7. Provide updated and current educational materials on head injury and concussion to all school staff and students.

Emergency Procedures

For the health and safety of your students any changes in phone numbers or emergency contacts should be reported to our front office staff.

Minor/non-life-threatening accidents

Any accident requiring a visit to the nurse requiring nursing care is documented in the student's health record. School nurses will use their discretion in determining whether a phone call home is warranted.

Major Accidents/life threatening accidents

The school nurse or a staff member carries out immediate first aid. The school nurse or school designee will determine if 911 should be called and a staff member will start that process. The parent will be contacted. In cases when the parents or emergency contact cannot be reached, emergency care will be provided including 911 transport as needed. Staff will continue to try to reach the parent or emergency contact. A staff member will accompany the student to the hospital and stay until the parent arrives. In case of extreme emergency, staff may contact the local emergency unit before calling the parent.

For Your Information School Closings or Late Starts

SICS will close when the Springfield Public Schools close and local radio and television stations will announce closing information. Look for information about the Springfield International Charter School

on www.wggb.com and www.wwlp.com . Only under extreme circumstances will school be closed once students have arrived. Closings during the day are also announced on local radio and television stations.

School Breakfast/Lunch Program

The breakfast and lunch program for SICS will be managed by Sodexo School Services and the Springfield Public Schools. Parents/guardians will be notified at the start of the school year about school lunch and milk program prices. Students may continue to bring a lunch from home.

Microwaves are NOT available for student use.

Advertisements, Solicitations and Sales of Fundraising Items

Although business and service agencies have a legitimate and collaborative role with SICS, a distinction must be made in the case of business promotion for private gains through school-based advertisements and solicitations.

The following guidelines apply:

1. Permission to post bulletins must be pre-approved by the Director/designee if a program or service for youth by a local non-profit agency is announced.

2. The Director/designee determines which materials may be distributed to students.

3. Direct sales by outside vendors to students are prohibited. School administrators may provide lists of vendors carrying certain items for pre-authorized sales and/or permit student organizations to sell products on a controlled basis. (e.g. school store, class sales).

4. Announcements through the Director's office may be made for anything connected with charitable organizations that are nationally recognized.

5. No organization (except the Parent Connection, Booster Club, and recognized school groups) may use the school facilities for communication, advertisement, or commercial sales purposes without the approve of the Director/designee.

SICS students are NOT allowed to sell fundraising items at the school for the benefit of outside organizations. The selling of these items can be disruptive to class time and therefore is not permitted

Social Security Numbers

Each student is asked to voluntarily inform the school of his/her Social Security number for uniform record-keeping purposes. Including this information in the cumulative record does not change the privacy of student records.

Parent Connection

The SICS encourages an atmosphere in which parents, administration, and faculty join in a partnership to ensure each child's success. The school's "Parent Connection" organization was formed to "create an optimum environment for parents to facilitate communication between The School and parents."

The goals of the Parent Connection are as follows:

- Increase communication among parents, staff, and students.
- Provide more interaction among parents; and
- Provide a structure for parent volunteer activities.

All parents are automatically members of the Parent Connection and can freely join any committees or activities.

For additional information regarding the Parent Connection, please contact the school.

Extended Day Program:

The Extended Day Program is offered on-site for a reasonable fee to SICS parents and guardians to assist in the before and after-school care of their students. The program is designed for students in grades K through 5. The fees (per student) are as follows:

- AM fee is nine ($9.00) for all or any part of the program time from 7:00AM to the start of the school day
- PM fee is twelve ($12.00) for all or any part of the program time from dismissal to 6:00PM
- A ten ($10.00) penalty will be assessed for each 5-minute increment for students arriving before 7:00AM or remaining after the 6:00PM deadline for pickup.
- If early drop-offs or late pick-ups continue to occur on a regular basis, other childcare arrangements will have to be made.

SICS Extended Day program is run on funds collected. If funds are not collected on a weekly basis, the program may not be offered.

Parents may use this program on a regular basis or on an as needed or emergency basis.

For parents utilizing the program on a regular basis, the fee for this program is to be PREPAID; meaning payments must be made in advance for the upcoming week. On an emergency or as- needed basis, payment is expected when the parent picks up and signs out their child. IF PAYMENTS ARE NOT RECEIVED ON A TIMELY BASIS AS OUTLINED IN THE INFORMATIONAL PACKETS, YOUR CHILD WILL BE INELIGIBLE TO ATTEND THE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM; TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM IS AUTOMATIC. ALSO, ANY STUDENT WITH AN OUTSTANDING BALANCE IS INELIGIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM FOR THE UPCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR IF THE BALANCE IS NOT CLEARED BY THE LAST DAY OF JUNE.

To ensure the safety of all children participating in the program, an adult/guardian MUST come into the building to pick up the student and initial the sign-out sheet. Your child will not be released unless this procedure is followed.

All students are expected to follow the SICS Code of Conduct throughout their extended day enrollment. Disciplinary infractions will be brought to the attention of the program director. Repeated infractions will result in termination from the Extended Day Program.

We offer the program on all regularly scheduled days of school, with the following exceptions:

- Scheduled Early Dismissal Days – morning Extended program only; no afternoon program.
- Morning Delay due to weather – The Extended Day program is delayed by the same amount of time. Please, do not drop off your child until the appropriate time, as supervision will not be available or the ten ($10.00) penalty for each five-minute increment will be assessed.
- Early dismissal due to weather – No pm extended day program held.
- Snow days, vacation, days off – No program.

Specific information regarding the location, fees, and hours of the Extended Day Program will be available in the administrative offices. Please contact Mrs. Cynthia Redmond, Extended Day Coordinator, after 2:30 p.m. at 413-783-2600 or 413-200-2057 after 4:00 p.m. for any information regarding the Extended Day Program or via email credmond@sics-mail.net.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA):

The Environmental Protection Agency, as part of its regulation of asbestos in schools, requires that schools notify parents/guardians and employees that an asbestos management plan is on file and available for review at school. SICS was inspected and no asbestos-containing materials were found in the school. The asbestos management plan is available for inspection during normal business hours. For additional information or questions, please contact Derek Conway, Director of Operations or Tim Tynan, Asbestos Program Manager, at (413) 783-2600.

Legal References:

SICS intends to follow all mandates of state and federal law and all provisions issued by the Board of Education. The following legal references apply:

- Title II, of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
- Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
- Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
- MGL c. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

- MGL c. 71; Sec. 37H, 37H1/2, 37H3/4 (student handbooks required to state disciplinary measures applicable to "violations of other students' civil rights")
- MGL c. 76; Sec 5 (prohibition of discrimination "on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation", in access to "advantages, privileges, and courses of study of [local] public school".)
- MGL c. 151C (Fair Education Practices Act, includes prohibition of sexual harassment)
- MGL c. 214; Sec 1B (right of privacy)
- MGL c. 214; Sec 1C (right of freedom from sexual harassment)
- MGL c. 12; Sec 11H and 11I (prohibition of threats, intimidation, or coercion interfering with someone's legal rights)
- MGL c. 265; Sec 37 (criminal penalties for the use of force or threats to interfere with someone's legal rights)
- MGL c. 265; Sec 39 (increasing penalties for assaults, batteries, and property damage motivated by bias on grounds of race, religion, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation)
- MGL c. 266; Sec 127A (criminal penalties for vandalism of a school)
- Board of Education Chapter 622 Regulations Pertaining to Access to Equal Educational Opportunity, adopted 6/24/75, amended 10/24/78
- Board of Education, Chapter 766 Regulations 10/74 – amended through 3/28/78, 603 CMR 26:00
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- 20 U.S.C. Sec 4071-74
- 20 U.S.C. Sec 1415
- MGL c. 71, Sec 37H
- MGL c. 71, Sec 37H 1/2
- MGL c. 71, Sec 37O

APPENDIX A

Springfield International Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

SICS is committed to providing all our student's equal educational opportunities in a safe and respectfully learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. SICS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

Our commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. SICS will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, intimidation, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school building, on school grounds, or in school related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore everyone's sense of safety.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to address bullying and cyber-bullying. SICS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber- bullying, and retaliation. The Schools' Director and Administrative staff are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan.

This commitment is essential to the school's vision of educational excellence and is further strengthened by Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) c. 71, §370, Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, prohibiting all forms of bullying and retaliation in all Massachusetts public and private schools. In accordance with this legislation, SICS has developed the following Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Definitions
In developing the Plan and related policies and procedures, SICS will utilize the following definitions.

Aggressor: is a student or staff member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach and advisor who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying: as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property or

creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purpose of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

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

Hostile Environment: as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Perpetrator: a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, who engages in bullying or retaliation.

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

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

Victim/Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

School grounds: School grounds are the property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school for a school sponsored activity, function program, instruction or training.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall develop, adhere to and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The plan shall apply to students and members of the school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses.

School personnel at all levels of the SICS will play a critical role in implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. All school personnel have a role in teaching students, directly and by example, to be civil to one another and promote an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. The Administrative team is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up to date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. The Administration will involve representatives from the greater school and local community in further developing, implementing, and evaluating the Plan. Planning and Oversight will be the responsibility of the Director/designee and will include:

- Receiving all reports on bullying.
- Collecting and analyzing school data on the prevalence of bullying and developing measures to assess problems and to measure improved outcomes.
- Improve the school's process for recording and tracking incident reports, for collaborating with law enforcement when needed, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors.
- Planning and implementing supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors.
- Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school will use.
- The Director, with the assistance of the Administrative Team, will be responsible for developing new policies, or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of the implementation.
- The Administration will be responsible for amending the Student/Parent and Staff Handbooks and developing parent information materials.
- Reviewing and updating the Plan each year or more frequently if needed.

Training and Professional Development

The Plan must reflect the requirements under M.G.L. c.71, §370 to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurse, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. The law lists the following six topics that must be included in professional development:

1. Developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying.
2. Developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies form immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents.
3. Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying.
4. Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment.
5. Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying.

6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Existing and annual training for all staff includes, but is not limited to the following: Students Records and Confidentiality, FERPA-20 U.S.C. 1232G, IDEA-20 U.S.C. 1400, Civility Policy, Anti Hazing Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy and the Physical Restraint Policy. Additional training and professional development will be provided based on needs and concerns identified by the Administration.

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

Additional topics may be identified by the school leadership as they consider the unique needs of the school community. The school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan and sections of the Plan related to staff duties will be included in the Employee Handbook.

Access to Resources and Services

A key aspect of promoting positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The Plan describes strategies for providing support and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's capacity to prevent and respond effectively to bullying, services should reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets, aggressors and their immediate family members.

Bullying prevention and intervention is a collective effort and priority for all staff. Students who may be either targets or bystanders are taught to seek help from a trusted adult, therefore, training for all personnel in the identification and response to bullying is the first step in ensuring that available resources are made available to targets, aggressors, witnesses and others impacted by bullying behaviors. Key staff includes Principals, school nurses, guidance and adjustment counselors, Special Education staff, paraprofessionals, support staff, teachers and administrators.

School Counselors are trained to assist in the delivery of universal prevention and social competency programs such as Second Step, Aggressors and Victims, Bystanders, and behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups and individually focused curricula. The School Psychologist and School Adjustment Counselors are trained in more intensive interventions. The Administration has and will develop safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation. They will provide social skills programs to prevent bullying and offer education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. When appropriate, interventions may include collaboration with other community agencies and service providers in support of students with more targeted needs.

For students with disabilities, as required by M.G.L. c. 71B, §3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

When necessary, the school will refer students to outside mental health services. Linkage protocols have been developed with the Behavioral Health Network/Child Guidance Clinic, the Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Children and Families to improve access to community-based services when appropriate. There is an understanding between the School, Local Law Enforcement and the Hampden-County District Attorney's Office that establishes protocols for cooperation and sharing of information.

Appropriate family members of targets and aggressors will be encouraged to meet with one of the schools' Counselors or Administrative Staff, who have been trained to assist in the delivery of universal prevention and social competency programs. Family members may also be referred to outside/community-based agencies based on their assessed needs.

Academic and Non-Academic Activities

The law requires that SICS provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's curricula. Curricula will be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. For specific bullying prevention approaches the Director/designee will research curricula that emphasizes the following approaches: using scripts and role plays to develop skills; empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance; helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance; emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies; enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference. Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. General teaching methods that will be used at SICS to support the bullying prevention efforts are as follows:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines.
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students.
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline.
- Using positive behavioral supports.
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students.
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors.
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development.
- Using the Internet safely.

- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

- The director/designee will review the Plan yearly or as needed with all students in age-appropriate settings.

Policies/Procedures for Reporting/Responding to Bullying and Retaliation
To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, SICS has established policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff members, students, parents and others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. Reports made by students, parents/guardians, or other individuals who are not school members, may be made anonymously. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Director/designee. The school staff member is required to report immediately to the Director/designee any instance of bullying or retaliation he/she becomes aware of or witnesses. The requirement to report to the Director/designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respect behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

The school will ensure that a variety of school-based reporting resources are available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form that will be available in the Main Offices, the nurses' offices, the school counselors' offices, and on the school's website sics.org. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents/guardians. At the beginning of each school year, SICS will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents/guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Director/designee, will be included in the Student/Parent and Staff handbooks.

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Director/designee will take steps to access the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. SICS expects anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Director/designee immediately. The Director/designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

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

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director/designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Director/designee contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00. See student handbook for more specific information regarding student safety.

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school; the Director/Designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the director/designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Director/designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Civil Rights Administrator will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Director/designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

The Director/designee will investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so; will consider all available information known. During the investigation, the Director/designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents/guardians, and others as necessary. Whoever is conducting the investigation will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witness that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. The Director/designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bulling and retaliation will be consistent with the school's policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Director/designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

After the investigation, if bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Director/designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities.

The director/designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Director/designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent/guardian unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

In response to bullying, the SICS will utilize an array of skill-building strategies and/or individualized interventions to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation. Upon the Director/designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred; the school will use a

range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, §370(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the Director/designee may consider include:

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

If the Director/designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action. If it is determined that disciplinary action is appropriate, it will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's Student/Parent Handbook. (Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.)

The Director/designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to restore the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. Within a reasonable period of time, the Director/designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the bullying and whether additional supportive measures are needed.

Collaboration with Families

The school has implemented strategies to engage and collaborate with families in order to increase the awareness of bullying and cyber-bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents/guardians. The school will offer educational programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the components of the anti-bullying curricula. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Parent Connection (PC), Booster Club and Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).

Each year the school will inform parents/guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include

information about cyber-bullying, online safety and the School's Internet Safety Policy. All notices made available to parents/guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents/guardians. The school will post the Plan and related information on its website.

Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, §370(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

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

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against someone who reports bullying provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or who has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, §370, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Relationship to Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the school's policies, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents SICS from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or SICS' policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2, other applicable laws, or the schools' policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Massachusetts Statutes: Student Behavior and Discipline

https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/discipline-

APPENDIX B

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:_____Date:_____
(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely based on an anonymous report)

Check whether you are the: ☐ Target of the behavior ☐ Reporter (not the target)

Check whether you are a:

☐ Student ☐ Staff member (specify role)_____☐Parent ☐ Administrator ☐ Other (specify) _____

Your contact information: email _____and telephone number_____

If student, state grade:_____

Information about the Incident:

Name of target (of behavior) *(Victim*): _____

Name of aggressor (person who engaged in the behavior) *(Bully):* _____

Date(s) of incident(s): _____ Time when incident(s) occurred: _____

Location of incident(s) (be as specific as possible): _____

Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other: _____

Name: ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other: _____

Name: ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other: _____

Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred and what each person did and said, including specific words used). *Please attach additional if necessary.*

Check box if the target has been harassed due to membership in a protected class such as (mark as appropriate):

☐Race/color ☐Religion ☐Gender ☐Gender Identity ☐National origin ☐Disability ☐Sexual Orientation ☐Citizenship status

If the box is checked, please identify the protected class, report to the Civil Rights/ Title IX Coordinator, and follow protocols for response.

Signature of person filing this report: _____Date: _____

Completed forms may be submitted to the Principal for your child's grade level.

***** FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY *****

Signature of person receiving this report: _____Date: _____

Return completed Form alleging discrimination to the SSI and Principal.

APPENDIX C

INCIDENT REPORTING GRIEVANCE FORM

1. Name of Reporter/Complainant: _____

2. If you are the Target (of the behavior):

Recipient Name:_____Title: _____

3. Check whether you are a: Student____Staff member_____Parent _____

Administrator_____Other (specify)_____ Phone #: _____

4. Information about the Incident

Name of target of behavior:_____Student___Staff___Other___

Name of Subject:_____Student___Staff___Other___

Date(s) of Incident: _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred:_____Incident Location (be as specific as possible):

_____

_____

Witnesses (List the names of those who saw the incident or have relevant information about the incident):

Name:_____Student:_____Staff Member:_____Other: _____

Name:_____Student:_____Staff Member:_____Other: _____

Name:_____Student:_____Staff Member:_____Other: _____

5. Describe the details of the incident (the names of persons involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used. Use additional paper if necessary.

_____

_____

6. Interference with, intimidation of, and/or retaliation against any individual, including a student, parent, or guardian, for filing a complaint, a grievance or opposing discrimination, is strictly prohibited and shall be treated as an actionable wrongful act in and of itself.

7. Signature of Reporter/Complaint:_____Date: _____

8. Form provided to:_____Position:_____Date: _____

9. Complaint registered by phone or in-person: _____

Return completed Form alleging discrimination to the SSI and Principal.

APPENDIX D

REPORT OF HEAD INJURY DURING SPORTS SEASON FORM

This form is to report a head injury (other than minor cuts or bruises) that occurs during an athletic event. It should be returned to the Athletic Director and reviewed by the school nurse.

For Coaches: Please complete this form immediately after the game or practice for head injuries that result in the student being removed from play due to possible concussion.

For Parents/Guardians: Please complete this form if your child has a head injury outside of school related athletic activities.

Student's Name_____Sex_____Date of Birth_____

Address_____Telephone _____

Sport_____Grade _____

Date of injury: _____

Did the incident take place during a school activity? Yes_____No _____

If so, where did the incident take place? _____

Please describe the nature and extend of injuries to the student:

Name of person completing the form (Please Print): _____

Signature/Date: _____

Relationship to student: (please check one) Coach_____Parent _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

POST SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY MEDICAL CLEARANCE AND AUTHORIZATION FORM

This medical clearance should only be provided after a graduated return to play plan has been completed and the student has been symptom free at all stages (at rest and during exertion). This form may only be completed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner or neuropsychologist involved in the student's recovery.

Student's Name_____Sport_____Sex_____Date of Birth_____Grade _____

Date of injury_____Nature and extent of injury _____

Symptoms (check all that apply):

___Nausea or vomiting

___Headaches

___Light/noise sensitivity

___Dizziness/balance problems ___Double/blurred vision

___Fatigue

___Feeling sluggish- "in a fog"

___Change in sleep patterns

___Memory problems

___Difficulty concentrating

___Emotional changes

___Other

Duration of symptom(s): _____

Diagnosed with concussion? _____

If yes, date student completed graduated return to play plan: _____

****

Name of Physician/Practitioner: _____

Address:_____Phone #: _____

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE-NAMED STUDENT FOR RETURN TO PE AND ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

Signature:_____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Massachusetts Schools Immunization Requirements

Massachusetts school immunization requirements are created under authority of 105 CMR 220.000 Immunization of Students Before Admission to School

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Grades Kindergarten – 6 ¶†

In ungraded classrooms, Kindergarten requirements apply to all students ≥5 years.

DTaP	**5 doses;** 4 doses are acceptable if the fourth dose is given on or after the 4th birthday. DT is only acceptable with a letter stating a medical contraindication to DTaP
Polio	**4 doses;** fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	**3 doses;** laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
MMR	**2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	**2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

§ Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel.

¶ Meningococcal vaccine requirements (see Grades 7-10 and 11-12) also apply to residential students in Grades Pre-K through 8 if the school combines these grades in the same school as students in Grades 9-12.

†Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

See following pages for Grades 7-10, Grades 11-12

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Grades 7 – 12†

In ungraded classrooms, Grade 7 requirements apply to all students ≥12 years.

Tdap	**1 dose;** and history of DTaP primary series or age-appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at ≥7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥10 years since last Tdap
Polio	**4 doses;** fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	**3 doses;** laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
MMR	**2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	**2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

Meningococcal Requirements

Grade 7-10	**1 dose**; 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement
Grade 11-12‡	**2 doses**; second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16th birthday and ≥ 8 weeks after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement

§ Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

†Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) must be renewed annually at the start of the school year and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

‡ Students who are 15 years old in Grade 11 are in compliance until they turn 16 years old.

Individualized Education Program process guide and forms

A general overview of how the special education process works (taken from the IEP guide prepared by the USDOE) can be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep.

For the DESE explanation of the how an IEP is developed, consult the IEP Process Guide and the standard IEP forms available on the DESE Web site: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep.

10.2 Table of abbreviations

Many common special educational phrases are abbreviated by acronyms composed of the initial letters of the phrase. For your convenience the acronyms and phrases used in this document are listed below:

BSEA: Bureau of Special Education Appeals

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CMR: Code of Massachusetts Regulations

DESE: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education

FBA: Functional Behavioral Assessment

IAES: Interim Alternative Educational Setting

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEE: Independent Educational Evaluation

IEP: Individualized Education Program

PRS: Problem Resolution System http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/laws.html

10.3 Table of Web sites

The DESE publishes extensive information for parents and school districts on its internet websites. These Websites include pertinent laws, agency policies and useful documents that explain the special education process.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/07_1ta.html

Bureau of Special Education Appeals
https://www.mass.gov/bsea-decisions-and-rulings
http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/dala/bsea/hearing-rules.doc
http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/dala/bsea/hearing.doc

http://www.mass.gov/anf/hearings-and-appeals/bureau-of-special-education-appealsbsea/mediation/
http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/dala/bsea/mediation-brochure-2012.doc
http://www.mass.gov/anf/hearings-and-appeals/bureau-of-special-education-appealsbsea/mediation/mediation-faqs.html
http://www.mass.gov/anf/docs/dala/bsea/ Consent to Access

MassHealth (Medicaid):
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/13_1.html
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/28mr/28m13.docm

Discipline: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/disc_chart.doc
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: http://idea.ed.gov/.

The Basic Special Education Process under IDEA:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/process.doc Individualized Education Program:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep Individual Education Program Process Guide:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/proguide.pdf Independent Educational Evaluation:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/?section=admin

Observation of Education Programs by Parents and Their Designees for Evaluation Purposes:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/09_2.html Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb.
PRS Problem Resolution System compared to BSEA Due Process Complaint:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/complaintchart.doc

Program Quality Assurance Services Problem Resolution System:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/ Special Education Laws and Regulations:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/laws.html Special Education Surrogate Parent:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2013SurrogateParent.html Special

Education Transition Planning Form:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/28MR/28m9.docx

Student Records Regulations: http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html

Student Records Questions and Answers
http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/cmr 23qanda.html?section.

Transition Planning: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/cspd/mod4.html#

APPENDICES

The link to Appendices provides the updated disciplinary notices regarding suspensions and removals for the 2026-2027 school year.

Please see the link below for the Appendices.

http://sics.org/disciplinary-docs