

DOS AMIGOS
EARLY
CHILDHOOD
CENTER



SCHOOL IN THE SQUARE



DOS AMIGOS

**Dos Amigos/ECC Family
Handbook
2024 - 2025 School Year**

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WELCOME TO DOS AMIGOS

Welcome to Dos Amigos, School in the Square, where our mission is to engage, educate and empower Inwood's promising children, while supporting their families and providing an inspiring working environment for our educators. Our school is defined by three things: academic rigor, dual language instruction and creating a passion for learning.

Our team approaches each student as an individual, with different learning styles, interests, and skills. Teachers come to know students both academically and personally, fostering a nurturing environment that is joyful and facilitates learning and growth. In this way, we hold both our teachers and our students to the highest expectations.

Dos Amigos empowers students by providing enriching experiences that celebrate cultural diversity and are committed to anti-racist education and practices.

We believe that we are building excellent community members. So, we focus on the social emotional as well as academic skills that support success. To thrive in a school environment, students must be engaged. Knowing this, we work to inspire our students and make the experience of learning fun.

Finally, we are, above all, a community of learners; this extends to our staff as much as our students. We encourage and support regular professional development to maintain a culture of betterment throughout the school. We grow our teachers in the same way we want them to grow our students! This makes a dynamic organization that promises to be responsive to its adult and youth community.

Best,

Jumaane Saunders

DOS AMIGOS MISSIONS STATEMENT

School in the Square engages, educates and empowers children and adolescents to respond mindfully and creatively to life's opportunities and challenges. School in the Square is a place where students, families, and educators are seen, heard, and inspired and where students build the academic foundations, emotional intelligence and leadership skills necessary to excel in their futures. School in the Square draws its name from the concept of the public square, where communities gather to solve problems and celebrate successes.



SCHOOL LOGISTICS

DOS AMIGOS SCHOOL CALENDAR

Family Calendar 24-25

Dos Amigos Staff

School Leadership:	
Jumaane Saunders - Principal	jsaunders@schoolinthesquare.org
Zach Zeppieri - Assistant Principal	zzeppieri@schoolinthesquare.org
Tamara Vega - Director of Early Childhood Center	tvega@schoolinthesquare.org
Crystal Lopez - Director of Operations	clopez@schoolinthesquare.org
Josmary Perez - Assistant Director of Operations	jperez1@schoolinthesquare.org
Denise Rivera - Dual Language & Culture Coordinator	drivera@schoolinthesquare.org
Monique Sierra - Student Support Services Coordinator	msierra@schoolinthesquare.org
SEL:	
Shari Drummond - School Counselor	sdrummond@schoolinthesquare.org
Kaylin Herrera - SEL Case Manager	kherrera@schoolinthesquare.org
Family Engagement:	
Genesis Vargas - Family Coordinator	gvargas@schoolinthesquare.org
Operations:	
Aristotele Rivas - Tech Associate	arivas@schoolinthesquare.org
Stephanie Herrera - Operations Aide	sherrera@schoolinthesquare.org
Boris Arias - Operations Aide	barias@schoolinthesquare.org
William Herrera - Culture Aide	wherrera@schoolinthesquare.org
Noel Torres - Facilities Director	ntorres@schoolinthesquare.org
Doris Lluch - Food & Facilities Associate	dlluch@schoolinthesquare.org
Domingo Mieses Hernandez - Food & Facilities Associate	dmieseshernandez@schoolinthesquare.org
ECC Team:	
Andrea Puerta - PreK Teacher	apuerta@schoolinthesquare.org
Claudia Silva - PreK Teacher	csilva@schoolinthesquare.org
Kenye Del Rosario - PreK Teacher	kdelrosario@schoolinthesquare.org
Larissa Acosta - PreK Teacher	lacosta@schoolinthesquare.org
Yary Diaz - PreK Teacher	ydiaz@schoolinthesquare.org

Jessenia Ortiz Espinal - PreK Teacher	jespinal@schoolinthesquare.org
Monica Montanero - PreK Teacher	mmontanero@schoolinthesquare.org
Carmen Hilario- PreK Teacher	chilario@schoolinthesquare.org
AJ Long - PreK Specialist	along@schoolinthesquare.org
Edward Salazar - PreK Specialist	esalazar@schoolinthesquare.org
Melanie Guerrero - PreK Art Specialist	mguerrero@schoolinthesquare.org
Jay Medrano - Office Manager	jmedrano@schoolinthesquare.org
Kindergarten:	
Rosenny Ramirez - Kindergarten ELA	rramirez@schoolinthesquare.org
Zuleira Medina - Kindergarten ELA	zmedina@schoolinthesquare.org
Noemi Santos - Kindergarten ELA	nsantos@schoolinthesquare.org
Wendy Anderson - Kindergarten Associate Teacher	wanderson@schoolinthesquare.org
Rachel Gee - Kindergarten Associate Teacher	rgee@schoolinthesquare.org
Jennifer Ortega - Kindergarten Associate Teacher	jortega@schoolinthesquare.org
1st & 2nd Grade:	
Natalie Chaparro - 1st Grade ELA	nchaparro@schoolinthesquare.org
Jasmine Polanco - 1st Grade ELA	jpolanco2@schoolinthesquare.org
Cecilia Logan - 1st Grade ELA	clogan@schoolinthesquare.org
Charles Silverio da Silva - 1st & 2nd Grade Spanish	csilveriodasilva@schoolinthesquare.org
Sandra Unigarro - 1st & 2nd Grade Spanish	sunigarro@schoolinthesquare.org
Shirley Hernandez - 1st & 2nd Grade Spanish	shernandez@schoolinthesquare.org
Mateo Onori - 1st & 2nd Grade Spanish	monori@schoolinthesquare.org
Darlene Rosario - 1st & 2nd Grade Resident	drosario@schoolinthesquare.org
Bhawna Gupta - 2nd Grade ELA	bgupta@schoolinthesquare.org
Darren Taraza - 2nd Grade ELA	dtaraza@schoolinthesquare.org
Rayhan Arefin - 2nd Grade ELA	rarefin@schoolinthesquare.org
3rd & 4th Grade:	
Teresa Montanero - 3rd Grade ELA	tmontanero@schoolinthesquare.org
Zahirya Kamara - 3rd Grade Math	zkamara@schoolinthesquare.org
Kenia Cruz Guardado - 3rd Grade Teacher	kcruzguardado@schoolinthesquare.org
Alberto Gonzalez-Mohino Pinilla - 3rd & 4th Grade Spanish	agonzalez@schoolinthesquare.org
Ana Ruiz - 3rd & 4th Grade Spanish	aruiz@schoolinthesquare.org
Edwin Trinidad - 3rd & 4th Grade Resident	etrinidad@schoolinthesquare.org
Nozomi Kurihara - 4th Grade Reading	nkurihara@schoolinthesquare.org
Jennifer Gomez - 4th Grade Math	jgomez@schoolinthesquare.org
Carmen Logan - 4th Grade Writing	clogan@schoolinthesquare.org
Sarah Holsberg - 4th Grade Teacher	sholsberg@schoolinthesquare.org

Specials:	
Glauco Lima - Music Teacher	glima@schoolinthesquare.org
Hana Sakamoto - Art Teacher	hsakamoto@schoolinthesquare.org
Sindy Castro - Theater/Movement Teacher	scaastro@schoolinthesquare.org
Steven Cabrera - PE Teacher	scabrera@schoolinthesquare.org
Yadira Rios - Science Teacher	yrios@schoolinthesquare.org
Intervention Team:	
Kishan Singh - Instructional Coach	ksingh@schoolinthesquare.org
Stephanie Santos - Learning Specialist (K + 1st)	ssantos@schoolinthesquare.org
Stephanie Feinberg - Learning Specialist (2nd)	sfeinberg@schoolinthesquare.org
Yvette Harris - Learning Specialist (3rd + 4th)	Yharris@schoolinthesquare.org

Attendance

<p style="text-align: center;">Elementary School School-Wide Preventative and Proactive Interventions for <u>Chronic Absenteeism/Lateness</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">95%+ Attendance is the goal!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Physical and Emotional Health and Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Healthy learning environments ● Welcoming, Safe school climate ● Access to food and other basic needs ● Restorative circles → Belonging, Connection and Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging school climate ● Positive peer connections ● Positive relationships with students and families ● Trimester Attendance Celebration for student with perfect attendance and most improved attendance → Academic Challenge and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to tech and internet ● Learning supports ● Weekly monitoring of attendance/lateness trends by Operations Team ● Home visits for students previously identified as needing additional support → Adult and Student Well-Being and Emotional Competence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative check-ins ● Access to mental health supports by social worker and school counselor ● Trauma-informed practice ● Access to SEL learning curriculum

****Excessive absences and lateness will be addressed by school leadership.**

SAFETY GUIDELINES

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Pre-K:

- ❖ At 7:45am the doors will open for PreK families. They may walk the children to the classroom.
 - **Special Note** : Our Pre-K program will move in the 2024-2025 school year from our Cooper Street campus to our Early Childhood Center at 37 Park Terrace East. Once the program transitions to the Park Terrace campus the doors will open for Pre-K families at 7:30am.

Kinder - 4th

- ❖ (K-4) At 8:15am the doors will open for students to walk up to their classrooms.

LATE ARRIVALS

- ❖ PK families must bring their students to the classroom.
- ❖ K-4 families will sign in after 8:45 at the main entrance. The students will transition to the classroom solo.

LATE PICK-UPS

- ❖ The families will call the main office to advise on the late pick-up.
- ❖ The students will be picked up from the cafeteria.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- ❖ Students are dismissed from the classroom, gym or side yard depending on the admin directions.
- ❖ PreK - 2:45pm dismissal from the classroom
- ❖ Kinder - 3pm
- ❖ 1+2 - 3:15pm
- ❖ 3+4 - 3:30pm

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students will not be dismissed to anyone that is not on their parent approval list. For the safety of our children, notes will not be accepted. If you need to make a last minute change, please call at 718-709-9003. We will not call you back on a non-listed number. Please note we will ask the person picking up the student for a picture identification.

MEALS AND RECESS

Students eat during scheduled meal times at Dos Amigos. Please note we are a **NUT FREE ZONE**. Students are encouraged to bring **plastic water bottles**, which can be refilled during the day at water-filling stations located throughout the building. In addition to lunch, students are provided with a snack once each day. Students participating in after school programs will receive an additional snack. We are a low sugar school and do not allow students to have candy or excessively sweet drinks/soda while in school. Any students with these items will have the item taken away and returned to home.

Recess is the time that allows all students a break. They should feel free to join in any games and should never feel excluded. Organized games of play are supervised in the side yard, backyard, park and gym. During inclement weather and other necessary circumstances, recess takes place in an alternative indoor location.

Please remember that:

- ❖ All students must wear appropriate outerwear to recess if it is below 40 degrees. We want our children to be outside as often as possible, please make sure they are dressed for the weather. Students without appropriate outer clothing will be kept indoors for that day.
- ❖ Generally, recess will take place outdoors if the weather is dry and the temperature is above 32 degrees. Unless conditions are dangerous outside, all classes will go for a nature walk.

DRESS CODE

Encouraging our students to be different is a value that we honor. Our uniform was created for students to have as many looks, variations and combinations as possible. We empower our students to exhibit various forms of expression accompanied with a strong sense of school pride. We believe school unity - in the building and outside - begins with a consistent uniform look. Outside, we want it to be known that our students are a part of a team and a strong caring environment.

Students can combine Dos Amigos uniform pieces to create their own style. Polos must have the Dos Amigos logo. Polos are available in purple, orange, teal and yellow. Dos Amigos sweatshirts, pullovers, and fleeces can be worn over polo shirts. Students can wear any neutral color pants (Examples: Khaki, Navy Blue and Black or Jeans; but no large logos, text, or rips are allowed. Students can wear any closed-toe shoe of their choice (no sandals) - sneakers are preferable.)

Purchasing:

You can shop for uniform items online through the Student Styles website:

<https://yourstudentstyles.com/>

***Grades PK-1st, Please send in a change of clothing labeled with your child's name inside a sealed ziplock bag.**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SCHOOL NURSE

The following services are offered by the nurse's office:

- ❖ Emergency first aid and/or CPR is provided with referrals to appropriate persons (i.e. S2 staff members with CPR/AED Certification)
- ❖ Maintenance of student health records and emergency notification cards
- ❖ Processing of accident reports
- ❖ Dispensing of physician approved medications
- ❖ Monitoring of student injuries
- ❖ Case management and referral

Every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian in the event of an emergency requiring medical attention. In the event there is an emergency requiring medical attention for a student and the

parent/guardian cannot be reached or if the school determines that delay would be dangerous for a child's health, the school's staff members will secure the necessary medical treatment for a child.

Students who require medication during school hours must bring the MAF (Medication Administration form), completed by a physician. Parents must sign the back of this form giving permission to administer medication ordered by the doctor in school. Completed form must be returned to the School Nurse.

Non-prescription medications such as (e.g. cough lozenges, etc.) will be administered only under unusual circumstances and with written parent/guardian authorization. Over the counter medication such as tylenol or motrin and other as needed medications also need a completed MAF. These medications need a pharmacy label with the student's name.

Students at the elementary level will be directed to use their inhaler in the presence of school personnel.

The School Nurse will administer medications when:

- ❖ The medicine is prescribed by a physician.
- ❖ The medicine is in its pharmacy container with written directions.
- ❖ Written permission from the parent/guardian is on file.

MANDATED REPORTING

According to New York State law, all adults in a school building are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and will report suspected child abuse immediately by telephone to the New York Central Registry. A formal written report (Form DSS-2221A) will follow this telephone call to the Student Protective Service office within 48 hours. Our obligation to report includes instances of educational neglect, which includes many factors, including excessive missed school. More than 7 consecutive absences, 10 cumulative absences, or a pattern of excessive tardiness and early dismissal may form the basis of an educational neglect report.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS

- We will practice all procedures so that students are comfortable and understand how to be safe.
- Students must move quickly, silently, in an orderly manner, and follow staff directions.
- Fire and emergency drills will be periodic and may occur under a variety of weather conditions.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In addition to notices provided by local news stations, the school will send an automated phone call to all family members with pertinent updates. DA will follow the decisions of the Chancellor of the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) for delays/school closings related to severe weather or other emergencies. Parents may listen to: WINS (1010 AM), WCBS (880 AM), WLIB (1190 AM), WBLS (107.5 FM), WXLX (620 AM), as well as NY 1 (TV Channel 1), and WNYE-TV (TV Channel 25) to find out about closings/delays.

FERPA NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

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

- ❖ The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day S2 receives a request for access.
- ❖ Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the Executive Director that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Executive Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- ❖ The right to request the School to amend the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- ❖ Parents or eligible students who wish to ask S2 to amend a record should submit a written request to the Executive Director, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- ❖ The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- ❖ One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the S2 Board of Trustees. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- ❖ Upon request, the School will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer; however, the School will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request.
- ❖ The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by DA to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

- ❖ Disclosures that DA may make without parental consent:
 - FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to School officials, disclosures related to some

judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

- DA may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student.
- To other School officials, including teachers, whom the School determines to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions;
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer;
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf;
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid;
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released;
- To organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the School, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; student aid programs; or improve instruction;
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency; and
- Information the school has designated as “directory information”.

FERPA NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that School in the Square Charter School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, DA may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow DA to include this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- ❖ A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- ❖ The annual yearbook;
- ❖ Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- ❖ Graduation programs; and
- ❖ Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs), such as DA, receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Dos Amigos to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School. DA has designated the following information as directory information:

- ❖ Student’s name
- ❖ Address
- ❖ Telephone listing
- ❖ Electronic mail address
- ❖ Photograph
- ❖ Date and place of birth
- ❖ Dates of attendance
- ❖ Grade level
- ❖ Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- ❖ The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- ❖ Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student’s SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

For the safety of students and everyone in the DA community, school property that is assigned to students, including cubbies, and desks, remain the property of the school. Students, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time. School authorities will make an individual search of a student's book bag, desk, closets, cubbies, and person only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in the possession of an item

which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Searches will be conducted under the authorization of the Principal or designee. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from students' desks, backpacks, cubbies, and persons by school authorities.

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT POLICY

S2 will provide a safe and productive learning environment for all students. In accordance with the New York Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), we will promptly address all incidents of harassment and/or discrimination of students that impede students' ability to learn, including any form of bullying, taunting, or intimidation. No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at a school function and we reserve the right to discipline students, consistent with this RB Policy, who engage in harassment of students off of school property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct 1)affects the educative process; 2) actually endangers the health and safety of S2 students within the educational system; or 3) is reasonably believed to pose a danger to the health and safety of our students. This includes written and/or verbal harassment that materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the school and/or which school leaders reasonably forecast as being likely to materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school.

- ❖ Dignity Act Coordinator. DAC Advisor is the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC). The DAC is trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The DAC will be accessible to students and other employees for consultation and advice.

- ❖ Retaliation. S2 prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of harassment. All complainants and those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and School policies, who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

- ❖ Reporting and Investigating. All S2 staff members are responsible for reporting harassment of which they have been made aware to their immediate supervisor. Any student who believes that s/he is being subjected to harassment, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of harassment, shall report the harassment to their teacher or counselor. A staff member who witnesses harassment or who receives a report of harassment shall inform the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall promptly investigate the complaint and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority and/or other official designated by the school to investigate allegations of harassment. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged harasser and victim shall be made to ensure that harassment has not resumed and that those involved in the investigation of allegations of harassment have not suffered retaliation.

If students or families suspect any kind of bullying has occurred, please immediately notify:

Kaylin Herrera

Dignity Act Coordinator

Kherrera@schoolinthesquare.org

COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

School in the square places considerable value on courtesy, respect, and responsibility. We encourage parents/guardians and staff to develop open lines of communication with each other for the benefit of the children attending the school. However, we know that from time to time, grievances arise.

Any parent/guardian who has a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, is encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at DA by telephone or email using the staff contact information found at the beginning of this Handbook. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to parent/guardian concerns. If an issue is not resolved promptly or satisfactorily, please contact the Principal to discuss the matter further.

Jumaane Saunders

Principal

jasaunders@schoolinthesquare.org

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, you can contact the Executive Director.

Evan Meyers

Executive Director

evan@schoolinthesquare.org

Any individual or group may bring complaints or concerns of any kind to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will work to resolve conflicts fairly and informally, as quickly as possible. After reviewing the complaint, the Executive Director will respond either in writing, telephone, or in person depending on the circumstance. If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the complaint to the individual or group's satisfaction, or if the complaint is about the Executive Director, the individual or group may bring their complaint to the S2 Board of Trustees. The complaint may be presented to the Board in an open meeting, in written form, by letter or via email to boardchair@schoolinthesquare.org. The Board of Trustees shall investigate and respond to all complaints in a timely manner, and shall serve as the appeals body for any complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved.

Procedure for Complaints under Section 2855 of the Charter Schools Act alleging a violation of the Charter Schools Act, S2's Charter, or any other provision of law Section 2855(4) of the New York Education Law (part of the New York State Charter Schools Act (CSA)) provides that any individual or group may bring a complaint directly to the Board of Trustees of S2 alleging a violation of the CSA, the School's charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the School. All such complaints should be in writing and include the following:

1. the name, address, and phone number of the complainant;
2. a detailed statement of the complaint, including the specific provision of
3. the School's charter or law that allegedly has been violated;
4. the relief sought by the complainant; and
5. the response, if any, received from the School thus far.

The Board of Trustees will respond to the complaint within the earlier of 30 days of receipt of the formal written complaint or the date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, unless extenuating circumstances outlined in the complaint require an expedited review.

If the complainant believes that the Board of Trustees has not adequately addressed the complaint, the individual or group may then present the complaint to the School's authorizer, the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York (the "Board of Regents"). The process for bringing a complaint to the Board of Regents can be found here: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/complaint.html>.

The Board of Regents has delegated authority to handle complaints concerning charter schools to the Commissioner of Education. The Charter School Office of the New York State Education Department, on behalf of the Commissioner, will investigate and respond to complaints concerning charter schools that have been appropriately filed, and has the power and the duty to issue appropriate remedial orders involving any such complaint.

ACADEMICS

DUAL LANGUAGE

Dos Amigos/ECC is committed to a Dual Language education where acceptance, diversity, inclusion, and respect are the principles that shape the life of our school. We seek to inspire our students to discover and develop their own unique talents. We hold our students to high expectations, capitalize on their strengths-including cultural and linguistic strengths- and provide them with the individualized developmental and learning supports necessary to succeed in school. This is reflected by our rich and varied social, cultural, and academic learning environment.



Our youngest pre-kindergarten students are immersed in the language program as our students learn to interact with both English and Spanish interchangeably in our immersive and self-contained classes.

LITERACY

ECC/Dos Amigos is proud to provide comprehensive literacy instruction. Students have access to varied literature to enable them to develop a love of reading. Our large classroom libraries filled with diverse and engaging literature allow for our students to discover their interests and fuel their intellectual curiosities. Students will further their literacy instruction through abundant guided reading in leveled, small groups; read-alouds, and independent reading.

PHONICS

Phonics instruction is an essential component of our reading program. Our young learners have the opportunity to learn the relationship between the sounds of the spoken language with the letters they relate to in written language. We instruct in Spanish and English for Phonics and all core areas of literacy.

WRITING

We provide our students with daily opportunities to express themselves on paper. With practice, our students become increasingly independent and view themselves as authors, comfortable experimenting with thoughts and illustrations reflective of their own interests and ideas.

CULTURAL STUDIES

Our Cultural Studies program is designed to incite conversation, exploration, and stimulate our students' curiosity about the world around them. Topics explored include Identity, Cultural Celebrations, Our Community History, and Community Interactions and Responsibilities that are meaningful and relevant to our students. Our students learn and explore their social existence by exploring the idea that there are similarities and differences among people everywhere, that they are interdependent, and they are responsible for their communities. We commit to anti-racist education and practices. We work to acknowledge and celebrate differences, fight race based injustice and bias and strive to become changemakers in our community and beyond. Our Cultural Studies curriculum allows students to be confident in their ability to ask questions, share and try out ideas, and pursue their curiosities.

MATH

Students begin with the concrete stage (using math tools and manipulatives), then moving to pictorial (solving problems with pictures representing numbers and their quantities) and finally into the abstract (where numbers represent symbolic values). Students emerge as mathematicians able to think flexibly and use a variety of strategies to deepen their number sense and understanding.

ART

Our students are able to explore and construct with various types of materials such as paper, fabric, clay, recyclables. Students develop fine motor skills through their drawing and painting tools, such as brushes, markers, pencils, crayons and scissors. Students develop understanding of art elements through hands-on projects and discussions. Students grow confident and are joyful in creating and showcasing their artwork throughout the school year.

MOVEMENT

Movement is essential to the growth and health of our students. Through movement, our students develop agility, coordination, strength, and endurance. They also benefit from social skills acquired through movement such as cooperation, teamwork, and safety.

MUSIC

Music allows our students to express themselves, communicate, and bring them together. Our program allows our students to explore music of different genres and in different languages as well as musical storytelling and vocal development through song.

THEATRE

Students are able to express themselves through theater. In theater class, students learn to use their voices, bodies, and imagination to bring characters to life, create their own plays, and perform onstage. Theatre creates a space for students to rehearse speaking their ideas out loud, collaborate as an ensemble, and be the playwrights, actors, directors, designers of their own work. In theater class, students' ideas build on plays and stories to create their own fun, original performing experiences.

SCIENCE

We believe that science is beneficial for elementary kids for several reasons:

1. Curiosity and Exploration: Science encourages children to ask questions and explore the world around them. This innate curiosity fosters a love for learning.
2. Critical Thinking: Engaging in scientific activities helps kids develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They learn to analyze information, make observations, and draw conclusions.
3. Hands-On Learning: Science often involves experiments and hands-on activities, making learning interactive and engaging. This tactile experience can enhance understanding and retention.
4. Understanding the World: Science helps children understand natural phenomena, from weather patterns to the human body, fostering a sense of wonder about the universe.

Our robust science program centers these ideas for children.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports reflect skills, concepts, and content grounded in academic standards from our curriculum that our students experience each year. Progress reports are given 3x per school year. Family-Teacher Conferences will take place 2x a year, with an optional end of the year conference. Teachers will report on student progress, however, teachers and families develop a partnership so families are aware of their student's progress at all times.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Social and emotional learning (SEL) refers to a wide range of skills, attitudes, and behaviors that teach things such as critical thinking, managing emotions, working through conflicts, decision making, and teamwork. We strongly believe that these habits of mind positively impact the success of a student's education, self-esteem, peer relationships, and community engagement. Throughout the school day our staff will integrate SEL components. Students will be involved in activities throughout the day where they will practice skills and begin to gain insight into their minds, behaviors and actions.

Pre-K Curriculum

Here at ECC/Dos Amigos we provide a creative, bilingual immersion program that is designed specifically for all the needs of our students whether monolingual or bilingual. At the present time pre-k lessons are offered daily both in English and Spanish. We utilize the Every Child Ready, Apple Tree curriculum for our pre-k grade level.

Every Child Ready provides a balanced early learning program created to prepare three-and-four-year-old children for kindergarten and beyond. The Every Child Ready program focuses on the children's development across social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and academic areas. Children learn through exploration and purposeful play. Our curriculum is integrated and connected to themes which are often child directed. Our goal is for each child to thrive and reach their potential.

Our program focuses on four key areas of development:

1. **Social-Emotional Development**

- **Goal:** Build confident, responsible, and prosocial individuals.
- **Strategies:** Foster self-esteem, a growth mindset, and a sense of responsibility for oneself and others.

2. **Physical Development**

- **Goal:** Enhance both gross and fine motor skills to support self-care and confidence.
- **Strategies:** Develop abilities that enable personal independence and promote overall well-being.

3. **Cognitive Development**

- **Goal:** Stimulate curiosity, problem-solving, and critical thinking.
- **Strategies:** Encourage exploration, logical thinking, and symbolic representation.

4. **Language Development**

- **Goal:** Advance both receptive (understanding) and expressive (communicating) language skills.
- **Strategies:** Integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing to strengthen cognitive and relational skills.

Learning Centers: Our classrooms feature “learning centers” that align with these developmental goals. Each center is designed to support specific aspects of social, language, and cognitive growth. Teachers use guided questions to encourage exploration and deeper learning within these centers.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

FAMILY COUNCIL

Dos Amigos/ECC is committed to working collaboratively with the families of our community. Family council is open to parents and guardians of the Community. We envision the Family Council as providing a forum for discussion of school issues, seeking the input and guidance of those who attend. Additionally, we value the partnerships we have with our families and will also identify ways that families will be involved in the day-to-day life of the school - as guest speakers in classes, volunteers, and participants in academic representations and forums. We see great potential for a Family Council to help us bring this vision to life. Families will be notified of meetings via flyers and our parent square communication app.



Each classroom has a parent representative and each grade also has a representative, who acts as a liaison between the classroom and home.

FIELD TRIPS AND OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

ECC/Dos Amigos students have the privilege of learning beyond the classroom. We will utilize our neighborhood, parks and public spaces frequently. Field trips are intended to enhance learning and are considered an extension of the classroom. As representatives of the school community, students are expected to uphold our shared commitments even when we are outside of the building; take care of ourselves, take care of each other and take care of this place. Additionally, students are expected to follow instructions and policies of any facility visited; and that students will respect, listen to, and remain with school staff and parent chaperones. In the beginning of the school year we will ask families to sign a walking trip waiver, this will allow teachers the ability to use local parks, take walks, walk to community sites as frequently as deemed appropriate. When we are able to attend longer distance trips, families will be notified in advance and will need to sign and return a permission slip allowing students to attend.

FAMILY CONFERENCES

Our partnerships enable us to invite families to participate in various excursions, share their expertise, and attend Community Celebrations. Conferences further foster family participation and involvement in their child's school life. We always provide translation/interpretation services at all school events.

SCHOOL COMMITMENTS

DOS AMIGOS FAMILIES COMMIT TO:

TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES

- ❖ Accept the education of their children as a joint responsibility with the school community.
- ❖ Set an example of 100% respect for the worth of other persons.
- ❖ Take an antiracist stance.
- ❖ Know and support commitments to the school and help their children understand them.

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

- ❖ Build positive relationships with Dos Amigos staff, other families, and all Dos Amigos friends.
- ❖ Help their children deal effectively with peer relationships.
- ❖ Read to your child nightly.

TAKE CARE OF THIS PLACE

- ❖ Ensure that absences are for excused reasons only with a note upon return.
- ❖ Ensuring that children arrive at school on time and are ready to learn every day.
- ❖ Ensure their children are wearing school uniforms with pride.
- ❖ Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect students
- ❖ Ensure that contact information (address and telephone number) is updated in a timely manner.
- ❖ Maintain updated emergency contacts.
- ❖ Comply and follow up in a timely manner with all communication processes: e.g. notes, phone calls, emails, forms, consents, emergency cards, etc.
- ❖ Attend conferences and meetings when requested.

SCHOOL COMMITMENTS

DOS AMIGOS TEACHERS COMMIT TO:

TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES

- ❖ Be prepared to teach, demonstrate an interest in teaching, and support student achievement.
- ❖ Being a lifelong learner.
- ❖ Laughing everyday.

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

- ❖ Build good relationships with students, their families and caretakers, and with fellow teachers, colleagues, and any visitor to our school.
- ❖ Maintain a calm and peaceful classroom environment.
- ❖ Hold students accountable to be active learners.
- ❖ Establish expectations/rules, classroom procedures and practices that maximize student learning in their classes and support the success of fellow teachers.
- ❖ Protect students' right to learn in a supportive classroom.
- ❖ Support students' social emotional well being.
- ❖ Encourage students to hear new ideas and take risks.

TAKE CARE OF THIS PLACE

- ❖ Designing and maintaining a classroom environment that fosters creativity and exploration.
- ❖ Communicate with the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Team when they receive information about changes in a student's life that may affect student conduct or performance.
- ❖ Communicate regularly with families through frequent communication via; class dojo, phone calls, emails, texts and newsletters.



SCHOOL COMMITMENTS

DOS AMIGOS STUDENTS COMMIT TO:

TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES

- ❖ Wear your school uniform with pride.
- ❖ Do your best everyday.
- ❖ Come to school ready to explore, question and learn.
- ❖ Be a good friend to everyone.

TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

- ❖ Be a good friend to everyone.
- ❖ Be kind, fill someone's bucket everyday.
- ❖ Share with your friends.
- ❖ Wait your turn.

TAKING CARE OF OUR SPACE

- ❖ Put items away when done using them.
- ❖ Take care of all materials.
- ❖ Help our building to always look beautiful.
- ❖ Use all materials in a respectful manner.
- ❖ Respect your friends' property.



S2 DISCIPLINE POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES - RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIORS

At School in the Square, we strive to build and sustain a safe community where all students feel a sense of belonging and are celebrated as well as respected for their uniqueness and individuality. S2 takes a proactive role in promoting social emotional learning by acknowledging when students demonstrate positive behaviors, using affirming and reinforcing language to encourage desired behaviors. S2 staff work diligently to create meaningful relationships with students and opportunities for students to explore their sense of autonomy while also empowering them to make responsible choices. Like all of us, children will have moments in which they make mistakes. Through reflective approaches, students will learn to find and use their voices in order to repair disagreements and engage in acts of empathy and forgiveness. Additionally, S2 strongly believes that family partnerships are the key to student success. Our teachers will maintain ongoing communication with parents/guardians to discuss behavioral expectations, highlight progress towards those expectations, and collaboratively implement steps to gradually replace any misbehavior with responsible behavior.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

S2 adheres to the principles of Restorative Practices, which are grounded in the belief that a person who causes harm to an individual or community should acknowledge and take responsibility for their actions. At S2, we focus on the needs of the people impacted by the harmful behavior and what the person who caused harm can do to make it right. We consider the circumstances involved and explore strategies that will prevent the behavior from recurring. Restorative Practices include reflection (student and staff member process incident), mediation (students involved in community circles or conferences), individual/group conferencing (prep work and series of questions regarding harm done), and making amends through direct action (amicable agreement through circles).

We use Restorative Practices to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within our community. We aim to empower students to understand that their behavior affects others, follow S2 rules and internalize the reasons why we have them. Where appropriate, loss of privileges, referral to the Dean or other school administrator, or disciplinary consequence(s) may accompany a restorative approach. Safety, both physical and emotional, is paramount.

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

S2 employs multiple approaches to providing support to students. Including an SEL team, problem solving strategies, pro-social skill curriculum and student groups to address skill deficits.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION

S2 provides students with time and space to resolve conflicts in a structured and productive manner. This may involve individuals or groups. No student will be forced to participate in conflict resolution activities, but it is highly encouraged as an effective means to repair strains on relationships within the community.

Community Building/Problem Solving: We use Community Building to engage members of the S2 community to develop the following skills: active listening, empathy, sharing, and what their contribution to developing a safe/brave space looks and sounds like.

As part of the prep work before initiating Restorative/Repair after a harmful incident, there are a series of questions used to help give individuals guidance on how to process the event. Individuals should initially be spoken to separately from others involved. Once all parties are able to process and answer all questions in an amicable manner, all parties can be brought together to conduct a conference. A member of the School Leadership Team (SLT) or Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Team will lead the conference and will provide additional support to all parties.

STUDENT RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR CODE

At School in the Square, we want to ensure that there is a fair and consistent Code of Conduct (“Responsible Behavior Code”), so that students know what is expected of them at all times. We have developed a school-wide discipline code that ensures appropriate disciplinary steps are taken when students do not adhere to the Responsible Behavior Code.

Student disciplinary offenses are those actions or inactions that violate the School’s Responsible Behavior Code or interfere with the delivery of educational services, jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school community, or threaten the integrity and stability of the school itself.

The standards set forth in the Responsible Behavior Code apply to behavior:

- at school, whether remote or in person, and/or on school grounds;
- participating in a school-sponsored event or activity, whether remotely or in person;
- walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event or activity;
- walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school provided or district provided transportation; or
- walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored event or activity conducted off school grounds.

School-related disciplinary offenses may also include misconduct outside of the school, such as activity on social media that reasonably could affect the school or learning environment.

School administration will use their professional judgment in determining which disciplinary response(s) will be most effective in dealing with the student’s behavioral challenge, taking into account the following factors:

- The student’s age and maturity level;
- The nature and seriousness of the behavioral incident and the circumstances which led to the incident;
- The student’s previous behavioral history;
- The effectiveness of other forms of intervention or discipline;
- Information from parents/guardians, teachers and/or others, as appropriate;

- The student's attitude; and
- Other relevant factors.

When a student does not meet behavioral expectations and the School's Responsible Behavior Code is not followed, a clear and consistent disciplinary response will ensue, and other consequences as further described below. Progressively more serious disciplinary responses shall be given to any student who repeatedly engages in one or more behavioral challenges. Multiple infractions with the same offense will result in a higher consequence at the discretion of the Principal. Where appropriate, school administration will contact law enforcement authorities.

DOS AMIGOS + EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE - DISCIPLINE CODE

S2 categorizes behaviors (infractions) into three levels. A range of responses for each level appears below. We understand that consistent and fair discipline approaches are necessary to promote effective behavior management. Whenever possible and appropriate, the response to misbehavior will begin with the lowest level of responsible behavior. We hope to create helpful learning experiences that will encourage children to choose responsible behaviors.

Level 1: Uncooperative but Not Unsafe Behaviors

In response to uncooperative behaviors, teachers will begin with non-verbal reminders such as close proximity, eye contact, point to visual cues, tap on the desk, or write a post-it. If a child continues to show these types of behaviors, a verbal redirection will be given. The teacher will be as direct and specific as possible. A teacher may also choose to have a private check-in with the child in order to forecast consequences if the child continues to exhibit uncooperative behaviors.

Level 2: Disruptive but Not Unsafe Behaviors

Children who engage in disruptive behaviors that are not unsafe but prevent them or others from learning, or disrupt the peace of the school community, will be asked to take a break from the classroom. They will be referred to a member of the school leadership team (SLT) or social emotional learning (SEL) team, who will work with them to reflect on what happened, what could have been done differently, and what needs to be done to return to class.

Logical consequences for these types of behaviors are discussions with teachers or school leaders, student/teacher conferences, student action plan, family conferences, and/or phone calls home.

Level 3: Unsafe Aggressive/Harmful/Dangerous/Violent Behaviors

Dos Amigos intends to use suspension only as a last resort to maintain the safety of the school community. The involvement of the Principal will be necessary if this type of intervention is deemed appropriate (procedures are set forth below). If a child exhibits unsafe aggressive, harmful, dangerous, or violent behavior, the child will be taken to a safe place to de-escalate, a parent/guardian will be contacted and may be asked to come to the school immediately to pick up the child. We will then create a plan to support the student and the family. A behavior plan can have a variety of steps in order to support behavioral changes.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Non-Discrimination

S2 welcomes all students equally. All students will be treated as individuals. Different treatment based on race, color, national origin, disability status, sex, sexual orientation, religion or any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law will not be tolerated. Anyone who feels that they have been treated differently on any such basis should speak with a counselor, who will apprise the Principal of all reports. Anyone who raises any concerns of discrimination on any basis will be free from retaliation for raising such a concern.

Search and Seizure

For the safety of students and everyone in the S2 community, school property that is assigned to students, including lockers, remains the property of the school. Students, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. School authorities will make an individual search of a student's bag, backpack, cell phone, desk, lockers and person only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Searches will be conducted under the authorization of the Principal or his/her designee. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from students' desks, bags, backpacks, lockers and persons by school authorities.

Gun Free Schools Act Policy

Federal and State laws require the expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the Principal may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended).

Any such expulsion must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its implementing regulations, for a student with or presumed to have disabilities.

"Firearm" as used in this law is defined by 18 USC § 921(a), and includes firearms and explosives.

The Principal shall refer to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system of any student who brings a firearm or weapon to the school. "Weapon" as used in this context shall mean any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than two and half inches in length.

Procedures and Due Process for Short-Term Suspension

Short-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from School in the Square for disciplinary reasons for a period of up to ten (10) days. This includes in-school suspension.

The Principal may impose a short-term suspension and shall follow due process procedures consistent with applicable federal case law. Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal shall notify the student verbally of the alleged incident for which the student is being held responsible. If the student denies the allegations, the Principal must provide an explanation of the evidence against the student. The student shall be given an opportunity to deny or explain the incident that may lead to the suspension. The Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing that the student may be suspended from school. The written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or overnight mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to suspend the student, sent to the last known address(es) of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parent(s) or guardian(s).

The notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and will inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal. Both the notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). At the conference, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student's version of the incident and to ask questions of others who witnessed or were involved in the incident, under such procedures as the Principal may establish. The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student is suspended unless the student's presence in school poses a continuing risk to persons or property or an ongoing disruption to the academic process, in which case the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

An appeal of the decision of the Principal may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the Board within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Principal's decision, unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board of Trustees will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the School's authorizer:

New York State Education Department
Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue
Room 5N Mezzanine
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-1762

Procedures and Due Process for Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion

A long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from School in the Square for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than ten (10) days. Expulsion refers to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons. This is the final level of correction.

Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension or expulsion, the following procedure, consistent with applicable federal case law, will be followed:

- The student shall be immediately removed from class and/or school, if necessary.
- The student shall be informed of the charges and the evidence for those charges; where applicable, the student will have the opportunity to explain his or her side of the events.
- The Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, in person or on the phone.
- The Principal shall provide written notice that the school is going to commence a disciplinary hearing to the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) by personal delivery or overnight mail delivery as soon as possible to the last known address of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident which resulted in the suspension and shall state that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion.
 - The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parents(s) or guardian(s) if it is known to be other than English.
 - The notice will state that at the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, present and question witnesses, and present evidence.
- The School will set a date, time, and place for the formal hearing, which shall be set forth in the written notice described above.
- An audio transcript of the formal hearing will be created and made available to all parties upon request.

The Principal, or his/her designee, shall serve as hearing officer and preside over the hearing. When the Principal does not serve as hearing officer, the designated hearing officer shall provide a report to the Principal which shall be advisory only, and the Principal may accept or reject all or part of it. A written decision will be issued within five (5) school days after the formal hearing to the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

An appeal from the written decision may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals must be in writing and submitted to the Board within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the written decision, unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board of Trustees will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. Final decisions of the Board of Trustees may be appealed to the School's authorizer:

New York State Education Department
 Charter School Office
 89 Washington Avenue
 Room 5N Mezzanine
 Albany, NY 12234
 (518) 474-1762

Provision of Instruction During Removal

School in the Square will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the general curriculum of School in the Square. Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. All suspended students are entitled to receive alternative instruction commencing within 24 hours of the suspension or expulsion. Alternative instruction dates and times will be listed on

the student's suspension letter. All students will be provided with a minimum of two hours per day of alternative instruction.

For a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided in like manner as a suspended student until the student enrolls in another school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

Alternative instruction will take place in our local library, via web-based video conference. One or more of the following individuals will provide instruction: teacher, teacher aide, or a tutor hired for this purpose. Please note that whoever administers this instruction will meet all certification requirements as stipulated in Section 2854(3)(a-1) of the New York State Education Law.

Discipline for Students with Disabilities

General

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior that is the subject of the disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.534—that a disability exists shall also be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. Schools in the Square shall comply with sections 300.530-300.537 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

School in the Square shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities including the name of the student, a description of the relevant behavior, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Students whose IEP includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will immediately be referred to the appropriate Committee on Special Education (CSE) for any consideration of changes.

A student identified as having a disability shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to notification and involvement of the parent or guardian.

School in the Square will ensure that the Special Education Department Chair and/or the general classroom teacher will attend all meetings regarding their students initiated by the CSE of the student's district of residence. These meetings could be relating to the development and implementation of behavioral intervention plans, initial referrals, change in service, or annual reviews, Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs), among other things.

Provision of Services During Removal

School in the Square will place students in an interim alternative educational setting as appropriate and mandated by 34 C.F.R. § 300.531.

Students removed for a period of fewer than ten cumulative days during the school year will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The school also shall provide alternative instruction to assist the student, so that he or she is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum, including additional instruction, phone assistance, computer instruction and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals equals ten or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the student's special education teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

During any removal for drug, weapon, controlled substance and/or seriously bodily injury offenses pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g), services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence.

Additional Due Process (MDR)

If discipline that would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with a disability, the following steps shall be taken: (1) no later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parent(s) or guardian of the student with a disability shall be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 C.F.R. § 300.504; and (2) immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made, the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that is the subject of the disciplinary action.

If, upon review, it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability, except as provided in 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the student will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent or guardian requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to drugs, weapons, controlled substance and/or serious bodily injury offenses, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration

of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent or guardian and the school agree otherwise.

Students with a 504 Plan and “Deemed to Know” Students

With regard to disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion, the Section 504 rights of charter school students with disabilities are the same as other students with disabilities.

When addressing discipline for students with disabilities, including students with 504 plans or those who are “presumed to have a disability,” School in the Square will comply with applicable legal requirements governing the discipline of a student for misconduct.

Compliance with the Child Find Requirements of IDEA

School in the Square will comply with the federal Child Find requirements (34 CFR §300.111), which require schools to have in place a process for identifying, locating and evaluating students with disabilities. Students enrolling for the first time in a New York public school will be screened by a team of teachers (including both regular and special education teachers) to identify any possible indication that the child may need a specialized or Individualized Education Program, or referral to the CSE of the student’s district of residence. Other students will be brought to the attention of the team if they are demonstrating any problems within the regular classroom environment. Strategies will then be implemented to address any identified special needs of the student. Should the problems persist and a disability is suspected, the student will be referred to the CSE of the student’s district of residence for an evaluation.

Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”) Policy.

S2 is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. In accordance with New York State’s “Dignity for All Students Act” (“DASA”), S2 will promptly address all incidents of harassment and/or discrimination of students of or by any student enrolled at the school. This includes any form of bullying, taunting, or intimidation.

Policy Definitions:

“*School property*” means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus, as defined in section 142 of the vehicle and traffic law.

“*School function*” means a school-sponsored extracurricular event or activity.

“*Harassment*” and “*Bullying*” shall mean the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of

harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. For the purposes of this definition the term "threats, intimidation or abuse" shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.

"Cyberbullying" shall mean harassment or bullying as defined above, where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

Student's Rights. No student shall be subjected to harassment or bullying, including cyberbullying, by employees or students on school property or at a school function. Additionally, no student shall be subjected to discrimination based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, by school employees or students on school property or at a school function.

S2's Responsible Behavior Code prohibits harassment and bullying, and students who engage in such behavior will be disciplined as set forth in the Responsible Behavior Code. Further, the school reserves the right to discipline students, consistent with the Responsible Behavior Code, who engage in harassment or bullying of students off of school property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct: 1) affects the educative process; 2) actually endangers the health and safety of S2 students within the educational system; or 3) is reasonably believed to pose a danger to the health and safety of our students. This includes written and/or verbal harassment that materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the school and/or which school leaders reasonably forecast as being likely to materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school.

The S2 Approach to DASA Education. At S2, we recognize that students' social and emotional development is inextricably linked to their academic success. We have regular programming as part of our students' schedules that directly supports their social-emotional development, teaches students about issues such as discrimination, bullying and harassment, and provides students with tools to address these issues.

At MS/HS grade level, all students participate in a weekly advisory class that is taught by our social workers. Our social work team has created a scope and sequence for this class using a responsive classroom as their framework. The curriculum utilizes such tools as journals to help students understand their commitments as community members of S2. Each quarter a different grade also participates in restorative circles. This class is taught by our Dean of Culture. Restorative Circles enable students to talk freely about school issues and world issues within a supportive group free from judgment. This is another space where school wide community norms are reviewed.

Reporting and Investigating. All S2 staff members are responsible for reporting harassment, bullying, or discrimination of which they have been made aware to their immediate supervisor. Any student who believes that s/he is being subjected to harassment, bullying or discrimination, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of harassment, bullying or discrimination, shall report the harassment, bullying or discrimination to any staff member, the DAC, or the Principal. A staff member who witnesses harassment, bullying or discrimination, or who receives an oral or written report of harassment, bullying or discrimination, shall promptly orally notify the Principal not later than one school day after witnessing, or receiving a report of, such acts and shall file a written report with the Principal not later than two school days after making such oral report.

The Principal shall promptly investigate the complaint and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority (e.g., the Executive Director) and/or other official designated by the Executive Director or the S2 Board of Trustees to investigate allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination. When an investigation reveals any such verified harassment, bullying or discrimination, the school will take prompt actions that are reasonably calculated to: end the harassment, bullying or discrimination; eliminate any hostile environment; create a more positive school culture and climate; and prevent recurrence of the behavior. Any such actions shall be consistent with the S2 Responsible Behavior Code, which uses restorative practices to respond to behavioral infractions when appropriate and possible, in order to address harm done to the community and to seek to restore and repair the damage. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged harasser and victim shall be made to ensure that the harassment, bullying or discrimination has not resumed and that those involved in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination have not suffered retaliation.

Material incidents of discrimination and harassment on school grounds or at a school function will be reported to the State Education Department as required by law.

The Principal shall promptly notify law enforcement authorities when the Principal believes that any harassment, bullying or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.

No Retaliation. S2 prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination. All complainants and those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and School policies, who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

Distribution of Policy. S2 shall distribute a written or electronic copy of this Policy to all employees, students, and parents/guardians at least once during every school year.

Receipt of Family Handbook

I have read and understand the 2024-2025 Dos Amigos at School in the Square Family Handbook. I agree to the commitments outlined and to participate to the best of my ability in the life of Dos Amigos at School in the Square.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please sign and return this form, using the take home folder, by January 1, 2025.