



2024-25

School in the Square

Family Handbook

Revised 9/19/24

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Welcome!

Dear Students and Families,

We are honored and excited to build School in the Square (S2) with you. S2 draws its name from the concept of the public square, where communities come together to solve problems and celebrate successes. We envisioned S2 as 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 high school, college and the world beyond. Ultimately, we must work together to structure our own sustaining practices, shaped and developed in the collaborative work we do.

We will work to establish solidarity, familiarity, and trust between staff and your family. When issues do come up, we hope that mutual understanding will give us additional avenues to use in resolving them. When we shake hands on graduation day, we will have reached that goal together.

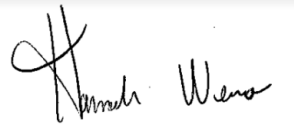
This handbook contains important information, policies and procedures pertaining to S2 families. Please read and discuss the entire handbook together with your child to ensure he/she understands and is able to observe the norms of School in the Square.

As we embark together toward this courageous vision, we want to pause to thank you and welcome you to our community.

Warm Regards,



Evan Meyers



Hannah Werno

I. School Logistics

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Title	Email
Bernard Skomal	8th Grade History Teacher	bskomal@schoolinthesquare.org
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Brianne Hunt	Student Support Coordinator	bhunt@schoolinthesquare.org
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Dulce Clegg	Art Teacher	dclegg@schoolinthesquare.org
Elise Roberts	7th Grade History Teacher	eroberts@schoolinthesquare.org
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Jeanette DeLeon	Front Office Manager	jdeleon@schoolinthesquare.org
Jessica Frith	PE/Health Teacher	jfrith@schoolinthesquare.org
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Juan Rosario	7th Grade Science Teacher	jurosario@schoolinthesquare.org
Kara Kramer	Student Support Coordinator	kkramer@schoolinthesquare.org
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Luis Gallegos	Assistant Principal	lgallegos@schoolinthesquare.org
Maria Padron	Food & Facilities Associate	mpadron@schoolinthesquare.org
Marques Love	8th Grade Science Teacher	mlove@schoolinthesquare.org
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Martin Rabot	7th Grade ELA Teacher	mrabot@schoolinthesquare.org
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Montrese Meeks	8th Grade STEM ICT Teacher	mmeeks@schoolinthesquare.org
Morgan Malcolm	7th Grade Hum ICT Teacher	mmalcolm@schoolinthesquare.org
Norma Rivero	Custodian	nrivero@schoolinthesquare.org
Pamela Martinez	Operations Aide	pmartinez@schoolinthesquare.org
Rebecca Morales	8th Grade Social Worker	rmorales@schoolinthesquare.org
Richard Cruz	Music Teacher	rcruz2@schoolinthesquare.org
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Shelley Murray	Curriculum Coordinator	smurray@schoolinthesquare.org
Tanner Martz	7th Grade Math Teacher	tmartz@schoolinthesquare.org
Temeika Spruiells	6th Grade Hum ICT Teacher	tspruiells@schoolinthesquare.org
Terri Huckabee	6th Grade ELA Teacher	thuckabee@schoolinthesquare.org
Tima Gumane	8th Grade Hum ICT Teacher	hgumane@schoolinthesquare.org
Yolanda Rosario	Asst. Director of Operations	yrosario@schoolinthesquare.org

  DOS AMIGOS	2024-25 Family Calendar Revised 4.3.2024 - Subject to Change
Date	Event
July 2024	
Monday, Jul 8	First Day of Summer School [Rising Grades 1-9]
August 2024	
Wednesday, Aug 7	Last Day of Summer School [Rising Grades 1-9]
Thursday, Aug 22	First Day for Students [Grades K-9]
September 2024	
Monday, Sep 2	Labor Day (No School)
Tuesday, Sep 3	First Day for Students [PreK only]
Monday, Sep 9	After School Begins [Grades K-9]
Monday, Sep 16	After School Begins [PreK only]
Friday, Sep 20	Staff PD Day (No School)
October 2024	
Friday, Oct 11	Staff PD Afternoon (Half Day for Students)
Monday, Oct 14	Indigenous People's Day (No School)
November 2024	
Monday, Nov 11	Veteran's Day (No School)
Friday, Nov 15	Last Day of Trimester 1
Wednesday, Nov 27 - Friday, Nov 29	Thanksgiving Break (No School)
December 2024	
Thursday, Dec 12	Evening Family Conferences (Regular School Day Grades 6-9, Half day for Students Grades PreK-4)
Friday, Dec 13	Family Conferences (Half day for Students)
Monday, Dec 23	Winter Break Begins (No School)

January 2025	
Wednesday, Jan 1	Last Day of Winter Break (No School)
Friday, Jan 17	Staff PD Afternoon (Half Day for Students)
Monday, Jan 20	MLK Jr. Day (No School)
Tuesday, Jan 21 - Friday, Jan 24	High School Regents Makeup Testing (Grade 9)
February 2025	
Wednesday, Feb 14	Last Day of Trimester 2
Monday, Feb 17 - Friday, Feb 21	No School - Mid-Winter Break
March 2025	
Friday, Mar 14	Staff PD Day (No School)
Thursday, Mar 20	Evening Family Conferences (Regular School Day Grades 6-9, Half day for Students Grades PreK-4)
Friday, Mar 21	Family Conferences (Half day for Students)
April 2025	
Monday, Apr 14 - Friday, Apr 18	Spring Break (No School)
Tuesday, Apr 29 - Wednesday, Apr 30	Elementary & Intermediate-Level ELA Test [Grades 3-4, 6-8]
May 2025	
Wednesday, May 7 - Thursday, May 8	Elementary & Intermediate-Level Math Test [Grades 3-4, 6-8]
Friday, May 16	Staff PD Afternoon (Half Day for Students)
Monday, May 26	Memorial Day (No School)
June 2025	
Tuesday, Jun 4	Life Sciences Regents Testing (Grades 8-9)
Monday, Jun 10	Geometry Regents Testing (Grade 9)
Monday, Jun 16	Last Day of School (Half Day for Students)
Tuesday, Jun 18	Algebra Regents Testing (Grades 8-9)

DAILY SCHEDULE**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday Schedule**

Period	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Regular Arrival Starts at 8:00			
Period 0	8:15 - 8:43 - La Placita	8:15 - 8:43 - La Placita	8:15 - 8:43 - La Placita
Period 1	8:45 - 9:18 - Period 1a 9:20 - 9:53 - Period 1b	8:45 - 9:53 - Period 1	8:45 - 9:53 - Period 1
Period 2	9:55 - 11:03 - Period 2	9:55 - 11:03 - Period 2	9:55 - 11:03 - Period 2
Period 3	11:05 - 12:05 - Period 3 lunch/recess	11:05 - 12:05 - Period 3 lunch/recess	11:05 - 12:05 - Period 3 lunch/recess
Period 4	12:07 - 1:15 - Period 4	12:07 - 12:40 - Period 4a 12:42 - 1:15 - Period 4b	12:07 - 1:15 - Period 4
Period 5	1:17 - 2:25 - Period 5	1:17 - 2:25 - Period 5	1:17 - 2:25 - Period 5
Period 6	2:27 - 3:35 - Period 6	2:27 - 3:35 - Period 6	1:27 - 3:00 - Period 6a 3:02 - 3:35 - Period 6b
DISMISSAL AT 3:35 PM FOR ALL STUDENTS			
3:37 - 6:00 - Optional Afterschool			

Wednesday Schedule

Period	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Regular Arrival Starts at 8:00			
Period 0	8:15 - 9:00 - La Placita	8:15 - 9:00 - La Placita	8:15 - 9:00 - La Placita
Period 1	9:02 - 9:52 - Period 1	9:02 - 9:52 - Period 1	9:02 - 9:52 - Period 1
Period 2	9:54 - 10:44 - Period 2	9:54 - 10:44 - Period 2	9:54 - 10:44 - Period 2
Period 3	10:46 - 11:46 - Period 3 lunch/book club	10:46 - 11:46 - Period 3 lunch/book club	10:46 - 11:46 - Period 3 lunch/book club
Period 4	11:48 - 12:38 - Period 4	11:48 - 12:38 - Period 4	11:48 - 12:38 - Period 4
Period 5	12:40 - 1:30 - Period 5	12:40 - 1:30 - Period 5	12:40 - 1:30 - Period 5
Period 6	1:30 - 2:30 - Period 5	1:30 - 2:30 - Period 5	1:30 - 2:30 - Period 5
EARLY DISMISSAL AT 2:30 PM FOR ALL STUDENTS			
2:32 - 6:00 - Optional Afterschool			

II. About School in the Square

MISSION AND VISION

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

School in the Square (S2) engages, educates and empowers adolescents in Washington Heights and Inwood to respond mindfully and creatively to life's opportunities and challenges. S2 draws its name from the concept of the public square, where communities come together to solve problems and celebrate successes. We envision S2 as 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 college and professional life. In line with our commitment to equity and diversity, S2 is dedicated to serving all students by providing a differentiated and inclusive learning environment.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

- **ALL STUDENTS:** Everyday all students may enter the building via the Wadsworth entrance between 8:00 am and 8:15 am. Students will report directly to their La Placita room, they can grab breakfast from the first floor hallway before heading to the room. All students must enter the building through the main entrance before 8:15 to be considered on time. **All students who arrive at or 8:15 will be marked as late.** All late students will be greeted by a staff member to scan in, given a late pass before going to their first period. Please note latenesses are tracked and appear daily on the student's profile.

BREAKFAST PROCEDURES

- Teachers will greet students in their La Placita rooms.
- Teachers will monitor the group and will engage in student conversations.
- We encourage healthy eating habits. If students choose to bring foods from home/store they should be nutritious whole grains, fruits, vegetables and foods high in protein.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- At the end of the last scheduled block of the day, final period teachers will walk students outdoors for dismissal.
- **On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday all students** will be dismissed after 6th period at 3:35. All students will be dismissed through the Wadsworth Ave exit.
- **On Wednesdays students** will be dismissed from 5th period at 1:30 with optional clubs and office hours running from 1:30 - 2:30. Students will be dismissed through the Wadsworth Ave exit. Those students that walk home alone will be directed to go straight

home. Students attending after school programs will be dismissed to their afterschool room. Students taking the bus will report to room 103 and will be escorted to the bus. Students who are Parent Pick Up will be held inside until their parent has been identified outside the building.

MEALS AND RECESS

Students eat during scheduled meal times at School in the Square. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles, which can be refilled during the day at water-filling stations located throughout the building (3rd floor hallway, Operations office and 1st floor hallway).

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 gym, roof or game room. 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. Students without appropriate outerwear will automatically be assigned to an indoor location for that day.
- Generally, recess will take place outdoors if the weather is dry and the temperature is above 32 degrees.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are discouraged from bringing electronic devices (e.g. tablets, PSP, iPad, smart watches or similar devices) to school (and cell phones for 6th and 7th grade students). School in The Square is not responsible or liable for anything that happens to any student's device. If a device is stolen or broken in school, the parent of that student assumes full responsibility for all replacement costs.

If a parent chooses to allow his/her child to bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school, the following rules apply:

- 6th & 7th Grade students will have lock boxes in their La Placita to store their device for the day. Student cell phones and any wearable technology (smart watch, airpods etc.) must be turned off and placed in the locked box.
- 8th Grade students will be allowed to keep their cell phones in their backpack turned off. Cell phones should only be used when students are on Off Campus lunch.

If a student is found using any electronic devices during the day:

1. The device will be confiscated and held by the Principal or an Assistant Principal.
2. The student can retrieve the device from the office at the end of their school day. Parents will be called in cases where this behavior is repeated.

IV. Academics

S2 offers a Common Core-aligned program of study in ELA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and the Arts that encourages critical thinking and effective communication. The goal of our academic program is to foster the intellectual and personal growth of students through rigorous instruction and social-emotional development, promoting college readiness and retention.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

S2 uses a balanced literacy approach to teaching language arts. The New York State Common Core ELA Learning Standards provide a pathway to nurturing students to be college and career ready in ELA and communication skills. Towards this end, students must demonstrate independence; build strong content knowledge; respond to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline; comprehend as well as critique; value evidence; use technology and digital media strategically and capably; and come to understand other perspectives and cultures. To achieve this result for our students, S2 has adopted My Perspectives curriculum which will engage today's digital natives with an interactive core curriculum that brings complex texts to life. My Perspectives inspires students to read more deeply, write more vividly and think more critically.

MATH

At S2, students will gain the arithmetic and algebra skills needed to navigate the world and make sound financial decisions. S2 uses Amplify Math to create a solid foundation, focusing on basic skills and strong understanding. Over the course of the day, students participate in math workshops; rotation stations; differentiated teacher instruction; hands-on, collaborative problem solving and discussion; and independent practice. Students will work on rigorous open-ended, real-world projects that promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

SOCIAL STUDIES

S2's social studies program helps students think like historians. Our units focus on teaching students to gather, use and interpret evidence; to practice chronological reasoning and consider causation; to compare and contextualize historical events; to apply geographic reasoning; to understand economics and economic systems; and to participate in civic life.

SCIENCE

S2 students will engage in structured inquiry activities to achieve science literacy. Using S2's combination of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Amplify Science, students will deepen their understanding of scientific concepts and methods. Hands-on laboratory work allows students to explore while developing science skills such as analysis, inquiry, and empirical design. Through informational texts, content-rich science videos, online resources, and digital simulations, students will build up their background knowledge and learn to pose and evaluate arguments based on evidence.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Our commitment to meeting students where they are is at the core of S2. To this end we take an

inclusive approach to supporting students with additional learning needs such as students with disabilities as well as those learning English as a new language.

We offer services to support our special population students including Integrated Co Teaching (ICT) classrooms where there are two teachers working together to ensure students have access to a high quality general education experience while receiving required literacy, numeracy, language and social-emotional support. Additionally, students have small group instruction by an expert who provides counseling, speech and language support as mandated by a student's IEP or English language proficiency.

If you have questions about the content of your child's IEP, or you student English as a new Language status, please contact our grade level Student Support Coordinators, Kara Kramer (grades 6 & 7) and /or Brianne Hunt (grades 8 & 9)

Kara Kramer	Brianne Hunt
<i>G6&G7 Student Support Coordinator/ 504 Coordinator</i>	<i>G8&G9 Student Support Coordinator/ 504 Coordinator</i>
kkramer@schoolinthesquare.org	bhunt@schoolinthesquare.org

If you have questions about the 504 process or your child has a 504 Plan, please contact our 504 Coordinators.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

In addition to their core academic classes, S2 students may meet with teachers for differentiated, small-group instruction. Academic Intervention Services (AIS) provides students with targeted instruction in math and literacy to advance mastery of foundational skills. This instruction, provided in small groups with one teacher during essentials periods, ensures students who qualify have a space for building their foundational skills to access grade level content.

STUDENT REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Three times a year, families receive an individual report card that outlines their child's progress in each subject area. The purpose of the report card is to formally document student progress, communicate successes and concerns to families, provide an opportunity to set goals and pursue greater success while classes are still in progress.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are designed to practice what has been taught and to apply learned skills. It is expected that students will complete homework independently when assigned.

TECHNOLOGY

Our goal is for all students at School in the Square to learn and grow in a technology-rich

environment and develop 21st Century Skills. Students will receive a School in the Square Google account in which they will create online documents, slideshows, emails to teachers, student/teacher generated websites, online portfolios, and other forms of digital work. These accounts are school property and are not student personal accounts. Parents should ask students for usernames and passwords and be an active part of reviewing their child's online work.

In order to ensure student privacy and obtain permission for student participation in activities that require and document student work on the Internet, S2 asks that parents sign and return a form to school at the beginning of each year. The signed form indicates approval for the student's name, picture, art, written work, voice, verbal statements or portraits (video or still) to appear on websites and publications associated with S2 (including, but not limited to, blogs, student newspapers, school brochures and yearbooks). The student's name, picture, art, written work, voice, verbal statements, portraits (video or still) shall only be used for public relations, public information, school or district promotion, publicity, and instruction.

The agreement also allows your child to use their assigned email account from Gmail. These are email accounts that we can monitor, view and maintain. We can also close the account if the need arises. These accounts are necessary in order for students to use Google Education applications in classroom projects, however children can work on paper and in notebooks if their parent disapproves of the use of these accounts.

In order to maintain appropriate use of our technology equipment students should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Student's email address will generally be: FirstName.LastName@schoolinthesquare.org. Only use your Google class-based email addresses and accounts
- Only log in as yourself and not as another user
- S2 e-mail is for communicating with teachers and project group members about school-related assignments. It may not be used for sending personal messages.
- S2 has the right to monitor all student computer use, including all emails sent from student's school email address
- Do not download software, plug-ins, games or other programs
- Do not change desktop, taskbar, screensaver, or any computer setting
- Do not access anyone else's data folders, files or documents
- Do not eat or drink near computers or computer equipment
- Any misuse of these accounts, the website or the internet, will result in the loss of student privileges

Google Chromebooks will be provided to the S2 students under the directions and stipulations laid out in the Chromebook Agreements outlined in the next section.

CHROMEBOOK AGREEMENTS, PROCEDURES, AND INFORMATION

The focus of the Chromebook program at School in the Square is to provide tools and resources for the 21st century Learner. Excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational curriculum. Increasing access to technology is essential to build upon college and career readiness skills. The individual use of Chromebooks is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for the future.

STUDENT/PARENT CHROMEBOOK USE AGREEMENT 2023

The purpose of the Chromebook program at School in the Square (S2) is to provide tools and resources for the 21st century Learner. Excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational curriculum. Increasing access to technology is essential to build college and career readiness skills. The individual use of Chromebooks is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for the future.

Students will be given access to a Chromebook for educational use for the duration of their studies at S2.

The following information details the requirements that accompany S2 Chromebooks:

A. GENERAL AGREEMENT

- The Chromebook will be used for educational purposes only.
- Inappropriate content will **NOT** be allowed at any time on Chromebooks (this includes weapons, pornographic material, inappropriate language, gang related images etc.).
- Files, folders or programs not created by you should **NOT** be deleted.
- Illegal downloading and distribution of copyrighted materials is a serious offense and shall not be conducted.
- Unauthorized access to another person's account or Chromebook without consent or knowledge is considered hacking and is unacceptable.

B. LOSS OR DAMAGE

If you damage or lose a Chromebook you are responsible for the reasonable cost of repair or replacement. Any instance of the above-mentioned issues must be reported immediately to a member of the Technology Management team.

Issue	Cost
Broken Screen	\$50
Replacement Charger	\$15

Lost/Stolen Machine*	\$150 minimum
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*Actual cost of a new Chromebook in 2021 and installation of the S2 Management System is \$252.

C. GENERAL TECHNOLOGY EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- Treat Chromebooks with respect and proper care
- Keep foods, liquids and other dangerous materials away from the Chromebook
- Report any issues immediately to a member of the Technology Management team
- **NOT** deface the Chromebook by removal or addition of any item (including stickers, markings, etc.)

School Culture

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES

S2 adheres to the principles of Restorative Practices, which promotes the practice 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).

As part of the prep work before initiating Restorative/Repair Circles after a harmful incident. There are a series of questions used to help give individuals guidance on how to process the event(s) that took place. 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 circle or conference. It is recommended that a member of the SLT or SEL be notified about or present for Repair Circles/Conference to provide additional support to all parties.

Types Of Circles used in Restorative Practices

Community Building Circles- We use Community Circles 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. *“Community is not a place, but a relationship: lessons for organizational development” Boyle-Watson*

Repair or Restorative Circles - These are conducted when conflict happens or when harm is done. The purpose of the circle is to repair the harm caused by an individual(s) to the community, by acknowledging what happened, the harm caused, and what the steps are to make things right. These can be used when members of the community have a concern or conflict with other members(s). These circles require prep work. All individuals who are involved in these circles should be prepared. As a circle keeper, you should be in the right state of mind yourself and ask for support if desired. The more serious the matter the more prep work should happen and support solicited from SLT or SEL.

Celebration Circles- These can include acknowledging community, individual achievements, and birthdays. They are also used to celebrate identity, culture, and the sustainable positive outcomes of Restorative/Repair circles. Celebrating these moments strengthens the relationships first foundation of our school.

Where appropriate, loss of privilege or separation from the S2 classroom may accompany a restorative approach. Safety, both physical and emotional, is paramount. 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.

DRESS CODE

Our Policy:

At S2, encouraging our students to be different is a value that we honor. Our uniform policy 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. Outside we want it to be known that our students are a part of a team and a strong caring environment.

Students can combine S2 uniform pieces to create their own style. Tops must have the School in the Square logo on them, and include t-shirts, polos, School in the Square sweatshirts, pullovers, and fleeces can be worn over polo and t-shirts. All options are available in black, red, burgundy heather gray and navy blue. Students can wear black, or khaki pants, shorts, plain black or gray sweatpants, or skirts to the knee. Students can wear any closed-toe shoe of their choice (**no sandals, or crocs or foam runners**). **Jeans and non School in the Square sweaters are not considered school uniform and should not be worn.**

Purchasing:

You can shop for uniform items online through Student Styles. Scan to shop!

Upon enrollment at School in the Square, the school will provide each family with a uniform starter package. If students want additional items, families can shop online anytime. Families needing additional support can contact the school.



What if my Child Comes to School out of Uniform?

S2 Leadership and the uniform committee considered this question carefully. Students agreed that uniforms can enhance their learning experience. As with all situations, we will check in with the student and discuss any hardships that might be preventing the student and family from wearing the uniform. We also encourage students to be proactive, if they come to school out of uniform and immediately ask to borrow a uniform, we will provide one without question.

Therefore, our community has agreed that if a student comes to school out of uniform:

1. The student will be provided with a “loaner” uniform to wear and return at the end of the day. The student will also be reminded of the importance of coming to school with a uniform.
2. A second time, the student will wear the loaner and a phone call to the family will be made to explore if other factors are contributing to not wearing uniform
3. A third time, the student will still be provided a loaner uniform, a phone call home to schedule a meeting with parent or guardian regarding consistently being out of uniform. Student and parent will meet with a member of SLT and SEL to conference regarding contributing factors and develop a solution.

ATTENDANCE, LATENESS AND HOME VISITS

Students are expected to be present at school for the entire day when school is in session. To the extent possible, please schedule appointments after school or on days when school is not in session.

Vacations should be taken only during school breaks. Students are expected to make up all work missed on the day(s) they were absent and submit assignments when they return to school in person.

In the event of absence due to sickness or family emergency, parents should notify the school by calling the school by 8:00 a.m or by sending an email to JDeLeon@schoolinthesquare.org. Parents should leave a message if no one answers indicating their name, their student’s name, the reason for the student’s absence, a number at which the parent may be reached, and the best time for a staff member to return your call.

Absence due to illness must be validated with a doctor’s note. Also, please note that under no circumstances will students be dismissed before the end of the day without a parent, legal guardian, and/or emergency contact person present.

Please note that S2 reserves the right to verify excused absences.

Any of the following qualify as an Excused Absence:

- Student illness (doctor’s note required)
- Medical or dental appointments (doctor’s note required)
- Death in the family
- Religious holidays of the student’s faith

- Required court appearance or subpoena by a government agency
- School-sponsored or special events (conferences, state/national competitions)

Our goal at S2 is for every student to have 100% attendance. In an effort to maintain this goal we will mail quarterly postcards with attendance/lateness trends. Additionally, the following supports are in place:

If a student is absent	Expect
Once	A phone call home the day of from an S2 staff member
1-2 times in one month or 3-5 times in a trimester	A one on one conversation between the student and their La Placita teacher
3-4 times in one month or 6-8 times in a trimester	A family meeting with a social worker that results in an Attendance Goal agreement and possible peer mentor
Five times in one month or 9+ times in a trimester	A home-visit and/or family meeting with a member of the school leadership team and social worker that results in an individualized support plan and weekly check ins between the student and leadership team member. *In the most extreme cases S2 will have to make a Call to the State Central Registry due to Educational Neglect, if necessary

Students are expected to be in school on time for the day. For all students who are late, the following supports are in place:

If a student is late	Expect
1-2 unexcused lateness in one month	A one on one conversation between the student and their La Placita teacher
3-4 unexcused lateness in one month	A family meeting along with student and with a social worker to review and sign a Tardy Goal Agreement.
5 or more unexcused lateness in one month	A family meeting along with the student and with a member of the school leadership team that results in an individualized support plan that includes daily check in with a member of the school leadership team.

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VII. Community Agreements

In order for us to follow our three agreements: **to take care of each other, our place and ourselves** our school community must make the following commitments and affirmations:

Commitments:

- * I commit to using words and actions that help everyone feel welcome, valued and respected
- * I commit to using social media in a thoughtful and responsible manner when interacting with peers and representing myself
- * I commit to being anti-racist (person who actively fights against racism)
- * I commit to advocating for myself when I need help both academically, socially, and/or personally
- * I commit to practicing social distance, healthy hygiene practices (hand washing) and wearing a mask for my safety and the safety of other students and adults in the school building

Affirmations

Engaging	● I create healthy relationships with my peers & adults at S2 ● I have the tools I need to improve through practice ● I am curious and act courageously in my S2 Community ● I inspire others around me
Educating	● I am open & ready to learn ● Every accomplishment begins with the decision to try ● Hard things don't scare me
Empowering and Being Empowered	● I matter & what I have to offer matter ● The challenges I face are opportunities for growth ● I am an upstander ● My actions define my impact in my life & the S2 Community

VIII. 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 and/or on school grounds
- participating in a school-sponsored event or activity
- while working remotely on chromebook
- 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 challenges may also include behavioral challenges outside of the school, such as social media that reasonably could affect the school or learning environment.

School administration will use their judgment in determining which disciplinary steps will be most effective in dealing with the student’s behavioral concerns , taking into account the following factors:

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

When a student does not meet behavioral expectations and is unable to follow the School’s Responsible Behavior Code, a clear and consistent disciplinary step will be developed, and other consequences as further described below. Progressively more serious disciplinary outcomes shall be implemented upon any student who repeatedly carries out one or more disciplinary actions .

If it becomes necessary, school administration will collaborate with Youth Officers from the 34th

Precinct.

Below is a chart in which we share what responses/approaches may occur if students disrupt S2 Community. The list of actions that disrupt the S2 community is not exhaustive but provides examples of actions that do not support our Responsible Behavior Code. The list may be modified periodically by School in the Square staff with notice to students and families.

Framing and Purpose					
At S2, we strive to use student-centered, restorative practices that encourage the academic, social, and emotional growth of all students. By following the tiered, restorative practices outlined here, we will maximize our efforts in maintaining a safe, inclusive, and rigorous academic environment. Finally, the documentation tasks below will help Grade Level Teams analyze Culture data that will inform how we support our students.					
School-Wide Preventative and Proactive Interventions for Behavior					
• Warm and inviting school and classroom culture • Positive relationships with students and families • Explicitly teach desired behaviors • Provide opportunities to practice desired behaviors and give feedback • Establish classroom routines and structures					
Level of Support	Observable Behaviors	Menu of Available Interventions & Supports (To Be Documented in PowerSchool)	Person Responsible for Intervention Implementation & Progress Monitoring	Person responsible for communicating updates to stakeholders	Documentation
Tier 1 These interventions are supported by the classroom teacher or attending adult.	• Not following behavior expectations • Inappropriate language/volume/tone • Name calling/teasing • Excessive Talking • Being off-task • Opting out/head on desk • Distracting others • Horseplay without injury • Throwing paper • Out of program • Uniform infraction • Leaving class • Inappropriate tech use • First instance of Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.)	• Define/reminder of behavior expectations • Reteach desired behavior • Teacher proximity or visual prompt • Praise appropriate behavior • Redirection • Private student/teacher conversation • Incentives • Community Service • Family outreach • Cool Off Space and Time • Logical consequence	• Classroom Teacher/Staff Member	• Classroom teacher • Stakeholders: ○ Grade level team	• If your Tier 1 interventions are not working over the course of two days, document using the form here.
Tier 2	• Minor harm pattern • Verbal aggression	• Family conference	• Grade Level Social Worker	• Grade Level AP: Shares	• Document result(s) of your

These interventions are supported by SEL, Grade Level AP in conjunction with teacher or attending adult	- toward student/staff - Theft - Vandalism and/or destruction of school property - Cell phone is consistently not in Yondr pouch - Refusing to wear loaner and/or uniform - Repeated academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc)	○ FREE Phone Translation Services ● SEL/SLT+Teacher Student Conference ● Behavior Contract with goals, incentives, and logical consequences ● Check in/Check out ● Skills Groups ● Additional Academic Support ● Restorative Circle or Conference ● Phone confiscation ● SSM Child Study	& Grade Level AP	- grade level wide updates via email or at next SSM. ● Teacher shares updates from class at next SSM	- Tier 1 interventions using the form here. ● Following a Tier 2 intervention, Teacher/staff member documents impact of intervention using the form here.
Tier 3 These interventions are supported by SEL/Grade Level Admin/Principal in conjunction with grade level team, teacher or attending adult.	● Tier 1 and 2 interventions have not been successful. ● Safety Concerns: ● All forms of bullying and threats ● Sexual assault/harassment ● Causing physical harm/harassment ● Reasonable suspicion of drug/alcohol use ● Leaving school grounds without permission ● Horseplay with injury ● Fighting ● Injured Student ● Any other behaviors that compromise the mental or physical well being of anyone in the S2 community	● Counselor observation ● Revised SSM Child Study ● FBA/BIP ● Family/AP/Teacher(s) Conference with updated Behavior Contract: Logical consequences, revised goals, and incentives. ● Wraparound services ● Privileges revoked (for preferred activity) ● Safety Concern Separation from class ● ISS/OSS	● Grade Level Social Worker and Grade Level AP	● Grade Level AP: Shares grade level wide updates via email or at next SSM. ● Teacher/staff member shares updates from class.	● Document the incident using the form here.
After work hours Safety Concern, text the grade level specific SLT members below and complete the form : Dr. Pierre (G6 AP) 954-471-2681 D. Sass (G7 AP) 203-313-9706 L. Gallegos (G8 AP) 323-605-6284					

Logical Consequences	
● Reflection time with community service during breakfast, recess, or after school. ● Make up work time during after school study hall. ● Timed Behavior Contract with goals, incentives, and logical consequences ● Mandatory after school and/or breakfast ● Loss of participation on sports teams and field trips	

BULLYING

Bullying is considered a behavior which threatens the safety of the school. These behaviors will be handled in a similar fashion as any serious threat to school safety. While not exhaustive we consider bullying to be any activity which includes:

- Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying); such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.
- Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying) based on an individual's actual or perceived race, weight, religion, religious practices, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.

POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

- **Temporary Separation from the Classroom Community**

There are times when a staff person's best efforts are insufficient to prevent a child from harming themselves, others, or the physical environment.

In cases such as these, the child may then need to be separated temporarily from the classroom community. When safe for the child to return to class and a plan for repairing harm has been established the child will return to the classroom community. After any such removal a restorative conversation is held between the student and others affected to ensure a smooth transition back into the community.

- **Short -Term Suspensions (In-School and Out-Of School)**

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 a short-term suspension, the Principal shall notify the student verbally of the (physical or behavioral) incident that occurred. If the student denies the incident, the Principal must provide an explanation of what the student was allegedly involved in. . The student shall be given an opportunity to explain the incident that may lead to the suspension. The Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing or by phone that the student may be suspended from School. The written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or

express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to suspend the student. The delivery will be sent to the last known address(es) of the caregiver(s) at 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 other students who may have witnessed or have been involved. 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 School Leader 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 School Leader'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

Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion

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.

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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 express 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(b)—that a disability exists shall also be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. School 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 Sindia Vasquez 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.

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:

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by S2 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 S2 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.

S2 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 (S2), with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, S2 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 S2 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 S2, 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 S2 to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing by March 15th. S2 has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of member of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- 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 S2 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 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 ED 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 person 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), S2 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 S2 reserves 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 disrupt 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.

- A. Dignity Act Coordinator. S2 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.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.

If students or families suspect any kind of bullying has occurred, please immediately notify our Dignity Act Coordinator, Mr. Gallegos.

Luis Gallegos

Dignity Act Coordinator and Director of School Culture

lgallegos@schoolinthesquare.org

COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

School in the Square Charter School (S2) 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 S2 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.

Hannah Werno

Principal

hwerno@schoolinthesquare.org

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily you can contact the Head of Schools.

Yeou-Jey Vasconcelos

Head of Schools

yvasconcelos@schoolinthesquare.org

Any individual or group may bring complaints or concerns of any kind to the Head of Schools. The Head of Schools will work to resolve conflicts fairly and informally, as quickly as possible. After reviewing the complaint, the Head of Schools will respond either in writing, telephone, or in person depending on the circumstance. If the Head of Schools is unable to resolve the complaint to the individual or group's satisfaction, or if the complaint is about the Head of Schools, 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 the School's charter or law that allegedly has been violated;
3. the relief sought by the complainant; and
4. 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.

Complaints and Investigations Procedure for Sexual Harassment or Misconduct

S2 takes complaints regarding sexual harassments and misconduct very seriously. S2's top priority is to ensure that its staff members and students are protected from such abuse and are empowered to raise any concerns they may have free from fear of retaliation. As a result, S2 has developed the following protocol for addressing such concerns, which is intended as a supplement to its above processes.

All complaints and information about sexual harassment or misconduct will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. This investigation policy applies regardless

of whether the concern was raised by an employee, student, or other third-party associated with S2. An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment or misconduct will be prompt and thorough and completed as soon as reasonably possible. Investigations will be confidential to the extent practicable and consistent with any applicable law.

Investigative Process

All S2 employees are required to cooperate as needed in any investigation of suspected sexual harassment or misconduct. S2 will not tolerate retaliation against any person who files a complaint, supports another's complaint, or participates in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy. While the process may vary from case to case, investigations of sexual harassment or misconduct will proceed outside S2's restorative justice model and in accordance with the following steps:

Students or their guardians may direct any concerns that they may have regarding sexual harassment or misconduct to any staff member. S2 employees should direct complaints of sexual harassment or misconduct, including those referred to them by any students or their guardians, to either the Principal or the Executive Director, provided that if the Principal or Executive Director is implicated in the complaint, the issue should be brought directly to the Board of Trustees' attention.

All complaints of sexual harassment or misconduct referred to the Principal or Executive Director must be promptly brought to the attention of S2's Board of Trustees.

Complainants are encouraged to provide complaints in written form. If the complaint is verbal, the person who learns about the complaint shall encourage the individual to provide their allegations in writing. If the individual refuses, the staff member who receives the complaint shall prepare a written record of the complaint based on the verbal reporting.

The written record of the allegations shall be promptly provided to Principal or the Executive Director by the person receiving or presenting the complaint—unless the Principal or Executive Director is implicated in the allegations, in which case the written record should be presented to the Board of Trustees directly. If the complainant(s) or employee who prepared the written record is unsure how to provide the allegations, they should contact an administrator who has not been implicated in the complaint so such administrator can help the individual(s) provide the record to the appropriate person or entity.

The Principal or the Executive Director will investigate complaints of sexual harassment or misconduct, including, where appropriate, consistent with DASA. However, if the complaint implicates the Executive Director or Principal, the Board of Trustees will appoint a person to investigate the complaint. Such person may include S2 staff members, outside third-parties, or such other persons as the Board of Trustees may deem appropriate based on the circumstances, and subject to any legal requirements.

If documents, emails, video recordings, phone records or other information or media are relevant to the investigation, all parties to the investigation shall take steps to preserve them. This includes

saving the items in a secure location or ensuring that these items are not automatically deleted.

The investigator shall determine the appropriate protocols for the investigation, based upon the specific facts and circumstances. This includes reviewing relevant documents or electronic communications, as well as interviewing relevant witnesses.

The investigator shall make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation as expediently as possible.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall report their findings to the Board of Trustees, or a subcommittee thereof. If the investigator is the Principal or Executive Director, they shall decide what appropriate action, if any, should be taken. They must notify the Board of Trustees of their decision and reasoning for such decision when they relay their investigative findings to the Board of Trustees. If the investigator is not the Executive Director or Principal, because these individuals were implicated in the allegations related to the investigation, the Board of Trustees will then decide what action, if any, is necessary in light of the investigator's findings.

Investigative Processes, Generally

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Family Handbook, no subordinate staff member shall be permitted to conduct any investigation involving any person who is their supervisor or superior, whether directly or indirectly. This applies to all types of investigations. In the event that any concern or complaint is made against or concerning the Executive Director or a Principal, such must be brought promptly to the attention of the Board of Trustees, who will determine the appropriate party to conduct any necessary investigation.

VIII. 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

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 Medication Administration 504 form, completed by a physician, to the School Nurse.

Nonprescription medications (e.g. aspirin-free pain relievers, cough lozenges, etc.) will be administered only under unusual circumstances and with written parent/guardian authorization.

Students with severe asthma may carry their inhaler during the school day, with a prescribed medication form on file with the nurse.

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

- Students should become familiar with exit directions posted in each classroom.
- 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. S2 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.

IX. Family and Community

FAMILY COUNCIL

We envision the Family Council as providing a forum for discussion of school issues that helps parents become aware of opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. We hope that students' families will be involved in the day-to-day life of the school—as guest speakers in classes, volunteers, and participants in academic presentations and Forums. We see great potential for a Family Council to help us bring this vision to life.

FIELD TRIPS AND OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS

S2 students have the privilege of learning beyond the school campus. Field trips are intended to enhance learning and are considered an extension of the classroom. As representatives of the S2 community, S2 students are expected to adhere to all school rules and policies regarding exemplary behavior and appropriate dress whether on campus or off campus. Our specific expectations are that students will follow specific S2 instructions and policies of any facility visited; and that S2 students will respect, listen to, and remain with S2 Staff & parent chaperones.

FAMILY CONFERENCES

Teacher schedules include time for outreach so parents/guardians hear regularly about their children's progress and positive accomplishments. 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.

We encourage families to check our student information system, PowerSchool, weekly to monitor their child's progress.

Let our final word in this handbook affirm that School in the Square places great value on the partnership with families, you make our school and community possible.

Thank you again for being here.

Receipt of Family Handbook

I have read and understand the 2024-2025 School in the Square Family Handbook. I agree to the commitments outlined and to participate in the life of School in the Square.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please sign and return this form to the main office or your La Placita teacher.