



FAMILY HANDBOOK

SCHOOL YEAR 2025-26



SCHOOL IN THE SQUARE MIDDLE
120 WADSWORTH AVENUE
NY, NY 10033

SCHOOLINTHESQUARE.ORG

Revised 11/07/25

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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.

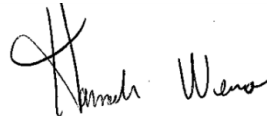
This handbook contains important information, policies and procedures pertaining to S2 families. Please read and discuss the entire handbook together with your child to ensure he/she understands and is able to observe the norms of School in the Square.

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
Executive Director and Founder



Hannah Werno
Principal

I. School Logistics

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Title	Email
Bernard Skomal	8th Grade History Teacher	bskomal@schoolinthesquare.org
Bianca Martino	AIS Math Teacher	bmartino@schoolinthesquare.org
Bridget Walsh	Student Support Coordinator	bwalsh@schoolinthesquare.org
Bruce Ceron	7th Grade Hum ICT Teacher	bceron@schoolinthesquare.org
Daniel Eden	Sr. Director of Operations	deden@schoolinthesquare.org
Dulce Clegg	Art Teacher	dclegg@schoolinthesquare.org
Elise Roberts	8th Grade HUM ICT Teacher	eroberts@schoolinthesquare.org
Geneveve Addae-Wusu	8th Grade Math Teacher	gaddaewusu@schoolinthesquare.org
Hannah Werno	Principal	hwerno@schoolinthesquare.org
Hipolito Romero Jr.	ENL Intervention Teacher	hromero@schoolinthesquare.org
Hope Kwon	8th Grade ELA Teacher	hkwon@schoolinthesquare.org
Ivan Ruiz	Culture Coordinator	iruiz@schoolinthesquare.org
	6th Grade Science Teacher	
Jack Bailey	6th Grade Hum ICT Teacher	jbailey@schoolinthesquare.org
Jeanette DeLeon	Front Office Manager	jdeleon@schoolinthesquare.org
Jesse Hammock	PE/Health Teacher	jhammock@schoolinthesquare.org
Jessica Piña	7th/8th Grade Counselor	jpina@schoolinthesquare.org
Juan Rosario	7th Grade Science Teacher	jurosario@schoolinthesquare.org
Kevin Agbomenou	6th Grade Math Teacher	kagbomenou@schoolinthesquare.org
Kimberly Colomer	6th Grade History Teacher	kcolomer@schoolinthesquare.org
Lizeth Nerys	Assistant Principal	lnerys@schoolinthesquare.org
Luis Roca	6th Grade ELA Teacher	lroca@schoolinthesquare.org
Maria Padron	Food & Facilities Associate	mpadron@schoolinthesquare.org
Marques Love	8th Grade Science Teacher	mlove@schoolinthesquare.org
Martha Farias	Food & Facilities Associate	mfarias@schoolinthesquare.org

Martin Rabot	7th Grade ELA Teacher	mrabot@schoolinthesquare.org
Mirabel Ashley	7th Grade STEM ICT Teacher	mashley@schoolinthesquare.org
Montrese Meeks	8th Grade STEM ICT Teacher	mmeeks@schoolinthesquare.org
Norma Rivero	Custodian	nrivero@schoolinthesquare.org
Rebecca Morales	6th Grade Social Worker	rmorales@schoolinthesquare.org
Sonia Avila	Music Teacher	savila@schoolinthesquare.org
Shelley Murray	Assistant Principal	smurray@schoolinthesquare.org
Tanner Martz	7th Grade Math Teacher	tmartz@schoolinthesquare.org
Tima Gumane	AIS Literacy Intervention Teacher	hgumane@schoolinthesquare.org
Yolanda Rosario	Asst. Director of Operations	yrosario@schoolinthesquare.org

SCHOOL CALENDAR



School In the Square School Year 2025–2026 – Family Academic Calendar

July '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

December '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June '26						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Legend						
School Closure						
Summer School						
Half Day						
First or Last Day for Students						

JULY 2025

Mon, Jul 7	First Day: Summer School
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AUGUST 2025

Wed, Aug 6	Last Day: Summer School
Mon, Aug 25	First Day: K, Grade 6, & Grade 9
Tue, Aug 26	First Day: Grades 1-5, Grade 7-8, & Grade 10

SEPTEMBER 2025

Mon, Sep 1	School Closure: Labor Day
Tues, Sep 2	First Day: Pre-K
Fri, Sep 19	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development

OCTOBER 2025

Fri, Oct 10	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Mon, Oct 13	School Closure: Indigenous People's Day

NOVEMBER 2025

Tue, Nov 11	School Closure: Veteran's Day
Wed, Nov 26 - Fri, Nov 28	School Closure: Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER 2025

Wed, Dec 10 - Fri, Dec 12	Winter Family Conferences
Fri, Dec 19	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Mon, Dec 22 - Wed, Dec 31	School Closure: Winter Break

JANUARY 2026

Thur, Jan 1 - Fri, Jan 2	School Closure: Winter Break Continued
Mon, Jan 19	School Closure: Martin Luther King Jr Day
Tue, Jan 20 - Fri, Jan 23	January Regents Exam Window (High School Only)
Mon, Jan 26	School Closure: Professional Development

FEBRUARY 2026

Fri, Feb 13	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Mon, Feb 16 - Fri, Feb 20	School Closure: President's Day & Mid-Winter Break

MARCH 2026

Fri, Mar 20	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Wed, Mar 25 - Fri, Mar 27	Spring Family Conferences

APRIL 2026

Fri, Apr 3	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Mon, Apr 6 - Fri, Apr 10	School Closure: Spring Break
Tue, Apr 21 - Wed, Apr 22	ELA State Test: Grades 3-5
Tue, Apr 28 - Wed, Apr 29	ELA State Test: Grades 6-8

MAY 2026

Tue, May 12 - Wed, May 13	Math State Test: Grades 3-8
Fri, May 22	Half Day: School Closure in Afternoon for Professional Development
Mon, May 25	School Closure: Labor Day

JUNE 2026

Tue, Jun 9 - Wed Jun 10; Wed, Jun 17 - Thu, Jun 25	June Regents Exam Window (Grades 8, 9, 10 Only)
Thu, Jun 18	Last Day: PK-8th Grade Students
Fri, Jun 19	Full Organization Closure: Juneteenth
Tue, Jun 23	Last Day: 9th and 10th Grade Students

DAILY SCHEDULE

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday Schedule

Period	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Regular Arrival Starts at 8:00 LATE starts at 8:15			
Period 0	8:15 - 8:25 - Homeroom	8:15 - 8:25 - Homeroom	8:15 - 8:25 - Homeroom
Period 1	8:25 - 9:23 - Period 1	8:25 - 9:23 - Period 1	8:25 - 9:23 - Period 1
Period 2	9:25 - 10:23 - Period 2 WIN (What I Need)	9:25 - 10:23 - Period 2	9:25 - 10:23 - Period 2
Period 3	10:25 - 11:23 - Period 3	10:25 - 11:23 - Period 3 WIN (What I Need)	10:25 - 11:23 - Period 3
Period 4	11:25 - 11:49 - Period 4 Lunch	11:25 - 11:49 - Period 4 Recess	11:25 - 11:49 - Period 4 Placita
Period 5	11:49 - 12:13 - Period 5 Recess	11:49 - 12:13 - Period 5 Placita	11:49 - 12:13 - Period 5 Lunch
Period 6	12:13 - 12:37 - Period 6 Placita	12:13 - 12:37 - Period 6 Lunch	12:13 - 12:37 - Period 6 Recess
Period 7	12:39 - 1:37 - Period 7	12:39 - 1:37 - Period 7	12:39 - 1:37 - Period 7
Period 8	1:39 - 2:37 - Period 8	1:39 - 2:37 - Period 8	1:39 - 2:37 - Period 8
Period 9	2:39 - 3:37 - Period 9	2:39 - 3:37 - Period 9	2:39 - 3:37 - Period 9 WIN (What I Need)
STAGGERED DISMISSAL STARTING 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 LATE starts at 8:15			
Period 0	8:15 – 8:25 – Homeroom	8:15 – 8:25 – Homeroom	8:15 – 8:25 – Homeroom
Period 1	8:25 – 9:15 – Period 1 Placita	8:25 – 9:15 – Period 1 Placita	8:25 – 9:15 – Period 1 Placita
Period 2	9:17 – 10:02 – Period 2	9:17 – 10:02 – Period 2	9:17 – 10:02 – Period 2
Period 3	10:04 – 10:50 – Period 3	10:04 – 10:50 – Period 3	10:04 – 10:50 – Period 3
Period 4	10:52 – 11:37 – Period 4 Lunch	10:52 – 11:37 – Period 4	10:52 – 11:37 – Period 4
Period 5	11:39 – 12:25 – Period 5	11:39 – 12:25 – Period 5 Lunch	11:39 – 12:25 – Period 5
Period 6	12:27 – 1:12 – Period 6	12:27 – 1:12 – Period 6	12:27 – 1:12 – Period 6 Lunch
Period 7	1:14 – 2:00 – Period 7	1:14 – 2:00 – Period 7	1:14 – 2:00 – Period 7
EARLY DISMISSAL AT 2:00 PM FOR ALL STUDENTS			
2:00 – 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 homerooms, 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.
 - **On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday all students** will be dismissed at 3:37. All students will be dismissed through the Wadsworth Ave exit.
 - **On Wednesdays students** will be dismissed at 2:00 with optional clubs from 2:00–2:30. 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.

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.

School in the Square Middle School Policy on Cell Phones & Internet-Enabled Devices

I. Introduction: Legal Overview & Policy Rationale

Legal Context

In accordance with state law and the district's **Distraction-Free Schools Policy**, the use of internet-enabled devices during the school day is prohibited on school grounds. This legislation is designed to ensure student safety, minimize distractions, and promote academic focus. The law requires schools to create and enforce systems—such as cell phone lockers—that support compliance.

School Rationale

Our school is committed to fostering a focused, respectful, and academically rigorous environment. Unrestricted access to devices during the school day undermines instructional time, increases social pressures, and distracts from meaningful learning. By removing these devices from the school day, we aim to:

- Promote equity and reduce digital distractions
Support student mental health by limiting social media access
- Reinforce healthy digital boundaries both in and out of school
- Ensure safety and compliance with legal requirements

We believe this policy is a shared responsibility—families, students, and educators all play a critical role in maintaining a healthy learning environment.

II. Key Definitions

- **Internet-enabled devices:** Smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, laptops, iPods, game consoles, or any other devices capable of connecting to the internet or running apps.
Non-internet-enabled devices: Devices that cannot connect to the internet (e.g., analog watches, basic flip phones).
- **School grounds:** All buildings, fields, and areas within the school's property lines.

- **School day:** Includes all periods from arrival through dismissal, including non-instructional time (lunch, recess, passing time, etc.).
- **Parent:** Any legal guardian or individual acting in loco parentis.

III. Policy Statement

Students **may not use internet-enabled devices during the school day** while on school grounds unless a specific exception applies (section VII). The policy does not prohibit the use of:

- Non-internet-enabled devices such as a non-internet enabled flip phone or
- School-issued internet devices used for instructional purposes. This includes chromebooks or iPads provided by the school.

IV. Student Responsibilities

- **Device Surrender:** Students must turn in internet-enabled devices at arrival to a secure, assigned **cell phone locker** during homeroom. If students arrive to school late, they will be turned in to the front office, an Operations staff member will place late phones in a cell phone locker.
- **Cell Locker Use:** Cell phone lockers must remain locked during the day. Devices must be powered off.
- **Access Restrictions:** Devices may only be retrieved **after dismissal**, unless approved by an administrator.

V. Parent Responsibilities

- Avoid sending unnecessary internet-enabled devices to school.
- Contact the main office or your student's advisor for any urgent communication instead of calling or texting your child.
- Support healthy tech habits at home to reinforce the school's efforts.

VI. Staff Responsibilities

- **Morning Checks:** Staff will collect all student devices during homeroom. All internet enabled devices will be stored and locked during the day in phone lockers.
- **Monitoring:** Staff will conduct periodic phone locker checks and address misuse.
- **Emergencies:** In urgent cases, staff may retrieve devices for students only with administrative approval.

VII. Exceptions to the Policy

Use of internet-enabled devices may be permitted **only** under the following circumstances:

1. Authorized by a teacher or administrator for educational purposes
2. Needed for student healthcare management
3. Emergency situations
4. Translation services
5. Student caregivers approved by a psychologist or counselor (case-by-case)
6. Required by law
7. Included in an IEP or 504 Plan

These circumstances must have prior approval and be confirmed by school leadership. If you think your student qualifies for an exception, you must reach out to Ms. Werno (hwerno@schoolinthesquare.org) for approval.

VIII. Consequences for Violations

Offense	Consequence
1st	Verbal warning and reminder to secure device properly
2nd	Device confiscated until end of day; parent contacted
3rd+	Reflection; parent must pick up the device; further disciplinary action may follow

Repeated violations may result in additional consequences aligned with the school's behavior code.

IX. Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Devices

- The school is **not responsible** for lost or damaged devices.
- Students are encouraged not to bring expensive devices unless absolutely necessary.
- Families should **insure** valuable devices if needed.

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.

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, Bridget Walsh (bwalsh@schoolinthesquare.org).

If you have questions about the 504 process or your child has a 504 Plan, please also reach out to Ms. Walsh.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

In addition to their core academic classes, S2 students may meet with teachers for differentiated, small-group instruction during WIN (What I Need) blocks. These blocks are based on iReady scores and include Academic Intervention Services (AIS), which provides students with targeted instruction in math and literacy to advance mastery of foundational skills as well as acceleration.

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 2025

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 have access to a Chromebook for educational use for the duration of their studies at S2.

The following information details the requirements that accompany S2 issued 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.
- Regarding Chromebooks, loaning to or borrowing from students is **NOT** allowed.
- Illegal download 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.
- Please note that upon discharging from School in the Square, students' email addresses will be deleted from our system.

B. LOSS OR DAMAGE

If your assigned Chromebook is damaged, lost or stolen, 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

Missing Keys	\$5/key
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Actual cost of a new Chromebook in 2025 and installation of the S2 Management System is \$252.

C. TERM OF AGREEMENT

Your right to use and possess the Chromebook terminates no later than the last day of the school year. Students who need a Chromebook for the summer may request this via the Summer Chromebook Request Form, which must be submitted prior to the end of the school year.

D. APPROPRIATION & REPOSSESSION

Failure to comply with all the terms of this Chromebook Use Agreement may result in your default of the agreement. Chromebook use for non-school purposes without S2 consent may be considered unlawful appropriation of S2 property.

E. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- Treat Chromebooks with respect and proper care
- Protect their Chromebook and return it to the charging tower prior to leaving the classroom unless other permissions have been given
- Keep foods, liquids and other dangerous materials away from the Chromebook
- Report any Chromebook 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.)
- **NOT** loan out their Chromebook to other individuals (including other S2 students)

Parents are expected to:

- Foster responsibility and respect for the Chromebook.
- Accept responsibility and settle payments for any negligence regarding the Chromebook.

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

The purpose of our uniform policy is to make sure that each student is dressed for success, which allows them to be their best self. A Uniform consists of the following -

- School in the Square polo
- School in the Square outer garment (¾ zip, sweatshirt or cardigan)
- Solid black sweatpants with no visible logos or stripes.
- Solid black uniform pants or slacks.
- Knee-length uniform shorts and skorts may be worn in warmer weather.

Students can wear any closed-toe shoe of their choice **(no sandals, crocs, foam runners or UGG tasman or slides)**. **Bike shorts, jeans, jeggings, leggings and non School in the Square sweaters are not considered school uniform and should not be worn.**

Sunglasses, hoods on heads, hats and durags are not considered uniform and should not be worn inside the building. In addition, personal headphones should not be worn in the building.

Students who wear clothing and/or accessories that do not adhere to the guidelines above will be asked to change the inappropriate article(s). When necessary, parents might be asked to bring a change of clothing, or the school will provide alternate garments for the student to wear (if possible).

Purchasing

You can shop for uniform items [online](#) through Student Styles. Scan below 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
1 time in a week	Electronic communication informing family of the marked absence
1-2 times in one month	A phone call and/or message from the student's Placita teacher A one on one conversation between the student and their La Placita teacher
3-5 times in one month	On the first instance this occurs an extended phone conference or zoom call with an SEL team member that results in an Attendance Goal agreement On the second instance this occurs an in-person meeting family meeting will be scheduled to review the prior Attendance Goal agreement and identify further supports
6-8 times in one month	A home-visit and/or in-person family meeting with a member of the school leadership team and SEL team member that results in an individualized support plan and weekly check-ins between the family 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 SEL team member 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.

VII. Community Agreements

Our community thrives when we follow our **three agreements**:

- Take care of yourself
- Take care of others
- Take care of this place

These agreements guide how our students learn, interact, and grow together every day. To live these out, we encourage our students to practice **the 3 R's**:

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Readiness

These cultural values help us build a safe, inclusive, and empowering school community.

S2 Students show **responsibility** when they:

- Follow directions the first time
- Arrive to class on time and prepared
- Wear a complete uniform with pride
- Use class time wisely and complete assignments

- Take ownership of their choices and actions

Responsibility means ***taking care of yourself.***

S2 students show **respect** when they:

- Use kind and positive language with classmates and adults
- Listen when others are speaking
- Treat school property and others' belongings with care
- Help keep classrooms, hallways, and common spaces clean
- Honor personal space and boundaries
- Reflect on how their choices impact others

Respect means ***taking care of others.***

S2 students show **Readiness** when they:

- Enter each class focused and ready to learn
- Show effort and perseverance, even when work is challenging
- Listen for instructions and ask for help when needed
- Stay on task and fully participate in class

Readiness means ***taking care of this place*** by contributing to a positive and productive learning environment.

Affirmations

Engaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am open & ready to learn • Every accomplishment begins with the decision to try • Hard things don't scare me
Empowering and Being Empowered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Disciplinary Consequences (In order of severity of response)

Whenever possible, S2 aims to keep students in the learning environment and uses a range of techniques in order to support and redirect students within the classroom. Each campus also has a range of disciplinary responses that can be used to hold students accountable for inappropriate behavior, as follows:

Warning/Redirection

Teachers and other school staff will redirect the student to the expected behavior and may give a warning if the behavior persists, letting the student know what the next consequence will be. Depending on the type of behavior, the next consequence could be a seat change, check-in with the teacher, or a behavioral referral.

Behavior Referral

If a teacher has redirected the student behavior within the classroom and the student's behavior persists, the teacher may create a behavior referral, where an administrator or member of the SEL team will come to support the student. The student may be taken to another space to reflect, practice behaviors, and be brought back to the classroom if the student's behavior improves. The student will return to class promptly and be given the opportunity to complete any schoolwork that is missed and the parent (s)/ guardian (s) will be notified of the referral. If the student's behavior does not improve, the SEL team will work with the student to identify any underlying issues and determine if further interventions are necessary.

Loss of Privileges

When a student engages in challenging behavior, they may lose the privilege to participate in field trips, school-wide incentives, social activities, or other earned privileges, with parent(s)/guardian(s) notification. The student will be provided with instruction.

Temporary Confiscation

Teachers or other staff members may temporarily confiscate cell phones or other personal technology, or other items that disrupt the learning environment. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive communication following the confiscation of a student's device or other item, which will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.

Student Reflection, including Lunch Reflection/After School Reflection

Student reflection is when students take time to write out or verbally describe what happened. The student takes the opportunity to reflect on their behavior and have a restorative conversation, as needed, with another student or a teacher. Students reflect on their behavior and address ways to respond differently in the future. This is often accompanied by a re-entry conversation before the student enters the learning space. In all instances, parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified that the student was assigned a reflection.

Temporary Exclusion from District-Provided Transportation

The Principal may temporarily exclude a student (other than a student with an IEP or 504 Plan mandating bus service) from district-provided transportation, based upon the student's behavior on the bus, if all other attempts to resolve such behavior fail. Prior to excluding a student from the bus, the Principal will arrange a conference with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and other appropriate personnel to help resolve the student's behavioral problems on the bus and to arrange other means, if necessary, of getting the student to school. Exclusion from the bus does not mean suspension from school and shall not last for longer than five (5) consecutive days.

Short-term In-school Suspension

A short-term in-school suspension refers to the removal of a student from the S2 school community for disciplinary reasons for a period of up to ten (10) days. During an in-school suspension, a student will remain in school for the entire day but will be provided with instruction in a separate location. Procedures for short-term suspensions are set forth below.

Short-term Out-of-school Suspension

A short-term out-of-school suspension refers to the removal of a student from the S2 school community for disciplinary reasons for a period of up to ten (10) days. All students serving a short-term out-of-school suspension of any length will be provided with alternative instruction as described below. Procedures for short-term suspensions are set forth below. All students serving an out-of-school suspension of any length will receive alternative instruction off campus.

Long-term Out-of-school Suspension

A long-term out-of-school suspension refers to the removal of a student from the S2 school community for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than ten (10) days. All students serving a long-term out-of-school suspension will be provided with alternative instruction as described below. Procedures for long-term out-of-school suspension are set forth below.

Expulsion

Expulsion refers to the permanent removal of a student from the S2 school community for disciplinary reasons. Alternative instruction will be provided to a student who is expelled as described below. Procedures for expulsion are set forth below.

Student Responsible Behavior Code

At S2, 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 system that recognizes students for positive behavior, while ensuring that appropriate disciplinary action is 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.

A disciplinary offense may occur while the student is:

- 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 school, including texting, e-mailing, and/or activity on social media, when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the school learning environment or endanger the school community.

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

- The student's age and maturity level;
- The nature and seriousness of the behavior and the circumstances/context in which the behavior occurred;
- The student's previous disciplinary record;
- The effectiveness of other forms of discipline;
- Information from parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers and/or others, as appropriate;
- The student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) and/or 504 Plan, if applicable;

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

When a student does not meet behavioral expectations and a violation of the School's Responsible Behavior Code has occurred, clear and consistent disciplinary action and other consequences will ensue, as further described below. When required, school administration will contact law enforcement authorities.

SECONDARY: Middle and High School (6-12) Discipline Code

The following lists provide examples of violations of the Responsible Behavior Code that may result in disciplinary consequences. The chart may be modified from time to time or supplemented by S2 upon advance notice to students and families.

Level 1: Uncooperative/ Non-Compliant Behavior

- 1.1 Breaking classroom/school-wide agreements
- 1.2 Using inappropriate language
- 1.3 Causing a disruption in the classroom
- 1.4 Having a cell phone
- 1.5 Failing to be in one's assigned place on school premises, including leaving class without permission
- 1.6 Running away from adult
- 1.7 Minor hitting, pushing, and play fighting
- 1.8 Being untruthful
- 1.9 Using school materials, technology and/or school property improperly
- 1.10 Bringing items or using items in school in violation of school policy
- 1.11 Posting or distributing material on school premises without permission
- 1.12 Being out of uniform

Behavior Supports and Interventions

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| • Calming Corner/Cool Off Space | • Mentoring |
| • Check In/Check Out | • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Outreach |
| • Collaborative Problem Solving | • Referral to Student Support Services Team |
| • Community Service | • Referral for Mental Health Support Services |
| • Development of Individual Behavior Contract/Chart | • Restorative Practices |
| • Individual/Group Counseling (with Parent/Guardian Permission) | • Student Conference/Family Conference |
| • Individualized Support Plan (ISP) | |

Range of Possible Disciplinary Responses

- Warning/Redirection
- Student Reflection
- Loss of Privilege
- Removal from classroom by teacher

Level 2: Disorderly Behavior

- 2.1 Repeated level one infractions
- 2.2 Causing a disruption in the classroom
- 2.3 Engaging in disruptive behavior on the school bus
- 2.4 Engaging in verbal conflict
- 2.5 Engaging in verbal threat to harm
- 2.6 Violating S2's Internet Use Policy (e.g., use of S2 computers for non-educational purposes) in non-criminal, non-harmful way (i.e. playing a game)
- 2.7 Using electronic technology inappropriately (e.g. unauthorized audio/video recording)
- 2.8 Engaging in minor scholastic dishonesty (see appendix pg. 43)
- 2.9 Gambling
- 2.10 Refusing to get into uniform
- 2.11 Giving false or misleading information in a safety situation

Behavior Supports and Interventions

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| • Calming Corner/Cool Off Space | • Individualized Support Plan (ISP) |
| • Check In/Check Out | • Mentoring |
| • Collaborative Problem Solving | • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Outreach |
| • Community Service (with parental/guardian consent) | • Referral to Student Support Services Team |
| • Development of Individual Behavior Contract/Chart | • Referral for Mental Health Support Services |
| • Individual/Group Counseling (with Parent/Guardian Permission) | • Restorative Practices |
| | • Student Conference/Family Conference |

Range of Possible Disciplinary Responses

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Warning/Redirection | • Loss of Privileges |
| • Student Reflection | |
| • Behavior Referral | • Removal from classroom by |

- teacher
- Temporary Confiscation
- Temporary Exclusion from District-Provided Transportation

Level 3: Disruptive Behavior

- 3.1 Repeated level two infractions
- 3.2 Engaging in harassing, intimidating, or bullying behavior, including through electronic communications and postings on social media
- 3.3 Stealing from others or school
- 3.4 Hitting, pushing, shoving, fighting, or biting repeatedly – or a first incident – causing physical injury or showing intent to physically injure another person
- 3.5 Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact, or touching someone in a private part of body
- 3.6 Causing visible injury
- 3.7 Having and/or using tobacco or other harmful substances or delivery devices, including but not limited to e-cigarettes, lighters, vaping devices, and other atomizers
- 3.8 Using slurs based upon actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability
- 3.9 Bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized persons to enter school
- 3.10 Engaging in vandalism, graffiti or other damage to school property or property belonging to others
- 3.11 Using electronic technology inappropriately, including but not limited to inappropriate social media use
- 3.12 Engaging in major scholastic dishonesty (see appendix pg. 43)
- 3.13 Leaving school premises without permission
- 3.14 Defying or disobeying the school personnel, security guards, and/or first responders in a way that substantially disrupts the educational process and/or poses a danger to the school community
- 3.15 Tampering with, changing, or altering a record or document of a school by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or other electronic means
- 3.16 Engaging in gang-related behavior (e.g., wearing or displaying gang apparel and/or accessories, writing graffiti, making gestures or signs)

Behavior Supports and Interventions

- Calming Corner/Cool Off Space
- Check In/Check Out
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Community Service (with parental/guardian consent)
- Development of Individual

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior Contract/Chart • Individual/Group Counseling (with Parent/Guardian Permission) • Individualized Support Plan (ISP) • Mentoring • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Outreach • Referral to Student Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services Team • Referral for Mental Health Support Services • Restorative Practices • Student Conference/Family Conference |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Range of Possible Disciplinary Responses

- Student Reflection
- Behavior Referral
- Loss of Privileges
- Temporary Confiscation
- Temporary Exclusion from District-Provided Transportation
- Short-term in-school suspension for up to ten days
- Short-term out-of-school suspension for up to ten days
- Suspension that results in a suspension for a fixed period of 11 or more school days

Addressing Level 4 Behaviors

This progressive code of conduct is predicated upon concurrent supports/interventions with a discipline response to address student misconduct so that students learn from their misbehavior. The Progressive Ladder of Support and Disciplinary Responses calls for universal prevention for all students and the early identification of students who are in need of additional and/or specific support.

The school should address Level 4 behavior in accordance with the Progressive Ladder of Support and Disciplinary Responses and the progressive approach to discipline set forth in this Discipline Code. The Discipline Code provides a range of disciplinary responses for these types of behaviors to ensure that all relevant factors are considered in determining the appropriate response.

Suspensions for more than 20 school days may be imposed when required by law or for infractions that involve seriously dangerous and/or violent behavior where the circumstances warrant the imposition of a longer suspension or expulsion. All suspensions in excess of 5 school days require approval by the Head of Schools.

Level 4: Aggressive, Harmful, or Violent Behavior

4.1 Coercing, threatening, planning, or instigating an act of violence, injury, or harm to other(s)

4.2 Engaging in harassing, intimidating, bullying, libelous, or slanderous behavior with intent to harm, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying), which could be based on an individual's actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability or weight; 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

4.3 Having, using, distributing, or selling a weapon or other object that can harm others

4.4 Engaging in any violent or criminal behavior that requires calling first-responders

4.5 Having, using, distributing, or selling controlled substances or prescription medications without appropriate authorization, illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, drug paraphernalia, and/or alcohol

4.6 Making sexually suggestive comments, innuendoes, propositions or similar remarks, or engaging in nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (e.g., touching, patting, pinching, lewd or indecent public behavior, or sending or posting sexually suggestive messages or images)

4.7 Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm, or engaging in any behavior that activates Building Response Team protocols

4.8 Engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity

4.9 Engaging in sexual conduct on school premises or at school-related functions

4.10 Posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing literature or material containing a threat of violence, injury or harm, or depicting violent actions against or obscene, vulgar or lewd pictures of students or staff, including but not limited to posting such material on the internet

Behavior Supports and Interventions

- Calming Corner/Cool Off Space
- Check In/Check Out
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Community Service (with parental/guardian consent)
- Development of Individual

- Behavior Contract/Chart
- Individual/Group Counseling (with Parent/Guardian Permission)
- Individualized Support Plan (ISP)
- Mentoring
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Outreach
- Referral to Student Support Services Team
- Referral for Mental Health Support Services
- Restorative Practices
- Student Conference/Family Conference

Range of Possible Disciplinary Responses

- Student Reflection
- Temporary Exclusion from District-Provided Transportation
- Short-term in-school suspension for up to ten days
- Short-term out-of-school suspension for up to ten days
- Suspension that results in a suspension for a fixed period of 11 or more school days
- Expulsion

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 but not limited to lockers, desks, and cubbies, 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 their 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 Head of Schools 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 Head of Schools shall refer to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to the school. "Weapon" as used in this context shall mean any weapon, 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 the S2 school community for disciplinary reasons for a period of up to ten (10) days. This includes in-school and out-of-school suspension.

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

- Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal shall notify the student orally of the charges against them. If the student denies the misconduct, the Principal must provide an explanation of the evidence against the student.
- The student shall be informed of the evidence; where applicable, the student will have the opportunity to explain their side of the events.
- If the Principal decides to proceed with the short-term suspension, the Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing that the student will be suspended from school.

- The written notice of suspension shall be provided by personal delivery or overnight mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to impose suspension, sent to the last known address(es) of the parent(s)/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)/guardian(s). An email will be sent in addition to both of the methods above.
 - The short-term suspension notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and will inform the parent(s)/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)/guardian(s).
 - At the conference, the parent(s)/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 danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of 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 to impose a short-term suspension may be made to the Head of Schools who shall make their decision based solely upon the record before them.

All appeals to the Head of Schools must be in writing and submitted to the Head of Schools within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Principal's decision, unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so.

Appeals may be submitted via email to hos@schoolinthesquare.org or by letter sent to:

Head of Schools
 School in the Square Public Charter School
 12 Sherman Avenue

New York, NY 10040

The Head of Schools will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. Final decisions of the Head of Schools may be appealed to the S2 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 directly to the Board. Appeals may be submitted via email to boardchair@schoolinthesquare.org or by letter sent to:

Board of Trustees
School in the Square Public Charter School
12 Sherman Avenue
New York, NY 10040

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 or Expulsion

A long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from the S2 school community 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 immediately be removed from class and/or school, as needed.
- The student shall be informed of the charges and the evidence for those charges; where applicable, the student will have the opportunity to explain their side of the events.

- The Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s)/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 the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), by personal delivery or overnight mail delivery as soon as possible to the last known address of the parent(s)/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 and challenge 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 recording of the formal hearing will be created and made available to all parties upon request.

The Head of Schools, or their designee, shall serve as hearing officer and preside over the hearing. When the Head of Schools does not serve as hearing officer, the designated hearing officer shall provide a report to the Head of Schools which shall be advisory only, and the Head of Schools may accept or reject all or part of it. A written decision will be issued within five (10) school days after the formal hearing to the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

An appeal from the written decision may be made to the S2 Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals must be in writing and submitted directly to the Board. Appeals may be submitted via email to boardchair@schoolinthesquare.org or by letter sent to:

Board of Trustees
 School in the Square Public Charter School
 12 Sherman Avenue
 New York, NY 10040

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. Appeals may be submitted by letter sent to: 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

S2 will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that student progress in the general curriculum of S2. 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 three (3) 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 at one of the S2 school facilities, or a library or another neighborhood location. The alternative instruction location will be communicated to the parent or guardian in the suspension letter. 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 disciplinary 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. S2 shall comply with Sections 300.530–300.536 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.

S2 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 (10) 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.

S2 will ensure that the Student Support Services Coordinator or special education teacher and/or the general education 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 behavior intervention plans, initial referrals, change in service, annual reviews, or Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs), among other things.

Provision of Services During Removal

S2 will place students in an interim alternative educational setting as appropriate and mandated by 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530 and 300.531.

Students removed for a period of fewer than ten (10) 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 (10) 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 the student's 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 the student's 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 serious 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 the student's IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence.

Additional Due Process: Manifestation Determination Review (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)/guardian(s) 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 a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be permitted to return to school immediately, in lieu of beginning or completing the period of suspension, except as provided in 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g); a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) must be conducted (unless an FBA was conducted before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred) and a BIP must be implemented for the student, or the existing BIP must be reviewed and modified as necessary to address the behavior. If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's 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)/guardian(s) may request a hearing to challenge an interim alternative educational setting or a manifestation determination by appealing the decision. If a parent or guardian requests a hearing to challenge an interim alternative educational setting or a manifestation determination, the student must 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 resulting in a disciplinary change in placement that would exceed ten (10) consecutive school days, including a disciplinary change in placement relating to drug, weapon, controlled substance and/or serious bodily injury offenses, whichever occurs first, unless the parent or guardian and the school agree otherwise.

Students with a Section 504 Plan and "Deemed to Know" Students

With regard to disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion, the rights of charter school students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) are essentially the same as the rights of charter school students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as described above, with minor differences in procedures depending upon the governing law and regulations. However, for a student who receives Section 504 accommodations, the School's Section 504 team, rather than the CSE of the student's district of residence, is responsible for conducting the manifestation determination review in connection with any significant disciplinary change in placement, in accordance with the requirements of Section 504.

A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services is entitled to all of the protections provided under federal law for students with disabilities if, before the behavior that led to the disciplinary action occurred, S2 is "deemed to have knowledge" that the student was a student with a disability, in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.534.

When addressing discipline for students with disabilities, including students with Section 504 plans or those students for whom the school is "deemed to have knowledge," S2 will comply with applicable legal requirements governing the discipline of a student for misconduct.

Compliance with the Child Find Requirements of IDEA

S2 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 student 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 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 their 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, S2 reserves the right to discipline students, consistent with the Responsible Behavior Code, who engage in harassment or bullying of students off school property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct: 1) affects the educational process; 2) 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 within the educational system. This includes written and/or verbal harassment or bullying which 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) aka DASA Coordinator

The Dignity Act Coordinator (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 names and contact information for DACs are posted on the school’s website. S2 has designated the following staff members to serve as DACs:

School in the Square Bilingual Elementary

School in the Square Middle

Rebecca Morales, Social Worker
rmorales@schoolinthesquare.org

If students or families suspect any kind of harassment or bullying has occurred, please immediately notify one of our DACs. The DACs will be accessible to students and other employees for consultation and advice.

Addressing Bullying and Bias-Based Behavior

Prevention and Intervention

S2 promotes a nurturing school culture that promotes positive interpersonal and intergroup relations and respect for diversity among students and between students and staff. Students' ability to learn and meet high academic standards and the school community's ability to educate its students are compromised when students engage in discrimination or harassment, bullying, or intimidating behavior toward other students.

S2 works to prevent bullying behavior through:

- Implementation of school-wide and classroom-based social emotional learning strategies and positive approaches to discipline.
- Age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the curriculum.
- Creation of a school-wide and classroom climate that supports racial, cultural and other forms of diversity, (i.e., clear communication of behavioral expectations, incorporation of lesson plans on prejudice reduction, modeling unbiased behavior, empathy development and cooperative learning).
- Encouragement of parent(s)/guardian(s) participation in bullying behavior prevention initiatives.

S2 addresses bullying behavior, utilizing discipline methods that reflect a commitment to restorative practices, which may include, but not be limited to:

- Immediate referral of the student harmed to appropriate support services in the school and community.
- Referral of those who caused harm to counseling to address underlying behavior and/or to administrators for appropriate discipline.
- Notification of parent(s)/guardian(s) of all those involved.
- Processes for resolution, such as restorative circles, led by an experienced circle leader.
- Ongoing actions intended to prevent recurrence, such as increasing adult

supervision of an activity in which incidents have occurred and close monitoring of the wellbeing of those harmed.

- Development of an Individualized Support Plan (ISP).
- Reconvening an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting.
- Participation in community service (with parental/guardian consent).

Bullying & Harassment: What You Need to Know

Bullying and harassment can be physical, verbal, non-verbal, or written—including online messages, texts, social media, and gaming chats. They may happen once or repeatedly, and often target someone because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, weight, or other personal characteristics. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior meant to harm someone. It is deliberate, unprovoked, and involves an imbalance of power—such as physical strength, social status, or age. Harassment is behavior that creates a hostile or intimidating environment. This includes sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual comments or actions) and sexual assault (any non-consensual sexual contact).

These actions are serious, and the school will investigate all reports. Staff, students, and families share responsibility to stop them by knowing the rules, speaking up, and not being a bystander. Prevention starts with respect and empathy.

Through social-emotional learning, students build skills to:

- Recognize and manage emotions
- Care about others
- Build positive relationships
- Make responsible choices
- Handle conflict respectfully

Students who use these skills are less likely to bully and more likely to stand up for others.

Bullying Is Not Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between two or more people who perceive they have incompatible goals or desires. Conflict occurs naturally as we interact with one another. It is a normal part of life that we will not always agree with other people

about the things we want, what we think, or what we want to do.

Most conflicts between students arise when students see the same situation from two different points of view. Think of some of the ways we describe people in conflict: "They were butting heads"; "They were going back and forth at each other"; "It was 'he said/she said/they said.'" In these cases, both people are equally "telling their side of the story."

In a conflict, people may get frustrated and angry. Chances are the amount of emotion each person feels will be relatively equal because both are vying for what they want. In the heat of the moment, one person's or both people's emotions can escalate a conflict. All of us have known of conflicts in which people have said things to hurt one another which they later regret.

People engaged in a conflict want the issue to be resolved. The "back and forth" that occurs is each person trying to make the case for what they want. When one or both people have the skills to resolve the dispute so that both sets of needs are met, the same conflict between the same two people most likely will not be repeated.

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 each grade level, all students participate in a morning advisory class that is taught by school staff. Our social-emotional team has created a scope and sequence for this class using responsive classrooms as their framework. The curriculum utilizes such tools as journals and circles to help students understand their commitments as community members of S2. 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 of, to their immediate supervisor. Any student who believes they are 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 no later than two school days after making such oral report.

The Principal or the Principal's designee shall promptly lead or supervise a thorough investigation of all reports of harassment, bullying, or discrimination, shall ensure the investigation is completed in a timely manner, and shall take appropriate action, including, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority (e.g., the Head of Schools and/or 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 S2's 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 student and stakeholder relationships. 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.

Each Principal shall provide a report on data and trends related to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination to the Head of Schools and Executive Director at least once during each school year.

Material incidents of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination 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 report or 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 and 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.

Scholastic Dishonesty Appendix

Minor scholastic dishonesty involves low-impact or first-time violations that typically result from poor judgment or misunderstanding of academic expectations. Engaging in minor scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- Copying an answer on a minor assignment
- Citing sources incorrectly
- Working with another on an independent minor assignment without permission

Major scholastic dishonesty involves deliberate, large-scale, or high-impact actions that significantly compromise academic integrity. Engaging in major scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- Cheating on major assignments, i.e. projects, tests, etc. (cheating includes copying from another's test paper; using material during a test which is not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with another student during the test without authorization; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in whole or part, the contents of an un-administered test; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for one's self to take a test; bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered; or securing copies of the test or answers to the test in advance of the test)
- Plagiarizing (appropriating another's work and using it as one's own for credit without the required citation and attribution, e.g., copying written work from the Internet, or any other source)
- Colluding (engaging in fraudulent collaboration with another person in preparing written work for credit) for particularly egregious situations (e.g., where numerous students are involved, where the behavior involves standardized tests, or where the behavior requires invalidation of a test)
- Using AI technology and passing it as your own intellectual property

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.

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.

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

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 harassment 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 & adult 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 2025-2026 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.



schoolinthesquare.org

