



## **2021-2022 Parent Handbook**

### **Handbook Explanation**

This handbook is designed to familiarize student and families with an overview of our policies, procedures and expectations. Please take time to read it carefully. Although not inclusive of every situation, the information in this handbook is a reference guide for the successful operation of Dynamic Minds Academy. If you do not understand or need further information about any of the contents, please contact our office. Our goal is to provide a positive and meaningful educational experience for all of the students at Dynamic Minds Academy. Dynamic Minds Academy is a tuition-free public charter school. Students are admitted to Dynamic Minds Academy at no cost.

### **Board of Directors**

Dynamic Minds Academy is governed by its Board of Directors (the “Board”). The Board will operate in accordance with its bylaws. The Board has entered into a Charter Agreement with Education One which is a division of Trine University. The bylaws and Charter Agreement shall be available on the School’s website, <http://www.dynamicmindsacademy.org>.

Board meetings are scheduled the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 PM and will be held at the Dynamic Minds Academy / The Hope Source location.

### **Mission and Vision**

**Mission:** Dynamic Minds Academy aims to bridge the gap between treatment and education for students with autism spectrum disorder by providing evidence-based practices for personal growth within an optimal learning environment.

**Vision:** Dynamic Minds Academy will fill gaps in treatment and education by bridging evidence-based treatments and practices for an optimal learning environment.

### **Conflict of Interest Policy**

Board Members will confirm annually that they have no inappropriate conflicts that would preclude them from serving Dynamic Minds Academy with fidelity. Board members will fully comply with all policies set forth independently from this handbook.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy and Equal Educational Opportunity**

Dynamic Minds Academy will foster an educational environment that provides an equal educational opportunity for all students pursuant to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. The School follows all applicable federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws in its educational programs. The School does not, and will not, discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or any other protected category specified in applicable federal, state, or local law.

## **Anti-Harassment Policy**

All students, administrators, and employees are responsible for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on School grounds immediately before, during, or immediately after School hours; in any School program or activity taking place in School facilities, on School transportation, or at other off-campus locations, such as at School-sponsored field trips or a training program. This policy also provides for the use of property or equipment provided by the School, including School-owned computers and the School's computer network.

Anyone who believes that a student has been or is the victim of harassment is encouraged to immediately report the situation to an appropriate staff member such as a teacher, counselor, or an administrator.

Romantic relationships between students are strongly discouraged.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Students shall not engage in any activity to harass an employee or student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

“Sexual Harassment” is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment or education;
- b) Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as a basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual;
- c) Such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's academic or professional performance or of creating a hostile or offensive work or education environment;
- d) Denial of an employment or educational opportunity occurs directly because an individual refused to submit to unwelcome requests for sexual favors made by a supervisor or teacher;
- e) Such conduct is engaged in by volunteers and/or non-employees over which the School has some degree of control of their behavior while on school property. a) Verbal conduct of a sexual nature such as talking about sex or sexual feelings, telling sexual jokes or stories, making sexual comments or innuendoes, whistling or making other sexually suggestive sounds.

Examples of sexual harassment include the following:

- a) Verbal conduct of a sexual nature such as talking about sex or sexual feelings, telling sexual jokes or stories, making sexual comments or innuendoes, whistling or making other sexually suggestive sounds.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Bullying is prohibited by Dynamic Minds Academy. Students who commit any acts of bullying will be subject to discipline, including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, arrest, and/or prosecution.

### **Definition**

“Bullying” is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically); physical acts committed; aggression; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student. Such actions create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- a) places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property;
- b) has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student’s physical or mental health;
- c) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s academic performance; or
- d) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying does not include, and should not be interpreted to impose, any burden or sanction on the following:

- a) participating in a religious event;
- b) acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger;
- c) participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's freedom of speech rights;
- d) participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one (1) or more adults;
- e) participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent; or
- f) engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

### **Applicability**

Dynamic Minds Academy prohibits bullying in all forms including, but not limited to, bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, or computer network.

### **Education**

Dynamic Minds Academy will provide training and/or instruction on anti-bullying prevention and policy to all students in grades Kindergarten through 12, as well as staff, in accordance with Indiana law.

### **Reporting**

Anyone who believes that a student has been, or is the victim of, bullying is encouraged to immediately report the situation to an appropriate staff member such as a teacher, school counselor, or administrator (including the Education Director). All staff, volunteers, and contracted service providers who observe or receive a report of suspected bullying shall notify a designated school

administrator in charge of receiving reports of suspected bullying within the same day. If a staff member does not know who to make a report to, he or she should make a report directly to the Education Director. Bullying reports to the Department of Child Services and/or law enforcement must be made as required by law, such as when a staff member believes that a student is the victim of abuse or neglect. Any person who makes a report of bullying and requests to remain anonymous will not be personally identified as the reporter or complainant to extent permitted by law. Dynamic Minds Academy will act appropriately to discipline staff members, volunteers, or contracted service providers who receive a report of bullying and fail to initiate or conduct an investigation of a bullying incident and for persons who falsely report an incident of bullying. Dynamic Minds Academy will act appropriately to discipline students, staff members, visitors, or volunteers who make false reports of bullying.

### **Investigation**

Once a report of suspected bullying is received by the designated school administrator, an expedited investigation shall follow. The investigation should be facilitated by the designated school administrator or other appropriate school staff. Information relating to the investigation will be gathered using means including, but not limited to: witness interviews, requests for written witness statements, record identification and review, and an assessment of whether bullying occurred. The investigation will be initiated within one (1) school day of the report to the designated school administrator and will ordinarily be completed within ten (10) school days.

### **Intervention/Responses**

If a report of suspected bullying is substantiated through an investigation, then Dynamic Minds Academy shall take appropriate intervention and responses as consistent with policy and procedure. Dynamic Minds Academy will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to stop the bullying, to remedy the bullying, and to prevent the bullying from recurring. Interventions and responses include, but are not limited to: separating the bully and the target; follow-up school counseling for the target; bullying education for the bully; and prompt disciplinary action against the bully. These steps should not penalize the target of the bullying. Disciplinary actions against the bully may include, but are not limited to: suspension and expulsion for students; discharge for employees; exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors; and removal from any office for governing body members. Also, if the acts of bullying rise to the level of serious criminal offense, the matter may be referred to law enforcement. Dynamic Minds Academy shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the process of minimizing bullying. Parents should report suspected acts of bullying to an appropriate school official. In addition, parents of students suspected of bullying will be notified by telephone or through other appropriate means of communication. Conversely, parents of students suspected of being the target of acts of bullying will also be notified with a phone call or through other means of appropriate communication. Parental notifications will occur in an expedited manner within two (2) school days after the designated school administrator receives the report of suspected bullying. Parents of students who are disciplined for acts of bullying will be involved in the disciplinary process consistent with the law and School policy.

### **Public Displays of Affection**

Public displays of affection between students are strictly prohibited. Should this occur, parents will be notified. DMA works with The Hope Source clinical staff on a therapeutic solution to behaviors, but disciplinary action may be necessary in some instances. Each incident will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **Social Media Policy**

Dynamic Minds Academy recognizes that the Internet and related technology enhances the learning process if such technology is appropriately accessed. Students are expected to use social media responsibly and to employ their own good judgment. Students are encouraged to review this policy for guidance on appropriate use of social media. Teachers are not allowed to communicate with students via social media.

The School prohibits bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, or computer network. Students using social media to bully or harass other students are subject to the Anti-Bullying Policy and discipline procedures. Students should alert a teacher or other staff member if they see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content online (including messages, posts, and, images).

## **Attendance policy**

Please contact the parent communication line via email or text to report all full day absences at [client.attendance@asdhopesource.com](mailto:client.attendance@asdhopesource.com). Regular attendance is vital to a child's learning process; however, if a student is absent due to illness or another reason, please notify us as soon as possible. The Dynamic Minds Academy and Hope Source staff is scheduled based on the number of students in attendance. Having prior knowledge of absences (including vacation time) allows staff members to utilize time where student attendance is decreased for their personal time off as well. Dynamic Minds Academy reserves the right to inquire whether the ill student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.

Arrangements for missed academic course work must be made with the Education Director in advance. If a student's late arrivals and/or absences are adversely affecting academic success, then a conference will be scheduled with parent/student to develop a plan of improvement.

Due to our extended school year students are permitted to be absent a total of 8 days of school for sick time, outside therapy, or personal reasons. It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate these absences and provide necessary documentation to Dynamic Minds Academy attendance officials in a timely manner. Students are also able to utilize an additional 5 days for a Spring Break or that time can be converted into unexcused time off. Any absences beyond those allotted days will accrue towards truancy reporting. After 10 unexcused absences have accrued, the student will be considered habitually truant and will be reported to the appropriate officials. Additionally, that student will be put up for expulsion from Dynamic Minds Academy. Please see Procedures for Expulsion in the Student Discipline section of this handbook.

Should there be medical reason for habitual absences, or another extenuating circumstance, documentation must be provided to the Dynamic Minds Academy Education Director. The

Education Director will consult with the Clinical Director of The Hope Source to develop a plan to support the family clinically in lieu of expulsion if deemed the most appropriate action.

## **School-Home Communication**

Every student will have a “Take home folder” that will be sent home each day provided by DMA/THS. This folder will be sturdy, labeled with the student’s initials, and will include a sheet protector. This folder will be used to send home any important parent communication including the daily parent communication log for therapy. This log should be reviewed daily and signed by the parent.

Classroom teams will send a weekly newsletter to parents each Friday detailing the plans and announcements for the upcoming week. This newsletter will be sent electronically via email and/or Remind. Parents should review this newsletter weekly and reach out to their child’s teacher if they have any specific questions regarding their child’s academic progress. Teachers will communicate any questions or concerns with parents via email, Remind, or phone.

Dynamic Minds Academy has a school-wide Remind account that allows parents and teachers an easy way to communicate without sharing phone numbers. All parents are automatically added to their child’s classroom upon enrollment. Remind can be accessed via text message, email, or through the Remind app.

## **Grading**

Teachers use a variety of assessment techniques to determine grades. Some of these techniques include projects, daily work production, tests, observation, rubrics, and review of goals accomplished. Our teachers will strive to create authentic assessments that focus on how, where, and why students use new skills. We believe that in order to provide students with valid measures of their understanding, we must create assessments that promote generalization of skills necessary for success in life, as well as in school.

Students in grades K-2 will receive skills-based report cards that report on their acquisition of foundational Mathematics and English/Language Arts and Reading skills. Students in grades 3-8 that participate in the alternative state assessment will also receive skills-based report cards.

All other students in grades 3-8 will receive letter grades for Math, English/Language Arts & Reading, Social Studies, and Science based on the grading scale below. As explained above, these grades will include projects, daily work production, tests, observation, rubrics, and review of goals accomplished.

Students in grades 9-12 will receive letter grades in the courses they enroll in via Plato as well as offline coursework completed with their classroom teacher.

90% - 100%.....	A
80% - 89%.....	B
70% - 79%.....	C
60% - 69%.....	D

59% and below.....F

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

Our students in grades K-8 receive instruction based on the Engage NY curriculums: Eureka Math and Core Knowledge ELA. More information about these curriculums is available at this website: <https://www.engageny.org/>. Our Science and Social Studies teachers in grades K-8 follow standards-based curriculum maps based on the Indiana State Standards. Project-based learning, play-based learning, and action-based learning principals are applied throughout our elementary and middle school levels to allow more access to education at every child's readiness level.

Students in Grades K-12 who require extensive modifications in order to access grade level standards will receive instruction utilizing the Core Curriculum Solutions provided by the Attainment Company.

Our students in grades 9-12 are primarily enrolled in classes via Plato Courseware to allow access to all courses required for an Indiana Diploma. Teachers also offer elective credits via the coursework completed during tablework.

All our students participate in state-mandated standardized testing with the accommodations outlined in their Individualized Education Plans. Additionally, we take a formative assessment three times per year to assess student achievement and growth. This assessment is called Exact Path. Reports on this assessment are sent home at the conclusion of each testing window.

## **Lunch and Snack**

Students will need to bring a sack lunch to school each day. Students should also bring a personal water bottle that is labeled with his/her name. Students can fill their bottles as needed using our water fountains. Students are also asked to bring healthy snacks for AM and PM snack time. This can be sent daily or weekly. Please label all snack items that are sent in for more than a day. We encourage you to pack nutritious lunches and snacks for your child. We ask that students not bring in the following: Cola or other soft drinks, caffeinated drinks, all food and drinks that are artificially red or blue in color and high sugar items.

## **Drop-off and Pick-Up**

Student drop-off and pick up is an important safety and organizational matter. As the year progresses, changes may be made to better accommodate the traffic and ensure student safety. The following represents procedures in place as of the printing of this handbook:

- a) Student drop off is at 8:00 each morning and pick up is at 3:30 each afternoon
- b) Students should not exit the car to enter the building until a staff member is present
- c) Please have your child ready to exit the car independently (i.e., shoes and jacket on, lunch and backpack in hand) and a staff member will assist your child in entering the building at 8:00.
- d) Students should exit from the vehicle door closest to the building when possible.
- e) Staff members will release students to parents one by one at drop off. Staff members will be able to assist with door opening and seat belt procedures as needed.
- f) To ensure that drop off and pick up is as efficient as possible, please refrain from lengthy discussions with staff members or giving verbal messages at this time.

- g) Parents should use extreme caution and minimal speed at all times during pick up and drop off. Watch for children at other drop off doors.
- h) Parents dropping off after 8:10 should follow the **Late arrival, Early departure & Late pick-up procedures**
- i) Parents arriving to pick up after 3:40 should follow the **Late arrival, Early departure & Late pick-up procedures**

## **Late arrival, Early departure & Late pick-up procedures**

Please call, text, or email the DMA/THS parent communication line ASAP to report all late arrivals, early departures or late pick-ups: (317-578-0410 or [client.attendance@asdhopesource.com](mailto:client.attendance@asdhopesource.com)). Drop off hours are at 8:00-8:10 AM and Pick up is at 3:30pm-3:40pm. This is the only time of the day that these specific doors are monitored.

- *Late arrival*- Students arriving to school after 8:10 am must enter through the main office doors and be signed in by a parent or other adult. Parents will be asked to wait with their child until the appropriate staff member is present to take them. If a student arrives past 8:10, they will be marked tardy.
- *Early departure*- Students leaving school for appointments or other reasons should be picked up from the main office door. Parents must enter the building and sign students out. Advance notice should be given when possible via the parent line or an email.
- *Late pick up*- Parents are expected promptly at dismissal time. In the event of an emergency that necessitates a pick-up later than 3:40 pm, parents should pick up at the front office doors. If a student is picked up after 3:40 there is an automatic \$10 fee charged to parents. At 4:00PM it is then a \$1 per minute charge until the student is picked up.

## **Before & After Care**

Consistent before and after care can be arranged through the Education Director for a weekly fee. Students can arrive as early as 7:30am and stay as late as 4:00pm. Due to staffing this is a service that must be used daily in order to reserve these rates. Rates are not adjustable to daily rates if one day is missed and cover the full period from 7:30-8am and 3:40-4:00pm regardless of pick-up time. Students should be dropped off and picked up at the main entrance. Rates are as follows:

- Before Care only- \$25
- After Care only- \$20
- Before and After Care- \$40

If a child is not picked up by 4:00PM it is then a \$1 per minute charge until the student is picked up.

## **Student Dress Code**

The following general guidelines are in place in order to promote a safe environment that focuses on education and minimizes distractions. Administration reserves the right to determine if a student is wearing something that distracts or interferes with the learning environment. If a student's apparel is determined to be inappropriate for school, parents will be asked to bring a change of clothing or a student may be given clothes from Dynamic Minds Academy to wear.

1. All attire should be sized to fit without exposing undergarments, buttocks, stomachs or cleavage.
2. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length when arms are resting at sides.
3. The following items are strictly prohibited: Spaghetti strap tank tops, crop tops, transparent/mesh clothing.
4. Clothing should not display or suggest alcohol, tobacco or other drug related messages, profanity, violence, gang related symbols, obscene or sexually suggestive content.
5. Students participating in recreational activities or physical education must bring appropriate clothing.
6. Girls that are physically mature must wear appropriate undergarments.
7. Shoes with wheels are not permitted.
8. Heels on shoes should not be more than 2 inches tall
9. Hats, caps, bandannas are not permitted without special permission.
10. Coats, hats, gloves, and scarves need to be placed in a locker with the student's backpack. An extra sweatshirt may be sent in if the student is cold.

### **Locker Policy**

Every student will be issued a locker to be used for personal belongings that are brought to and from school each day. All personal belongings must be stored in the locker throughout the school day with the exception of the student's lunch box, a light jacket/sweatshirt, and/or a water bottle. Lockers are not to be used for long-term storage of snacks or any other items. Students may not utilize locks or decorate their lockers with personal items. Lockers should only be visited at the start and end of each day and at mealtimes. DMA staff reserves the right to search a student's locker at any time.

### **Electronic Policy**

Students are not allowed to bring electronic devices such as an iPods, tablets, laptops, smart watches, or personal gaming systems. An exception to this rule may be made on an individual basis and must have prior written permission from the Education Director of DMA and/or Clinical Director of The Hope Source. It is strongly advised that cell phones are not brought on school property. Cell phones that are brought to school may not be utilized 8:00-3:30pm and must be kept in a student's backpack on airplane mode. If a student is found using a personal cell phone during the day, it will be confiscated and held until the end of the day for parent pick-up. Dynamic Minds Academy is not responsible for loss or damages to any personal electronic device on school property.

### **Personal Items**

Personal items such as books, games, toys etc. should not be brought to school. Dynamic Minds Academy does not accept responsibility for the personal items of students. If for some reason these items are brought to school, they should remain in the student's backpack. Items that are too distracting will be collected and returned at the end of the day. Backpacks, purses and other personal bags need to be stored in the student's locker upon arrival.

### **Dynamic Minds Academy Field trip and Outing Policy**

- *Group Scheduled Trips*-Parents will have advance notice of scheduled field trips that are planned. Reminder information will be sent home prior to the event as well.
- *Small group outings/authentic learning opportunities*-Parents will be notified of small group outings the day before by notification and permission slip in the Take Home binder. These include library trips, volunteer opportunities, personal goal activities, etc.
- *Recurring outings*-If your child has a recurring outing, then you will be notified in advance the day of the week that this occurs so that you can anticipate that each week. These include pre-scheduled community outings and recreational activities.

#### Procedure for all outings

- Staff members will sign students in and out of the building with specific times and destination.
- All outings are intended to allow for authentic opportunities within the community while targeting desired goals.
- All outings will be noted in the communication binder
- All students must have consent to transport waiver on file

### **Accident Policy**

If a student has a non-emergency accident at school, a staff member will complete an incident form. This form will be photocopied for your child's file and sent home in their take home binder. Parents will be contacted immediately for all urgent matters.

### **Health & Safety Policy**

Please see attached "DMA Return to School Plan and Health Protocol" for COVID-19 related policies and protocols. All other health protocols are listed here:

#### Medication & Supplement Dispensing Policies and Procedures

- All medication (prescription and over the counter) and supplements must have a signed consent
- All prescription medication must have a physician's signature.
- All over-the-counter and prescription medication must be in the original containers with name and dosing instructions visible on label.
- Medication must come in the exact dosage prescribed so the person administering is not responsible for splitting pills.
- Medication should be transferred from parent to staff member directly. Medication should not be sent in backpacks or lunchboxes.
- Consent forms must be updated each time there is a change in medication or dosing. (This includes stopping medication.)
- An emergency care plan is required from the physician for asthma and/or epinephrine
- Medication sent in will be inventoried and secured in a medication lock box.
- Medication dispensed will be recorded in each child's medication log.

**Additional Health Protocols:**

In addition to COVID-19 symptoms, students with the following additional symptoms should remain home:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Contagious eye infection
- Contagious skin infection
- Excessive runny nose
- Evidence of lice infestation, scabies or other parasitic infection

If a child arrives sick or becomes sick during the day, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. If parents cannot be reached, then the child's emergency contact on file will be notified. If your child has been sent home from school due to an illness **unrelated to COVID-19**, they may not return to school until:

- They have not vomited or had diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have taken a prescribed course of antibiotics for 24-48 hours.
- They are fever free without the use of medication for 24 hours

**Visitor Procedure**

Dynamic Minds Academy and The Hope Source are happy to welcome visitors in the building given the following guidelines for situations below. All visitors must report to the front desk to provide identification, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge before entering any school area beyond the front lobby.

**Lunch**

Parents are welcome to join their student for lunch. Please make your request to join your student by the end of the school day prior to the day you plan to visit. Requests can be made to the Education Director or Clinical Director. A location separate from other students will be provided for the lunch visit if it is scheduled from 11:30-12 or the lunch may take place from 12-12:30pm in the Café.

**Classroom Visits**

Parents are welcomed in our classrooms. Parents wishing to visit their student's classroom should contact the Education Director for an appointment at least one day before the desired time and register with the school office upon arrival. All visitors must be escorted during the school day. If you would like to meet with the teacher about student progress, an appointment must be made outside of instructional time.

**Field Trips**

Parents are welcome to chaperone field trips that are sponsored by Dynamic Minds Academy teaching staff. Volunteers will be required to complete and have an approved criminal history background check prior to attending the field trip. The cost of the background check will be the responsibility of the volunteer.

## **Alternate Pick-up Person**

Written authorization is required for a change in pick up procedure. Please let us know in advance so that a form may be completed. If a new person is added to the authorized pick-up list, they will be asked to show photo ID before leaving with the child.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

Cancellations and delays will be determined as much in advance as possible. Every effort will be made to make the decision prior to 6:30 am. Cancellations and delays will be displayed on WTHR channel 13 as well as the WTHR 13 website. We will also post this information on the Dynamic Minds Academy Facebook page and send a notification via Remind.

## **Celebrations**

Staff members will closely monitor student dietary restrictions and food allergies during holiday parties and birthdays. Permission will be requested for special events where students may be offered something different. Parents are welcome to send in special treats for your child's birthday, however due to diet restrictions, not every child may be able to partake. Unfortunately, due to confidentiality reasons, parents may not join their student for birthday celebrations. (Please see visitor policy for more information.)

## **Tobacco Use**

Dynamic Minds Academy is a non-smoking facility. Smoking and/or tobacco use are prohibited anywhere on property, inside or outside.

## **Student Discipline**

Dynamic Minds Academy takes a therapeutic approach to student behavior and collaborates with The Hope Source clinical staff to develop plans when student behaviors occur in the DMA classroom. In some instances, disciplinary action is necessary, and these written procedures will be followed. Dynamic Minds Academy is unable to share details regarding a student's behavior or disciplinary actions with anyone but that child's parent or guardian.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Notwithstanding the foregoing or any other law or policy, a suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary action against a student who is a child with a disability (as defined by IC 20-35-1-2) is subject to the procedural requirements of 20 U.S.C. 1415 *et seq.* and 511 I.A.C. 7-1-1 *et seq.*

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

A student may be suspended or expelled for "student misconduct" or "substantial disobedience" if the student misconduct or substantial disobedience in question occurs:

- a) On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- b) Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- c) Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

Notwithstanding the foregoing or the maximum term of an expulsion specified below, a student who is identified as bringing a firearm (as defined by IC 35-47-1-5) or destructive device (as defined by IC 35-47.5-2-4) to school or on school property, or who is in possession of a firearm or destructive device on school property, shall be expelled for at least one (1) calendar year, with the return of the student to be at the beginning of the first school semester or quarter after the end of the one (1) year period. The Education Director or his designee may modify the period of expulsion on a case-by-case basis for any student expelled for a violation of this paragraph.

Notwithstanding the foregoing or the maximum term of an expulsion specified below, a student who is identified as bringing a deadly weapon (as defined by IC 35-31.5-2-86) to school or on school property, or who is in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, may be expelled for not more than one (1) calendar year.

### **Procedures for Suspension**

The Education Director or her designee may suspend a student for not more than ten (10) school days provided the student has the opportunity for a meeting with the Education Director or her designee, during which the student is entitled to the following:

- a) A written or an oral statement of the allegations against the student;
- b) If the student denies the allegations, a summary of the evidence against the student; and
  - c) An opportunity for the student to explain the student's conduct. a) Interference with an educational function or school purposes; or
  - b) A physical injury to the student, other students, school employees, or visitors of the school.

If the conduct in question requires immediate removal of the student, the meeting mentioned above must occur as soon as reasonably possible after the student's suspension. Following a suspension, the Education Director or her designee shall send a written statement to the parent of the suspended student describing the student's misconduct and the action taken by the Education Director or her designee.

Notwithstanding the foregoing paragraph, the Education Director or her designee may suspend a student for more than ten (10) days provided such suspension is pending expulsion and the Education Director and her designee determines that such continued suspension will prevent or substantially reduce the risk of:

- a) Interference with an educational function or school purposes; or
- b) A physical injury to the student, other students, school employees, or visitors of the school.

### **Procedures for Expulsion**

The Education Director or her designee may conduct an expulsion meeting or appoint legal counsel or a member of the School's administrative staff, provided such member has not expelled the student in question during the current school year and such member was not involved in the events giving rise to the current expulsion. The Education Director, her designee or any appointed person may issue subpoenas, compel the attendance of witnesses, and administer oaths to those giving testimony at the expulsion meeting.

Prior to the expulsion meeting, the Education Director, her designee or any appointed person must give the student and the student's parent notice of their right to appear at the expulsion meeting. Such notice must meet the following requirements:

- a) Be provided by certified mail or personal delivery;
- b) Contain the reasons for the expulsion; and

- c) Contain the procedure for requesting an expulsion meeting.

If the student or the student's parent requests an expulsion meeting, the Education Director, her designee or any appointed person shall conduct the expulsion meeting and, within a reasonable time following the meeting's conclusion, perform the following:

- a) Issue a written summary of the evidence heard at the expulsion meeting;
- b) Take action the individual finds appropriate; and
- c) Give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent.

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the action taken, the student or the student's parent may submit a written appeal to the grievance officer of the Board of Directors of the Dynamic Minds Academy.

Within a reasonable time following receipt of a written appeal, the grievance officer shall hold a meeting to consider:

- a) The written summary of the evidence issued by the Education Director, his designee or any appointed person; and
- b) The arguments of the person advocating for expulsion and the student or the student's parent.

Upon considering these items, the grievance officer of the Board of Directors may take action he finds appropriate. The student or the student's parent may seek judicial review of an expulsion decision as provided by IC 20-33-8-21

### **Maximum Term of Expulsion**

Except for the misconduct specified above relating to a firearm, explosive device, or deadly weapon, a student may not be expelled for a longer period than the remainder of the school year in which the expulsion took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester. If a student is expelled during the second semester, the expulsion remains in effect for the summer school (if applicable) and may remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year.

### **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

School employees shall immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. In compliance with IC 31-33-5-1 *et seq.*, any employee who has knowledge of suspected child abuse shall report this knowledge to the Education Director. The Education Director in turn will be responsible for making a report to Child Protective Services and appropriate law enforcement. The Education Director will be responsible for all follow-up communications with Child Protective Services and law enforcement officials and shall inform appropriate school personnel about the outcome of reported child abuse or neglect.

The law protects those who report suspected child abuse or neglect. Any person who reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in any judicial proceeding or other proceeding resulting from such report is immune from any civil or criminal liability (provided that the individual is acting in good faith).

If investigators want to interview a student who is a suspected victim of abuse or neglect, the Education Director shall determine whether or not the student's parents should be notified. If it is appropriate, the Education Director shall notify the parents of the time and place of the interview.

### **Parent Communication with Education Directors, Faculty, and Staff**

Dynamic Minds Academy values the conversation that takes place between parents and teachers about the education of children. Nonetheless, this conversation must follow certain guidelines in order to be fruitful and to allow teachers to devote themselves to their classes during the day. Parents may use any of the following modes to communication to contact the administration and staff of Dynamic Minds Academy:

- a) Email
- b) Message left with the office personnel
- c) Face-to-face meeting (this must be scheduled in advance using one of the means above)

Dynamic Minds Academy employees may not use social media to communicate with students. However, communications are, in fact, permissible if the employee uses email or another form of school-adopted communication (such as PowerSchool, Class Dojo, or Remind). Lower school teachers (grades K-5) may not email students directly. Upper school teachers (grades 6-12) may email students if relevant to classroom instruction and if parents and the school office are copied on each correspondence.

During the school day and both immediately before and after school, teachers have their minds on teaching or impending meetings and extracurricular activities. Parents should schedule in advance a phone call or meeting with a teacher rather try to communicate through an impromptu “five-minute” chat. Parents who are in the building for another reason should not use their access to faculty in order to circumvent the normal means of contacting a teacher unless that teacher clearly invites such a conversation. This policy applies to parents who are themselves teachers or other employees at the school. Parents who disregard this protocol, or who are uncivil, may be required to conduct all further communications with teachers through the Education Director.

Dynamic Minds Academy teachers and administrators will respond to parents as quickly as possible. In general, parents should expect to hear from a teacher within 24 hours, or the Education Director within 48 hours, of contacting the school, barring weekends and holidays. While a teacher’s schedule may not permit an actual meeting within that time, the teacher will attempt to make contact in some way.

Dynamic Minds Academy will recognize and communicate with parents with joint custody upon review of a court order allowing such communication. In the case of password-protected school forms, the school encourages one of the parents to complete the forms so that the school does not receive conflicting information.

The Education Director of Dynamic Minds Academy reserves the right to ban any parent/guardian from the school building during school hours. Any unsafe behavior in the car line may result in an alternate drop off/pick up plan at the discretion of the Education Director.

## **Expectations for Parents**

We believe parents own the fundamental responsibility for their children’s education and that the school’s role should be viewed as a supportive one. The school expects parents to:

- a) Model good character and insist that their children cultivate good habits and virtues;
- b) Help their children develop effective study skills;
- c) Read to their children, especially those in the early grades;
- d) Oversee regular reading and writing and mathematics skill development;
- e) Stimulate discussion and exploration of ideas and events with students;

f) Support the school’s goals through familiarity with the Handbook and parts of the website devoted to the mission and philosophy of the school, homework review, getting children to school on time, and holding high expectations and aspirations that contribute positively to the student’s success.

## PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read the attached Handbook and reviewed with my child. We understand the rules and policies and are committed to follow them accordingly.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_