



TECH FREIRE

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Student and Family Handbook
2026-2027

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Our mission

The mission of TECH Freire Charter School is to provide a college-preparatory learning experience specializing in computer science and entrepreneurship with a focus on individual freedom, critical thinking, and problem solving in an environment that emphasizes the values of community, teamwork, equity, and commitment to peace.

TECH Freire Charter High School - 2221 North Broad Street , Philadelphia, PA 19132			
Hours	Phone	Fax	Website
Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM.	267-507-111	267-507-1110	www.techfreire.org

Staff List & Contact Information

A complete list of staff and their contact information can be found on our website.

Position	Name	Email
Head of School	Brian Galetto	brian.galetto@techfreire.org
Head of Academics	Jisu Jeong	jisu.jeong@techfreire.org
Head of School Culture	Jamilah Gibbs	jamilah.gibbs@techfreire.org
Director of Special Education	Colleen Church	colleen.church@techfreire.org
Head of Operations	Jamie Boyer	jamie.boyer@techfreire.org

Link to School Calendar

The Charter School Calendar can be found on our website [HERE](#) and will be updated as necessary.

Social Media:

Freire Schools uses social media to celebrate our students and our schools, as well as to relay important information. Please follow @freireschools on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and TECH Freire's accounts @TECHFreire on Facebook.

Student Attendance

Regular school attendance is a primary factor in a student's successful academic and social development and lays the groundwork for a successful and productive life beyond school. Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process.

NOTE: Parents/Guardians, please email frontdesk@techfreire.org to communicate any attendance information to the school (lateness, absences, early dismissal, etc.)

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

The following policy outlines the definitions, expectations, and procedures related to student absences, including the distinction between excused and unexcused absences, documentation requirements, and the consequences associated with truancy. This policy is established in accordance with Pennsylvania state regulations and is intended to ensure consistent attendance while providing appropriate accommodations for legitimate absences. Students and families are expected to review and comply with these guidelines to support a positive and productive educational experience.

Excused Absence

An excused absence is any absence that is documented for official business. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- court dates,
- death in family,
- doctor or dentist appointments.

Excuses of this kind must be documented on official letterhead or back to work slips from a doctor, court, or other professional, and brought to school, not emailed, within 5 school days of the absence. Hand-written notes or parent notes will not be accepted as proof of official business.

Other absences that will be excused include suspensions, participation in a project sponsored by an organization eligible for Pennsylvania Agricultural Fair Act grants (such as FFA for 4-H), participation in a musical performance for an event or funeral with a national veterans' organization, or if health or sanitation laws or regulations prevent a student from attending school.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any other kind of absence from school. Examples include, but are not limited to: sickness, family trips, etc. **While parents should still send a note to school explaining the absence in order to mitigate truancy, parent notes do not excuse absences.** Parent notes can be used to prevent up to 6 truanies a year. The Head of School is authorized to develop a system of consequences for attendance. See below for the School's Truancy Policy and Procedures.

Pennsylvania regulation requires that we remove any student from the roll who has accumulated 10 consecutive unexcused absences. A certified letter will be sent to notify parents of their child's removal from the school roll.

Parental Notification of Absences

The Charter School will use the following methods to notify parents/students of their attendance record:

- Daily automated attendance call to all students who are absent (please make sure that the school has the most up-to-date contact number for you at all times).
- Attendance will be printed on all official grade reports that are sent home on a quarterly basis.
- A letter will be sent to the student's home when they have accumulated 3, 6, 10, 15, and 18 unexcused absences. See the Truancy section below for more information.

NOTE: Parents may view attendance through their personal access to the PowerSchool system.

Lateness Procedures

A student is considered late if they are not present in their first period class by the official start of the school day.

Lateness can lead to serious consequences, including the following:

- Students who arrive sixty (60) minutes after the start of school on full days, or forty-five (45) minutes late on half days, will not be admitted to the School. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the Head of School. The student's parent/guardian will be notified and the student will be sent home and marked as an unexcused absence for the day.
- Repeated unnecessary lateness may result in disciplinary or other corrective action at the discretion of school administration.

Note: These procedures are subject to change based on state and/or federal health regulations and recommendations.

Early Dismissal Procedure

To protect student safety, the Charter School reserves the right to only release students to a parent/guardian or an emergency contact on file with the School. In emergency situations, the Head of School may permit the release to another individual with written or emailed consent from the parent/guardian. For non-emergent or anticipated early dismissals, such as doctor's appointments, etc., students must present a note detailing the time and reason for early dismissal. This note, which must have the parent/guardian name and phone number listed, must be presented by 10:00AM. Additionally, the email address that it is sent from must be aligned with what we have on file. If the student does not have a note, a parent/guardian must pick the student up and sign them out of school. For the safety of your student, please limit emergency requests.

A student must be present in the second period (official attendance period) in order to be marked present for that day. Therefore, any student who receives an early dismissal prior to this time will be marked absent for the remainder of the day.

Please note: For the safety of our students, the Charter School will deny an early dismissal in the event that any of the above procedures are not followed.

Immediate Dismissal due to health emergencies

In the event that there is a public health emergency and a student begins showing signs or symptoms of an illness, parents/guardians must be able to accommodate an immediate dismissal of the student from school.

Make-Up Procedures

It is the responsibility of a student who has been absent to obtain missed work, homework, and assignments from their teachers.

Pre-Arranged Absences

If a student knows ahead of time that they will be absent or miss a class, they should make every effort to collect work from teachers the day before and/or contact teachers or classmates about missed assignments before returning to school. Alternatively, students or parents can reach out to academic advisors to assist in collecting work.

Missed homework/class work policy

Students who are absent must make up missed homework/classwork assignments as soon as possible. The number of days a student is absent is equal to the number of days a student has to make up an assignment.

Missed quizzes/tests

Students who are absent (excused or unexcused) on the day of a test or quiz will be expected to take the test or quiz on the day that they return to school, unless other arrangements have been made with their teachers. It is the student's responsibility to make an appointment with a teacher to make up this missed test or quiz. More specific procedures are outlined in class syllabi.

Missed projects/papers

At a teacher's discretion, papers and other assignments that students knew about before being absent are due upon the student's return or by email.

Participation in School Activities

A student absent from school may not participate in any after school activity on the day they were absent. It is the responsibility of the student to make up any and all assignments missed as a result of an absence (illness, suspension, field trip, etc.).

Truancy

A student is considered truant after 3 truant absences. A child is considered habitually truant after 6 or more truant absences. To avoid truant absences, students must always bring a parent note explaining their absence within 5 school days of returning to school. The standards to avoid a truant absence are less strict than those to have an absence excused. However, while a parent note may be used to avoid a truant absence, the School must still determine that the absence was for a legitimate reason. Parent notes can only be used to prevent up to 6 truant absences per year. After 6 absences with parent notes, any further such absences will be considered truant.

Within 10 days of a student's third truant absence, Freire will notify the student's family of the child's violation of compulsory school attendance. The notification will be sent in writing to the person in parental relation with the child who resides in the same household as the child. When transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, the notice will also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent if the parent's mailing address is on file with the School and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order. The notice will:

- Include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant
- Be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation

Upon reaching 18 absences, a student may be mandatorily retained, regardless of student's end of year grades, at the discretion of the Head of School. Additionally, if a family chooses to transfer schools during the academic year, a student who is deemed habitually truant will not be eligible to enroll in a cyber charter school per PA law.

School Attendance Improvement Plan

After a student accumulates six (6) unexcused absences, the School shall schedule a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) to identify barriers to attendance and develop a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). Written notice of the conference shall be provided to the student's parent/guardian. Although attendance by the student and parent/guardian is strongly encouraged, neither may be legally compelled to attend. The School may conduct a conference even if the parent/guardian declines to participate or fails to attend after reasonable notice and attempts at communication.

The Charter School reserves the right to conduct a SAIC prior to a student reaching six (6) unexcused absences when appropriate. For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the Student Services team shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

The purpose of the conference is to identify the causes of the student's attendance issues and develop a collaborative plan to improve attendance. As appropriate, the conference may include the student, parent/guardian, school staff, and representatives of relevant agencies or service providers.

The Charter School may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until the conference has occurred. The outcome of the conference must be documented in a SAIP. The SAIP must be documented on an official form substantially similar to one developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This plan substantiates efforts made by the school, the family and other vested third parties to assist the student in addressing and resolving school attendance issues.

Please note that if a student transfers to Freire during the school year and is determined to have been habitually truant at their previous school, Freire must implement a Student Attendance Improvement Plan upon enrollment to support improved attendance moving forward.

Legal Consequences for Sustained Truancy

The School will notify the student's district of residence and/or appropriate authorities when a student is habitually truant and school-based interventions have not resolved attendance concerns, in accordance with Pennsylvania law. Families may be required to appear at court hearings or be assigned a case worker who will make home visits. Parents or guardians convicted of violating compulsory attendance can be fined, required to complete an appropriate course, or perform community service. In order to support legal proceedings conducted under Pennsylvania's truancy law, Freire will document all truant absences, all outreach efforts made, any conferences held, and any interventions pursued.

Student Life

Dress Code

The Charter School does not have a uniform. We grant students the right to choose clothing that is comfortable to them, affordable, reflects their personal style and identity provided what they wear supports their learning and engagement in school. We limit this right only when a student's clothing creates issues of safety for the Charter School or harms the learning environment.

The following actions conflict with our expectations around safety and maintaining a positive learning environment:

- Wearing any non-religious head covering that obstructs the face, for example, balaclavas and sheistys.
- Wearing clothing with obscene images, language, phrasing, or logos displaying violence or drugs (including alcohol and/or tobacco) on any clothing or accessories.
- Allowing private areas of the body to show. This includes: exposing genital area, rear end, chest/stomach, excessive cleavage, upper legs, “bathing suit area”, wearing see-through clothing, etc.
- Allowing undergarments to show. This includes; bras, see-through tights, underwear, boxers, and briefs.
- Pants below the waist.

The administration reserves the right to determine on a case-by-case basis whether a student’s clothing may have the potential to harm school safety or the learning environment, as it is impossible to list every deviation from the dress code. Therefore, the above list should not be considered exhaustive.

We will strive to apply this policy fairly and will not discriminate based on an individual’s body shape or size. In the event a student receives unwanted sexual advances, harassment, or sexual comments (including those about their body or clothing), the burden of the responsibility for the incident is on the other individual perpetrating the harassment who will be subject to disciplinary sanction (see Sexual Harassment policy). A student’s dress will never be treated as justification for another’s harassing behavior and the harassing individual will be held accountable as such.

School staff may additionally demand different standards of dress for special events, trips, etc. For example, “business casual” or “professional dress” may be mandated for an important class presentation.

The Dress Code Policy also applies to the Zoom virtual learning space.

Freedom of Expression Policy

The Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania guarantee a student’s right to freedom of speech. This right is guaranteed in school unless the right to express themselves causes one or more of the following consequences:

- Materially and substantially interferes with the education process
- Threatens harm to the Charter School or community
- Encourages unlawful activity
- Interferes with another individual’s rights

Freedom of Expression Procedures

In these circumstances, the Charter School will take action necessary to protect the educational environment. Student publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, and other means of communication must conform to the following condition:

- All posted, distributed, or printed material must be presented to the Head of School Culture or their designee for approval prior to distribution or posting.

Athletics

Students who participate in interscholastic athletics at the Freire Charter School, must adhere to the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) eligibility rules for student athletes.

Eligibility

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at the School, which is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA), must adhere to the PIAA eligibility rules for student-athletes.

To be eligible to participate in a sport, student-athletes must follow the guidelines below:

Grade Checks

- Student-Athletes (including student managers) must be passing 5 out of 6 classes to be eligible for participation in athletic programming (games, practices, workouts, etc.).
- Eligibility is checked once per week, following grade updates. If an insufficient number of grades are recorded, the Administration will make the academic eligibility determination.
- Ineligibility is effective immediately after a grade update until the student-athlete is passing 5 out of 6 classes and the student-athlete notifies their academic advisor.

Discipline Check

- Disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to detentions and suspensions, take precedence over any athletic event, unless determined otherwise by the Administration.

Ineligibility

- The Athletic Director, Head of School Culture, and the Head of School may determine that a student is ineligible to participate in athletics at any time at their discretion.
- A parent/guardian has the right, at any time, to request that their student-athlete not participate in sports, and the Charter School will enforce any such requests.
- In order to remain on the team, ineligible student-athletes must account for their whereabouts during all practices and games but will not be permitted to participate. If an ineligible student-athlete does not do so, the coach will determine the consequence at their discretion.
- Practices: Ineligible student-athletes must either attend (but not participate in) practice or receive extra academic help and provide a note.
- Away Games: Ineligible student-athletes must attend an after-school center or tutoring session during all away games and provide a note to the coach on the following school day. Ineligible student-athletes are not permitted to ride with the team nor participate in any aspect of the game with the team.
- Home Games: Student-athletes are permitted to attend home games after attending an after-school center or tutoring session and providing a note. Ineligible student-athletes are not permitted to wear uniforms or participate in any aspect of the game with the team.

Game Day Eligibility

- The Administration will determine a student-athlete's game day eligibility based upon their overall performance and behavior on any given game day.

Concussion Protocol

If a student-athlete receives a bump, blow or jolt to the head, they will be removed from play immediately. If the student-athlete is determined by a game official, school staff member or present healthcare professional to exhibit signs or symptoms of a concussion, the student-athlete will not be allowed to return to participation that day. The Charter School staff member will notify the parent/guardian or relevant emergency contact.

If the student-athlete was not allowed to return to play the day of the bump, blow or jolt to the head, the student-athlete cannot return to participation/play until they have been evaluated and cleared by an outside healthcare professional and present signed documentation stating such.

Academics

General Promotion Guidelines

- Students receive academic credit for each class passed with a grade of 75% or higher. Any final year grade under 75% earns no credit. Credits are only awarded upon the completion of a course.
- Students who fail one or two classes in an academic year will be required to attend summer school at the Charter School for each class failed. Summer school attendance is mandatory. If a student fails 1-2 classes, they will be eligible to attend summer school. If a student fails 3 or more classes, they will not be eligible for summer school and will be retained.
- Students will be retained (i.e. required to repeat a grade) in the following situations:
 - o Students who earn less than four credits (i.e. fail four or more classes) in an academic year will be retained. The student will be required to repeat the grade level in its entirety (i.e. take all 6 classes over again). At the discretion of the Head of School or designee, a student who receives above an 80% in any class may be enrolled in the next grade level of that class.
 - o Credits will be reviewed and students will be placed in the grade they most qualify for based upon the School's graduation requirements. Determinations will be based upon availability of credit recovery programs, current grades, and at the discretion of the Head of Operations/Head of Academics.
- Senior credits and transcripts are reviewed prior to entering senior year. Determinations will be based upon availability of credit recovery programs, current grades, and at the discretion of the Head of Operations/Head of Academics.

Policy on Graduation Requirements

Students must have twenty-four (24) credits and completed one of Pennsylvania's ACT 158 approved pathways to graduate.

All credits must be earned in the following manner*:						
4 English Credits	4 Math Credits	3 Science Credits	3 Social Studies Credits	1 Physical Education Credit	2 Foreign Language credits	5 Elective credits

*Transfer students will be evaluated on a case by case basis and are subject to course availability.

The Act 158 pathways available to students are the following:

- **Keystone Proficiency Pathway:** Score Proficient on all three Keystone exams: Algebra, Literature, and Biology.
- **Keystone Composite Pathway:** Earn a composite score of 4452 on the Keystones, with at least one score of Proficient and no scores of Below Basic.
- **Alternative Assessment Pathway:** Students can qualify by achieving a certain score on standardized assessments other than Keystones, for example scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams, or by getting accepted to a 4-year college and maintaining a high school GPA of 85% and an average daily attendance rate of 85% during 11th and 12th grade.
- **Evidence Based Pathway:** Students must collect three pieces of evidence from a defined list that includes acceptance to a 2-year college, completion of a service learning project, and maintaining a high school GPA of 75% and an average daily attendance rate of 80%.

Students receive academic credit for each class passed with a grade of 75% or higher. To participate in the graduation ceremony, students must have earned all 24 credits, successfully completed all requirements for the Senior Project, and met the graduation requirements established under Pennsylvania's Act 158. If a student has taken one or more AP courses, they participate in the graduation ceremony if they have earned all other non-AP credits, successfully completed all requirements for the Senior Project, met the graduation requirements established under Pennsylvania's Act 158. and earned at least a 65 in the AP course.

- Students who have severely violated the Code of Conduct may be prohibited from participating in graduation ceremonies at the administration's discretion. The receipt of a diploma may be delayed until discipline matters have been settled.
- All outstanding student fees must be paid in full to receive a diploma.
- Any other graduation requirements set by Pennsylvania law.

All students have until September 30th of their graduation year to complete all graduation requirements. A student is no longer eligible to earn a diploma from the School after September 30th.

Procedure for participation in graduation ceremonies

- In order to participate in the graduation ceremony and receive a diploma, students must have:
 - Earned all 24 credits as well as passed all requirements for the Senior Capstone/Entrepreneurship class
 - Paid all outstanding student fees in full

- o Not have committed a severe violation of the Code of Conduct. Such students may be prohibited from participating in graduation ceremonies at the discretion of the Heads of School
- o Attendance average is higher than 90%, e.g. the student has not missed more than 17 days in the school year if the school year is 180 days

Grading Policy

Quarterly grades reflect 70% Mastery and 30% Effort. Every assignment in a teacher's grade book is coded for either Mastery or Effort and is clearly labeled for parents and students.

Midterms and Final Exams

Teachers will give midterms at the end of the first semester and final exams at the end of the second semester. The Charter School will follow amended schedules during these testing days. There will be one exam make-up day for absent students. **Students are expected to report to each exam on time. No extra time will be given for late students.**

Midterm and Final Exam Weighting

Midterm and final exams will count as a percentage of the semester grade. The percentages increase by grade and are shown below:

- 9th - 12th grade – 10%

Senior Exemption: Any Senior holding a 93% average in a class as of the last grade check prior to final exams will be exempt from taking the final exam for that class. **(12th grade ONLY)**

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are held each year so that students can use their teachers' feedback in order to directly impact their grade for the remainder of the year. All parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to meet with every teacher, regardless of how successful their student's performance may be.

Academic Integrity procedure

Students are expected to create their own original work at all times. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty (i.e. plagiarism, copying, cheating, utilizing AI tools) will not receive credit for that work. Severe cases of academic dishonesty or repeat offenses may be brought to the Board for expulsion. Academic dishonesty offenses carry over from class

to class and grade level to grade level. Consequences for academic dishonesty can be found in our Behavior Matrix and are as follows:

- **1st Offense** – Removal of the Effort grade, retake up to 75% for Mastery assignment, conference with the Head of School Academics, phone call home.
- **2nd Offense** – No credit on the assignment or test, conference with the Head of Academics, phone call home, write-up in student's PowerSchool record.
- **3rd Offense** – No credit on the assignment or test, parent and student meeting with the Head of Academics, academic contract, write-up in student's PowerSchool record.

An informal hearing and recommendation for expulsion are at the Head of Academics' discretion for students who exceed 3 offenses.

Please note: This list of consequences is not exhaustive, nor does it represent a strict policy. The Charter School reserves the right to use its discretion and judgment in each case of academic dishonesty.

Use of AI Tools

The Charter School recognizes the value of artificial intelligence (AI) tools like Grammarly, ChatGPT, and more. If used appropriately, these AI tools can enhance student learning. However, if used inappropriately, these tools can fall under our Academic Integrity/Academic Dishonesty Policy. Teachers will make every effort to clarify when it might be appropriate to use AI tools to enhance student work. However, if teachers do not explicitly offer this clarity for a given effort or mastery assignment, it is the responsibility of the student to ask for that clarity. If students choose not to ask for that clarity and use AI tools without teacher permission or if students disregard teacher clarification, the Academic Integrity/Academic Dishonesty Policy takes effect.

Make-Up Procedures

The following make-up procedures are at the discretion of the Head of School.

Major Assignments

Students have two weeks past the due date or until the end of the quarter (whichever comes first) to submit major papers or projects for credit. Within that time frame, they will be marked 10% off for each school day that they are late for the first three school days with a maximum 30% deduction.

Lateness to Class

Any student arriving late to class without an excused absence will not be permitted to make up missed work or receive credit for homework. Any major assignments handed in at that

time may be counted as late at the teacher's discretion. Any student late for class without an excused absence during a test or quiz will not receive extra time.

Procedure for PowerSchool and Grades

Parent or guardian access to their student's grades through PowerSchool provides an opportunity for ongoing conversations regarding academic progress. PowerSchool allows parents to see their student's progress, assignment grades, write-ups, comments and recent attendance.

Parents/Guardians each get a username and password to login to see their child's grades. Grades are updated often but can only be considered truly accurate and up-to-date on the 15th and 30th of every month (the last time grades were updated for each class is shown at the bottom of the screen in PowerSchool). If there are general academic questions or concerns related to a specific class, parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers by email. Teachers will respond within 2 business days. More serious concerns should be addressed to the Head of Academics.

National Honor Society

For many students, selection as a member of the National Honor Society (NHS) is the pinnacle of their achievements in school. This honor, recognized throughout the nation, is both the public recognition of accomplishment and the private commitment to continued excellence on the part of the student. Please see our [website](#) to learn more.

Makerspace Safety Procedures

The makerspaces are environments where students are expected to be actively involved with technology equipment, machinery, and other hands-on materials. To ensure that the environment is safe, the Charter School has developed these rules and guidelines. These rules must be followed at all times while occupying the spaces. A copy of the Acknowledgement and Release Form for participating in the makerspace program is attached as an Appendix and must be signed and returned to the school.

Student Responsibilities

- Read and understand the safety guidelines
- Provide and explain the rules to their parent or guardian
- Sign the agreement and ensure a parent/guardian signs the agreement
- Follow the safety rules at all times while in the makerspaces

General Safety Guidelines

1. Safety goggles and dust masks must be worn at all times when machinery, electrical, or heat sources are used unless stated otherwise by a teacher or instructor.
2. Report any unsafe condition, accident, or injury to the teacher immediately.
3. Conduct yourself in a responsible manner. Pay attention and think about what you are doing at all times.
4. Horseplay and other inappropriate conduct in the makerspaces are dangerous activities and will not be tolerated.
5. Follow all directions carefully. If you do not understand a direction, ask the teacher for help or clarification.
6. Do not eat, drink, chew gum or apply cosmetics in the makerspaces.
7. Do not use headphones or other audio devices unless as instructed by a teacher or other staff member.
8. Know the location and procedures for the use of all safety equipment in the makerspaces.
9. Remove all jewelry and items that could interfere with machinery and result in injury. Consult with your instructor if you are unsure whether a piece of jewelry is okay to wear.
10. Listen carefully to all safety procedures, which are given before each lab activity. If you do not understand a safety procedure, ask your teacher to explain it before proceeding.
 - a. Dress properly during a maker activity. Long hair should be tied back. Loose clothing and dangling jewelry should be removed or tied up. Keep hair, clothing, and hands a safe distance from machinery.
 - b. Do not touch any equipment or materials until you are told to do so.
 - c. Perform only those experiments and activities approved by your teacher or instructor.
 - d. Never leave any active project or activity unattended. Do not wander from your area or distract others who are involved in an activity or an experiment.
11. Carry sharp instruments pointing downward and away from you and others.
12. Work areas should always be kept clean and tidy.
13. Notify your teacher immediately of any health concerns during maker activities.

Tools Used in the Makerspace

The Makerspaces may employ use of a variety of hand and power tools that include but are not limited to:

Hand Tools	Power Tools	Computer Automated Tools
• Hammers • Wrenches • Pliers • Screwdrivers	• Bandsaw • Drill Press • Power Drill	• Laser Cutter • ShopBot CNC Machines • 3D Printers

- Chisels
- Hand Saws
- Scissors/Knives

- Power Drivers

Hand Tool Potential Dangers

Hammers, wrenches, chisels, pliers, screwdrivers, and other hand tools are often overlooked as harmless tools. Hand tools may seem like they may not cause immediate harm, but they are the cause of many injuries. These injuries can be serious, including loss of fingers or eyesight.

Hand tools can cause many types of injuries:

- Cuts, abrasions, amputations, and punctures. If hand tools are designed to cut or move metal and wood, remember what a single slip can do to fragile human flesh.
- Repetitive motion injuries. Using the same tool in the same way all day long, day after day, can stress muscles and ligaments. Carpal tunnel syndrome (inflammation of the nerve sheath in the wrist) and injuries to muscles, joints and ligaments are increasingly common if the wrong tool is used, or the right tool is used improperly. Injury from continuous vibration can also cause numbness or poor circulation in hands and arms.
- Eye injuries. Flying chips of wood or metal are a common hazard, often causing needless and permanent blindness.
- Broken bones and bruises. Tools can slip, fall from heights, or even be thrown by careless students, causing severe injuries. A hammer that falls from a height is also very dangerous.
- Use the right tool for the job. Don't use your wrench as a hammer. Don't use a screwdriver as a chisel, etc. Go back to the tool house and get the right tool in the right size for the job.

Hand Tool Safety Guidelines

Always be sure to follow the instructions of your teacher or instructor when operating a hand tool, this will prevent you from encountering needless dangerous situations. Be sure to adhere to the following:

- Don't use broken or damaged tools, dull cutting tools, or screwdrivers with worn tips. Immediately inform the instructor if you notice a tool in bad condition.
- If using sawing tools, cut in a direction away from your body and as instructed by your teacher or instructor.
- Make sure your grip and footing are secure when using large tools.
- Pass a tool to another person by the handle; never toss it to them.

- Use the right personal protective equipment for the job. Follow company instructions for selecting and using safety eyewear, steel toed shoes, gloves, hard hats, etc.
- Never carry sharp or pointed tools such as a screwdriver in your pocket.
- Select ergonomic tools for your work task when movements are repetitive and forceful.
- Store tools properly when you stop work.

Power Tool Potential Dangers

Power tools can be extremely dangerous if they are used improperly. People can be seriously injured or fatally harmed by power tool accidents. Common accidents associated with power tools include abrasions, cuts, lacerations, amputations, burns, electrocution, and broken bones. These accidents are most often caused by the following:

- Touching the cutting, drilling, or grinding components
- Getting caught in moving parts
- Suffering electrical shock due to improper grounding, equipment defects, or operator misuse
- Being struck by particles that normally eject during operation
- Touching hot tools or work pieces
- Falling in the work area

Power Tool Safety Guidelines

When working around power tools, you must wear personal protective equipment and avoid wearing loose clothing or jewelry that could catch in moving machinery. Use the correct tool for the job. Do not use a tool or attachment for something it was not designed to do. Always be sure to follow the instructions of your teacher or instructor when operating a hand tool, this will prevent you from encountering needless dangerous situations. Be sure to adhere to the following:

- Select the correct bit, blade, cutter, or grinder wheel for the material at hand. This precaution will reduce the chance for an accident and improve the quality of your work.
- Watch your work when operating power tools. Stop working if something distracts you.
- Do not rely on strength to perform an operation. The correct tool, blade, and method should not require excessive strength.
- If undue force is necessary, you may be using the wrong tool or have a dull blade.
- Before clearing jams or blockages on power tools, disconnect from power source. Do not use your hand to clear jams or blockages, use an appropriate tool.
- Never reach over equipment while it is running.
- Never disable or tamper with safety releases or other automatic switches.
- When the chance for operator injury is great, use a push stick to move material through a machine.

- Disconnect power tools after your session, or as advised by your instructor.
- Keep a firm grip on portable power tools. These tools tend to vibrate at high speeds and can potentially slip from a light grasp.
- Do not play or jest with other students while you are operating power tools. You need to be fully focused on the task you are completing.
- Do not operate power tools when you are sick, fatigued, or taking strong medication.
- When possible, secure work pieces with a clamp or vise to free the hands and minimize the chance of injury.

Computer Automated Tool Potential Dangers

1. **Laser Cutters:** Laser cutters use a powerful laser for precise cutting and engraving. The hazards associated with a laser cutter include the possibility of fires and the generation of hazardous and/or irritating combustion products. The high powered laser can cause damage to eyes and skin, and it must be contained within the cutter.
 - Always follow the teacher's instructions when operating a laser cutter.
 - A fire extinguisher should be mounted on the wall near the laser cutter.
 - Do not attempt to operate without a teacher's/instructor's permission.
 - Never leave an operating laser cutter unattended.

2. CNC Machines

CNC Machines pose the same dangers as power tools; the difference is that these are computer assisted. Please adhere to the following measures to ensure your safety:

- Do not alter or modify any machinery, tooling or accessory unless you contact an instructor and obtain permission.
- Edit your program for safety, format, correctness, and clarity.
- With the help of your teacher/instructor, do a virtual run of the project before the actual run.
- Secure long hair or loose clothing that could become caught or tangled in the moving parts of machine. Long hair poses an extreme safety hazard around machine tools, and, therefore, must be netted or isolated for safety.
- Wear your safety glasses.
- Clamp all work securely before starting the machine.
- Only approved materials can be machined. See your instructor for more information.

3. 3D Printers

While 3D Printers do not cause nearly as much danger as the above-mentioned tools, they can cause certain dangers given the right (bad) circumstances. Please adhere to the following measures to ensure your safety:

- Wear Safety Glasses and Gloves when handling the 3D Printer.
- Extruder and motors are HOT during operation; do not touch these as they may cause burns.
- Extruder and motors may be HOT at any time; do not assume that a non-moving 3D Printer is off. Check with your instructor and wear gloves before attempting to touch the extruder or motor.
- Removal tools for 3D printers are often sharp; follow the same guidelines as hand tools when handling the 3D printer removal tool.

For more details regarding the makerspace program, please contact the Head of Operations, Jamie Weiss at 267-507-1111 x1617 or by email at Jamie.Boyer@techfreire.org.

Student Services (Special Education)

Child Find and Public Awareness Policy and Procedures

The Charter School is committed to the identification of students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Chapter 711. The School shall maintain a system to protect the confidentiality of student information and records – see policies 502 and 503 for more information.

Public Notice

- The Charter School participates in the annual Charter School Public Awareness Notice in the Philadelphia newspapers and public radio.
- The School's awareness and outreach activities include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities. These activities are designed to reach parents/guardians of students experiencing homelessness, wards of the state, students with disabilities attending private schools, and highly mobile students, including migrant children.
- The Charter School provides access to informational brochures detailing the special education process in Pennsylvania Charter Schools at all parent meetings and in the main office.
- The Charter School publishes an annual notice regarding special education on the School's website and in the parent and student handbook.

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Academic School Year Child Find Process

The Charter School has created a multi-disciplinary team to determine the need for further evaluation. The process is as follows:

- Every quarter, Academic Advisors as well as teachers compile curriculum-based performance reports for each student assigned to their caseload. This may take the form of a report card, a progress note, or some other format.
- Teachers screen these reports to determine which students are struggling academically. Any students appearing to need extra support are referred to the Head of Academics for either informal instructional support or some level of our response to intervention program, depending upon the needs of each student.
- Parents and students are notified and invited to an informal meeting to discuss student needs and teacher/parent concerns. A determination is made to refer students for response to intervention remediation and support, and/or a multi-disciplinary evaluation.
- Midway through the following quarter, Academic Advisors check on the grades and progress of these students using three-pronged criteria:
 - o Is the student coming for extra help?
 - o Is the student completing homework assignments?
 - o Is the student passing?
- Teachers are then asked to determine whether the student appears to need further evaluations and/or supports. This may lead to an eventual full evaluation, conducted by a school psychologist.
 - o In the case of a full evaluation, parents, teachers and the student meet to discuss the results and potential outcomes of the evaluation process.
 - o In order for a student to go through a full evaluation with a school psychologist, the parent must give consent on the School's Permission to Evaluate form.
- A student is referred for a full evaluation only after reasonable regular education and response to intervention options have been exhausted and/or the student's needs have demonstrated significant resistance to intervention within the regular education classroom.

Summer Child Find Process

In an effort to most efficiently and proactively identify students with disabilities the Charter School extends its Child Find process to encompass the summer school program; as it is likely that unidentified students with disabilities will experience a degree of academic difficulty that requires the attendance of summer school.

School administrators and teachers will review the academic histories and transcripts of the students attending the summer school program. School officials may identify students who have experienced chronic educational difficulties to be referred for a formal educational screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist (MDE). The following guidelines will be utilized to determine which students require assessment as a component of the school-wide Child Find process:

- If a student is enrolled in summer school for the second consecutive year or more, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist.
- If the student is enrolled in summer school for the areas of science, social studies, and language arts, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist.
- Students who present evidence of underachievement and/or whose educational difficulties are related to factors other than a disability may not be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by the school psychologist. However, efforts will be made to identify other resources and supports to assist in meeting the educational needs of such a student. Further, the Charter School strongly encourages the parents of such students to actively engage in working with their child to address the barriers to their educational success.

School Culture

Our school believes that a safe, structured, and affirming environment allows students to focus on learning, build meaningful relationships, and grow into thoughtful, responsible members of their communities.

These policies are designed to:

- Establish clear and consistent expectations for behavior
- Promote equity and respect for all members of the Charter School community
- Support student growth through accountability and reflection
- Maintain safe learning environments
- Partner with families to reinforce shared expectations

All members of the Charter School community share responsibility for upholding these standards. Through consistency, transparency, and collaboration, we create schools where every student can thrive.

Nonviolence and Commitment to Peace

1. TECH Freire students shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects a commitment to nonviolence. Students are expected to:

- a. Act in a manner that affords all other students the opportunity to learn which is physically safe and free from distractions.
 - b. Admit mistakes, and take increased responsibility for their own learning and social actions.
 - c. Respect self and all others, and respect individual differences.
 - d. Behave appropriately while in school, on field trips, and in any forum where the student is representing the TECH Freire community.
 - e. Avoid hurtful language.
 - f. Use appropriate channels to express concerns, fears, or complaints.
2. Physical violence occurs when an individual student harms, attempts to harm, or threatens another individual via physical force. It is a deliberate act. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- a. Any type of striking or grabbing by one student or another person (punching, biting, kicking, hair pulling, etc.)
 - b. Fighting another student or a group of students, including joining a fight
 - c. Serious threat to cause harm to another via social media or other serious verbal intimidation.
 - d. Throwing objects
 - e. Structural violence such as the physical destruction of property that causes any function of the school to be temporarily suspended
 - f. Weapons possession
 - g. Sexual assault, as defined in Board Policy 116: Title IX Policy
3. TECH Freire defines other types of violence as the harm or intent to cause harm in a non-physical way (e.g. mental or emotional). Examples include but are not limited to:
- a. Invading an individual's personal space
 - b. Recklessly endangering other students, staff, or community members
 - c. Verbal intimidation or threats, including threatening to bring another individual to fight someone, or arranging for a non-student or non-community member to engage in harassment of another student (including threats made by text, video, or using any type of social networking site/app)
 - d. Abusive or derogatory language
 - e. Bullying, as defined in Board Policy 204: Anti-Bullying
 - f. Hazing, as defined Board Policy 214: Anti-Hazing
 - g. Unlawful harassment, as defined in Board Policy 115: Harassment
4. When TECH Freire students are in a School Setting, the Code of Conduct and the procedures and timelines set forth therein shall apply. When a student engages in conduct that is prohibited in this Policy, it shall constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct. Violations may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including a recommendation that a student be expelled from TECH Freire.
- a. Unless leadership determines that there are extenuating circumstances requiring a different result, the disciplinary consequence for students who engage in physical violence (defined above) shall be referral for a formal

expulsion hearing unless that student is protected under IDEA (34 CFR §300.530(d)(4)).

- b. Acts of violence where the intent is not to cause physical harm (defined above) may lead to a formal hearing. The Charter School administration will evaluate the situation on a case by case basis and determine disciplinary consequences.
5. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to abridge student rights to due process, including procedural and substantive rights, that are granted by law or another TECH Freire Charter School policy.
6. Some acts of violence, including those listed above, may also constitute violations of the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In those instances, law enforcement may be contacted by the school.
7. TECH Freire shall utilize restorative practices that respond to acts of violence, and shall also offer pro-active supports to students to prevent violence and respond to it. Supports may include orientation for new students, peer mediation programs, instruction in conflict resolution, connecting students and families with community resources such as family therapy and counseling, restorative circles, and other programs.

Chart of Possible Consequences

Consequences are determined on a case-by-case basis as stated above, and subject to any applicable protective procedures under the IDEA as set forth in law or school policy.

Act	Likely Consequence
Unprovoked physical harm	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Provoked physical harm	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Direct threat to cause physical harm	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Volatile/aggressive behavior intended to intimidate or escalate a situation (examples include yelling, flipping a desk or chair, punching a wall, throwing objects)	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Retaliation in legitimate self-defense (e.g. fighting back)	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Verbal abuse/bullying with physical threat over social media/text/or otherwise	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion

Verbal abuse/bullying without physical threat over social media/text/or otherwise	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Bringing a weapon to school (gun, toy/mock gun, knife, etc.)	Expulsion
Bringing a pellet gun, cap gun, or water gun to school	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Bringing outside people (including relatives of any kind) to the school to fight	Informal hearing leading to a formal hearing leading to board vote on expulsion
Threats to bring outsiders (including relatives of any kind) to the school to fight	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion
Blatant disrespect to others	Informal hearing which may lead to formal hearing which may lead to board vote on expulsion

Code of Conduct

Guiding Principle

As an educational institution, the Charter School recognizes that it is our responsibility to educate students regarding nonviolence. These guiding principles are based upon the belief that as students progress from one grade to the next they become more responsible for the rules and gain a greater capacity for independent decision making.

Expectations of Students

The Charter School will provide our students with skills that they need for the future. The teachers, counselors, administrators, and custodial staff at the Charter School are dedicated to the education and well-being of our students. In turn, the Charter School expects and requires all students to show respect and care for the staff, volunteers, visitors, the building, each other, and people of all cultures represented in the school. The Charter School also expects students to take care of the property within the school and in the community as defined below.

Corporal Punishment Policy

The physical punishment of students for infractions of the discipline policy is strictly prohibited.

Teachers and school authorities may use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

- To quell a disturbance
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects
- In protection of persons or property, or for the purpose of self-defense

General Behavioral Expectations

Creating and maintaining a good relationship with the entire surrounding community both inside and outside of the school grounds is an important goal of our school.

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Sexual activity or public displays of affection.
- Loitering on the street corners or sitting on the steps of surrounding buildings.
- Making excessive noise when entering the building or leaving the building.
- The use of profanity (cursing) anywhere inside or out of the building.
- Interrupting the learning environment.
- Speaking to or treating any community member in a rude/disrespectful manner.
- Theft
- Physical Recklessness
- Using local businesses as places to hang out, or gathering inside stores, restaurants or local businesses before or after school.

The following actions conflict with our expectations and are unacceptable:

- Littering anywhere near the school grounds – inside or outside.
- Eating or drinking in any area except the designated areas. Food items are permitted only in the lunchroom, during advisory, and the first period of the day.
- Possession of a glass bottle.
- Using school telephones without permission.
- Roaming the building without a pass.
- Disrupting the learning environment in any way.
- Playing cards or dice, or gambling in any way.
- Being tardy to class.
- Horseplay or play fighting, inside or outside of school. Horseplay and play fighting are defined as rough, noisy, unruly, or rowdy play that may or may not involve physical contact.
- Running down the stairs or hallways in the school, around school, and outside of the school.
- Throwing objects anywhere in the building (extreme circumstances could lead to recommendation for expulsion).
- Speaking to any community member in a way that makes them feel unsafe or violated. (Extreme circumstances may lead to a suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion).
- Tampering in any way with school building systems or equipment (such as fire alarms or fire extinguishers).
- Being in areas of the buildings before or after school without the permission and presence of a staff member.

Interventions

The Board grants the Head of School authority to develop a program of consequences and interventions for violating the Code of Conduct. In the event of potential violations of the Nonviolence and Commitment to Peace Policy, Policy Against Bullying and Cyberbullying, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy, or other serious infractions, students shall be afforded all rights defined by 22 Pa. Code Chapter 12. If a student chooses to act in an unacceptable way, the Dean's office will assign a consequence for the student's actions.

Each intervention is meant to be used as a warning that the student's behavior is unacceptable and therefore should NOT BE REPEATED. Repeated or excessive violation of the same rule will result in more severe consequences.

The following is a list of interventions which may be used by the Dean. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather a sample of the interventions the Dean may use:

Anger management	Apology letter	Behavior contract
Community outreach/service	Detention	Educational Seminars
Informal Hearing	Hours outside of school time	Loss of privilege to attend school functions
Loss of privilege to go out to lunch	Parent conference	Personalized Improvement Plan (PIP)
Probationary contract	Public apology (written or verbal)	Research project
Support groups	Teacher/Student conference	Teacher detention
Therapy		

A student whose behavior does not change or intensifies will be subject to interventions of increased severity. All students and parents will receive a warning notification if unacceptable behavior continues, or the frequency of that behavior increases. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a student could end up in one, or more of the following tiers of consequences:

Lunch Detention	After School Detention	Contract (behavioral or probationary)
Family Meeting	In-School Suspension	Suspension

Suspensions

A suspension (1–10 days) may be issued by the Head of School or Dean following an investigation; once it is determined that a suspension is appropriate, the school will immediately notify parents or guardians verbally and in writing to explain the reasons and offer an opportunity to respond. While suspensions typically begin immediately after parental contact, students will be held at school until the end of the day if a guardian cannot be reached, and the school will attempt to schedule a reinstatement meeting or informal hearing, which is required for any suspension lasting four or more days in accordance with 22 Pa. Code Chapter §12.8(c).

If a student has been suspended, they will be prohibited from attending school, being on school grounds or participating in or attending school activities (dances, field trips, athletic events, etc.). Students are required to make up all class work and tests missed during a suspension.

Actions that will result in a suspension from school activities include, but are not limited to:

- Jeopardizing the safety of another community member
- Active or passive participation in the destruction of property
- Possession of weapon, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal items
- Breaking the Nonviolence Policy
- Cutting class or leaving the classroom without permission
- Stealing
- Sexual harassment
- Severe acts of defiance or disrespect that cause harm to the community and take away from the learning of other students

Reinstatement Meeting

If a student is suspended but not expelled, the student and their parent or guardian are required to participate in a meeting with the Dean's Office before the student will be permitted to resume attending school or school activities. Students may not attend school or school activities until this mandatory meeting occurs.

The Reinstatement Meeting will serve as a warning to alert the student and their parent/guardian that they have seriously or chronically violated the school's Code of Conduct. It is further hoped that the student will realize the impact their behavior has had on their learning and that of their fellow students, and therefore make all necessary changes in their behavior while in school.

The Charter School may waive the requirement for a Reinstatement Meeting only if a behavior contract was put in place as part of an informal hearing.

Informal Hearings

Informal hearings are held in cases where a serious infraction of the Code of Conduct has occurred, when a suspension is 4 or more days long, and/or any instance where the Charter School may make a recommendation for expulsion. Informal hearings will follow the format described below:

- The Charter School will offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 3 days of the suspension.
- The Charter School will provide both parent and student with sufficient notice of time and place of the informal hearing.
- During the informal hearing, the Charter School will state the concerns and observed behaviors.
- The Charter School will provide the results of any investigation should the incident have required one.
- Both parent and student will have the opportunity to provide their observations, comments and concerns regarding the incident.
- Students have the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
- Students have the right to speak and produce witnesses on their own behalf.
- Upon conclusion of the meeting the Charter School will determine the next action, which may include a recommendation for expulsion or a probationary behavioral or probationary contract.
 - o Recommendation for Expulsion:
 - See formal “Formal Hearing/Expulsion Policy” (next page)
 - o Behavioral or Probationary Contract:
 - The Head of School or Dean may determine that a behavior contract is required

Behavioral/Probationary Contract Procedure

- The administrator will review with the student the written warning, which states the student understands:
 - o This is their final warning from Freire.
 - o The student will be required to fulfill the conditions of the contract.
 - o Failure to fulfill the conditions of the contract may result in a recommendation for expulsion from the school.
- When a contract is issued, the student and parent are made aware of the terms being presented by the Dean's office.
- The contract will establish a time and date when the compliance of the contract will be reviewed.

- The contract may include restorative measures such as an apology letter or other interventions assigned by the School.

Contracts are non-negotiable. Students and parents must adhere to all terms of the contract as dictated by the school. Since contracts are issued in lieu of a recommendation for expulsion, if a parent/student does not agree to follow the terms of the contract, then there is a possibility that the refusal could result in a recommendation for expulsion. Prior to this, a meeting to review the contract will be held and will include the Head of School, a Dean or their designee, parent/guardian, and the student and provides a space for students and parents to provide feedback on the contract terms.

Expulsion Investigation Procedure

If there is a suspected violation of School policy the Charter School will follow these steps:

- A preliminary investigation to determine whether the policy was violated will be conducted.
- Should the Dean find that the student both knew about and violated the Nonviolence Policy then the Dean is required to recommend the student for expulsion from the school.
- In a case where a student may have violated the law, the Charter School may refer the incident to law enforcement while simultaneously continuing the school's disciplinary process. Consequences imposed by the Charter School are independent of and in addition to any penalties imposed under the law.

NOTE: A Dean's recommendation for expulsion is a recommendation only. A student is not formally expelled until after a formal expulsion hearing is held and the Board of Directors votes to expel the student.

Upon a recommendation for expulsion, the student and their parent will be provided with the following:

- Their rights and responsibilities as a student/parent.
- The formal hearing/expulsion policy and procedures

Formal Hearing/Expulsions

If a student is recommended for expulsion as a consequence of their actions, they have the right to a formal expulsion hearing. This hearing must commence within 15 days of formal charges (unless mutually agreed upon by both parties). Special Education students have additional rights as described below.

- A formal hearing is REQUIRED in all expulsion actions.

- A formal hearing will be arranged and notification of the charges, all evidence, and the rights of students/parents shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians at least 3 days prior to the hearing. The information will be emailed and sent via certified mail.
- The hearing will commence on the agreed upon date with an independent Fact Finder presiding over the hearing.
- The Charter School will present evidence, statements, and its case, giving the parent and student a chance to view all information.
- Parents and students will be given the opportunity to question witnesses and present their own information.
- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- The Fact Finder will write a summation of facts that will be presented at the following Board Meeting.
- Only the Board of Directors, through a majority vote of the entire Board, can determine whether a student will be expelled.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

Parent and Student Rights

- In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.
- A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions.
- This hearing will be conducted by an impartial Fact Finder.
- The Board of Directors is given a summation of facts by the Fact Finder and a majority vote of the entire governing board is required to expel a student.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
 - o Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
 - o At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student, and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension. Otherwise the hearing will proceed as scheduled.
 - o The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
 - o The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and must have the parent or guardians (as identified in the PowerSchool database) attend the hearing.

- o The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- o The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- o The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on their own behalf.
- o A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
- o The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
 - Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
 - Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400—1482).
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.
- The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent. Parents have 5 days to find the appropriate placement and notify the school.

Parents Right to Withdrawal

The Charter School is a school of choice for families. Parents may choose to voluntarily withdraw their student from the school at any time for any reason. The Charter School cannot formally expel a student who is no longer enrolled at Freire. Should a parent choose to withdraw their student from the Charter School prior to potentially being expelled, any remaining procedures related to expulsion will cease. The student's academic record will reflect the withdrawal, not an expulsion. If a parent decides to withdraw their student, they must submit a withdrawal form.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who violate the Code of Conduct, or engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities and/or actions injurious to themselves or others, which would typically result in corrective action or discipline of students without disabilities, will be disciplined in accordance with requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), its implementing state and federal laws and regulations and school policy.

Suspension from School

A student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days of school per school year, for the same reasons and duration as a student without a disability. Such suspension shall not constitute a change in the student's educational placement.

Changes in Educational Placement/Manifestation Determinations

A manifestation determination is required by IDEA (2004) when considering the exclusion of a student with a disability that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement.

In certain circumstances, students who have not been determined to be eligible for special education may assert the protections of IDEA 2004 if TECH Freire had "knowledge" that the student was a student with a disability before the occurrence of the behavior that precipitated a disciplinary action. The Charter School will be deemed to have knowledge if: (1) the parent/guardian of the student expressed a concern in writing (unless the parent/guardian is illiterate or has a disability that prevents compliance with the requirements contained in this provision) to TECH Freire that the student is in need of special education and related services; (2) the parent/guardian of the student has requested an evaluation of the student; or (3) the teacher of the student, or other TECH Freire personnel, expressed a specific concern about the behavior or performance of the student to the director of special education or other supervisory personnel at the School.

Disciplinary Change of Placement

A disciplinary change of placement occurs when a student who is receiving special education services is excluded from school:

- For more than ten (10) school days in a row,
- For more than fifteen (15) school days in any one school year,
- When days 11-15 constitute a pattern of exclusion, OR
- When a series of removals constitutes a pattern, through consideration of factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another; OR
- For any length of time for a student with an intellectual disability*.

*For students with intellectual disability, any disciplinary suspension or expulsion is a change in educational placement and may not be made without parental consent or judicial approval.

The Charter School may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for no more than forty-five (45) school days without a manifestation determination review under the following circumstances, and where the underlying conduct is at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the School:

- Carrying or possessing a weapon

- Knowingly possessing, using, selling or soliciting illicit substances
- Inflicting serious bodily injury upon another person

In addition, a student with a disability may be removed to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if a hearing officer orders the change in placement after determining that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

On the date a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement due to a violation of the Code of Conduct, the Charter School will notify the parent/guardian(s) of that decision and provide procedural safeguards to the family. A student with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement shall continue to receive educational services so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP (with services as determined by the Child's IEP team); and shall receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

Note: IDEA 2004 does not prohibit the Charter School from reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability to appropriate authorities, nor does it prevent state law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of federal and state law to crimes committed by a student with a disability. Any such reports made by the Charter School shall comply with IDEA 2004, the Memorandum of Understanding between TECH Freire and the Philadelphia Police Department and Pennsylvania Department of Education Guidance.

Manifestation Determination Process

Within ten (10) school days of the decision to change the student's placement, the parent/guardian and members of the students' IEP team shall conduct a Manifestation Determination meeting to answer the following questions:

1. Was the behavior caused by, or directly and substantially related to, the student's disability; OR
2. Was the behavior a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP?

If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team will take one of the following actions:

- Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), unless one was already conducted prior to the change of placement occurring, and implement a positive Behavior Support Plan for the student; OR
- If a positive Behavior Support Plan has already been developed, review and modify it as necessary to address the behavior; and return the student to the placement

from which they were removed, unless the parent/guardian and IEP team agree to a change of placement as part of the positive Behavior Support Plan.

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability:

- The student may be disciplined in accordance with school policy, rules, and regulations in the same manner and to the same extent as students without disabilities.

Technology

Student Use of Technology

Technology resources are defined as any electronic tool, device, program, or system that aids the academic environment for a student. Technology includes:

- All computer software and hardware including student chromebooks
- Cell phones, tablets, and smart watches
- Analog and digital networks (e.g., data, video, audio, voice, and multimedia)
- Email systems and communications technologies
- Administrative systems, media systems, and learning information systems
- Smart Boards
- Related and forthcoming systems and new technologies

Acceptable Use

Acceptable use of the School's technology is any use that is consistent with the educational objectives of the Charter School and in accordance with the TECH Code of Conduct. This includes academic work, college exploration and research, and employment exploration and research. All use is subject to review by the School's staff

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are on school grounds and in the community. Communications on the network are often public in nature and general school rules apply. Students must respect the rights of others in both the Charter School community and in the global community.

Unacceptable Use

These rules provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses for illustrative purposes but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by students. General examples of unacceptable uses which are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- **Legal & Ethical Conduct:** Do not use school technology for illegal acts, including the purchase of controlled substances. Respect copyright laws—no unauthorized downloading, file-sharing, or plagiarism (including AI-generated content).
- **Safety & Security:** Keep your passwords private; you are responsible for any activity on your account. Never attempt to access another person's files or accounts. Do not share personal contact information (addresses or phone numbers) online or arrange to meet strangers.
- **Respect for Others:** Harassment, bullying, and hate speech are strictly prohibited. Do not send offensive, obscene, or threatening messages. Respect the privacy of others by not sharing private messages or personal info without permission.
- **Care for Property:** Vandalism of hardware or software, including spreading viruses or tampering with system settings, is prohibited. Families are financially responsible for any equipment damaged by a student.
- **Resource Management:** Use school bandwidth and storage responsibly. Avoid wasting resources by sending "spam," chain letters, or downloading excessively large files.
- **General Expectations:** School technology is for academic use only—no commercial transactions or accessing obscene/profane material.

A full list of acceptable and unacceptable uses of technology [HERE](#).

Inappropriate Content

Students should have no expectation of privacy while using school technology, including school Wi-Fi. Students are monitored by a service such as Gaggle, which uses technology and trained professionals to evaluate content 24 hours a day for potentially harmful content, messages, documents, images and more. If there is discovery of objectionable content or a potentially harmful situation, the monitoring service alerts the School. These programs such as Gaggle are also required by federal law to report suspected child pornography to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

If the School's automated monitoring system discovers that a student has accessed, stored or sent sexually explicit or inappropriate images, the Charter School will impose discipline and parents and law enforcement will be notified if the Charter School suspects the student has committed a crime.

Chromebook Use

When necessary for classwork, students will have access to Chromebooks. This allows students to direct their own learning and have a greater reliance on active learning strategies. The increased access to technology will enhance instruction and provide more achievement opportunities for students.

Software: Only legally licensed software/applications, media, or other data is permitted on the Chromebook. As this computer is the property of the School, the Charter School has the ability to install and uninstall software at our discretion and remotely. Students may not download software, operating systems, applications, or media (including songs, photos, videos) without a prior approval from an authorized school employee.

Privacy: The Chromebooks provided are the property of the School. The chromebook may be examined or searched at any time at the discretion of the Charter School or its employees.

Neither students nor parents/guardians have any right to privacy of any data saved on the Chromebook or in any network drives. The Charter School has the ability to remotely monitor student activity on this Chromebook and will do so at its discretion. The Charter School will never access the camera when the camera has not been activated by the student.

Furthermore, e-mail, network usage, and all stored files shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use. The Charter School cooperates fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to violations of computer crime laws, and may give proper authorities access to email, files, and network usage data during the course of an investigation.

Saving Files: Students should not save files on the device. The Charter School will provide students locations to save their school-related work. There should be no assumption that files saved directly to the chromebook will be stored indefinitely. Files saved improperly may be deleted at any time. The Charter School accepts no responsibility for lost files.

Remote Access: For chromebooks approved for off-campus use, students and parents are expected to comply with all requests for remote access by the Charter School or approved employees. The Charter School also has the ability to remotely access the Chromebook for purposes, such as locating a lost device, software or program updates, IT support, etc., and may do so without notice to you or your child.

School Rules: All rules, policies, and procedures of the Charter School that apply to students in/during/or at school apply while using the Chromebook. School administrators may develop additional rules regarding use of the device in the future.

Media Access & Safety: Some media and content have been blocked to better ensure the safety of our students. For chromebooks approved for off-campus use, these filters do not

replace the importance of parents/guardians in monitoring student Chromebook usage. Parents are expected to be partners in ensuring students' Internet safety.

Personal Use & Use by Others: The Chromebook is intended solely for educational use by the student enrolled in the Charter School. Students are not permitted to use the computer for personal use. Family members and others are not permitted to use the chromebook for any reason except for assisting a student with a school-sanctioned activity or assignment. For virtual parent-teacher conferences or other parent-school-family virtual meetings, parent use of the chromebook to participate in such meetings is acceptable.

Login Information: Students must log in only with their provided account information. Users may be held accountable for actions performed under their account name if it has been determined that their account was negligently left accessible. If a user suspects their account security has been compromised they are required to immediately contact their school's IT Coordinator for support.

External Records Sharing with Online Platforms

As with the use of most software and websites, students and parents are agreeing to the terms of use and privacy and data sharing provisions, including those of G Suite, Google Classroom, Zoom, Edmentum (Study Island), IXL, GoGuardian, Gaggle, etc.

You can find the Terms of Service for these platforms below:

- G Suite: https://gsuite.google.com/terms/2013/1/premier_terms.html
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/terms>
- Edmentum (Study Island): <https://www.edmentum.com/terms-of-use>
- IXL: <https://www.ixl.com/terms-of-service>
- GoGuardian: <https://www.goguardian.com/eula/>
- Gaggle: <https://cdn.gaggle.net/terms-of-service.html>

Zoom Expectations

All students will be held to the following expectations during Zoom sessions:

- Participants will use appropriate language (no cursing, no derogatory language, no disrespect or yelling) during Zoom sessions.
- Participants will mute themselves when they are not speaking to limit background noise.
- Participants will be a positive contributor during the online environment.
- Participants should dress appropriately during the session i.e. no revealing or obscene clothing.
- Participants may not use personalized backgrounds; they may distract from learning.

- The chat feature in Zoom should be used appropriately and be focused on academic conversations. The teacher may disable this feature at her/his discretion.
- Participants will not be allowed to screen share unless given permission by the Charter School staff.
- Participants may not edit the shared screen of any zoom participant.

Please be advised that Zoom sessions may serve as a virtual classroom at times. All rules from your physical classroom still apply to the virtual, at home classroom. The Code of Conduct applies to students any time during the Zoom call, whether it be on video or in the 'chat'.

Recording of Students

By having your child participate in audio/visual virtual learning or in-classroom learning where a teacher may be recording for virtual learning students, you give consent for their likeness, voice, and statements to be recorded as needed for educational purposes. Participation constitutes your consent under any applicable privacy laws, including the Pennsylvania Wiretap Act (18 Pa.C.S. 5703).

Student Cell Phones & Electronics

Phones and personal electronics are not to be used during school. This includes but is not limited to cellphones, smart watches, personal laptops, Meta Glasses, headphones, cameras. Every student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. While the Yondr Pouch is considered school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their assigned Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good condition (no damages, including bent pin). Any items put in the pouch other than their working electronics, those items will be confiscated and not returned. Students may be subject to a Probationary Contract for Electronics Infractions.

Daily Process

When students arrive to school, they will:

Turn off personal electronics.	Place ALL personal electronics inside their Pouch and secure it in front of school staff.	Store their Pouch in their backpack for the day.
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At the end of the day, or if a student is permitted to leave campus for lunch, students will open their Pouch, remove their electronics, close their Pouch and put it in their backpack. Students must bring their Pouch to school with them each day. Upon reentering the school building, including when returning from off-campus lunch, electronics must again be pouches.

Forgotten Pouch

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

A \$30 replacement fee will be charged if a student's pouch is:

- Lost or damaged.
- Forgotten consistently (3 or more consecutive days).

Note: In cases of chronic forgetfulness, students may also lose lunch privileges.

Consequences for Inappropriate Personal Electronics Use

If electronic devices are used without authorization during the school day, the following consequences will be issued:

1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
The staff member will take the device and it will be returned at the end of the day.	The staff member will take the device and a parent/guardian will be required to pick up the device.	The staff member will take the device and a parent/guardian will be required to pick up the device.	Violation of their Electronics Contract-Suspension issued.
Detention.	Detention, loss of lunch privilege for a week.	The student is put on a device contract. The length of the contract can vary. Students will need to turn in their device(s) to a Dean at the start of the day and can only get it back after dismissal.	The phone will be confiscated and will not be returned to anyone other than a parent/guardian at the informal hearing. Recommendation for expulsion.
If the student does not comply or is defiant, additional consequences may apply.			

Refusal to surrender a requested device will be considered an act of extreme defiance and will result in severe consequences.

The School is not financially responsible for property that a student voluntarily brings to school, including in the event that property is lost, misplaced, or stolen.

School Policies and Procedures

This Family & Student Handbook does not contain all of the School's policies. Additional policies can be found on our [website](#).

Students Experiencing Homelessness

The Charter School recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other students. The Charter School shall make reasonable efforts to identify children experiencing homelessness, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and other federal and state law regulations.

The Board may waive policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation, and success in charter schools of homeless students, based on the recommendation of the Head of School.

Definitions

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular, and night-time residence, which include the following conditions:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in emergency, transitional, or domestic violence shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings.
- Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
- Living as run-away children.
- Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents or caretakers.
- Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

Migratory children are children who are, or whose parent or spouse are, migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers, or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain or accompany such parent or spouse, in order to obtain, temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work.

Student and Family Rights

Under McKinney-Vento, eligible students have the right to the following:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the Charter School gathers needed documents
- Enroll in a local school or continue attending the Charter School (school of origin), if that is your preference and is feasible
- If it is determined that the school selected is not in the student's best interest, the Charter School will provide a written explanation of its position and inform you of your right to appeal the School's decision
- Receive transportation to and from the Charter School, if requested
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to your needs as a student

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board has designated the Head of School Culture or their designee to serve as the School's liaison for homeless students and families.

The School's liaison shall coordinate with:

- Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children, youth and families.
- School districts on issues of records transfer, per pupil allocation, transportation and special education programs to ensure that homeless children who are in need of special education and related services are located, identified, and evaluated.
- State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The School's Liaison has the following responsibilities:

- Identify homeless children and youth;
- Inform parents or guardians of educational rights and related opportunities available to their children, and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Disseminate public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where children and youth receive services under the Act and forms to such places as schools, family shelters, and food pantries;
- Mediate enrollment disputes in accordance with the Enrollment Dispute section and ensure immediate enrollment pending resolution of disputes;
- Inform the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, of all transportation options, including to the school of origin, and assist in accessing these transportation services;

- Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or immunization or medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or immunization or medical records;
- Understand the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidance issued for the education of homeless students in order to distribute information on the subject as well as to present workshops for school personnel, including office staff.

Best Interest Determination

The Charter School ensures that the best interests of students and families experiencing homelessness are in mind. This means that homeless students shall remain at the Charter School (school of origin), unless it is determined that it is not in their best interest. If remaining at the Charter School is not in their best interest, the necessary transfer of school records shall be carried out by the Charter School to ensure the student's immediate enrollment in a new school.

Students in Foster Care

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Foster Care Provisions establish, enhance, and formalize collaborative working relationships between child welfare and local educational agencies.

Best Interest Determination

The Charter School ensures that foster students' best interests are in mind. This means that foster students shall remain at the Charter School (school of origin), unless it is determined that it is not in their best interest. If remaining at the Charter School is not in their best interest, immediate enrollment in a new school and the transfer of school records shall be carried out by the School.

Transportation

In collaboration with local child welfare agencies, the Charter School will develop written procedures for how transportation will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of a child's time in foster care.

Foster Care Point of Contact (POC)

The Head of School Culture is the School's Foster Care Point of Contact (POC). The Foster Care POC shall coordinate with state and local child welfare agencies, the State's Foster Care POC, and other school administrators on regarding the following responsibilities:

- Facilitation of professional development and staff training of Title I foster care provisions and needs of foster students, as needed;
- Best Interest Determination and documentation
- Transfer of student records, including immunizations, medical records, IEPs and Section 504 plans to ensure immediate enrollment
- Facilitation of data sharing and reporting, consistent with FERPA

- Development, implementation, and coordination of local transportation procedures
- Special education programming
- Ensuring the educational stability and safety of all foster students.

Title IX Policy

The Charter School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and supportive learning and working environment, free from Sex Discrimination, in which all members of the The Charter School community can thrive and succeed.

The Charter School has adopted this Title IX Policy (the “Policy”) in order to advance its goal of maintaining an environment free from Sex Discrimination, including Sex-Based Harassment, as well as related Retaliation. The Charter School encourages individuals who have been affected by Sex Discrimination and/or Retaliation to promptly make a Report to The Charter School using any of the reporting options described in this Policy. The Charter School will respond promptly and equitably to all Reports or Complaints of Sex Discrimination and/or Retaliation, and will take appropriate steps to eliminate the behavior, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy

The Charter School Board stands firmly against bullying. Bullying behavior is contrary to the mission and vision of the Charter School, negatively affects the Charter School’s culture and environment, and can be damaging to the Charter School community at-large.

Bullying (including Cyberbullying) is prohibited in the Charter School’s Code of Conduct. Student conduct which may constitute Bullying or Cyberbullying shall be addressed in the same manner as other student disciplinary investigations, consistent with the Charter School’s Code of Conduct. Allegations of Bullying or Cyberbullying will be investigated promptly. In addition, a determination of whether the target of the Bullying or Cyberbullying was targeted or reports being targeted wholly or in part due to the target’s race, age, marital status, creed, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or national origin will be made. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Anti-Hazing Policy

The Charter School Board stands firmly against hazing. Hazing is contrary to the mission and vision of the Charter School, negatively affects the Charter School’s culture and

environment, and can be damaging to the Charter School community and/or its reputation. In all of its forms, hazing is prohibited at the Charter School and in certain instances may constitute a crime. The Board directs that complaints of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and that corrective action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Charter School is committed to maintaining an education and workplace environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the Charter School community include the Charter School's Board of Trustees, employees, administration, faculty, staff, school volunteers, parties under contract to perform work for or with the Charter School, and family members participating in school meetings or school-sponsored activities.

The Charter School does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of the Charter School from or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression), age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic background, marital status, pregnancy, disability, veteran/military status, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies or in its programs and activities. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth Policy

The TECH Freire Board of Directors is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students, and to ensure that every student has equal educational opportunities and equal access to educational programs and activities. As such, the Board, administration, staff, and students will comply with Federal and state laws which require that all programs, activities, and employment practices be free from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. This policy is designed in keeping with these mandates to create a safe learning environment for all students and to ensure that every student has equal access to all school programs and activities.

This policy sets out guidelines and expectations for addressing the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students and is aimed at promoting their inclusivity, privacy, and safety at all times. This policy does not anticipate every situation that might occur with respect to transgender or gender non-conforming students and the needs of each

transgender or gender non-conforming student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the goal is to not exclude, separate, deny benefits to, or otherwise treat differently on the basis of sex any person in the school's educational programs or activities. The full policy can be found on our website [HERE](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual abuse, discrimination, hazing, or bullying, please fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Safe Schools Policy

Act 26 of 1995 (the Safe Schools Act) creates a mandatory one-year expulsion for the possession of weapons on school property, including school-sponsored events. It requires parents to provide a sworn statement upon registering their child in school as to whether the child had previously been suspended or expelled from another school. Act 26 also requires schools to maintain records on acts of violence and weapon possession and to forward student discipline records when a student transfers to another school.

Act 26 defines the term weapon as "including but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, or instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury." The law requires action for documented cases of weapon possession in school or while traveling to and from any school or school program, including while on public transportation or school buses.

Reporting a TECH Freire Community Member

Any member of the public or school community may report another community member for violating the Code of Conduct. Students have the responsibility to inform a staff member if they become aware that a fellow student is in possession of illegal substances, firearms, weapons, or any items that could endanger the health, safety, or welfare of the Charter School community or property. The Dean's Office will follow up on all reports.

Retaliation

It is the School's policy that a positive, open environment be maintained at all times. Therefore, the Charter School encourages all community members to report problems or concerns without fear of retaliation or reprisal. All reports will be promptly investigated. The Charter School is committed to doing whatever is necessary to protect students from retaliation resulting from a concern or complaint. Should the Charter School determine that retaliation has occurred, or that a community member is planning retaliatory action, disciplinary steps will be taken.

Expectation on Conduct of Friends and/or Family

This policy applies to Guests (non-TECH Freire students who are brought by TECH Freire students to School-sponsored events) and to family members of TECH Freire students or other adults who visit the Charter School or attend School-sponsored events. It is the

student's responsibility to ensure that their Guests are aware of this Policy and other student conduct rules.

Search and Seizure

When a reasonable suspicion exists that a search of a student's person, locker, device, or other belonging will uncover evidence of a violation of School policy, school rules, or applicable law, the Head of School or their designee may conduct a search. A student shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present during the search unless there is reasonable suspicion that the search may uncover material which poses an immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff, in which case the search may be conducted without prior warning (22 Pa. Code § 12.14).

The Head of School or their designee may institute general search procedures, including at the point of entry to the Charter School building, lockers, hallways, or randomly selected portions of the building or grounds, when necessary to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the Charter School community, students, and staff. General search procedures may also be instituted at school functions, such as school dances or proms. Students and families shall be notified in advance of any functions at which these general searches may occur.

Searches may include the use of metal detection devices such as wands or automated weapons detecting systems and students may be asked to remove coats, empty pockets, or open their backpacks, purses etc.

Participation in the Charter School's entry screening procedures is required for entry into the school building. Students who decline to participate in required entry screening procedures will not be permitted to enter the school building. Additionally, a student who refuses or otherwise obstructs a search may be subject to disciplinary consequences. .

Any violations of Charter School policy or rules, including those outlined in the Code of Conduct and Parent/Student Handbook, that are discovered through the searches described herein shall be addressed in accordance with School policy or Memorandum of Understanding with law enforcement.

If a search uncovers an item, material, or substance, the possession of which would appear to be in violation of applicable law, the matter shall be reported to local law enforcement authorities. The staff member or administrator responsible for conducting a search is responsible for the safekeeping and proper retention/disposal of any illegal, unauthorized, or prohibited materials found as a result of the search. Care should be taken to ensure that any seized material is properly secured until surrendered to law enforcement. The Charter School reserves the right to perform its own independent testing/analysis of any substance seized in order to determine whether or not possession of such substance constitutes a

violation of School policy or applicable law. The parents/guardians of the student shall be notified as soon as practicable after the search has been conducted.

Federal Programs

Our schools participate in several federally funded programs designed to ensure that every student has equitable access to high-quality educational opportunities. These programs provide supplemental resources and services that strengthen instruction, support student achievement, and promote meaningful family engagement.

Parent Meetings

The Charter School invites parents to attend an annual Title I informational meeting, held in conjunction with a regular parent association meeting. At this meeting, we explain the purpose and requirements of Title I programs, describe how the Charter School participates in the program, and detail how the Charter School is spending its Title I funding in the current school year. School representatives review parents' right to be involved, provide the complaint procedure, and identify the School's federal programs coordinator. At this time, we solicit feedback from parents on topics including how the Charter School is spending Title I funds, the quality of the Student-School-Parent Compact, and this Family Involvement Policy. School administrators consider any feedback received when seeking to make improvements at the next relevant annual opportunity (e.g. policy updates, budgeting, program planning, etc.).

As the Charter School creates, improves, and implements its Title I Schoolwide Program, the planning team takes into account parent feedback received at the annual Title I informational meeting, comments from regular monthly parent association meetings, survey results, and relevant informal suggestions made by parents.

School events that provide opportunities for parent involvement throughout the year are held at a variety of times, both during the school day and in the evening.

Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities, including transportation, childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

Parent Rights Under Title I

Under Title I, Part A, parents have the right to:

- Be involved in our Title I, Part A programs – The School, with the help of its parents, will develop and implement a Title I Family Involvement Policy and a School-Parent Compact
- Request regular meetings – Requests for meetings to discuss Title I programs should be put in writing and submitted to the Federal Programs Coordinator.

- Know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications – Parents may request, and the Charter School then will provide, certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to their child. Requests should be put in writing and submitted to the Federal Programs Coordinator.

Parent Family Engagement Policy

The School is fully committed to finding meaningful and mutually enriching ways for parents to participate in our school to serve as partners in improving the quality of teaching and learning for all of our students and at every level. As a recipient of Title I funds, the Charter School abides by a Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The policy is updated annually, with input from parents and students, distributed at parent meetings, delivered through our website, and is included in the student handbook. The policy describes the means for carrying out Title I Parent and Family Engagement Requirements [Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)].

This policy states how the Charter School involves parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I Plan and be partners in their child's education.

- An annual parent survey to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of the School. This survey also asks parents to provide feedback on the following:
 - o Barriers to greater participation in activities,
 - o The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including with school personnel and teachers,
 - o Strategies to support successful family interactions.
- A minimum of two meetings annually where parents are invited to help develop the Title I Plan and revise the Parent Engagement Policy. These meetings include time to:
 - o Review parent survey results
 - o Review performance data
 - o Provide input into development of Title I plan including performance measures, spending plan/budget, and strategies for improving parent engagement.
 - o Evaluate and amend school-parent compact
- Numerous opportunities for parents to be involved in the activities of the school including:
 - o New Parent Clinic
 - o Back to School Night
 - o Parent-Teacher conferences
 - o Exhibition Nights
 - o Family meetings/info sessions where a member of the Charter School staff presents on relevant topics such as college application process and Act 158 graduation requirements

- Strategies to engage families and communicate with them:
 - o Family meetings for all students identified as needing additional support, held either at the home of the student or at the school.
 - o Each grade level has a dedicated academic advisor. This individual reaches out to the family of any student failing one or more classes at the conclusion of the first semester so that a family meeting can be scheduled and appropriate measures taken to support the student.
 - o The student's report cards also offer information beyond the traditional content of grades, teacher comments, and attendance information. These report cards provide parents with their student's progress on standardized tests, a record of their behavior, and information on their student's participation in extracurricular activities.
- Support programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school, including sessions on financial literacy and FAFSA completion.
- Title I Coordinator/Network Office Federal Programs Manager attend conferences and trainings, meet annually with the School's academic leaders to plan and monitor implementation of parent engagement activities
- The Charter School coordinates and integrates parent and family engagement strategies under Title I, Part A with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs including IDEA/Special Education parent training, annual notices for English learners, information sessions to support Pennsylvania's Act 158, the use of ESSER funds, and the development of our schoolwide and comprehensive plans.

Understandable Communication

The School has an accurate perception of the number of our parents for whom English is not their first language as a result of input provided on a Home Language Survey that parents are required to complete when a student first enrolls in the school. As a result, we are able to support these parents directly with a variety of resources including telephonic translation into approximately 170 languages through a service provided by LanguageLine. Additionally, as part of a quarterly phone call held with parents of any ESL students, the School is able to regularly check in with these parents to ensure that they fully understand communications from the School and provide additional support as needed.

Parent Contact Information

It is essential that parents keep their contact information on file with the Charter School up to date at all times. The Charter School may need to reach parents in emergencies, to notify them of incidents involving their child at school, or for other important reasons. Parents must therefore contact the Charter School any time there is a change to their address, phone number, or email address. Parents can also update their contact information through the PowerSchool Portal: [Student and Parent Sign In](#).

Parent Concerns

When parents/guardians have a concern about something going on in a classroom or at the School, the best thing to do is first contact their child's Academic Advisor or classroom teacher to discuss the matter. After that, if the situation still has not been resolved, the parent needs to contact either the Head of Academics (for any matters relating to teaching and learning in the school) or the Head of School Culture (for any matters in the school not directly related to teaching and learning). If the concern is not resolved at the school level, or if a community member wishes to make a specific complaint to the Board, they can provide notice to the Head of School who can relay their concern to the Board and set aside time on a meeting agenda when appropriate. Parents and community members may attend any board meeting and present a statement during the public comment period but are encouraged to share any specific concerns beforehand so that the Board can best address them. The Board will review the complaint and come to a final decision as quickly as possible.

Contract for Excellence

From the students themselves to their parents/guardians, teachers, and support staff – each and every member of the Charter School community has a critical role to play in supporting success for our learners. To make sure each individual knows their role in the process, all community members must agree to and sign the Contract for Excellence which was developed jointly with parents. This can be found on our website [HERE](#).

Materials and Trainings Available to Parents & Guardians

PowerSchool Training

The Charter School is committed to doing everything possible to help parents have the tools they need to support their child in school. To that end, the Charter School holds trainings each year so that parents feel adept at using our student database (PowerSchool) from their homes and offices. Parents can log into PowerSchool on a bi-weekly basis and receive up-to-date information about their individual student. From PowerSchool they can see a current reflection of their student's performance in each class, including specific information on how a student performed on every class assignment and assessment. Parents also have access to their student's daily attendance, current overall grades as well as test and quiz grades, homework performance, and in-school behavior.

Training for PowerSchool usually occurs in September as part of our Back to School Night but is also offered through individual tutorials. Parents receive a username and password in order to enter their account on PowerSchool. As part of that training, parents learn the capabilities of the program and how to tailor those capabilities to meet their individual needs and access the information they want to see about their child's progress. For any parents who miss Back to School Night and still want to learn how to access their child's

progress online, our Academic Advisors are available by appointment throughout the year to help parents access this very important feature.

Other Important Parent Involvement Information

We are always working to form stronger, better partnerships with parents. Some ways in which we further this goal that have not been mentioned specifically above are:

- Two parents of current students serve on the School's Board of Directors.
- Parents are surveyed yearly for input on the quality of their children's teachers and staff.
- Parents receive bi-weekly communications updating them on school activities, events, issues, etc.
- Parents receive mailings frequently through the regular mail.
- Utilization of ParentSquare which allows the Charter School to communicate information to parents via automated phone calls, text messages, and emails.
- Teachers are required to respond to every communication from a student's parents within a reasonable period of time.
- Teachers take the time to write comments on report cards thereby giving parents more specific information than just a grade.
- The interview process for hiring staff includes parent input when possible, and in particular when hiring senior administrative staff members.

Academic Advisors

Each child has an Academic Advisor. The job of the Academic Advisor is to support students in their academic growth by following student progress on a regular basis, communicating with a student's parent/guardian in times of concern, helping to link students to the extra help and support centers the Charter School has available to all students, and helping to ensure that the staff at school and parents at home are doing all they can to support our students' academic success. When requested by parents, Academic Advisors will also facilitate regular meetings that provide parents with an opportunity to formulate suggestions and participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child.

Emotional Support Team

Another fundamental way that we support parents in helping their child's achievement and potential soar is through our emotional support team. The School's emotional support team serves all students in need of therapy on a regular basis. Students meet with either our in-house certified family therapist or one of the handful of graduate school interns studying the science of emotional support and working closely at our family therapist's direction. Any and all family members of a currently enrolled student are also welcome to participate in emotional support therapy sessions. In accordance with PA Act 147 of 2004,

students who are 14 years of age or older can request counseling and are entitled to confidentiality, subject to legal restrictions (for example, counselors must report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect and may be required to report a suspicion that the student has been a victim of a crime).

Education for Our Educators about the Importance of Parents in Student Success

Every staff member participates in at least two trainings per school year on effectively partnering with parents to maximize student achievement. One of these trainings is held during our start of the year staff orientation, and the second at one of our regularly scheduled staff professional development sessions. Issues about differences in culture, expectation, communication styles, etc. are addressed.

Additionally, administrative personnel and school leaders participate in ongoing informal conversations regarding how to support parents and their students most effectively. One of the primary roles of our Academic Advisors is to serve as a liaison to and for parents with the Charter School and to make sure to give voice to parent concerns, feedback, and positive experiences.

Title I Complaint Procedures for Parents

A parent who feels that the Charter School is not meeting its Title I or other responsibilities as outlined in this policy, should first discuss the problem with the School's Federal Programs Coordinator. Examples of violations would be such things as:

- An annual meeting was not convened to explain Title I offerings to parents
- Parents were refused information on the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher

If the concern was not resolved at the school level, a parent should begin a formal Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) complaint procedure as outlined below. A complaint is defined by the Charter School as a written, signed statement. It must include the following:

- A statement that PDE or TECH Freire Charter School has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations which apply to programs under the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with PDE or TECH Freire Charter School regarding the complaint

Federal Programs Coordinator Contact Information

TECH Freire Charter School's Federal Programs Coordinator is:
Tanza, Compliance Manager, Freire Schools Collaborative
1617 JFK Blvd Ste 580
Philadelphia PA 19103

General Policies and Procedures

Communication During a Health Emergency

It is crucial that the Charter School is able to get in contact with all students and parents/guardians. It is critical that students and parents/guardians check and read their emails regularly and answer any texts or phone calls from the School. It is imperative that you do not block the School's phone numbers used to communicate with you as that will prevent the Charter School from alerting you to an emergency in addition to missing important information.

ID Cards Procedure

Identification pictures will be taken at orientation and then again on a make-up day. A student's first ID card is provided free of charge. IDs that become worn out will be replaced free of charge.

Locker Procedure

Students may opt into using a school locker. If a student opts in, a locker will be assigned to them and they will be provided with the combination to the locker. Students assigned a locker must sign an agreement stating the terms and conditions for its use. Students are to only use the locker assigned to them. Sharing lockers is not permitted. Any item found in a student's locker is considered the property of the student who has been issued said locker. As all lockers are the exclusive property of TECH Freire, the Charter School reserves the right to open and inspect lockers at any time and without notifying the student.

Lunch Program & Procedures

All students are eligible for free lunch for the entire school year. There is no sign-up process required. Students simply have to present their school ID or student ID number to the lunch staff each day prior to receiving their lunch.

Students are not permitted to order food to be delivered to the School.

Transportation Procedure

SEPTA Transpasses

Students who reside in Philadelphia and meet eligibility requirements will receive a SEPTA Key Student Fare Card from the School District of Philadelphia. Although the Charter School is responsible for distributing the SEPTA cards, the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) is

responsible for determining eligibility and then issuing cards to the school for distribution. Although the Charter School does not determine eligibility nor do we have any authority over SEPTA cards, parents are still encouraged to contact the Charter School with any questions and concerns. If a student DOES NOT reside in the SDP, parents need to contact the student's district of residence.

Eligibility for SEPTA Key Student Fare Cards

A student must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for a SEPTA card:

- Reside in the SDP (Residents outside the SDP please refer to the "Out of District Residents" section)
- Live MORE than 1.5 miles from the Charter School (The SDP determines this through addresses and zip codes)

Process for Determining Eligibility

- At the beginning of the year, the SDP will process the addresses of all students registered at the School.
- The students who are deemed eligible (see eligibility requirements) will be placed on an electronic list, accessed via Compass, the District's online transportation portal.
- The District will provide the Charter School with one SEPTA card for EACH student listed on Compass as eligible to receive a card. Please note: The Charter School ONLY receives a card for the students whose names appear on the eligibility list.
- The SDP's process for determining a student's eligibility status can unfortunately sometimes take more than a month from the first day of school. During this period the Charter School relies on parents to ensure that students have transportation to and from school.

Please note: All paperwork is submitted to the SDP in a very timely fashion. Once that paperwork is submitted, the Charter School (and parents) have to wait until the SDP determines eligibility and then issues a card.

Out of District Residents

Students who reside outside of the SDP must contact their district of residence directly in order to receive transportation.

According to Pennsylvania state law, districts are not required to provide transportation to students who attend a school that is more than 10 miles away from their district of residence.

The Charter School is not responsible for lost or stolen cards. If a student loses their card or it is stolen, the student and their parent or guardian will be responsible for the student's transportation until a replacement can be issued.

Please Note: The District provides one card per student. There are no "extra" cards.

Emergency School Closings and Delayed Openings

All school closings (whether a closure or delayed start made prior to opening or an early dismissal closure during the school day) will be listed on the School's website. In addition, information will be distributed through the Charter School Messenger system (automated phone calls and text alerts).

Telephone Calls

Student Use of School Phones

Students may only use the school's phones after receiving permission from a school administrator.

Incoming Calls to Students

We discourage parents from calling the Charter School to contact their child unless it is truly urgent as unnecessary phone calls disrupt the learning environment. In the event that a parent should urgently need to communicate with their child during the school day, the parent should call the School's main number and will be connected to the appropriate administrator who will handle each scenario on a case by case basis. If it is not an emergency, please email the front desk at frontdesk@techfreire.org.

Visitor Procedure

All visitors to the School, including parents, mentors, vendors, contractors, etc. should first sign in with the greeter. Visitors will be given a name tag, which they must wear at all times while in the building. The name tag will say "VISITOR" and the date of the visit. Any visitor who fails to adhere to this policy will be considered a trespasser. The administration will deal with trespassing by contacting the police.

All Visitors are required to follow the School's current health and safety plan. Any visitor who violates these health guidelines will be asked to leave the building.

Volunteer Procedures

All volunteers (parents, grandparents, community members) must have all clearances required under Pennsylvania law on file with the School. All duties and arrangements will be made by the appropriate school administrator.

If you would like to volunteer at the Charter School (including parents chaperoning a field trip), please notify Katie Pollard (katie@freireschools.org), Director of People Operations at Freire Schools Network Office, who tracks all clearances.

Volunteers are required to obtain the following clearances:

- Child Abuse History Clearance from PA DHS
- Criminal Record Check from PA State Police

- FBI Fingerprint Background Check (if the volunteer has not been a continuous resident of PA for the last 10 years)

Effective 7/25/15, the fees for child abuse clearance and PA criminal background check have been waived for volunteers. Volunteers should obtain their clearances online and when prompted to select the reason for the clearance, they should select "VOLUNTEER." This will ensure that they are not charged a fee. The fee for the fingerprint clearance still applies.

For more information, please visit <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/clearances/index.htm>.

Field Trips

Field trips are an essential part of learning. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in field trips unless a parent gives notice that a child is not permitted to participate. In order to ensure student safety, the Charter School requires that a student's parent/guardian complete a permission slip for field trips. The Charter School offers the option for parents/guardians to give consent for any and all field trips or educational activities that may occur outside the school building which are held during regular school hours and within the city of Philadelphia. There will be a parent communication prior to any field trip and parents will have the option to request that their child remain at school rather than participate in that field trip. Separate permission slips will be required for trips outside of Philadelphia or which start before or end after regular school hours. The appropriate permission slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School by the deadline, either on paper or through the school's online permission slip platform. The Charter School cannot accept verbal consent or any other form of parent/guardian authorization besides the fully completed and signed permission slip. The Charter School reserves the right to deny participation in field trips or activities at the discretion of school administration.

Lost and Damaged Property

School Property

Students are responsible for taking care of and returning school property provided for their use – including but not limited to books, locks, lockers, lab equipment, laptops, sports uniforms, sports equipment, etc. Families will be billed for lost or damaged items and may be followed by disciplinary action. Students will be required to pay off all account balances prior to receiving their transcript or diploma.

Personal Property

The Charter School is not responsible for students' or community members' personal property brought onto the School's campus or to any school activities regardless of

location. Students and visitors are responsible for ensuring that their personal property is secured against theft or loss at all times. Valuables such as wallets and phones should be kept with you or locked at all times, never left unsecured and unattended. In the rare instances when that is not possible and the cellphone is left with a staff member, the staff member is not responsible for any damage to a phone NOT in a Yondr pouch.

Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection

Romantic physical contact is prohibited at all times. Students who engage in inappropriate public displays of affection may be subject to disciplinary measures. Inappropriate public displays of affection distract from the college preparatory environment that is expected at all times. Age and circumstance will be taken into consideration when applying discipline measures for inappropriate public displays of affection.

Summary of Student Health Policies

The School's health policies are summarized below. Copies of the complete policies are available upon request and on the Charter School website [HERE](#).

Illness procedures

When the nurse is on site:

When the nurse is on site, they are the person who will determine whether or not the student is able to return to class. If the nurse determines that a student needs to leave, then they will contact the parents/guardian and request that they either pick up their student or request permission for the student to travel home on their own. If the nurse is unable to get in contact with the parent/guardian, they will contact someone else on the students' contact list in PowerSchool to get permission to send the student home. The nurse is the only person who has the authority to determine if a student must leave for the day on the basis of a medical concern. Reasons for sending a student home sick include:

- A fever of 100.4 or higher
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Asthma that is not being controlled with inhalers
- Conjunctivitis

When the nurse is NOT on site:

In the event that the nurse is not at the School, the Charter School will honor the wishes of the parents/guardians as to whether the student should stay in school for the day. In the event the nurse is not available and the Charter School and parent do not agree about the resolution, the Head of Operations will determine whether the student is too ill to stay in

school. In the event a student is too ill to remain in school, the student MUST be picked up by the parent or guardian or their designee. Please refer to the early dismissal policy. Students who are determined to be too ill to remain in school will not, under any circumstances, be allowed to leave school without being picked up by a parent/guardian or person they designate.

Medical Emergencies & Accidents:

In the event your child has a medical emergency (defined as an incident that requires immediate medical attention), we will make your child comfortable and begin appropriate first aid procedures. If your child needs to be transported to a hospital, an ambulance will be called. A school staff member may accompany your child to the hospital and may or may not stay with them until you arrive. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact your child's emergency contacts listed in powerschool.

Health Examinations and Screenings

Medical and Dental Examinations:

Physical examinations are required upon entry to the Charter School and in 11th grade. Dental examinations are required upon entry. Students without adequate health records who are transferring from other schools are required to be examined as soon as possible upon entry to the School. These examinations may be completed no more than one year prior to a student's entry into the grade where an exam is required. Entry is considered to occur on July 1.

Health Screening Tests

The following screening tests shall be conducted by a nurse or medical technician following Department of Health requirements and guidelines:

- **Vision:** Near and far visual acuity tests are conducted annually for all students.
- **Hearing:** Initial hearing screenings are conducted in eleventh grade.
- **Growth:** Height and weight measurements are taken annually.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

These procedures will be followed at all times (including after regular school hours) and in all facilities that the Freire Charter School occupies to the degree that they are relevant and prudent.

What the School needs from Parents/Guardians in an emergency:

- In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and understand that the School is prepared to respond to any type of emergency situation.

- **Do not call the school**, as an influx of phone calls may inhibit our ability to respond to an emergency. The school understands that communicating with parents during an emergency is a priority and will do so as soon as possible.
- If you DO NOT want your student dismissed to SEPTA should the School need to dismiss students from an evacuation site, make sure that the reunification request is filed with the School. Contact the Head of School: (215) 557-8555 x1916.
- Please realize that if your student is dismissed to use public transportation they MOST likely will not have their personal belongings with them. This includes coats, book bags, purses etc.
-
- Please review this entire plan and ask questions. Make sure that you understand exactly what will happen and the steps the School will take in response to an emergency.
- An emergency can happen at any time, so we need you to make sure that the following information is always up to date in our system:
 - Guardian/Parent phone numbers
 - Emergency Contacts: Name/relationship and contact numbers
 - Reunification paperwork up to date and submitted

Emergency Drill Procedure

If a drill takes place either during or after school hours, students or parents/guardians are not permitted to leave the premises until the drill is complete.

Parent/Guardian Notification

Parents will be informed of school emergencies as soon as possible. The following communication tools will be used during an emergency:

- ParentSquare
 - Calls and/or messages will be sent out periodically so that parents and guardians can have up to date information.
 - Please note that only students or parents who have signed up for this service will receive these messages. Contact the Head of School to sign up.
- Website Postings
 - Please refer to the school's website for in-depth information: techfreire.org

Emergency Response Procedures Summary

The School utilizes the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) method to respond to emergencies within the building. SRP includes Evacuation, Lockdown, Secure, and Hold with a reunification process available if necessary.

Evacuation	When is this protocol activated? Fire, bomb threat, or other situation that requires exiting the building in a quick yet orderly manner. What should you do if this protocol is activated? All members of the school community will leave the building immediately and make way to their primary evacuation site. Each grade has a primary evacuation site. Students and staff are trained on the location of these evacuation sites and the Evacuation procedure regularly throughout the school year. Parents will be alerted that an Evacuation was triggered at the School and more information will be provided as it becomes available. Once at the evacuation site, staff will take attendance to ensure all students are accounted for. At this time, additional parent communications will be shared if available. If the Evacuation is cleared and it is safe to return to the building, students will return to school and resume regular programming. If returning to the building is not possible, students will be dismissed directly from the primary evacuation site. Students will not be able to retrieve personal items from the building while an Evacuation is active. There may be scenarios where students must be reunified directly with their parent/guardian(s) or where dismissal from the primary evacuation site is not possible. <i>(See Reunification)</i>
Lockdown	When is this protocol activated? Severe security threat inside the building e.g. armed assailant, gun found in building. What should you do if this protocol is activated? All members of the school community should run out of the building if near an exit and able, otherwise hide in silence and out of sight within a locked room. Students and staff are trained on Lockdown procedure regularly throughout the school year. A Lockdown will be lifted after the severe security threat has been neutralized or deemed the threat has passed. If the Lockdown has been cleared, students and staff will resume regular programming. If the Lockdown is not able to be cleared or law enforcement becomes involved, the School will follow a police-led evacuation to the Reunification Site. In a scenario where the Reunification Site is activated, students must be reunified directly with their parent/guardian(s). <i>(See Reunification)</i>

Secure	When is this protocol activated? Threat outside the building e.g. extreme weather, hazmat outside, neighborhood gun violence. Can also be used when there is a potential threat that needs to be investigated, including a potential threat outside the building. What should you do if this protocol is activated? Possible actions include: no one in or out of the building; shut off hvac; move away from windows; move off first floor. No one needs to be hiding in silence as with a lockdown.
Hold	When is this protocol activated? A situation inside the building that requires students and staff to temporarily remain within their classroom/office. eg if EMT needs empty hallways to assist with a medical emergency, if staff need to clean a spill or other unsafe condition in one wing of the school, or if staff receive information about a potential safety issue that needs to be investigated. What should you do if this protocol is activated? Staff and students stay in the room they are in or to move to a space they are directed to. No one needs to be hiding in silence as with a lockdown.
Reunification	When is this protocol activated? Used immediately following a lockdown or evacuation if necessary. What should you do if this protocol is activated? Proceed to the reunification site after being directed by police or other public safety officials. After the school community reaches the reunification site, staff will take student attendance and parent/guardian(s) will be notified of the reunification location and be able to pick up their child.

PUBLIC NOTICES

PPRA Notice and Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, requires that the School notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your student out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screenings.

The School will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities. Parents will be provided an opportunity to opt their student out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys.

This notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Annual FERPA Notification

Annual Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the 2026-27 School Year/Notice to Parents and Guardians Regarding the Disclosure of Student “Directory Information”

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, affords parents, legally emancipated students, and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records.

These rights are briefly summarized below and are explained more fully in the Board’s Student Records Policy which is on file at the school and is available upon request. You are encouraged to review the School’s Student Records Policy for a full explanation of privacy rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School CEO a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official 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 amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the School CEO, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. 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 advise them of the 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 consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in 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 may include a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); contractors, consultants, volunteers, and other outside service providers used by the school; or a parent or student serving on official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school, school district, school system, or institution of higher learning in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

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

Directory Information

Directory information includes information contained in the educational record of a student, which is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, so that it may be disclosed without prior parental consent, unless the parent or guardian has advised the School to the contrary in accordance with school procedures.

Directory information includes the following:

- Schools attended;
- Student's name;
- Address;
- Telephone listing;
- Student electronic mail address;
- Photograph;
- Date of birth;
- Major field of study;
- Dates of enrollment;
- Grade level;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information from a student's education records in certain school publications, including: a playbill, showing a student's role in a drama production; school newsletters, the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets, such as for basketball, showing weight and height of team members. This information may also be made available to qualified outside organizations upon request.

If a parent or guardian chooses to refuse the inclusion of this type of information, they should mail a written objection on or before September 1, 2026, or two weeks after their child's start date, to the Head of School at: Freire Charter School, 2027 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Please note that an opt-out of directory information disclosures does not prevent the School from identifying a student by name or from disclosing a student's electronic identifier or institutional email address in class. The right to opt out of directory information disclosures does not include a right to remain anonymous in class, and may not be used to impede routine classroom communications and interactions, whether class is held in a specified physical location or virtually through electronic communications. **If a parent/guardian does not submit a written refusal on or before September 1, 2026 then the School may disclose directory information without prior consent.**

Annual AHERA Notification

As it pertains to the 2026-2027 school year, and pursuant to the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandate, as required by 40 C.F.R. 763.84 (c)(d) of public access to environmental records, this letter is to acknowledge the availability of the School's Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Management Plan.

The AHERA Management Plan provides a description of the location, quantity, and condition of all asbestos containing materials (ACM) found in each building. Per the School's most recent inspection conducted by Indoor Environmental Concepts, LLC, there are no known ACM present in the building.

If you have any questions or would like to see the full AHERA Management Plan, please contact Johnny Mills, Director of Operations at Freire Schools, at johnny@freireschools.org.