Inwood Academy
For Leadership

*Communications Matters*

# *Middle School* Student & Family Handbook 2026 - 27



**Belong.**

**Grow.**

**Lead.**

*A Brighter Tomorrow Begins Here.*

INWOOD ACADEMY
MIDDLE SCHOOL
433 W. 204th Street

STUDENTS TODAY.
LEADERS TOMORROW.
A BRIGHTER COMMUNITY ALWAYS.

**Belong. Grow. Lead.**

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# I. GENERAL INFORMATION

## Mission

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School will empower students to become agents for change through community focused leadership, character development and college preparedness.

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School is based on the three Core Components of College Preparedness, Community-Focused Leadership, and Character Development. These core components, joined with an integrated curriculum that combines skill building from a base of knowledge and a highly qualified teaching staff, will ensure our school's growth and sustainability as a thriving educational environment.

## Core Values

Inwood Academy for leadership believes in developing and supporting the whole child. Through intentional character development, we instill our core character traits in our student body, ensuring that our students not only graduate from Inwood Academy prepared for college and career, but that they graduate as leaders who exemplify integrity, honesty, restraint, care, and responsibility in all they do.

We hold our students, our staff, ourselves to these values, and believe that in order to lead, we must act with character. We use these core values as the basis for our discussions around behavior, discipline, celebrations and success. As a partner in this work, we invite you and your family to speak about these values at home as well.

We believe honesty, integrity, responsibility, caring, and restraint are traits that contribute to well-rounded individuals who care, give back, and lead.

I am a **RESPONSIBLE** leader when I make a plan, follow through and try my best.

I am a leader with **RESTRAINT** when I stop and think before I make a good choice and recognize personal impact on others.

I am a leader with **INTEGRITY** when I do what's right and stand up for myself and others.

I am a **CARING** leader when I use kind words and actions to help myself and others.

I am an **HONEST** leader when I listen first, speak my truth and own my actions.

## Contacting Staff and Student Information System (PowerSchool)

### Family Communications

The faculty and staff at IAL believe that clear communication among all community members is integral to a successful and supportive educational environment. Thus, frequent and consistent communication between us (the school) and you (the family) is critical. We want to ensure that we communicate often about how to best support you and your child through their academic journey. Additionally, our Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department works hard to ensure that lines of communication are always open, and that support for families is always provided.

### Some of the best ways to stay in contact with IAL:

- Use Powerschools! This is our Student Information System, where students grades and progress can be measured.
- Email Teachers! Your child's teachers emails are listed on Powerschools, but are also your teacher's first name.last name @ialcs.org.
- Consistent Communication with your child's advisor! Your child's advisor is their at school advocate to support your child's academic and social journey at IAL.
- The Family and Community Engagement weekly Wednesday News Brief's with our Director of Family Engagement, Tatiana Mahoney. As well as all the FACE Events and Workshops.

### Communication via Email

Below you will find the contact information of some of the staff at the Middle School. If you do not have access to email, you can always reach them via our main school number.

| Title & Name | Contact Information |
|---|---|
| CEO<br>Christina Reyes | christina.reyes@ialcs.org |
| COO/CFO<br>Jenny Pichardo | jenny.pichardo@ialcs.org |
| CSO<br>Bianca Mercedes | bianca.mercedes@ialcs.org |
| Board Chair<br>Maxwell Rosenthal | maxwell.rosenthal@ialcs.org |
| Middle School Director<br>Katherine Cuateco | katherine.cuateco@ialcs.org |
| Academic Dean<br>Sandy Trinidad (STEM)<br>Isaiah Brown (Humanities) | sandy.trinidad@ialcs.org<br>isaiah.brown@ialcs.org |
| Dean of Student Intervention Services<br>Giselle Tejada | giselle.tejada@ialcs.org |

| Title & Name | Contact Information |
|---|---|
| Dean of Culture<br>Jason Lantigua | jason.lantigua@ialcs.org |
| Middle School Dean of Students<br>Vicky Hiraldo | vicky.hiraldo@ialcs.org |
| Middle School Social Worker<br>Cristal Salas (6th & 9th grade)<br>Mariana De Los Santos (K–5th, 7th & 8th grade) | cristal.salas@ialcs.org<br>mariana.delossantos@ialcs.org |
| Director of PSW After School Enrichment<br>Nia Scott | inwood.psw@gmail.com |
| Director of School Operations<br>Kevin Garcia | kevin.garcia@ialcs.org |
| Director of Family & Community Engagement<br>Tatiana Mahoney | tatiana.mahoney@ialcs.org |
| Main Office | operations@ialcs.org |

## Student Information System (PowerSchool)

Students and families can independently track students' grades for various assignments throughout the school year on the PowerSchools Parent Portal via website or app. Students and families can direct any questions about PowerSchools access to FACE. To access the parent portal of Power Schools and view student progress, families should provide a valid email address to the main office.

### Weekly Family Bulletins

Once a week, FACE department hosts a Family Bulletin via ZOOM. Families can join to hear calendar and school updates and pertinent information, opportunities to volunteer and tips to help your child succeed. The Family Bulletin is recorded and then uploaded onto Youtube for reference.

### Monthly Family Coffee Hour

Once a month, FACE and the Elementary School Director will host a morning Family Coffee Hour at the Elementary School cafeteria for families to build connections, share information and discuss best ways to support our students. We will provide coffee, tea, water, and fruit. Families are welcomed to bring treats to share.

### Family Council

The mission of Inwood Academy's Family Council is to develop parent leadership and build capacity for greater involvement. We provide opportunities and training for families to participate in school governance and decision-making. The family council meets monthly to discuss ways they can provide support and resources to the school for the benefit and educational growth of the children. Please contact Tatiana Mahoney to participate in the family council.

## School Calendar and Daily Schedule

At the beginning of each school year IAL will issue its own calendar detailing key dates, events and information pertinent to the school. Phone blasts are sent to families to notify them of absence or special announcements including but not limited to: school closings, special events etc.

### Arrival times

- Official school start times Monday-Friday at 7:55am.
- Doors of the school will open for students at 7:30am.

### Dismissal times

- Official dismissal times Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 3:30pm.
- Wednesdays 2:25pm
- Half Days 1PM

## Transportation

### School Bus

IAL utilizes the New York City Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation for school bus service for eligible special education students. It is imperative that students utilizing this service understand that the driver is the source of authority on every school bus and all students must follow his/her directions and instructions. All general school rules apply on the bus and students who commit violations of school rules while utilizing school bus services will be disciplined in accordance with our Code of Conduct. In addition, failure to behave in a respectful manner and abide by school rules may result in loss of bus transportation privileges.

### Bus expectations:

- Students must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- Students must wear a seatbelt while on the bus.
- Students must keep the aisle clear at all times.
- Students must keep their volume at a minimal level.
- Students are not to exit the bus until it comes to a full stop.
- Students must enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Students must follow the directions of the bus driver.

### Bus Stop Change

If there is a change of address families must submit a proof of address to see if they qualify for a bus stop change. If approved by the New York City Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation, families will be notified by our office staff.

### Metrocards

Student metrocards will be provided in September and February. If your child happens to misplace their Metrocard, you must complete a Metrocard Replacement Request Form for a replacement found on our website www.inwoodacademy.org under Families and Form.

## Food Services

### Breakfast and Lunch Programs

IAL will provide students with breakfast, lunch, and a snack if they have an early or late lunch. During school hours, IAL reserves the right to determine which meals and/or snacks to serve. Food menus are prepared to provide healthy, nutritious and tasty meals. Soft drinks and sugary snacks are not provided. Please note that everyone will receive a lunch and recess break.

### Breakfast

Students are encouraged to eat breakfast everyday. Breakfast will be provided by the school and students will be given time to eat breakfast within the 7:30-7:50 window. If a student needs more time, time will be provided. Please note that we aim to avoid disruption to their school day.

### Lunch

Children may bring lunch from home; however, they should not bring unhealthy drinks (e.g. sodas or juices heavy in sugar) or unhealthy snacks (snacks high in fat, calories, or sugar) to school. Lunches will be placed in a designated area during the start of the day. Food is not allowed to be taken to the classrooms. No glass bottles or containers are permitted in the school building. Please note that school microwaves and refrigerators will not be accessible.

### Free and Reduced Lunch

IAL is currently enrolled in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. All students enrolled at IAL are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at **no charge** to your household each day of the school year.

Every family is required to fill out the lunch form completely and send the form back to school with your child.

### Dietary Restrictions

Please write a letter to the school if your child has health or religious restrictions in food consumption. Any food allergies will be honored upon documentation from your family doctor. Students may also bring their own food for breakfast or lunch. While we will have a milk chest and food warmer for school meals; we will not have a microwave or refrigerator available for student use. Students should not bring meals that need to be heated or refrigerated.

### Student Arrival & Lateness/Tardiness

IAL students are expected to arrive by 7:50 a.m. Students arriving any time after 7:50 am will be considered tardy. Students who are consistently tardy will be required to serve restoration on Wednesday(s). This may be assigned during student lunch periods or afterschool. Please contact the main office (646-665-5570) to notify the school if your child will be late.

### Dismissal

*General Dismissal*

- IAL Middle School students are dismissed from school at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.
- Families and guardians who wish to pick up their child must wait outside of the building at the appropriate door.
    - 6 - 8 grades dismiss at the far right door (near 9th Avenue). Each grade will line up at the designated area in front of the school building.
- Students in Grades 6-8 will be permitted to leave on their own with completion of the dismissal form.

**Please note:** To ensure a safe environment, students are not allowed to be dismissed from 3:00 to 3:45 PM (unless the school called to pick up the student) — this is due to it being a heavy transition time for all students.

## Enrichment Program | Play Study Win

The afterschool component is an optional program available to all students who wish to participate. All those interested must understand that transportation is not provided and that participation is a privilege. Participation may be restricted or denied when students have inconsistent attendance in the program. Schedules of enrichment activities will be given to students and mailed to parents to ensure that there is clear and open communication.

If any questions arise regarding the Enrichment Program, please feel free to contact Nia Scott, Afterschool Program Director at *inwood.psw@gmail.com*.

- Our afterschool program has dismissal at 6:15 p.m. on Monday-Friday.

## Early and Late Pick-Up

### Early Pick-up

Students who leave before the end of the regular school day will be excused only for medical or legal appointments or family emergencies.

Families or guardians must complete the Student Early Dismissal Form on the morning of the requested dismissal, unless an emergency prevents advance notice. The form is also available at www.inwoodacademy.org under Families → Forms. The family member or guardian must complete the verification process after submitting the form.

At dismissal, the authorized family member or guardian must report to the Main Office and sign the student out before the student can be released. Students approved for early dismissal are not permitted to leave school alone.

### Late Pick-Up

It is important for families to pick up students within the dismissal window. If there is a pattern of late pick ups, we will schedule a meeting with the family to determine what changes can happen to ensure that the student is picked up on time.

## Attendance Policy

**Our Commitment!** Every student should be in school, on time, and ready to learn each day. When attendance or punctuality becomes a concern, Inwood Academy for Leadership (IAL) will partner with students and families to understand barriers, provide support, and create a plan for improvement.

### 1. Daily Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to attend school every day that school is in session, arrive by their site's official start time, remain through dismissal, and attend all scheduled classes and required activities.

- Families should notify the school as soon as possible when a student will be absent or late and provide the reason.
- Students who arrive late must follow the site check-in process and report promptly to class. Every late student will be welcomed and admitted to school.
- Students may leave early only with proper authorization and according to the school's release procedures.
- At the Middle and High Schools, attendance is recorded by class period in addition to daily attendance.

### 2. How Attendance Is Recorded

IAL records whether a student is present, absent, late, or leaves early. When applicable, the record also identifies whether the event is excused or unexcused and includes the actual arrival or departure time.

**Important!** An excused absence is still a day of instruction missed and counts toward the student's attendance rate and chronic absenteeism status. A tardy or early departure does get counted and instructional time lost.

### 3. Excused and Unexcused Absences or Tardies

Reasons are reviewed and coded according to school procedures and applicable law. Families may be asked to provide documentation.

| May be excused with appropriate documentation | Unexcused |
|---|---|
| Illness or medical care | Family vacations or recreational activities |
| Legal matters or court appearances | Avoidable transportation problems |
| Family emergency | Calendar confusion or oversleeping |
| Religious observance | Other reasons not approved under school procedures |
| Other protected or school-approved circumstances | |

**Families should submit requested documentation promptly through the Excused Absence Form found on our website www.inwoodacademy.org under Families and Forms. Documentation may explain and appropriately code an absence, but it does not erase instructional time missed.**

### 4. How IAL Responds When Attendance Becomes a Concern

IAL reviews both the percentage of enrolled school days missed and attendance patterns. Support may begin sooner when there are consecutive absences, frequent lateness or early departures, missed classes, an urgent safety concern, or an emerging pattern. The absence ranges below are full-year equivalents. During the year, percentages are calculated using the number of days the student has been enrolled to date.

| Attendance level | When it applies | What families can expect |
|---|---|---|
| Early concern | 3% to less than 5% missed, about 6–8 days in a 180-day year | Personal outreach, record review, barrier discussion, named adult check-in, and follow-up. |
| At risk | 5% to less than 8% missed, about 9–14 days | Family conference, barrier assessment, Attendance Success Plan, supports, and weekly monitoring. |
| Immediate risk | 8% to less than 10% missed, about 15–17 days | Multidisciplinary review, intensified plan, more frequent check-ins, and targeted supports. |
| Chronically absent | 10% to less than 20% missed, about 18–35 days | Updated plan, formal notice, weekly review, and coordinated school or community supports. |
| Severely chronically absent | 20% or more missed, 36 or more days | Urgent case review, reengagement plan, frequent contact, and intensified supports. |

#### Attendance Success Plans

When a formal plan is needed, the school will work with the student and family to identify barriers, set a measurable short-term goal, select a small number of high-impact actions, identify school supports, and set check-in and review dates. A family signature will be requested, but support may begin even if a signature is not yet available.

#### First Six Weeks of School

Because early patterns matter, IAL responds more quickly during the first six weeks:

- Two absences or two tardies prompt personal outreach.
- Four absences or four tardies prompt a barrier review and documented goal.
- Students with a prior pattern of chronic absenteeism may begin the year with a preventive plan and a named adult connection.

### 5. Consecutive Absences and No Contact

The school will take additional steps when a student is absent on consecutive school days, especially if the school cannot reach the family:

- **After two consecutive days absent,** the school will personally contact the family to confirm the student's safety, location, reason for absence, expected return date, and any immediate barrier.

- **After three consecutive days absent with no contact,** the school will make multiple reasonable attempts using approved contacts and methods, involve a student-support leader, and notify the Site Director if contact is not established.
- **After five consecutive days absent with no contact,** the school will conduct an urgent case review and develop a reengagement and return-to-school plan. A home visit may be considered under approved safety procedures.

### 6. Punctuality and Early Departures

IAL considers both how often a student is late or leaves early and the total instructional time missed. Support is age-appropriate and designed to solve barriers, not exclude students from learning.

| Level | Trigger | School response |
|---|---|---|
| Pattern emerging | 3 tardies or early departures within 20 school days, or 60 minutes missed | Family contact, review of reasons, expectation reminder, and a practical next step. |
| Repeated concern | 6 within 30 school days, 120 minutes missed, or no improvement | Student and family conference, barrier review, Punctuality Success Plan, and two-week goal. |
| Intensive concern | 10 within 45 school days, 240 minutes missed, repeated first-period loss, or no improvement | Academic-impact review, written plan, one case owner, and weekly monitoring. |

### 7. Student and Family Responsibilities

- Make daily attendance and on-time arrival a priority.
- Keep phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts, and home addresses current with the school.
- Respond to school outreach and share barriers that may be affecting attendance.
- Provide requested documentation through the school's designated process.
- Participate in conferences and Attendance or Punctuality Success Plans when requested.
- Ask for help early with transportation, health, mental health, housing, caregiving, safety, school avoidance, or academic concerns.

### 8. School Support and Student Rights

IAL may connect students and families with school-based or community resources, including transportation problem-solving, health or mental-health support, housing resources, family routine planning, trusted-adult check-ins, safety review, counseling, tutoring, disability-related supports, and high school graduation-planning support.

- Attendance interventions are intended to restore access to learning and address barriers.
- Students will not be excluded from school because they arrive late.
- Attendance alone does not automatically result in an ACS report, denial of course credit, or denial of Regents examination eligibility.
- When a high school student has been absent for an extended period, the school will make multiple attempts to contact the student and family, understand the circumstances, offer support, and help the student return to school.
    - If the student cannot be located or is legally eligible to withdraw, IAL may begin a formal withdrawal or discharge review. The school will follow all required outreach, documentation, notification, and approval procedures before changing the student's enrollment status. Families will receive any required notices and information about their rights.

- Mandated reporters will follow the law when there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or maltreatment or when an urgent safety concern requires action.
- For high school students, course attendance may be reviewed together with instructional time missed, completed work, evidence of mastery, protected circumstances, notices, and opportunities to recover learning.

### 9. Returning to Learning

After an absence, students should return as soon as they are able and speak with their teachers about missed instruction and work. The school will provide reasonable opportunities for students to access missed learning consistent with course and school expectations.

### 10. Questions or Support

Families should contact the school's Main Office, Family and Community Engagement team, or a school designee with questions or to request support. Interpretation or translated communication will be provided when needed.

> **Please remember** to communicate early. The sooner the school understands what is getting in the way, the sooner we can partner on a solution.

## School Uniform Policy

IAL has a dress code to establish an appearance that is consistent as a member of our community; the uniform also establishes a sense of professionalism and team spirit. The goal of our uniform policy is to create consistency, community and safety. Each day the students are expected to dress according to the following standards:

### Monday–Thursday

- **Tops:** An Inwood Academy royal blue long or short sleeve polo shirt or an Inwood Academy sweatshirt, with or without hoods. All shirts must be long enough to cover the abdomen with hands lifted overhead.
- **Bottoms:** Khaki or navy blue pants or skirt (hemline may be no shorter than 3" above the knee). Students may wear IAL Sweatpants, with IAL Logo from Lands End. Twill shorts may be worn only in the warmer months at the discretion of the Dean of School Culture. Jeans, cargos, or leggings are not acceptable.
- **Accessories:** In light of IAL's dress code which encourages professionalism in formal settings, no ski masks, hats or other head coverings are permitted in the school building except for religious or medical purposes. Any articles of clothing or accessories, including tattoos, that refer to drugs, gangs, sex, racist ideas/symbols, or death are prohibited.

### Friday

Students are allowed to wear any Inwood Academy / Trailblazer T-shirt with uniform bottoms.

### Monday–Friday Outerwear & Footwear

- **Sweater —** Lands' End Performance Button-Front Cardigan in Navy or Zip-Front Cardigan in Navy with school "logo".
- **Crew Neck Sweater or Hoodie —** Lands' End navy blue crewneck with school "logo".

*When the "feels-like" temperature is below 40 degrees Fahrenheit, students must wear a coat or heavy jacket.*

- **Shoes:** Sneakers are strongly encouraged. Shoes with laces must be tied at all times with the tongue inside, and tied securely to ensure student safety. All other shoes must be completely closed toed shoes. No Crocs, slides, or slippers of any kind (including Ugg slippers and Birkenstocks).

### Dress Down Days

To maintain a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment, IAL policy prohibits students from wearing clothing in school, on school buses, or during any IAL- or school-sponsored programs or activities that take place on or off school property that contains language, images, or references that:

- Discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, religious practices, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, or weight;
- Include profanity, obscenity, nudity, or sexual acts;
- Threaten violence, injury, harm, or indicate gang affiliation.

Additionally, students are prohibited from wearing revealing clothing that does not provide full coverage of private body parts.

Shoes must be closed-toes. Crocs, slides and slippers are not allowed.

> **Note:** All dress down days will be communicated in advance along with information around the expectations for the day.

### Note the following:

- Students who arrive at school out of uniform will be loaned a uniform for the day, if available. Uniforms must be returned at the end of the day. If a loaner is not available, families will be contacted to request that a change of clothes or appropriate footwear be brought to school. Students who consistently arrive at school out of uniform may be required to serve a restoration and families will be contacted. This could potentially lead to a family meeting.
    - 1st time — Parent phone call
    - 2nd time — Parent phone call & reflection during recess.
    - 3rd time — Parent meeting.
    - 4th time — Rent a loaner ($1.00 per day fee until returned)
    - 5th time — Student will not be able to participate in an upcoming special school event, such as assembly, dress down, or field trip.
- IAL reserves the right to modify the dress code at any time, any modifications will be communicated with families ahead of time.
- If you are unable to obtain a uniform please contact our Director of Family and Community Engagement, Tatiana Mahoney.

### To purchase a uniform:

- Lands' End Website
- Phone: 1-800-963-4816
- Preferred School Number is: 900153065

## Search and Seizure Policy

A student and/or the student's belongings may be searched by an IAL staff member if the staff member has a reasonable suspicion and deems it necessary that a search of that student and/or the student's belongings will result in evidence that the student violated the law or may be endangering the safety of themselves or others.

The school reserves the right to remove items revealed in a search that are prohibited on school property or those items that may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Legal items removed will be returned to families who come to the school and request them, but will not be retained beyond the end of the school year. Illegal items, including illegal items due to student age, will not be returned and may be turned over to law enforcement.

All school-related property always remains under the control of the School and is subject to search at any time. School-related property includes but is not limited to computers, lockers, cabinets, desks, bookcases, buses and other vehicles and items controlled or directed by school officials in the support of educational-related programs or activities. The school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in backpacks or desks. Student shall not place nor keep in a locker, desk or other school-related property any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or contribute to the disruption of the mission of the school. The following

rules will apply to the search of school property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of illegal items found therein:

**a)**School authorities will make an individual search of a student's backpacks, desk, or other school-related property only when there is reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

**b)**Searches shall be conducted under the authorization of the Site Director or Director of School Culture.

**c)**Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed by school authorities.

**d)**Searches of an individual will be made upon reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. To the extent practicable, searches of an individual will be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex and with another witness present.

**e)**Searches of students and school property may be conducted on school grounds or whenever the student is involved with or attending a school sponsored or related function, whether it is on school grounds or not.

## General Policies

### Student ID Policy

Students must wear their school-issued ID on the designated, color-coded lanyard every school day. Students are required to scan their ID upon arrival so their attendance can be recorded accurately.

Lost or damaged IDs must be replaced for a $5 fee. Families may pay the fee in full or send $1 per day until the $5 replacement fee is paid.

Lanyard colors are assigned by grade for identification and security:

- Kindergarten and Grade 5: Hunter Green
- Grades 1 and 9: Royal Blue
- Grades 2, 6, and 10: Purple
- Grades 3, 7, and 11: Green
- Grades 4, 8, and 12: Navy Blue

## Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Student cell phones and other electronic devices can be disruptive in school. The school must ensure that they are not used inappropriately. Students who bring a cell phone or other electronic device (including ipad, apple watch, personal computer, or gaming devices) into the School are required to hand in their cell phones and devices upon entry to the school building, or in their homeroom, and will be distributed to students at dismissal. IAL Classes and hallways are a cell phone free zone. If a student fails to turn-in their cell phone or electronic devices upon arrival, it will be confiscated for the remainder of the day by an administrator, Dean of School Culture or a member of the student support team. Families will be called and may potentially have a meeting in order to receive the cell phone back. Students who consistently fail to adhere to this policy will require a family meeting, with the student present, to discuss next steps that will support their success.

**Please refer to (Appendix 1) for the full Inwood Academy for Leadership K-12 Distraction Free Device Policy.**

### Device Responsibility Policy

At IAL, we emphasize our core values—Responsibility, Restraint, Integrity, Caring, and Honesty—in all aspects of school life. As part of this, students and their families are expected to take responsibility for the care and maintenance of school-issued devices.

### Device Assignment and Responsibility

To ensure proper care and accountability, devices such as Chromebooks, and graphing calculators will be assigned to students by period. This assignment process helps us accurately identify which student is responsible for each device during that specific period.

### Device Damage and Repair Costs

Students must use and maintain these devices responsibly. If a device is damaged, the following repair costs will apply:

**Chromebook and graphing calculators:** $100

Failure to pay for the repair of damaged devices may result in the withholding of important documents, whichever is applicable.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining our school's resources and ensuring that every student has access to the tools they need to succeed.

## Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Statement

IAL is committed to providing an environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at a school function; nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by school employees or students on school property or at a school function.

### Evolv Technology

IAL is committed to providing a safe, orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, all staff, students, families and visitors will go through the Evolv Detectors. If any items are found not to be permissible they will be confiscated by school safety, dean or administrator. If an investigation is required students and families will be notified.

### Visitors Policy

We are committed to fostering an environment where all stakeholders belong, grow, and lead. We welcome parents, guardians, and other visitors to our school community, and we value your participation in our students' educational journey.

For the safety and security of our students and staff, we require all visitors to complete a Visitor Form prior to their visit. This ensures that we can adequately prepare for and accommodate your visit.

### Visitor Guidelines:

1. Notification: Please complete the Visitor Form to notify us of any upcoming visits. The form should be submitted at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled visit.
2. Check-In: Upon arrival, all visitors must check in at the front office. You will be required to present a valid photo ID and sign in to receive a visitor badge, which must be worn at all times while on school premises.
3. Escorted Visits: Depending on the nature of your visit, you may be escorted by a staff member to your destination within the school.
4. Respect for Learning Environment: We ask that all visitors respect the learning environment by minimizing disruptions. Please adhere to any specific guidelines provided by school staff during your visit.
5. Confidentiality: Visitors are reminded to respect the privacy and confidentiality of our students and staff. Any information overheard or observed during your visit should not be shared outside of the school setting.

By following these guidelines, we can ensure a safe, welcoming, and productive environment for our entire school community. Thank you for your cooperation and support in helping us create a space where everyone can belong, grow, and lead.

*To access the Visitor Form, visit the school website under Families and Forms. We look forward to your visit and appreciate your understanding and compliance with our safety measures.*

## Open Door Policy

The School maintains an open door policy and encourages parents to utilize it and strive to resolve concerns. The Family Room is available for parents who would like to get personalized training–particularly on our communication platforms: PowerSchool participate in reading clubs or use it as a meeting place for any of our parent leadership teams. Our Family Room is available from 9am to 4 pm - Monday through Friday. It is located in Room 101 in the Middle School at 433 West 204th Street.

### Complaint Policy

Whenever a parent or guardian has a concern or complaint, we ask that they communicate directly with their student's teacher or the Director of Family and Community Engagement to resolve concerns early and informally wherever possible. The Elementary School Director will also be available to resolve any concerns as needed. While it is our hope that you will be able to use the open door policy to resolve concerns, parents can also utilize the Formal Complaint Policy as described below.

## Formal Complaint Policy

All formal complaints from parents, family and other sources (families), should be handled in the following way.

- All formal complaints should be directed to the Site Director in writing. The Site Director will promptly address it. If families need support in supplying a written notice, our Director of Family and Community and Engagement will provide assistance.
- If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining party by the Director, the complaining party should ask in writing that the Site Director pass along the formal complaint to the Director of School Culture.
- If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining party by the Director of School Culture, the complaining party should ask in writing that the Director of School Culture send the formal complaint to the CSO and/or COO/CFO or email the CSO and/or COO/CFO directly.
- If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining party by the CSO and/or COO/CFO, the complaining party should ask in writing that the CSO and/or COO/CFO send the formal complaint to the CEO and/or Board of Trustees or email the CEO and/or Board of Trustee directly. The complaining party can reach out directly to the Board of Trustee to file a complaint if their concerns are not addressed at the school level.
- A representative of the Board of Trustees will send a written acknowledgement of receipt of complaint to the complaining party within 5 business days of receiving such complaint.
- The Board of Trustees will investigate the concern and respond to the complaining party in writing with their findings and decision within 30 business days from receipt of the formal complaint.

For matters relating to alleged violations of law or of the School's charter agreement, appeals of decisions made by the Board of Trustees may be made first to the New York City Department of Education (*CharterOversight@schools.nyc.gov*) and then to the Board of Regents through the New York State Education Department.

## Public Conduct on School Property

IAL is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school

functions. For the purposes of this policy, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function, including students, staff, parents and other visitors. All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner.

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

- Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy school property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other school employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, or obstruct the rights of others.
- Disrupt classes, school programs or other school activities.
- Intimidate or harass any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
- Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which the Code applies.
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
- Violate the prohibition on alcohol, drugs, and other illegal substances.
- Violate the prohibition on tobacco and smoking.
- Violate the prohibition on weapons, firearms and dangerous objects.
- Loiter on school property.
- Gamble on school property or at school functions.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of school officials performing their duties.
- Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by the Code.
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance, or Board policy while on school property or at a school function.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to penalties contained in the Code of Conduct. A visitor's authorization, if any, to remain on school property or at a school function will be withdrawn and they will be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they will be subject to ejection. The COO/CFO, Site Director or his/her designee is responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this section of the Code. The School reserves the right to restrict visitor access to the School building for failure to comply with this Policy or school rules. In addition, visitor conduct may be reported to law enforcement at the discretion of school administration.

## Recess Procedure

Every day, IAL students have recess whether indoors or outdoors. There will be indoor recess on days when there is inclement weather, such as rain or snow, or temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Students may stay inside during recess only if IAL's administration is provided with a Doctor's note stating that they may not go outside.

## Personal Items and Lost and Found

If any personal items have been lost, please notify our office staff and they will find someone who can assist you. All items unclaimed within a two week period will be discarded.

# II. ACADEMICS

Inwood Academy for Leadership has high standards for academic achievement and student success. IAL students prepare for college and career, develop their character, and build community-focused leadership through a rigorous academic curriculum and leadership focused social-emotional learning. IAL has high standards for academic achievement and conduct that are clearly defined, measured and monitored. Our curriculum is aligned with New York State requirements, and our instructional staff is committed to ensuring that our students have a rigorous and engaging learning experience that best prepares them for the College and Career pathway of their choosing.

## Families-Teacher Conferences

Families and teachers have the opportunity to discuss each student's progress at the Family-Teacher Conferences which will take place in November, February and April. However, if there is an immediate need, the school will be more than willing to make accommodations and meet prior to these scheduled times. Please call or email the school main office to set up a meeting with a teacher or the Middle School Director.

Students and families can independently track students' grades for various assignments throughout the school year on the Powerschools website.

## Report Cards & Progress Reports

IAL will send home progress reports at the halfway point of a quarter. Official report cards will be issued at the ends of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Quarters. Families can view student progress on the parent portal of Powerschools. To access the portal, parents should provide a valid email address to the main office.

## Homework

IAL does not believe that a large amount of homework is a key to student growth. For this reason, IAL teachers follow certain guidelines for when assigning homework.

Homework at Inwood Academy usually falls into one of the following categories:

1. Pre-learning — Students study FACTS and CONCEPTS to prepare for a task in the classroom and build fluency.
2. Checking for understanding — Students demonstrate competency in content, skills, or concepts covered during class time.
3. Practice — Students reinforce their understanding of skills, content, or concepts through practice.
4. Reflection — Students take time to connect with subject matter through analysis and reflection.
5. Study — Students solidify their understanding and retention in preparation for an assessment.

## Grading Policies / Promotion

Families will receive grade reports through our student information system, which are printed three times a year. Students who do not meet English Language Arts or Mathematics proficiency standards for their grade level may be at risk for retention. For students receiving a 1 or 2 on the NYS Math or ELA exam, the school administration

will evaluate each case individually to determine if promotion can occur. A plan will be developed for these students to help them get back on track, which may include course recovery, attending Spring Academies, and a recommendation to attend our summer program.

### IAL Student Retention Policy

In alignment with the principles of Light's Retention Scale, our district takes a thoughtful and individualized approach to student retention decisions, always prioritizing your child's long-term success and well-being. We evaluate each student holistically, taking into account academic performance, social-emotional development, physical maturity, and family support. Decisions are informed by multiple data sources, including test scores, classroom performance, and teacher input. Collaboration is essential—parents, educators, and administrators work closely throughout the process to ensure shared understanding and early identification of students at risk. When retention is under consideration, targeted interventions and regular progress monitoring are implemented. If a student is retained or promoted with conditions, a personalized support plan will be developed to address academic needs. Families who wish to appeal a retention decision may do so by contacting the school's Site Director within 10 days of notification.

### Principles of Our Retention Policy:

- **Holistic Evaluation**
  - We consider your child's academic performance, social-emotional development, physical maturity, and family support.
  - Multiple data points, including test scores, classroom performance, and teacher evaluations, help us make informed decisions.
- **Individualized Decision-Making**
  - Each child is unique; we make decisions on a case-by-case basis.
  - Personalized intervention plans are developed for students at risk of retention.
- **Collaboration**
  - Parents, educators, and administrators collaborate to make the best decisions for your child.
  - We maintain open and ongoing communication throughout the process.
- **Early Intervention**
  - We identify and support students at risk of retention as early as possible.
  - Targeted interventions are implemented, with regular progress monitoring.
- **Supportive Measures**
  - Additional resources and support are provided for retained students or those promoted with a catch-up plan.
  - A comprehensive plan outlines academic goals and support services.

### Criteria for Retention:

- **Academic Performance**
  - Consistently performing below grade-level expectations despite interventions.
  - Significant gaps in core subject areas based on test scores.
  - Unexcused absences impacting student performance.
- **Social-Emotional Development**
  - Exhibiting significant social or emotional difficulties impacting learning.

- Input from school counselors and teachers suggests benefits from retention.

- **Physical Maturity**
  - Physical development relative to peers considered.
  - Assessing if maturity affects engagement in grade-level activities.
- **Family Support and Environment**
  - Evaluating the level of family support available.
  - Considering external factors impacting the child's ability to succeed.

**Process:**

- **Identification and Intervention**
  - Early identification of at-risk students.
  - Implementation of targeted interventions and regular progress monitoring.
- **Evaluation and Decision-Making**
  - A retention review team evaluates progress and intervention effectiveness.
  - Decisions are made based on a holistic evaluation and collaboration with parents.
- **Communication and Support**
  - Decisions and rationale are communicated clearly to parents.
  - Detailed information on the support plan and next steps is provided.
- **Appeals Process:**
  - Parents who disagree with the retention decision may appeal to the school Site Director within 10 days.
  - A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the appeal and make a final determination.

We aim to ensure that retention decisions support your child's long-term success and well-being. If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**We notify families of possible retention using a variety of methods, which include but are not limited to the following:**

–Progress in doubt conference and letters in November, conference and Promotion in doubt letters in March.

–Parent Teacher Conferences

–Parent conferences scheduled at the discretion of parent, a teacher, or the Site Director

## Grading Scale

IAL uses a standards-based grading approach, where students' grades are based on their ability to master New York State content standards and IAL's Habits of Work (HOW) standards. This allows IAL to closely track student progress, ensuring that they are well-prepared for major assessments while simultaneously developing important work patterns.

### Standards and Assessments

For content standards, our learning objectives are correlated to the standards put forth by New York State. These grades will NOT be on a traditional A-F or 0-100% scale, but rather scored according to mastery level using a scale score of 1.0-4.0. For HOW standards, students are assessed on their ability to actively participate in the learning process and take responsibility for their learning. These standards are scored by rubric ratings using a scale score of 1.0-4.0.

### Standards Based Grading Rubric:

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 4 | ***Exceeds the standard:*** The student's work includes complexity, sophistication, originality, depth, synthesis and/or application that clearly exceeds what would be expected to meet the standard in this assessment. |

| Score | Description |
|---|---|
| 3.5 | ***Exceeds the standard:*** The student exceeds the standard and shows an inclination toward 4-level performance. |
| 3 | ***Meets the standard:*** The student fundamentally meets the standard and fulfills the assessment requirements. |
| 2.5 | ***Partially Meets the standard:*** Student meets the standard and shows an inclination toward 3-level performance. |
| 2 | ***Partially Meets the standard:*** The student has attempted to meet the standard but needs more time or effort to achieve proficiency. |
| 1 | ***Does not meet the standard:*** The student does not demonstrate understanding or did not attempt the assessment. |

## HOW Grading Rubrics

| Habits of Work (H.O.W.) — Grade | Expectations |
|---|---|
| Exceeds Expectations (4) | Participation: Student contributes during class (i.e. discussions, debate, Socratic seminar) and completes required assignments |
| Exceeds Expectations (3.5) | |
| Meets Expectations (3) | Responsibility: Student brought required materials to class; assignments are turned in on time; takes responsibility for their learning by putting in effort |
| Progressing Towards Expectations (2.5) | |
| Progressing Towards Expectations (2) | |
| Beginning to Meet Expectations (1.5) | |
| Does not Meet Expectations (1) | |

*Exceeds Expectations: encourages and aids others in participation; fulfills expectations of the selected responsibility(ies) with extra effort. Meets Expectations: often contributes or completes all assignments; fulfills expectations of the selected responsibility(ies). Progressing Towards Expectations: rarely contributes or sometimes completes assignments; partially fulfills expectations of the selected responsibility(ies). Does not Meet Expectations: does not contribute or does not complete assignments; does not meet the expectations of the selected responsibility(ies).*

## Academic Dishonesty

Our institution values academic integrity and strives to create an environment that fosters ethical behavior and personal responsibility. Academic dishonesty undermines the educational process and the trust that is essential in an academic community. This policy outlines the consequences and restorative measures for students found committing academic dishonesty.

### Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Fabrication
- Facilitation
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Multiple submissions
- Sabotage
- Ghostwriting
- Impersonation
- Unapproved use of resources

### Consequences and Restorative Measures

If a student is caught committing academic dishonesty, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Assignment Makeup:**
    - The student will be allowed to redo the assignment or exam in which the dishonesty occurred.
    - The makeup assignment must be completed in person under the supervision of the teacher.
    - The teacher will set a time for the makeup assignment, which must be completed within one week of the incident.
2. **Reflection and Restorative Activities:**
    - The student will complete a reflection on the consequences of academic dishonesty/misuse of intellectual property outside the high school setting.
    - The student will be required to participate in three weeks of restorative activities.
    - These activities will include either mandated tutoring or community service, depending on the student's academic needs.
    - The specific nature of the restorative activities will be determined by the teacher and/or school administration and will aim to address the underlying issues leading to academic dishonesty.

### Implementation and Monitoring

- The teacher will schedule and supervise the makeup assignment.
- The teacher and/or school administration will develop a plan for the restorative activities and monitor the student’s participation and progress.
- Failure to comply with the makeup assignment or restorative activities may result in further disciplinary action, as determined by the school administration.

## AI Use Policy

As AI technology becomes more prevalent, our middle school aims to prepare students to use these tools responsibly and effectively. The following guidelines outline the appropriate use of AI in our school environment:

### Educational Purpose:

AI tools may be used to enhance learning, such as for research, writing assistance, and problem-solving. However, AI should not replace students' independent thinking or efforts.

### Teacher Approval:

Any use of AI tools must be approved by the teacher. Students should seek guidance on when and how AI tools can be used in their assignments and projects.

### Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity. AI tools should not be used to complete assignments or exams in a way that misrepresents a student's own work. Plagiarism or over-reliance on AI tools is not permitted.

### Responsible Use:

Students will learn about the ethical implications of AI, including privacy concerns, data security, and the importance of verifying AI-generated content for accuracy.

### Family Guidance:

Families are encouraged to engage with their children about the use of AI tools at home and to monitor their use to ensure it aligns with school policies.

# III. SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

## Counseling Services and Guidance

Students have the social emotional support of their grade level Social Worker. Students with IEPs that have a counseling mandate will receive this service through the Committee on Special Education of their district of residence. The Director of Academic Intervention Services and/or IEP Coordinator will ensure that counseling services fully meet the IEP goals, and he/she will help to ensure a high standard of service.

## Intervention and Support for Students

- **Behavior.** Students will be disciplined based on our Student Code of Conduct. Students with IEPs will be disciplined in accordance with a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or CPS Assessment and Planning Tool (APT). If the BIP or CPS APT appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others, the matter will be immediately referred to the Committee on Special Education.
- **Literacy**
  - Language Comprehension: For students who do not require word recognition intervention, but may still have gaps in language comprehension. The focus of this class is vocabulary, morphology, and fluency.
  - Just Words: For students who have mild to moderate gaps in their decoding and spelling proficiency but do not require intensive intervention. The focus of this class is word study focused on phonemic awareness, decoding, spelling, high frequency words, and fluency.
  - Wilson Reading System: For students who need more intervention and multisensory language instruction. This class is a structured literacy program focused on phonemic awareness, decoding, spelling, word recognition, vocabulary.
- **ENL**
  - Entering and Emerging English Language Learners (ELLs) receive instruction on English language acquisition, reading, writing, and speaking skills through the Champion of Ideas program. In addition, they receive language acquisition support in their core content classes.
  - Transitioning, Expanding, and Commanding ELLs receive appropriate support based on their level in core content classes.

## Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and English Language Learners (ELLs)

Parents or guardians of new students should inform the school if their child is an English Language Learner (ELL) or has an Individualized Education Program (IEP). While Inwood Academy for Leadership (IAL) is committed to serving all students, we must receive the appropriate documentation in order to provide the best possible support.

If a parent or guardian wishes to request an evaluation for special education services, they may do so verbally or in writing to the IEP Coordinator. If a teacher believes a student should be evaluated, the parent or guardian will be contacted and provided with the student's academic data supporting this recommendation. With support from the IEP Coordinator, the parent or guardian will then submit a written evaluation request to the Committee on Special Education (CSE).

If the CSE determines that an evaluation is warranted, it will be conducted by a specialized external team from the New York City Department of Education. The goal of this referral process is to determine the most appropriate supports for each student in the least restrictive learning environment.

When a student enrolls at Inwood Academy for Leadership, parents or guardians are asked to complete a Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ) to determine if a language other than English is spoken at home. If the HLQ indicates that the student may speak or understand another language, the student will be administered the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL). This test helps determine whether the student qualifies for ELL services.

Once identified as an English Language Learner, the student will receive appropriate language support services. ELLs are placed in an ENL literacy track to provide targeted academic instruction that strengthens English language development. In addition, ENL specialists push into core content classes to support access to grade-level curriculum in an inclusive setting. To monitor progress, all ELLs in Grades K–12 are required to take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) each spring. The NYSESLAT assesses students' English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and helps ensure they are making progress toward English language development while meeting state and federal accountability requirements. Results from the NYSESLAT help schools and the State ensure that ELLs are making progress in their English language development and meeting federal requirements for annual assessment and monitoring.

## Support for Special Needs Students

All students with special needs will be taught in the least restrictive academic environment possible (LRE), and with age-appropriate peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's IEP. IAL will also work closely with the Department of Education to make sure that the services required by each student's IEP are provided. These are some of the services we offer:

- Integrated Co-Teaching in most core content subjects as defined as ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science
- 12:1 Self-Contained classes
- Related Services:
    - Speech and Language
    - Counseling
    - Occupational Therapy (outsourced through related agencies)

# IV. STUDENT SAFETY & HEALTH

## Confidentiality Policy

Personal information about individual students is considered confidential. We store this information in student files that are located in a locked file cabinet. These records are only available to those staff members who work with the students. Files may not be removed from the building except when they are officially requested from another school.

A student's parent or guardian has the legal right to inspect and review their child's file upon written request to the Director of Operations. Parents also have the right to representation during any review of their child's record. Conversations between teachers, administration, and parents/guardians about students, their specific educational concerns, or their past records are confidential. Information should not be shared with staff members or school community members that are not directly involved with the student. If an individual believes that this confidentiality has been violated, the individual should bring their concerns to the attention of the COO/CFO, Site Director and or designee. The COO/CFO, Site Director and or designee will review the situation and determine if the policy has been violated. If the COO/CFO, Site Director and or designee determines that an individual has violated the confidentiality policy, he or she will be subject to disciplinary action.

## Mandated Reporting

Members of the IAL staff are known as "Mandated Reporters," in compliance with state law. If a member of the staff suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they are obligated to report their suspicion to the grade level Social Worker, a Dean, or the Director of Academic Intervention Services. Signs of abuse or neglect may include but are not limited to; patterns of lateness to school and absence from school, late pick-up from school or the school bus; consistently unkempt or dirty; signs of physical abuse.

## Formal Incident Reports

Any accident involving a student will be documented. A designee from the main office will contact the parent or guardian; in the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the Parent Coordinator, Dean or the designee will send a report home with the student.

## Illness, Accidents and Emergencies

At the time you registered your child you provided us with information regarding your child's physician, and you also gave us the names of emergency contacts. In the event of illness which is not an emergency, we will attempt to contact you or one of the other people you have specified as emergency contacts. In the event of an emergency, we will apply our best judgment to protect and help your child. Please note that we have a nurse in our building during school hours.

## Suicidal or Homicidal Threat

If a student threatens their own life or the life of someone else, this will be brought immediately to the attention of the School Social Worker. If the School Social Worker determines that the child is in imminent danger, EMS and the parent will be contacted. When a student exhibits potentially suicidal behavior and the parent refuses to cooperate with the school or to take alternative preventive measures, the Deans or School Social Worker must report this to the Director of Academic Intervention Services and the information will immediately be reported to the Administration for Children's Services or local law enforcement officials.

## Medical and Immunization Information

All students must be immunized, in compliance with New York State law. Students who do not have the proper immunizations will be denied access to IAL until the immunizations are administered.

Parents and guardians are asked to alert their child's teacher with information about any allergies from which their children suffer. Parents and guardians are also asked to advise school administration if they grant permission to take their child to a hospital in the event of an emergency during school hours. Members of IAL's administration or school nurse are authorized to dispense prescribed medication only if the parent or guardian submits signed documentation from the doctor. Over-the-counter medication may be administered if accompanied by written parental consent.

## School Culture, Social Emotional Learning, and Restorative Practices

At Inwood Academy for Leadership, our community matters. As a school, we are committed to creating an effective, supportive, and safe environment for all students. This community is upheld and created by all teachers and staff at our school and intentionally fostered through things like Morning Meetings, Assemblies, Days of Service, Leadership Day, Advisories, and more.

Advisory is the primary place we develop character intentionally and explicitly with our student body. Our Advisory time is founded on the belief that our students are assets to their community and we utilize our Advisory time to focus on Community, Character, and College and Career Readiness, the 3 C's of IAL.

As we focus on developing the social and emotional needs of all students through small group discussion, we want our students to have conversations about issues that matter to them. Through thoughtful discussion, students and teachers build relationships, talk about their own social and emotional needs, as well as grapple with advocacy and leadership as it is developed for our students. These Advisory sessions focus explicitly on discussion and on students' developmental needs.

### Restorative Practices

As a school, we believe that community matters. We believe that all our students are assets to our environment, and make up our rich, diverse, and eclectic community. We value all our students and believe it is our primary responsibility to ensure that our school is inclusive, responsive, and reflective of all its members. Due to this commitment to our students, we believe that a restorative discipline approach is the most appropriate approach to discipline, as it honors our community, and allows all students to restore their relationships with the community when something goes wrong, or when the code of conduct is violated.

By adopting a restorative approach, we are asking our student body to be truly accountable for their actions in partnering with deans, counselors, teachers, and administration in order to own individual action, as well as

restore their community. When a student has violated the code of conduct, or has harmed another in the community, the questions that students will reflect on are the following:

- What happened?
- Who has been harmed or impacted by this behavior?
- What needs to be done to “make it right” or repair the harm?
- Who is responsible for this repair?
- How can we behave differently, or re-act differently in the future?

This style of questioning, and approach to discipline is seen throughout our interventions and response to disciplinary or behavioral needs. As outlined in the next section of the handbook, we have a handful of restorative approaches to supporting students in this work.

## Behavior Intervention and Restorative Approach, Progressive Ladder of Support and Disciplinary Responses

As our school is philosophically grounded in a restorative mindset for students and student behavior, we approach discipline and our approach to behavior through a laddered, supported standpoint. Student behavior should be handled on a case-by-case basis that allows for reflection, accountability, and individual ownership over what transpired. For all students and infractions, IAL will conduct full investigations and follow due process before moving forward with any behavioral consequence or decision. In all cases, many factors play a role in the final outcome of any disciplinary process, given the nature, severity, or context of misconduct. At times, the school may run concurrent support and disciplinary measures to support students, as well as appropriately address misconduct on campus.

As the Department of Education has outlined, we are sure to follow the following occurs at IAL:

**1.** Concurrent Support and Disciplinary Response to Misconduct — When a student engages in misconduct, support is provided to address the student's inappropriate behavior and/or underlying needs, in conjunction with disciplinary response, if appropriate. The goal is to foster social emotional growth and prosocial behavior and prevent future misbehavior.

**2.** Universal Prevention for All Students — The school takes a whole school approach to promoting positive student behavior. Social emotional learning is infused into the curriculum. School staff meet regularly to ensure that there is a comprehensive student support program in place that includes counseling services, guidance, opportunities for social emotional learning, student engagement opportunities, prevention and intervention. Be it behavioral support, encouraging prosocial student behavior, foster resiliency, and build students' positive connection to the school community. The school has a system in place of early identification of students in need of prevention, intervention, and/or support.

**3.** Initial Response — When a student experiences difficulty or engages in inappropriate behavior, the teacher contacts the parent, and depending on the nature and severity of the behavior and the age and maturity level of the student, takes one or more of the following steps: has a conference with the student; refers them to a dean, or social worker; develops a plan with a grade team for intervention.

In an effort to help students that are struggling behaviorally, IAL may provide some of the behavior interventions listed below. In the event that students are not meeting the behavioral expectations, parents and guardians will be notified during each step of the behavior intervention process. All behavior intervention is grounded in a restorative approach, working with students to self reflect, and support positive interactions in the school environment. At any point in time, for students struggling, some of the following interventions will be utilized:

**I.** Behavior Contract: IAL will create a behavior contract explaining what is expected from the student, consequences if a student is not abiding by the expectations set forth for them and rewards for when expectations are being met. Students, parents, and administration will sign the behavior contract so that everyone is working together to hold the student accountable to meeting the expectations set.

**II.** Dean Check In: Students may be placed on a dean check in list, where they are met daily, every other day, or weekly with the dean at the start of the day to discuss entry to school and do preventative work for students prior to entering a classroom. This will serve as an opportunity for soft skill development and social and emotional regulation setting.

**III.** Check In/Check Out: Students who have targeted behavioral goals, and struggle across multiple classroom or instructional environments may be collaborated with to develop a check in/check out (CICO). Students on CICO will develop a goal with the dean, and the dean will communicate this goal to teachers, each period student will have the teacher sign and note progress towards attaining the goal on the CICO sheet. This is a time bound goal tracking method to show targeted improvement in a specific area for students in the classroom environment.

**IV.**Peer to Peer Mediation: If two students are struggling interpersonally with one another, the dean, teacher, administrator may require, or the student may request, a dean mediation to take place. Successful mediations have three key components: preparation, the mediation, and follow up.

**V.**Student to Staff Mediation: If a student has exhibited disruptive or disrespectful behavior in a classroom, or a relationship with a teacher/staff member and student has been harmed, then a student to staff mediation will occur. This is similar to the peer to peer mediation, and has three steps: preparation, the mediation, and follow up.

**VI.**Restorative Circle: Circles are a highly effective group intervention when a behavior or incident has occurred that impacts a group. Restorative circles can be planned and supported by the culture team, but may occur in a class, club, or any group setting that would benefit from a group conversation.

**VII.**Restorative Assignments: Students may have incidents that would be best learned from and reflected upon through a restorative assignment. Restorative assignments aim to support students in targeted reflection and "repairing the harm" done in any given incident. The restorative assignment would be developed by the culture team, and would target education around the context of the incident, reflection, and some community service or community action.

**VIII.**Restoration: Restorations are assigned by deans or teachers throughout the day and serve as a space for reflection for students based on incidents that deem the need to reflect and check in with the dean. Restoration acts as a reflective space for students to reflect on behavior, and develop an action plan or next step for students.

**IX.**Plan B – Collaborative Problem Solving Conversation: IAL partners with Collaborative Problem Solving to train all staff in having supportive and collaborative conversations with students. These conversations are called "Plan B" conversations where staff and students partner to solve problems together. A Plan B conversation has three parts: Assessment Planning Tool (APT) — the planning tool teachers will use to plan and prepare for the Plan B Conversation; Plan B Conversation — a structured conversation with staff and students where student and staff identify their concerns, and develop a plan and/or strategies in order to support solving the problem collaboratively; and Follow Up — staff will check in about Plan B, and see if the proposed solution is working, if it's not working, then a new Plan B Conversation will occur.

*** Staff can follow the same process with a group or a class, steps are similar*

**X.**Community Service with Parent Consent: Students who have an incident that impacts the community in some way may be required or invited to complete community service in relation to the incident in order to best support healing and intentional learning for the student in relation to the incident that occurred.

**XI.**Guided Behavior Reflection: Students who have behavioral incidents or concerns may be guided by teachers or culture staff to do explicit behavior reflection. Reflection is a key element in a student's ability to develop self regulation and intentionally build key skills as needed.

**XII.**Behavioral Counseling: Students who struggle in the school setting may be assigned targeted counseling by a social worker, dean, or counselor for a specific period of time (ex: 4 weeks 1x a week, 6 weeks 2x a week) to support acquisition of social and emotional skills to support students in the school based setting.

# V. CODE OF CONDUCT / STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

## Overview

At IAL, we want to ensure that our school environment is safe and supportive for all students. Because of this, we have an established and upheld Code of Conduct that ensures all students and families are aware of the rules and expectations of the school, as well as ensure we have support in place for students who struggle to meet the expectations of the school.

We believe that our students are assets to a community, and thus, need to care for their community intentionally. Our approach to discipline is restorative in nature, assuming that students who struggle in the learning environment are able to be successful if we support them with intentional behavior intervention and support. This approach is coupled with high expectations for students, with high levels of support to meet those expectations. We utilize our discipline code to be explicit with our students and families about what is expected of students, and what would violate our code of conduct, and thus our school wide norms and ways of operating. An incident that would indicate a need of drastic intervention beyond that of a classroom teacher's interactions would be categorized as a "discipline offense."

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

A disciplinary offense may occur while the student is: at school and/or on school grounds; participating in a school-sponsored activity; walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event; walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity conducted off school grounds.

- School-related disciplinary offenses may also include misconduct outside the school that reasonably could affect the school or learning environment. School administration will use their professional judgment in determining which disciplinary action(s) will be most effective in dealing with the student's misconduct, taking into account the following factors:
    - The student's age and maturity level;
    - The nature and seriousness of the infraction and the circumstances which led to the infraction;
    - The student's previous disciplinary record;
    - The effectiveness of other forms of discipline;
    - The circumstances and context in which the conduct occurred, including but not limited to if the student has been experiencing bullying behaviors, if the student was reacting or responding in self defense, whether there was effort in order to address the situation prior to the incident using positive and preventative strategies;
    - Frequency and duration of behavior;
    - the number of persons involved in the behavior;
    - Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate;
    - The student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan), BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan) and/or 504 Accommodation Plan, if applicable;

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

IAL acknowledges that there may be times that these values are not reflected in the behavior of members of its student body. It is for those circumstances that IAL has adopted its Student Disciplinary Code. Our Disciplinary Code is adopted from the Department of Education's Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning, Grades 6-12.

The code is broken into five distinct sections, or levels, based on the severity of each infraction.

**Level 1:** Uncooperative / Non Compliant Behavior

**Level 2:** Disorderly Behavior

**Level 3:** Disruptive Behavior

**Level 4:** Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior

**Level 5:** Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

Each level of infractions provides a set of possible supports and interventions as well as a range of possible disciplinary responses that may be used by the school staff, deans, Director of Student Intervention Supports and Middle School Director. Our Discipline Code is modeled after the Department of Education's City-Wide Behavioral Expectations for students.

The following infractions are not all-inclusive to all types of behavior that may occur. Students who engage in misconduct are subject to appropriate disciplinary response based on the School, as determined by the deans, School Site Director, Director of School Culture, and Chief Schools Officer. If misconduct occurs that is not explicitly mentioned in the Code, the school will determine the level of infraction and related codes in order to best determine next steps. The family and student will be communicated with if this is the case.

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School is not responsible for omissions in the Code. The School reserves the right to amend the contents and reissue this Code. Final authority on all matters rests with the administration and Board when applicable. It is the responsibility of the student, parents/guardian, and staff to review this Code periodically. Should you have any questions regarding the Code, it is your responsibility to bring this to the attention of the school administration.

### Where and When the Discipline Code Applies

Inwood Academy for Leadership believes that all students who attend IAL are representatives of the Core Values, and our Code of Conduct. Our Discipline Code applies to behavior:

- in and during school hours;
- before and after school, while on school property
- while traveling on vehicles funded by the NYCDOE
- At all school-sponsored events; and
- on other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the education; process or to endanger the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the school community

This Discipline Code may refer to communication, gestures, expressive behavior, the infractions apply to communication that is oral, written, or electronic communication, including but not limited to texting, emailing, and social network usage and posting communication.

## Level 1 Infractions - Uncooperative/Noncompliant Behavior

**A01** Unexcused absence from school
**A02** Failing to wear school required uniform
**A03** Cutting Class
**A04** Being late to school or class
**A05** Bringing items to or using items in school in violation of Department of Education's Policy, and IAL's Policies and Handbook
**A06** Failing to be in one's assigned place on school premises
**A07** Behaving in a manner which disrupts the educational process (e.g., making excessive noise in a classroom, library or hallway)
**A08** Engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior
**A09** Posting or distributing material on school premises in violation of written Department of Education policy and/or school rules
**A10** Using school computers, fax machines, telephones or other electronic equipment or devices without appropriate permission

| Supports and Interventions | Range of Possible Disciplinary Actions |
|---|---|
| • Parent outreach<br>• Intervention by counseling staff, be it a 1:1 conversation, addition to a caseload with targeted goals for improved behavior<br>• Guidance conference(s)<br>• Restorative Approaches<br>• Individual/group counseling<br>• Peer mediation<br>• Mentoring program<br>• Conflict resolution<br>• Development of individual behavior contract<br>• Referral to Student Support Team<br>• Community service (with parental consent)<br>• Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO)<br>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) | **A.** Admonishment by pedagogical school staff<br>**B.** Student/teacher conference<br>**C.** Meeting with school staff (e.g. Director, Dean, Assistant Director, Social Worker, teacher) to address misbehavior and its impact.<br>**D.** Parent conference<br>**E.** In-school disciplinary action (e.g., formal restorative conference, after school detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities, or lunchtime detention) |

## Level 2 Infractions: Disorderly Behavior

**B01** Possession and/or use of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, matches, lighters, and/or vaping devices
**B02** Gambling
**B03** Using profane, obscene, vulgar, or lewd language, gestures, or behavior
**B04** Lying to, giving false information to, and/or misleading school personnel
**B05** Misusing property belonging to others
**B06** Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus/ school sponsored transportation
**B07** Inappropriate use of electronic technology (e.g., unauthorized audio/video recording)
**B08** Leaving class or school premises without permission of supervising school personnel

| Supports and Interventions | Range of Possible Disciplinary Actions |
|---|---|
| • Parent outreach | **A.** Admonishment by pedagogical school staff |

- Intervention by counseling staff, be it a 1:1 conversation, in addition to a caseload with targeted goals for improved behavior
- Guidance conference(s) by counselor, dean, social worker, or school staff
- Restorative Approaches
- Check In, Check Out
- Individual/group counseling
- Peer mediation
- Behavior Contract
- Social Skills and SEL Counseling (Individual or Group)
- Mentoring program
- Conflict resolution
- Development of individual behavior contract
- Referral to Student Support Team
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Community service (with parental consent)
- Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)

**B.** Student/teacher conference

**C.** Meeting with school staff (e.g. Director, Dean, Assistant Director, Social Worker, teacher) to address misbehavior and its impact.

**D.** Parent conference

**E.** In-school disciplinary action (e.g., formal restorative conference, detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities or communal lunchtime)

**F.** Temporary removal from the classroom, will result in student reflecting, mediating, and re-entering classroom space. (After a student is removed from any classroom by any teacher three times during a trimester, a suspension may be recommended if the student engages in subsequent behavior that would otherwise result in a removal by a staff member.)

## Level 3 Infractions: Disruptive Behavior

**C01** Defying or disobeying school personnel in a way that substantially disrupts the educational process and/or poses a danger to the school community (this behavior does not include Level 1 or 2, uncooperative/noncompliant or disorderly behavior, such as using profane language)

**C02** Bringing prohibited items to school as outlined in the school handbook

**C03** Using slurs based upon actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability

**C04** Entering or attempting to enter a school building without authorization or through an unauthorized entrance (A–G)

**C05** Shoving, pushing, or engaging in a minor altercation or similar physical confrontational behavior toward students or school personnel (e.g., pushing past another person), or throwing an object (e.g., chalk), or spitting at another person

**C06** Bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter school.

**C07** Engaging in gang-related behavior (e.g. wearing or displaying gang apparel and/or accessories, writing graffiti, making gestures or gang signs)

**C08** Tampering with, changing or altering a record or document of a school by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or other electronic means

**C09** Engaging in vandalism, graffiti, or other intentional damage to school property or property belonging to staff, students or others.

**C10** Knowingly possessing property belonging to another without authorization

**C11** Engaging in scholastic dishonesty which includes but is not limited to: (a) Cheating (e.g., copying from another's test paper; using material during a test which is not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with another student during a test without authorization; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in whole or part, the contents of an unadministered test; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for another to take a test; bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered; or securing copies of the test or answers to the test in advance of the test); (b) Plagiarizing (appropriating another's work and using it as one's own for credit without the required citation and attribution, e.g.,

copying written work from the Internet, or any other source); (c) Colluding (engaging in fraudulent collaboration with another person in preparing written work for credit); (d) Using AI to generate and submit a formal assignment.

**C12** Posting or distributing libelous material or literature, including posting such material on the internet. Smoking and/or use of electronic cigarettes and/or possession of matches or lighters

| Supports and Interventions | Range of Possible Disciplinary Actions |
|---|---|
| • Parent Outreach<br>• Intervention by counseling staff, be it a 1:1 conversation, in addition to a caseload with targeted goals for improved behavior<br>• Check In<br>• Check In, Check Out<br>• Peer mediation<br>• Restorative Assignment<br>• Social Skill and SEL Counseling (Individual or Group)<br>• Conflict resolution<br>• Development of individual behavior contract, if/then chart, or social story<br>• Referral to Student Support Team<br>• Collaborative Problem Solving<br>• Community service (with parental consent)<br>• Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO)<br>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)<br>• Referral to counseling services for youth relationship abuse or sexual violence<br>• Referral to counseling services for bias-based bullying, intimidation, or harassment | **A.** Admonishment by pedagogical school staff<br>**B.** Student/teacher conference<br>**C.** Formal meeting with school staff (e.g. Director, Dean, Assistant Director, Social Worker, teacher) to address misbehavior and its impact.<br>**D.** Parent conference<br>**E.** In-school disciplinary action (e.g., formal restorative conference, detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities or communal lunchtime)<br>**F.** Temporary removal from the classroom, will result in student reflecting, mediating, and re-entering classroom space. (After a student is removed from any classroom by any teacher three times during a trimester, a suspension may be recommended if the student engages in subsequent behavior that would otherwise result in a removal by a staff member.)<br>**G.** Suspension for 1-5 days |

## Level 4 Infractions: Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior

**D01** Engaging in sexual conduct on school premises or at school-related functions

**D02** Making sexually suggestive comments, innuendoes, propositions or similar remarks, or engaging in nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (e.g., touching, patting, pinching, lewd or indecent public behavior, or sending or posting sexually suggestive messages or images)

**D03** Posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing literature or material containing a threat of violence, injury, or harm, or depicting violent actions against or obscene, vulgar or lewd pictures of students or staff, including posting such material on the Internet

**D04** Engaging in physically aggressive behavior other than minor altercation which create a substantial risk of or results in minor injury

**D05** Engaging in an act of coercion or threatening or instigating violence, injury or harm to another or others

**D06** Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury

**D07** Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying); such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass (Bullying is more explicitly explain in IAL's Bullying policy, which is a part of this handbook)

**D08** Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying) based on an individual's actual or perceived race, weight, religion, religious

practices, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.

**D09** Possessing controlled substances or prescription medications without appropriate authorization, illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, drug paraphernalia, and/or alcohol

**D10** Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm

**D11** Making a bomb threat

**D12** Taking or attempting to take property belonging to another or belonging to the school without authorization, without using force or intimidating behavior.

**D13** Creating a substantial risk of serious injury by either recklessly engaging in behavior, and/or using an object that appears capable of causing physical injury (e.g., lighter, belt buckle, umbrella, or laser pointer)

**D14** Causing a serious injury by either recklessly engaging in behavior, and/or using an object that appears capable of causing physical injury (e.g., lighter, belt buckle, umbrella, or laser pointer)

**D15** Inciting/causing a riot

**D16** Using controlled substances or prescription medication without appropriate authorization, or using illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, and/or alcohol.

**D17** Possessing, displaying, or selling any weapon as defined in Category II.

| Supports and Interventions | Range of Possible Disciplinary Actions |
|---|---|
| • Parent outreach<br>• Intervention by counseling staff<br>• Guidance conference(s)<br>• Restorative Approaches<br>• Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)<br>• Individual/group counseling<br>• Check In<br>• Check In, Check Out<br>• Peer mediation<br>• Mentoring program<br>• Conflict resolution<br>• Development of individual behavior contract<br>• Short-term behavioral progress reports<br>• Community service (with parental consent)<br>• Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO)<br>• Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services<br>• Referral to counseling services for youth relationship abuse or sexual violence<br>• Referral to counseling services for bias-based bullying, intimidation, or harassment<br>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) Supports for Students | **A.** Parent conference<br>**B.** In-school disciplinary actions (e.g., formal restorative conference, detention, exclusion from extracurricular activities or communal lunchtime)<br>**C.** Temporary removal from the classroom, will result in student reflecting, mediating, and re-entering classroom space. (After a student is removed from any classroom by any teacher three times during a trimester, a suspension may be recommended if the student engages in subsequent behavior that would otherwise result in a removal by a staff member.)<br>**D.** Suspension for 1-5 days<br>**E.** Suspension for 6-10 days<br>**F.** Suspension that results in extended suspension for 30 to 90 school days with an automatic review for early reinstatement after 30 or 60 school days<br>**G.** Suspension that results in a one year suspension and assignment to an alternative program with an automatic review for reinstatement after 6 months<br>**H.** Suspension that results in a one year suspension and assignment to an alternative program without the opportunity for early reinstatement<br>**I.** Expulsion |

## Level 5 Infractions: Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

**E01** Starting a fire

**E02** Using force, or threatening to use force to take or attempt to take property belonging to another

**E03** Using force against, or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury against school personnel or school safety agents

**E05** Using extreme force against or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury upon students or others

**E06** Planning, instigating, or participating with another or others, in an incident of group violence

**E07** Engaging in threatening, dangerous or violent behavior that is gang-related

**E08** Engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity

**E09** Selling or distributing illegal drugs or controlled substances and/or alcohol

**E10** Possessing or selling any weapon as defined in Category I other than a firearm, bomb, or other explosive

**E11** Using any weapon as defined in Category II to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

**E12** Using any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I, to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

**E13** Using any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I or II, to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

**E14** Possessing or using a firearm, bomb, or other explosive as defined in Category I

| Supports and Interventions | Range of Possible Disciplinary Actions |
|---|---|
| • Guidance Interventions<br>• Parent outreach<br>• Intervention by counseling staff<br>• Guidance conference(s)<br>• Restorative Approaches<br>• Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)<br>• Individual/group counseling<br>• Mentoring program<br>• Conflict resolution<br>• Development of individual behavior contract<br>• Short-term behavioral progress reports<br>• Community service (with parental consent)<br>• Referral to a Community-Based Organization (CBO)<br>• Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling services<br>• Referral to counseling services for youth relationship abuse or sexual violence<br>• Referral to counseling services for bias-based bullying, intimidation, or harassment<br>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) Supports for Students | **A.** Parent Conference<br>**B.** In-school disciplinary response<br>**C.** removal from classroom by staff person<br>**D.** Suspension for 1-5 Days, results in a welcome back plan and meeting with families.<br>**E.** Suspension that results in continued suspension for a fixed period of 6-10 school days, results in a welcome back plan and meeting with families.<br>**F.** Suspension that results in continued suspension for 11-15 days, results in a welcome back plan and meeting with families.<br>**G.** Suspension that results in 16-20 School Days Suspension for more than 20 days, results in a welcome back plan and meeting with families. Expulsion |

## Prohibited Items: Weapons

### Category I

- Firearms, including pistols, starter guns, handguns, silencers, electronic darts, shotguns, rifles, machine guns, or any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile action of an explosive
- Stun guns/weapons
- Air guns, spring guns, or other instruments or weapons in which the propelling force is a spring or air, any weapon in which any loaded or blank cartridge may be used (such as a BB gun or paintball gun)
- switchblade knife, gravity knife, pilum ballistic knife, and cane sword (a cane that conceals a knife or sword)
- daggers, stilettos, dirks, razorblades, box cutters, case cutters, utility knife, and all other knives
- billy clubs, blackjack, bludgeon, chukka stick, and metal knuckles
- slingshot (small, heavy weights attached to or propelled by a thong) and slingshot
- martial arts objects including kung fu starts, nunchucks, and shurikens
- explosives, including bombs, firecrackers, and bombshells

### Category II

**Note:** Before requesting a suspension or possession of articles listed in Category II, for which a purpose other than infliction of physical harm exists e.g. a nail file, the School Director, in tandem with the discipline team, must consider whether there are mitigating factors present. In addition, the Site Director must consider whether an imitation gun is realistic looking by considering factors such as its color, size, shape, appearance, and weight.

- Acid or dangerous chemicals (such as pepper spray, mace)
- imitation gun or other imitation weapon
- Loaded or blank cartridges and other ammunition
- any deadly, dangerous, or sharp pointed instruments which can be used or is intended for use as a weapon (such as scissors, nail file that is four inches or longer and made of metal, broken glass, chains, wire)

**Note:** Any prohibited material will be confiscated by IALCS, in partnership with NYPD, when appropriate or needed. These confiscated materials will not be returned to students. Any and all prohibited materials will not be returned to students, or student families, at any point in time.

## Determining Disciplinary Response

As stated, our philosophy and approach to behavior is a restorative one, coupling high expectations for students, with high levels of accountability and support. We know that behavior is something students can learn and reflect from, while also ensuring our school is a safe location for all students.

We view behavior as a skill we can develop, but also note that our interventions and behavioral response is developed in order to prevent a recurrence of negative behavior. Due to this, when responding to behavior, all reasonable efforts must be made by the school and school personnel in order to support students, however

consistent and repeated violations of the Discipline Code may result in more serious consequences given the context and interventions tried.

Our discipline team will review the Code of Conduct when making determinations regarding disciplinary action, while simultaneously taking into account previous interventions, context, support given, and support needed.

**We consider the following when making disciplinary determinations:**

- a student's age and maturity level
- previous disciplinary record
- the context and circumstance for which the behavior occurred
- the frequency of the behavior, as well as the duration
- the number of person(s) involved
- any social emotional needs that may impact behavior (ie: substance use or addition, family or community situation)
- the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), as well as a student's 504 Accommodation Plan

The code allows for gradual accountability measures given the code violation and disciplinary response awarded. However, higher levels of accountability and disciplinary action may be taken for students who display a pattern of consistent and persistent behavior that violates the code of conduct.

*Student Disciplinary Actions*

### DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Code:

- **"Short-term suspension"** shall refer to the removal of a student from School for disciplinary reasons for a period of five or fewer days;
- **"Long-term suspension"** shall refer to the removal of a student from School for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than five days (6 and up); and
- **"Expulsion"** shall refer to the permanent removal of a student from School for disciplinary reasons.
- **"School property"** means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within and around the School; or within a school bus or other school transportation

## In-School Disciplinary Measures

In-school disciplinary actions may be imposed by the Deans of Students, or any administrative or culture staff member; provided in-school suspension and suspension of transportation may only be imposed by the Dean of Students, the School Administration or the Board. In the event of the imposition of in-school disciplinary action, the following shall apply:

- The staff member addresses the conduct (including describing the infraction(s) and hearing the student's version of events) and assigns an appropriate in-school disciplinary consequence.
- If necessary, the student is removed from class.
- Students/parents are responsible for transportation home when they are assigned to detention of in-school suspension.
- The school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian in order to discuss the infractions and may reduce the penalty based upon mutual understanding reached at the meeting.
- In-school disciplinary actions may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:
    - Restoration
    - Mandatory Reflection
    - Restorative Consequence or Project
    - Loss of School Privileges

## Restoration

Restoration is one of Inwood Academy For Leadership's methods for behavior intervention and support. Restoration is used for targeted individual or group intervention. Some of the reasons that students will be provided this form of intervention if they are struggling or having difficulty with the following:

**1)**Arriving to class on time

**2)**Wearing the school uniform

*Or other infractions for which restoration might serve as a useful form of intervention*

Restoration is different from what some may know traditionally as "detention." During restoration, students work with school deans to reflect on their actions and behaviors, the causes of said behaviors and the impact that they

are having on the school community. The students continue to work with the dean until they are able to restore the community and/or come to an understanding of how to prevent harm in the future.

## Short-Term Suspensions

Short-term suspensions may be imposed by the Dean of Students, School Administration or the Board. If a student commits an offense that calls for short-term suspension (5 days or less), s/he is subject to the following:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The student is informed of the charges against him or her.
- The student is entitled to respond to the charges against him or her.
- The parent/guardian is notified of the imposition of short-term suspension by IAL in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or communicated to families via email with a formal suspension letter attached. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents or guardian of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Dean of Students. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language of the mode of communication used by the parents or guardian if known by IAL to be other than English. Parents are required to then submit proof of receipt via form sent to families accompanying the suspension letter.
- The school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian in order to discuss the infractions and may reduce the penalty based upon mutual understanding resulting from the meeting.

*The School shall follow due process procedures consistent with Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975) relating to short term suspensions.*

All students will receive 2 hours of in-school tutoring during their suspension, timing of this tutoring is dependent on school and family need, but all students will receive 2 hours of daily in-school tutoring throughout the length of suspension.

## Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion

The Dean of Students, School Administration or the Board may impose a long-term suspension.

If a student commits an offense that calls for long-term suspension (more than 5 days) or expulsion, the following steps are taken:

- If necessary, the student is immediately removed from class and/or school.
- The student is informed of the charges against him or her.
- Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Dean of Students shall verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions.
- The parent/guardian is notified in writing by IAL. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or communicated to families via email with a formal suspension letter attached. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the School has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents which resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s) if it is known to be other than English. The notice will state that at the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, present and question witnesses, and present evidence.

- The school sets a hearing date. The student and/or his/her parent/guardian are notified in writing of the:
  - charges and a description of the circumstances that gave rise to the hearing
  - date, time and place of a hearing
  - notice of the right at the hearing to:
- be represented by legal counsel (at the student's/parent's own expense)
- present evidence and question witnesses
- The Dean of Students, or the designee of the School Administration, shall serve as Hearing Officer and preside over the hearing. The Hearing Officer shall, within twenty-four hours of the hearing, issue a written decision to the student, the parent/guardian, and the school's Board. The decision of the Hearing Officer may be appealed to the School's Board or a committee of the Board. That determination shall be final.
- Families may waive the right to a hearing given the context and information provided by the team. When a family wants to waive a hearing, this must be communicated to the school in written form stating that they do not want to hold a disciplinary hearing, and waive the right to it.

## Gun Free Schools Act

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

"Weapon," as used in this law means a "firearm," as defined by 18 USC§8921, and includes firearms and explosives. (New York Education Law §3214(3)(d) effectuates this federal law.)

The following are included within this definition:

- Any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. Knives with a blade of two and half inches or more in length fall within this definition.
- Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.
- The frame or receiver of any weapon described above.
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
- Any destructible device, which is defined as any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or other similar device.
- Any weapon which will, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and that has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
- Any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

The Dean of Students or designee of School Administration shall refer a student under the age of sixteen who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to a presentment agency for a juvenile delinquency proceeding consistent with Article 3 of the Family Court Act except a student fourteen or fifteen years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law § 1.20(42). The Dean of Students or designee of School Administration shall refer any pupil sixteen years of age or older or a student

fourteen or fifteen years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law § 1.20(42), who has been determined to have brought a weapon or firearm to school to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

## Provision of Services During Removal

The charter school will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a child who has been suspended or expelled to the extent required by law.

IAL will provide alternative instruction to students who are suspended. The School will provide alternative instruction to students as soon as practicable: in general, no later than the day after the suspension is effective. Such instruction will be at a reasonable location and time of the school's choosing.

Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. Except for the brief time it would take for a student to re-enter after public school, IAL does not have to, but may, provide alternative instruction for expelled students.

## Anti Bullying Policy

Bullying will not be tolerated in our community. When any student is bullied, it jeopardizes their ability to learn. Bullying is contrary to Inwood Academy for Leadership's mission and values and to New York State law and in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). Inwood Academy is committed to equal opportunity for all students. The purpose of this policy is to outline the stance that Inwood Academy for Leadership takes when it comes to bullying in all its forms.

Regarding hate speech, IAL denounces the use of words, gestures, or images to harass individuals or groups based on gender, gender expression, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of identity. "Hate speech" is contrary to the character traits of the school. Individuals determined to have participated in such harassment, as outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy, may be subject to consequences including suspension and expulsion.

All forms, types, and levels of bullying are unacceptable. Our character traits outline our obligations as a community:

- **Responsibility:** All members of the IAL community including staff, students and families have the responsibility to report every incident of bullying as outlined in this policy to Point Persons as described below. Also, we must take responsibility for our actions when we use our words or actions to bully others. Owning our mistakes, apologizing, and making amends help us to become better people.
- **Caring:** All members of the IAL community must care for all members of the community. No one should be singled out and bullied for any reason.
- **Restraint:** All members of the IAL community must practice restraint and ensure that choices related to words, imagery, or gestures do not include derogatory references that are considered offensive or defined as hate speech. In addition to avoiding derogatory language, students must not engage in any violent or bullying actions.
- **Honesty:** All members of the IAL community must be honest in reporting all bullying behavior. Honesty means that we will not make false accusations or use the word bullying in a thoughtless way. We will also not protect bullying and allow bullies to get away with their behavior by not being honest about things we have seen or heard. Bullying can continue unchecked when people are silent or passive in the face of it.
- **Integrity:** Demonstrating integrity means not living two different lives - being honest with who you are and what you stand for. As people with integrity, we must demonstrate a commitment to stand up against bullying in all its forms and to not be a silent bystander while bullying is taking place. We aim to prevent bullying as well as to intervene when it happens. Bullying is often an escalation of dynamics that have gone unchecked. We have a responsibility to work to de-escalate situations that could involve or lead into bullying, conflict, and harm.

Bullying is prohibited:

1. During any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned program or activity;
2. In school, on school property, on school buses, Inwood Academy-provided transportation, and at designated locations for students to wait for buses;
3. Through the transmission of information via electronic communication from a Inwood Academy computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment;
4. When the behavior or communication occurs off campus or through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school if the bullying causes a

substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school and has one of the effects enumerated in the bullying definition. This paragraph applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require Inwood Academy to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

### Definitions:

**"Bullying,"** including "cyberbullying," means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically (i.e., cyberbullying), directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

1. placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
4. substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, ostracism, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting, opposing or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

### Bullying is NOT Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between two or more people who perceive they have incompatible goals or desires. Conflict occurs naturally as we interact with one another. It is a normal part of life that we will not always agree with other people about the things we want, what we think, or what we want to do. Most conflicts between students arise when students see the same situation from two different points of view. Think of some of the ways we describe people in conflict: "They were butting heads"; "They were going back and forth at each other"; "It was 'he said/she said/they said.'" In these cases, both people are equally "telling their side of the story." In a conflict, people may get frustrated and angry. Chances are the amount of emotion each person feels will be relatively equal because both are vying for what they want. In the heat of the moment, one or both people's emotions can escalate a conflict. All of us have known conflicts in which people have said things to hurt one another which they later regret.

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

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or social media account in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more

persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

### Reporting:

If a student believes they or a peer has been the victim of bullying, they should report the situation to an advisor, teacher, or school administrator. Parents should report the situation directly to the Middle School Director, the COO/CFO or CSO. Anonymous reports are also accepted. A QR Code in a central area of the school (Main Office) is provided for all anonymous reporting and is easily identifiable. Anonymous reports are also accepted. All school staff are required to make a report within two business days of receiving the information.

No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report that has not been substantiated in the course of an investigation. Students and parents/guardians should also report violations of the bullying policy to school personnel.

| Contact | Email |
|---|---|
| Jenny Pichardo, COO/CFO | jenny.pichardo@ialcs.org |
| Bianca Mercedes, CSO | bianca.mercedes@ialcs.org |
| Christina Reyes, CEO | christina.reyes@ialcs.org |

### Investigation:

When a report is received, school personnel will collaborate with parents and students to agree upon a course of action and will work as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of students, gather information, and clarify facts. School personnel will make all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date of the report and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. Appropriate school personnel will be involved, as needed. Consistent with Inwood Academy's policy on student privacy, school personnel will provide parents and students involved in the bullying incident with information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with either the MS or the HS or other administrator to discuss the investigation, the findings, and the actions taken to address any bullying that is found to have occurred. Interventions may be provided, as needed, to the parties involved in the bullying, including but not limited to school Social Worker services, restorative measures, counseling, and others.

### No Retaliation:

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is a violation of Inwood Academy's policy and will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining interventions and consequences according to this Policy. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if Inwood Academy's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining and consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

### Consequences:

If a student is determined to have engaged in bullying behavior, they will be subject to disciplinary actions appropriate to the offense, the student's age and past behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the events. Disciplinary actions may include a series of graduated consequences and, in severe cases, suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be thoughtfully taken in an attempt to promote student safety and well-being, change and improve behavior, and uphold the school's Mission, Philosophy, and Core Values.

Consequences are necessary as a part of the process of holding students accountable for their actions, but must come in tandem with support through our Collaborative Problem Solving model. Through CPS students are supported to develop the lagging skills they may have that contributed to the act of bullying.

Regarding rude, mean, or bullying behaviors exhibited outside of school and among Inwood Academy students, teachers and administrators may get involved if students' actions impact the school experience, be it academic or social, for individuals or the community. In such instances, school personnel will work thoughtfully with students and parents to determine the best course of action.

### Policy Evaluation:

The Executive Leadership Team will work in partnership with the Board of Trustees to evaluate and assess the policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to, factors such as:

1. The frequency of victimization.
2. Student, staff, and family surveys of safety at a school.
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
4. The types of bullying being utilized.
5. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that Inwood Academy already collects for other purposes. The information developed as part of the evaluation process will be posted on Inwood Academy's website.

This policy is consistent with Inwood Academy's other policies, and can be found on the school's website, student handbook, and faculty/staff handbook.

### Roles and Responsibilities of Staff Members:

- **The Executive Leadership Team and the Leadership Team** - all members of administration will have access to the tracking system for all reported incidents of hate speech and bullying. Various members of administration will be involved in the investigation of specific incidents depending on the grade level of the students involved. Administration is responsible for tracking data and for assessing practices within the school to reduce the incidents of bullying and hate speech.
- **DoC** - the Dean of Culture is responsible for monitoring the tracking systems and providing weekly and monthly reports to the ELT and the Board. Collaborate with the ELT to create four lessons that will be used yearly in advisories to ensure all students understand the policy and have access to important information about their role during an act of bullying or hate speech. Each year, the DoC will revise and update the lesson plans as needed.
- **Deans** - the deans are responsible to address issues as they occur within the school and to report all incidents through the tracking systems listed above.
- **Advisors** - teach four lessons in advisory about bullying and hate speech.

- **All Staff** - all staff regardless of position must report all incidents of bullying through the tracking system as noted in the policy. All staff are responsible to take immediate action to report and take action whenever bullying occurs to stop the action.
- **All Members of the IAL Community** - staff, students, and family members must report any bullying that occurs within the school community.

## Student with Disabilities

### General

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior which is the subject of disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 CFR 300.534—that a disability exists may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. The School shall comply with sections 300.530-300.536 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

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

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

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

### Provision of Services During Removal

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

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

During any removal for drug or weapon offenses pursuant to 34 CFR §300.530(g) services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The School will, in consultation with the CSE, place students in interim alternative educational settings as appropriate per 34 CFR §300.520(g).

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

### Due Process

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with an IEP, the following steps shall be taken: (1) not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents of the student with a disability shall be notified by the School of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and (2) the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to disciplinary action (subject to CSE's availability).

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

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and School agree otherwise.

### Compliance with the Child Find Requirements of IDEA

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

### Compliance with Data Reporting Requirements of the IDEA

In compliance with 34 CFR §300.645, the School will submit an annual report to NYSED detailing the number of students with disabilities it serves, the nature of each student's disability, and each student's educational placement and setting. For reports that are the responsibility of the district of residence, the School will make any necessary data available to the district in a timely fashion and will comply with 8 NYCRR §119.3, which details the requirements for the "Charter School Report Card" and includes information relating to students with disabilities.

In compliance with 34 CFR §300.645, the School will submit annually the following reports by the dates noted: (1) PD-1C/4C: Dec. 13 - Count of Students with Disabilities Provided Special Education on December 2 and the

Settings in which Students with Disabilities are provided services; (2) PD-5C: mid-July - Students Exiting Special Education ; (3) PD-6: Feb. 1 - Special Education Personnel; (4) PD-8: mid-July - Students with Disabilities Suspended for Disciplinary Reasons; and (5) SEDCAR-1: Mar. 1 - ASEP Request for IDEA suballocation.

The special education staff in conjunction with the Director of Academic Interventions will be responsible for ensuring the collection, maintenance, and reporting of all data regarding students with disabilities. The reports listed shall be provided to the school district of residence and NYSED, as required.

## VI. ANNUAL NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 and implementing regulations ("FERPA") is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records.

The School recognizes the need to safeguard the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its eligible, thought to be eligible, and protected handicapped students (if not protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") in accordance with FERPA as well as the IDEA and its implementing regulations.

Education records are records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or by a party acting for the agency. "Educational agency" for purposes of this notice, means IAL. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records that include but are not limited to:

**a)** Personally identifiable information ("PII") is confidential information that includes, but is not limited to, the students' name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student's family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student's identity easily traceable.

**b)** Directory information is information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, sports activity sheets showing weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honor roll, recognition lists, awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. "Parent(s)" for purposes of this notice means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. They are: Parents have the right to inspect and review a child's education record. IAL will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an Individualized Education Plan "IEP" or any due process hearing, but in no case more than forty five (45) days after the request has been made.

Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the COO/CFO. Parents have the right to a response from IAL to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While IAL cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. IAL must receive a signed, dated and written consent from a parent that specifically states a representative may inspect and review their child's records. Such release must be sent to the COO/CFO or designee and must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made and the time period that the release is in effect. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.

If parents think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request an amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. IAL will decide whether to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing of its decision.

If IAL refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The school will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

Parents have the right to consent or refuse to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from the student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations.

"Consent" means: the parent (s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and maybe revoked at any time, information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); state agency representative, person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Directory information may be released without parental consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information.

> **Note:** Parents are required to submit written notification to the COO/CFO or designee, by September 30th, or within two weeks after enrolling at IAL if later than September 30th, if they do not want the school to release Directory information.

Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by IAL to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Parents are also encouraged to contact the Middle School Site Director to discuss any concerns regarding FERPA.

# VII. DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School ("IAL") and the Board of Trustees ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment within the charter school. In accordance with New York State's "Dignity for All Students Act" ("DASA") the School is committed to promptly addressing incidents of harassment and/or discrimination of students that impede students' ability to learn. This includes bullying, taunting or intimidation in all their myriad forms.

## Students' Right

No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at a school function. Nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, by school employees or students on school property or at a school function.

In addition, the Charter School reserves the right to discipline students, consistent with our Code of Conduct, who engage in harassment of students off school property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct 1) affects the educative process; 2) actually endangers the health and safety of Charter School students within the educational system; or 3) is reasonably believed to pose a danger to the health and safety of Charter School students within the educational system. This includes written and/or verbal harassment which materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the school and/or which school officials reasonably forecast as being likely to materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school.

### Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC)

The CEO or designee designates a staff member each school year the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC). The DAC is trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The DAC will be accessible to students and other employees for consultation and advice.

### Reporting and Investigating

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

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

## No Retaliation

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

# Appendix 1 | Distraction-Free Device Policy

### Inwood Academy for Leadership K–12 Distraction-Free Device Policy

*Aligned with the New York State Distraction-Free Schools Law*

Inwood Academy for Leadership (IAL) is committed to creating a safe, focused, and distraction-free learning environment for all students. In alignment with the new New York State Distraction-Free Schools Law, the use of personal electronic devices—including cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, and personal laptops—is prohibited during the school day.

These devices interfere with academic focus, social development, and emotional well-being, and can contribute to unsafe or inappropriate behavior. Therefore, IAL is implementing the following K–12 Distraction-Free Policy:

## Policy Overview for All Students (K–12)

**From the moment students arrive on school grounds until they leave for the day, personal digital devices may not be used or visible.** This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, iPads, tablets, and laptops. This rule applies during:

- Class time
- Lunch and recess
- Free periods and study halls
- Transitions between classes
- All school-related activities (e.g., field trips, assemblies)

Only **district-issued devices** may be used during the school day for instructional purposes. All personal devices must be powered off and stored in a **school-designated secure location**.

### Grades K–8 (Elementary & Middle School)

- All students must power off and store their cell phones in the cell phone lockers immediately upon arrival.
- Personal devices (including iPads, tablets, and laptops) are not permitted.
- Students will have access to school-issued Chromebooks for learning.
- Devices that are not properly stored are the student's responsibility.

## Early Dismissal & Non-Phone Users

- Students dismissed early will retrieve their phone from the main office before exiting.
- Families of students who do not carry phones must inform school leadership at the beginning of the year so that alternate entry protocols can be arranged. Notify the School Director or Dean of Culture of any changes during the school year.

## Prohibited Zones

All IAL instructional spaces, including hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, and the cafeteria, are designated distraction-free zones. If a student is found with a device that was not turned in or stored:

- It will be confiscated for the day by a dean or administrator.
- Parents/guardians will be notified, and a family meeting may be scheduled to determine next steps.

## Communication with Families

We understand that communication between students and families is important. Please be assured:

- Students will always have access to school phones in case of emergencies.
- Parents/guardians can contact the main office during the day if they need to reach their child.

## Liability Statement

- IAL is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged phones or personal electronic devices.
- For ongoing updates and more information, visit our website or follow our official school social media channels.

# Appendix 2 | Data Security and Cybersecurity Policy Updates

### Purpose of This Addendum

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) Information Security Office conducted a Data Security Review of Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School (IAL) on May 12, 2025. This addendum to the Student and Family Handbook formally incorporates the recommendations from that review into school policy. It supplements and should be read together with the existing handbook. Where any conflict exists, this addendum controls.

This addendum addresses three areas identified in the NYSED review: (1) data security and privacy policies, (2) access controls and device security, and (3) third-party data sharing and password standards.

## Section 1. DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY POLICY

### 1.1 Overview

IAL collects, stores, and shares certain student and staff information as required by law and necessary for school operations. Under New York Education Law Section 2-d and Part 121 of the Commissioner's Regulations, IAL is required to protect student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and educator Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) data. IAL implements the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) as the foundation of its data security program.

Student PII includes, but is not limited to: student name, date of birth, address, student identification numbers, academic records, attendance records, behavioral records, disability status, and any other information that could identify a student.

### 1.2 Data Security Policy (Addendum to Confidentiality Policy, Section II)

This section supplements the Confidentiality Policy in Section II of the handbook. IAL maintains a formal Data Security Policy governing the collection, use, storage, sharing, and disposal of student and staff data. The policy is maintained by the COO/CFO and CSO and reviewed at least annually.

**Key Protections for Student Data:**

- Student PII is stored in IAL's secure Student Information System (PowerSchool/SIS) with role-based access controls.
- Access to student records is limited to staff members with a legitimate educational interest, consistent with FERPA and Education Law Section 2-d.
- Student data is not sold, traded, or shared with third parties for commercial purposes.
- All staff receive annual training on data privacy, cybersecurity, and their obligations under Education Law Section 2-d.
- IAL maintains documented procedures for responding to data breaches, including notifying families as required by law.

**NOTE:** Families have the right to request information about what student data IAL collects and how it is used. Submit written requests to the COO/CFO at jenny.pichardo@ialcs.org.

### 1.3 New and Updated Policies

Consistent with NYSED recommendations, IAL has adopted or updated the following formal policies. Copies are available upon request from the main office:

| Policy | Description |
|---|---|
| Data Security Policy | Governs collection, storage, use, and sharing of all student and staff data in compliance with NYSED Part 121. |
| Acceptable Use Policy | Defines appropriate use of school-issued devices, networks, and digital tools by students and staff. |
| Incident Response Policy | Establishes procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to data security incidents and breaches. |
| Password and Access Standards | Requires strong passwords, multi-factor authentication where available, and regular credential reviews. |
| Third-Party Data Sharing Policy | Governs contracts and agreements with all vendors and service providers who access student PII. |
| Data Retention and Disposal Policy | Defines how long IAL retains student records and how data is securely destroyed when no longer needed. |

## Section 2. ACCESS CONTROLS AND DEVICE SECURITY

### 2.1 Staff and Administrator Access Controls

IAL uses a layered access control approach to protect student and staff data. The following standards apply to all staff, administrators, and authorized users of IAL systems:

- Access to student data systems (PowerSchool, Google Workspace for Education, and other platforms) is granted based on staff role and reviewed at the start of each school year.
- Staff who change roles or leave IAL will have access revoked promptly, no later than the last day of employment.
- All IAL accounts use multi-factor authentication (MFA) where available.
- Staff are required to complete annual cybersecurity awareness training, with completion tracked by the Director of School Operations.
- Shared or generic login credentials are prohibited. Each staff member must use a unique, individual account.

### 2.2 Student Device Use (Supplement to Electronic and Device Responsibility Policies)

This section supplements the Electronic Policy and Device Responsibility Policy in Section I and Appendix 1 of the handbook. IAL school-issued Chromebooks are managed devices configured, monitored, and secured by school administration.

### Student Responsibilities Regarding School Data:

- Students may only use their assigned school Chromebook for educational purposes as directed by staff.
- Students must not attempt to access, alter, or delete data or files belonging to other students or staff.
- Students must not share their school Google account credentials with anyone, including friends or family members.
- Unauthorized access to school systems or another person's account is a violation of this policy and may be reported to law enforcement.

### Monitoring Notice:

IAL-issued devices and school network activity may be monitored for safety and security purposes. This monitoring is conducted consistent with applicable law and IAL's Acceptable Use Policy.

### 2.3 Updated Password Standards

Pursuant to NYSED recommendations, IAL has adopted the following updated password standards for all school-managed accounts, effective immediately for all staff:

| Requirement | Standard |
|---|---|
| Minimum Length | At least 12 characters for all staff accounts. |
| Complexity | Must include uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and at least one special character. |
| Password Reuse | Staff may not reuse the last 5 passwords. |
| Change Frequency | Staff passwords must be changed at least once per school year. Immediate change required if a compromise is suspected. |
| Prohibited Passwords | Passwords may not include the user's name, the word 'password,' the school name, or easily guessable sequences. |
| Password Sharing | Sharing passwords is strictly prohibited. Contact the Director of Operations if you need access assistance. |

## Section 3. THIRD-PARTY DATA SHARING

### 3.1 Vendors and Service Providers

IAL uses a variety of third-party educational technology platforms. Any vendor or partner that receives, accesses, or stores student PII on behalf of IAL must enter into a Data Privacy Agreement (DPA) prior to receiving any student data, as required by Education Law Section 2-d.

**What Families Should Know:**

- IAL maintains a public list of all third-party vendors with access to student data, available on the IAL website and upon request from the main office.
- Each vendor agreement limits the use of student data to the specific educational purpose for which it was shared.
- Vendors are prohibited from selling, disclosing, or using student PII for commercial purposes, including targeted advertising.
- IAL reviews all vendor agreements annually.

**Current Key Platforms (with Data Privacy Agreements on file):**

- PowerSchool - Student Information System (SIS)
- Google Workspace for Education - Email, Docs, Classroom
- i-Ready - Reading and Math diagnostic assessments
- Curriculum-based platforms as adopted by grade-level teams

**NOTE:** Parents may request information about any specific vendor accessing their child's data. Contact the COO/CFO at jenny.pichardo@ialcs.org or the Director of School Operations at kevin.garcia@ialcs.org.

## Section 4. REPORTING A DATA SECURITY CONCERN

### 4.1 Internal Reporting

If a student, family member, or staff member believes that student or staff data has been improperly accessed, shared, or misused, they should report the concern immediately. IAL will investigate all reports promptly and take appropriate corrective action.

| Contact | Role | Email |
|---|---|---|
| Jenny Pichardo | COO/CFO - Primary Data Privacy Contact | jenny.pichardo@ialcs.org |
| Bianca Mercedes | CSO - School Safety and Operations Oversight | bianca.mercedes@ialcs.org |
| Kevin Garcia | Director of School Operations | kevin.garcia@ialcs.org |

### 4.2 External Reporting

Families may also file complaints directly with:

- NYSED Information Security Office: infosec@nysed.gov | (518) 486-4940
- U.S. Department of Education - FERPA: Family Policy Compliance Office, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

## Section 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This addendum is incorporated by reference into the Inwood Academy for Leadership Student and Family Handbook. All families are required to acknowledge receipt of this addendum as part of the annual back-to-school enrollment process.

**Questions?** Contact the FACE Department or the COO/CFO office. The complete NYSED Data Security Review Summary is available upon written request. Full policy documents referenced in this addendum are available at www.inwoodacademy.org.