



**PAULO FREIRE SOCIAL JUSTICE CHARTER SCHOOL  
STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

The Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School (PFSJCS) is a public high school preparing students for college success while inspiring them to be active and effective citizens. We achieve educational excellence and social responsibility for all our students through high expectations and a rigorous academic and social justice curriculum. Our students graduate with strong intellectual and ethical foundations necessary for future leaders of a global society.

**134 Springfield St, Chicopee, MA 01020 Telephone:**

**(413) 536-3201**

**Fax: (413) 536-3206**

**[www.paulofreirecharterschool.org](http://www.paulofreirecharterschool.org)**

Main Office Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday

8:00am – 4:15pm

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## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students, along with parents/guardians and staff will be active members in formulating, adopting, and monitoring a code of conduct for the school. The code will be reexamined and ratified every year to include new perspectives, and to affirm what is important to our school community. All students, teachers, staff, and parents will receive a copy of the current code of conduct. All students are required to review and sign the Code of Conduct.

In order to ensure that all students at Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School receive the quality education that they deserve, it is vital that all students understand the expectations the community has regarding individual behavior and personal responsibility. The policies outlined in this manual are for the good of the community and must be adhered to by all community members.

## BEHAVIORAL AND ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

### PFSJ BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

At PFSJ, we have four main expectations in each classroom to enable us to provide a safe and productive learning environment for all students and staff.

#### 1. Participate actively in classroom activities

- o Keep your head up; follow the speaker; engage with lesson

#### 2. Be ready to learn from bell to bell

- o Arrive to class on time, be in your seat and ready to begin when the late bell rings, participate in class activities until the bell rings to end class

#### 3. Arrive to class prepared

- o YOU **MUST** HAVE: Class materials (including a pen or pencil), planner, and a willingness to: challenge yourself, take risks in learning, work hard, and communicate your needs.
- o YOU **CAN** HAVE: Water bottle, small snacks that are ready to eat (e.g., granola bars, fruit, trail mix, chips, crackers-- no hot food)

#### 4. "Off And Away During The School Day" (except at lunch)

- o This includes phones, iPods, tablets, video games, earbuds and headphones.
- o Phones are only allowed if a teacher approves them **for academic purposes**.

In addition, you will see reminders of what being *respectful, responsible and safe* looks like in the different spaces of our school.

### ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

- o At the start of each semester, all teachers will distribute course descriptions, materials, reading lists, timelines, as well as standards and benchmarks for each class.
- o Each day in class, teachers will post and verbally review the standards and benchmarks that the class is currently working on, the class agendas, and assignments.
- o Teachers will also distribute in advance well-defined rubrics and study guides for all graded assignments to assure that all students know what specifically is expected for minimum completion and higher levels of work.
- o Students and parents have access to PlusPortals and can review completed work and work in progress.

Teachers will update assignment grades in PlusPortals no later than 2 weeks after the assignment due date, and whenever possible within one week.

### **CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE POLICY**

PFSJCS is a college preparatory high school where the majority of our students during their senior year attend Holyoke Community College (HCC). Class attendance is mandatory, and students can only miss three (3) classes before they lose credit for the class. In addition, if they are late to class three (3) times, it equals an absence. It is a very tightly structured system.

To ensure our students are getting the best daily education, and to prepare them for college, our school attendance policy is:

- Students must be in class by the bell. If they are not in attendance by that time, it will count as lateness.
- If a student is in school and does not come to class, it will count as an unexcused absence.
- If a student comes to class, gets a pass and stays out of the classroom longer than 5 minutes (unless approved by the Nurse or a Counselor), it will count as an unexcused absence.
- If a student is late to class three times it will count as an unexcused absence.

We will implement the following **consequences** in accordance with our Attendance Policy:

- After the 1<sup>st</sup> unexcused absence, the student will receive a verbal warning from the teacher.
- After the 2<sup>nd</sup> unexcused absence, the student's parent or guardian will be called and notified.
- After the 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused absence, the parent and student will need to meet with an administrator, who will issue a written warning.
- If a student has 5 unexcused absences from a class, the maximum grade he or she can receive for that course is a 70%.
- If a student has 10 unexcused absences from a class, the student will not receive credit for the class. Students will not be eligible to attend summer school for the class.

### **RESTORATIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE DISCIPLINE**

PFSJ defines five (5) levels of interventions and disciplinary responses. The following is a disciplinary interventions and consequences matrix and table, which contain a list of inappropriate or disruptive behaviors and potential appropriate interventions or consequences. This matrix and table is a general guideline only. The list of behaviors is not exhaustive or exclusive. We believe that student disciplinary practices work best when they are instructive, not punitive, and that the purpose of discipline must be to understand and address the causes of behavior to resolve conflicts, while teaching new skills and repairing the harm done in order to restore relationships. As such, there should be a gradient of interventions and consequences

that range in severity proportional to the behavior. Our approach is based upon a framework of progressive discipline and restorative practices. Specifically, minor behaviors result in smaller consequences while larger behaviors result in more serious consequences. While some behaviors may warrant exclusionary disciplinary, the aim should always be to prioritize minimizing the length of time a student is out of the learning environment.

### **Restorative Practices and Interventions**

We believe that intervention is most effective when the educator or staff working most directly with students intervenes in the way they believe will most effectively support the student.

Interventions are most effective when dealt with directly at the time and place the incident occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. We will always place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-awareness and self-discipline. Restorative Justice strategies may be used at the discretion of the Vice Principal in lieu of, or in addition to, certain other interventions and responses. In determining the appropriate responses to infractions, the Vice Principal will consider the following:

1. Student's age
2. Nature of the offense and the circumstances that led to the offense
3. Student's prior disciplinary record, if any
4. Effectiveness of other forms of intervention
5. Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate
6. Extenuating circumstances.

### **Tiered Interventions, Consequences, and Supports**

All Level 1 and Level 2 interventions should be implemented by the staff working most closely with the students. Administration will support the staff in these interventions and follow up as needed. While certain Level 3 interventions will require the intervention of the school Principal, Vice Principal, Dean of Climate and Culture, or Director of Student Services, many Level 3 interventions can and should be implemented at the discretion of the educator or staff working most closely with the student. All Level 4 and Level 5 interventions require the involvement of the school Principal and/or Vice Principal. In every case the Principal or Vice Principal shall determine the appropriate intervention or consequence based on the specific facts and circumstances. In no case shall this matrix and table be grounds for challenging or nullifying the Principal's and/or Vice Principals determination of the appropriate intervention and consequences which shall instead be measured by the applicable legal standard.

Infractions will always have a Restorative Justice Practice component but, are also subject to the use of other methods and practices due to severity, including but not limited to:

1. Parent/Guardian notifications and conferencing;
2. After school, Restorative Reflection programming;
3. Create a poster/flyer about the subject of the offense;
4. Prepare a public speech or performance relating to the subject to public apologies;
5. Presentations and research papers reflective of violations;
6. Referrals to counseling and other student services;

7. Compile and publish a list of resources available for people impacted by student;
8. Back- pack, locker, car and personal searches;
9. Behavior Intervention Plans;
10. Probationary agreements;
11. Suspension and/or Expulsion.

| Levels of I | Disciplinary Intervention   |
|-------------|---|
| Level 1     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher/Student Conference</li> <li>• Reminders and Redirection</li> <li>• Teaching of Expectations and Skills</li> <li>• Written Apology</li> <li>• Reflective Essay or Other Reflective Activity</li> <li>• Independent Study</li> <li>• Role-Play</li> <li>• Restorative Justice/ Project</li> </ul>  |
| Level 2     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Lower-Level Intervention</li> <li>• Parent/Guardian Outreach</li> <li>• In-Class Time-Out</li> <li>• Seat Change</li> <li>• Self-Charting of Behaviors -</li> <li>• Daily Check in sheet/ daily review</li> <li>• Reprimand by Administrator</li> <li>• Removal from Class to Supervised Intervention in Another Classroom</li> <li>• Loss Of Privileges (e.g., exclusion from group lunch or extra activities)</li> <li>• Mini-Course/Training (e.g., conflict resolution, anger management, social skills, or</li> </ul> |
| Level 3     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any lower-level Interventions</li> <li>• Student/teacher/Parent Conference</li> <li>• Referral to Support Staff (e.g. guidance counselor, social worker, psychologist, or nurse)</li> <li>• Short-term Behavioral Progress Reports</li> <li>• Behavioral Intervention Plan</li> <li>• Change in Schedule/Class</li> <li>• Referral to After-School Program</li> </ul>  |



|         |  |
|---------|--|
|         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restorative Justice</li> <li>• Community Service</li> <li>• Mentoring Program</li> <li>• Peer Mediation</li> <li>• Functional Behavioral Assessment</li> <li>• Referral to School-based Health/ Mental Health Clinics</li> <li>• Referral to Community-Based Services</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Treatment Services</li> <li>• Modification of IEP (if applicable)</li> </ul> |
| Level 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Lower-Level Interventions</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Restorative Justice</li> <li>• In-School Suspension - 1 to 3 days</li> <li>• Restitution</li> <li>• Out-of-School Suspension - 1 to 5 days</li> </ul>   |
| Level 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Lower-Level Interventions</li> <li>• Out-of-School Suspension - 1 to 10 days (may be extended as necessary)</li> <li>• Alternative Education Placement</li> <li>• Recommendation for Expulsion</li> <li>• Arrest or Referral to Law Enforcement</li> </ul>  |

**Inappropriate/Disruptive Behaviors and Levels of Intervention**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
|  | Intervention |
| <b>Inappropriate/Disruptive Behavior</b> | Intervention |

|   | I | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic Dishonesty (e.g. cheating or plagiarizing)   | • | • | • |   |   |
| Alcohol   |   |   |   |   |   |
| - Under the influence, Using, or Possession, distribution   |   |   |   | • | • |
| Assault or Battery  |   |   |   | • | • |
| - Simple Assault or Simple Battery  |   |   |   |   |   |
| - Assault with a Weapon or Battery Causing Serious Injury   |   |   |   |   | • |
| Bullying  |   | • | • | • |   |
| Bus Disruptions   | • | • | • |   |   |
| - Minor Disruption on the Bus (e.g. eating, drinking; being too loud, standing, throwing objects from the bus)  |   |   |   | • |   |
| - Serious Disruption on the Bus   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Classroom Disruption<br>(e.g. talking out in class or talking out of turn, throwing objects, and other behavior that distracts from student learning)   | • | • | • |   |   |
| Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination<br>(e.g. non-violent/non-physical, talking back to school staff, failure to follow directions, failure to respond to school staff questions or requests, refusal to participate in classroom activities, etc.) | • | • | • | • |   |
| Fighting  |   | • | • | • |   |
| - Physical Aggression (e.g., pushing and shoving)   |   |   |   | • | • |
| - More Serious Fighting (may include incidents involving minor injuries)  |   |   |   |   |   |

|  |        |        |        |   |   |
|--|--------|--------|--------|---|---|
| Gambling   |        | •      | •      | • |   |
| Hallway Misbehavior. Running, Making Excessive Noise or Loitering  | •      | •      | •      |   |   |
| Harassment based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, or Religion Against Members of the School Community   |        | •      | •      | • | • |
| Illegal Drugs or Controlled Substances   |        |        | •      | • |   |
| - Under the Influence, Using, or Possessing  |        |        |        |   |   |
| - Selling  |        |        |        |   |   |
| Lying to, Giving False Information to, or Misleading School Personnel  | •<br>• | •<br>• | •<br>• |   |   |
| Portable Electronic Devices Use at Unauthorized Times  | •      | •      | •      |   |   |
| Property Damage  |        | •      | •      | • |   |
| - Intentional Damage or Defacement of Another Person's or School Property (less than \$50)   |        |        |        | • |   |
| - Intentional Damage or Defacement of Another Person's or School Property (more than \$50)   |        |        |        |   |   |
| Sexually-Based Behaviors   | •      | •      | •      | • |   |
| - Consensual Sexual Activity   |        |        |        |   |   |
| - -Sexual Harassment (e.g. unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature)   |        | •      | •      | • | • |
| -  |        |        |        |   | • |
| - Sexual Assault   |        |        |        |   |   |
| Tardiness  | •      | •      | •      |   |   |
| - Persistent or Excessive Tardiness to Class/School  |        |        |        |   |   |
| Theft  |        | •      | •      | • |   |
| - Less than \$50   |        |        |        |   |   |
| - Greater than \$50  |        |        |        |   | • |
| <i>This matrix and table is a general guideline only. The list of behaviors is not exhaustive or exclusive. In every case the Principal shall determine the appropriate intervention or consequence based on the specific facts and circumstances.</i> |        |        |        |   |   |

| Inappropriate or Disruptive Behavior  | Intervention |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Trespassing<br>(Level 5 interventions may only be used when a student has entered onto school property without permission and then refused to leave school property upon request)   |              |   |   | • | • |
| Tobacco Possession or Use   | •            | • | • |   |   |
| Unauthorized Use of School Equipment  | •            | • | • |   |   |
| Unexcused Absence from School or Class Cutting  | •            | • | • |   |   |
| Weapons, Firearms, and Explosives   | •            | • | • |   |   |
| - Bringing or Possessing Fireworks  |              |   |   |   |   |
| - Igniting Fireworks  |              |   |   |   | • |
| - Bringing, Possessing, or Using Other Explosives (non-fireworks)   |              |   |   |   | • |
| - Threat or False Report related to Explosives  |              |   |   |   |   |
| - Bringing, Possessing, or Using Firearms   |              |   |   |   |   |
| - Bringing or Using Other Deadly Weapons  |              |   |   |   |   |
| - Possessing Other Deadly Weapons   |              |   |   |   | • |
|   |              |   |   |   | • |
|   |              |   |   |   | • |
|   |              |   |   |   | • |
| <p><i>This matrix and table is a general guideline only. The list of behaviors is not exhaustive or exclusive. In every case the Principal shall determine the appropriate intervention or consequence based on the specific facts and circumstances.</i></p> |              |   |   |   |   |

**The following infractions will warrant direct involvement by the Deans of Students and may be subject to involvement by local law enforcement.**

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Sexual Harassment
- Possessing, selling, or distributing illegal substances
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages
- Harming or attempting to harm another person with a weapon or dangerous object
- Hurting another person (or threatening to hurt another person or group)
- Bringing to school a weapon or dangerous object, including a knife
- Using a mock gun or other mock weapon in a threatening manner
- Damaging or stealing school or private property (or threatening to do so)
- Sexually harassment
- Possessing, sharing or distributing pornographic material
- Using racial, ethnic, or homophobic slurs, profanity, or obscene language
- Hazing or violence, or the threat of hazing or violence toward another student or school personal
- Using or possessing over-the-counter medication inappropriately
- Using, possessing or distributing alcohol
- Smoking on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities
- Tampering with school records
- Threats or acts of terrorism
- Pulling an emergency alarm or using non-designated entrances/exits
- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Violation of our school's internet/computer policy
- Gambling
- Theft
- Vandalism

## **SUSPENSION POLICY**

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, the Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal will provide both oral and written notice to the student and parent(s) in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice will include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

## **Emergency Removal**

The Principal/designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the Principal's/designee's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal/designee shall immediately notify the Executive Director in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation. The Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

## **In School Suspension – Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively**

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

## **Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 Days**

The Principal will hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended. At this hearing the Principal will provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge, explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, present information and include any mitigating facts. The Principal shall determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences or other remedies may be appropriate for the infraction. At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal/designee shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

### **Principal’s Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 91 days (consecutive or cumulative)**

The Principal shall hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand- delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal/designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;

Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Executive Director or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

### **Executive Director's Hearing**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Executive Director.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension.

The Executive Director shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Executive Director shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if efforts were made to find a mutually convenient day and time for the hearing. The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Executive Director shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Executive Director shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Executive Director shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal but shall not impose a



suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

## **Expulsion Policy**

The Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School policy regarding expulsion rests on a foundation that Expulsion of a student should only occur in rare instances and not before every attempt has been employed to maintain the student in our school in accordance with the steps described in our Discipline Policy: Restorative Justice.

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance, as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
2. Any student who assaults any employee of the School District on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either (1) or (2) above shall be notified in writing of their opportunity for a hearing, provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing the Principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.
4. Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
5. When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Executive Director/Superintendent of the sending school shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion. No school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent/Executive Director of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent/Executive Director of the school

expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

6. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

### **Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school-work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to

education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

**NOTE:** The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, is consistent with law, is set for the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in

**M.G.L. c. 71, §37H or 37H½.** The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than ninety (90) days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than ten (10) cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

SOURCE: LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H3/4; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

When Suspension(s) of a Special Needs Student Exceeds 10 Days per School Year: In general, if a student has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove the student from his or her current educational placement for a period not to exceed ten (10) consecutive school days in any school year. If the student possesses, uses, sells or solicits drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event, carries a weapon to school or a school function, or inflicts serious bodily injury at school or at a school-sponsored event, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 calendar days. If the student has been placed in an IAES as a result of a disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement, unless either a hearing officer orders another placement, or the parent/guardian and the school agree to another placement.

Any time the school wishes to remove a student from his or her current placement for more than ten (10) consecutive days in any school year, or for more than ten (10) cumulative days

when a pattern of removal is occurring, this constitutes a “change of placement.” A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal special education law.

These include the following:

- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team shall review its implementation and modify it if necessary.
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must inform the parent/guardian that the Team will consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for the removal was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the school’s failure to implement the IEP. This consideration is called a “manifestation determination.” Parent/guardians have the right to participate as members of the Team.

Consideration of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability: The law provides that the Team must consider evaluation information, observational information, the student’s IEP and placement, and must determine whether the behavior prompting the disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student’s disability. The Team considers if the student understood the impact and consequences of the behavior, and further considers if the student’s disability impaired the student’s ability to control his or her behavior.

- If the Team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of your child’s disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use or serious bodily injury) until the Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and receives parental/guardian consent to the new IEP and placement.
- If the Team determines that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the school may suspend or otherwise discipline the student according to the Student Code of Conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding ten (10) days, the school district must provide the student with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school district must determine the educational services necessary for FAPE and the manner and location for providing those services.
- If the parent/guardian disagrees with the Team’s decision on the manifestation determination, with the decision relating to placement of the student in an IAES, or with any other disciplinary action, they have the right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). A school district may not suspend or in any way exclude a special needs student during the period of a BSEA hearing or judicial proceeding brought to challenge a suspension,

proposed suspension or any determination under this policy unless the school district obtains a court order based on a showing that the student's continued presence in school presents a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

### **Regular Education Students covered by the Special Education Discipline**

#### **Restrictions:**

The law applies to regular education students if the school system had knowledge prior to the misconduct that the student was disabled. Under the new law, a school district is presumed to have “had knowledge” that a regular education student was disabled, if the student’s:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) has “expressed concern in writing” to the school district that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- Behavior or performance demonstrates a need for special education or related services;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested a special education evaluation of the child, or
- Teachers or other school personnel have “expressed concern” about the student's behavior or performance.

If there was no knowledge, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request an expedited evaluation. During this period, the student may be suspended or expelled. Students determined to have a disability must receive appropriate educational services.

### **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND SECTION 504**

These procedures apply to students identified as disabled only under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition to the requirements set forth in these procedures, the regular disciplinary procedures must also be followed.

#### ***Short-Term Suspensions (ten days or less)***

Section 504 students may receive suspensions of ten days or less under the same disciplinary procedures applicable to all students.

#### **LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS (GREATER THAN TEN DAYS) OR EXPULSION**

Prior to imposing a long-term suspension (greater than ten days) or expulsion of a student with a Section 504 plan, a 504 team must convene to determine if the misconduct giving rise to the disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student’s disability. The parent or adult student must be invited to participate in the manifestation determination meeting. If the team determines that no manifestation exists, the student may be disciplined utilizing the regular disciplinary procedures. If the committee determines that the misconduct is a manifestation of the student’s disability, the student may not receive a long-term suspension or expulsion.

#### **EXCEPTION TO SECTION 504 DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Students who have been identified as disabled under Section 504 and are recommended for discipline

arising from the current use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs may be disciplined by using the procedures applicable to regular education students. These cases do not require the use of the additional procedures outlined above. The disciplinary action taken must be consistent with the disciplinary action applied to regular education students for these same offenses. Students to whom these situations apply may not utilize the Section 504 hearing procedures.

## **SECTION 504 AND ADA POLICY**

No qualified disabled student shall be discriminated against because of a disability. In addition, parents/guardians who have a qualifying disability may request the District to provide appropriate accommodations necessary for them to participate in events which allow them to participate in the essential activities of their children. When requesting such accommodations, the parents/guardians must submit evidence sufficient to the administrator to determine the existence of the disability; an interactive process may occur to determine the appropriate accommodation(s). Students who are at least eighteen (18) years of age may submit their own requests. It is the policy of PJSJCS to provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability within its jurisdiction. It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, due process rights of qualified students with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed in PFSJCS. Any student, parent/guardian of a minor student or employee of PFSJCS who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any program, activity or service of the PFSJCS because he/she is an otherwise qualified disabled individual may file a written grievance giving the factual basis of the grievance, and the requested remedy, with the school principal/designee when such grievance arises from an alleged discriminatory practice occurring in a school or related to a school program or policy. The principal or the principal's designee will investigate the grievance and respond, in writing, within seven (7) school- working days. The investigation will include an interview of the grievance. If the grievance alleges discrimination which is based upon a policy or district-wide procedure or event, then the grievant should file the grievance with the Section 504/ADA coordinator for the system. See the second paragraph below. If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at the principal's level, the written complaint may be forwarded to the Director of Academic and Special Education Services who is the District Coordinator for Section 504, who may be contacted at (413)536-3201, between the hours of 8:00 and 4:00; Monday through Friday. The Principal is the school 504 Coordinator and may be contacted through the main office of PFSJC.

## PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

### Definitions:

1. Physical Restraint- Direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. Physical restraint is allowed as emergency procedure of last resort.
2. Extended Physical Restraint - A physical restraint the duration of which is longer than twenty (20) minutes
3. Mechanical Restraint - The use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of his or her body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician shall not be considered a mechanical restraint.
4. Chemical Restraint: The administration of medication for the purpose of restraint. The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 C.M.R. 46.02
5. Prone restraint- shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the facedown position. Prone restraint shall be prohibited in public education programs except on an individual student basis, and only under the following circumstances:
  - a. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
  - b. All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
  - c. There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
  - d. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
  - e. The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the principal and supervisor of ABA services.
  - f. The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b)1-5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.

6. Physical escort - a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location. This is not considered a restraint. However, if the escort is performed against the active resistance of the student to go with the staff person, consider the procedure a restraint and document its occurrence as such.
7. Time-out- a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming his or herself.
8. Seclusion- the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02. Seclusion restraint is prohibited.

The Executive Director or designee will ensure the development of procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training requirements, follow-up procedures, and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints regarding restraint practices;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- Procedures for conducting periodic review of data and documentation on the use of restraint as required by the regulations; and
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and within 30 days of a staff member being employed by Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School. This policy and its accompanying procedures are made available to parents of enrolled students.

**Nothing in this policy shall be construed to preclude any teacher, employee, or agent of the Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter Public School from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent serious harm.**

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES**

Physical restraint is defined by 603 CMR 46.02 as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement.



Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring oneself, another student or school community member; a teacher or employee or agent of the school district, may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The following considerations must be made by staff in emergency situations:

- Use only the amount of force necessary to move or contain the student and prevent injury or harm to the student or others;
- Move the student to a close by safe, protected area. This area should be free of breakable materials or materials that could be thrown
- Seek assistance from the Restraint Team
- If possible, have a partner help you escort the student and then remain with you and the student until the Restraint Team member(s) arrive

School Personnel shall keep in mind the following goals when using physical restraint:

1. Physical Restraint should be considered ONLY when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from immediate serious physical harm; and
2. All efforts must be made to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

The use of mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion is prohibited. The use of prone restraint except as permitted under 603 C.M.R. 46.03, or of any physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with the regulations at 603 C.M.R. 46.00, is also prohibited.

The Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint. In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

The Principal will ensure all staff members, parents and students are informed of the Physical Restraint Policy to include but not be limited to the following:

- Inclusion of the policy within the Student/Family Handbook;
- Inclusion of the policy and procedures within the Employee Handbook;
- Posting of policy and procedures on the school website;
- Review of policy, restraints and alternative methods and emergency procedures during Opening of School student orientation;
- Review of policy, restraints and alternative methods and emergency procedures during Parent Info night, PAC meeting and/or Open House.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of

property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated, as previously documented by a licensed physician.

**Risks of Restraint:** All restraints pose a significant amount of risk for both the student and staff members implementing the restraint.

- Risks to the student may include: cuts/scrapes, bruises, broken bones, hyperthermia (overheating),
- psychological trauma, breathing problems/asphyxia, and death.

Restraints should always be conducted in a team approach! This will ensure that the restraint is being implemented properly and safely.

The use of time-out procedures during which staff continuously observe and remain immediately available to the student shall not be considered seclusion restraint.

**DE-ESCALATION AND ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIORS:** Staff members will be aware of de-escalating and alternative approaches to restraint to address the needs of a student who is showing signs of escalating behaviors;

- Brief physical contact to promote student safety (such as guiding a student or re-directing a student)
- Providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill;
- Redirecting attention (such as to a shoulder, face or torso)
- Providing comfort hysterical escort that does not involve force

Staff should consider the environment and make some quick adjustments if needed to ensure the safety of the student and others. These may include: -

- Removing potential weapons from the immediate area (e.g. scissors, sharp pencils, materials that could be used as a projectile, etc.)
- Attempting to redirect the student to another safer area, if possible
- Removing other students from the immediate area

**PBIS:** Staff should also consider a variety of behavioral interventions that may be effective in deescalating the student, such as:

- Offering choices of activities;
- Reducing the demands/amount of work expected (without removing the expectations entirely);
- Reminding student of reinforcers available for engaging in appropriate behaviors (e.g. first work, then you can read);
- Prompting the student to use functional language to communicate their feelings or needs;

PFSJCS has a restraint prevention and behavior support system that includes: methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, to include but not be limited to:

- Crisis Planning
- De-Escalation of potential dangerous behavior;
- PBIS
- Restorative circle;

- Advisor/Advisee

Additional staff member considerations for restraint should be made on an individualized basis for each student.

- Students may have medical/psychological limitations or known or suspected trauma histories that should be considered prior to implementing restraint:
- Medical/psychological limitations: considerations may include specific types of restraints that students may not be able to participate in (e.g. chair holds, one person holds where students arm crosses their body, etc.) or
- if medical/psychological limitations exclude them from being able to restrained entirely.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

(1) Circumstances under which a physical restraint must be reported. Program staff shall report the use of any physical restraint as specified in 603 CMR 46.06(2).

(2) Informing the principal. The program staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school- working day. The written report shall be provided to the principal for review of the use of the restraint. If the principal has administered the restraint, the principal shall prepare the report and submit it to an individual or team designated by the superintendent or board of trustees for review. The principal or director or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Department upon request.

(3) Informing parents. The principal or director of the program or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and shall notify the parent by written report sent either within three school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. If the school or program customarily provides a parent of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the parent in that language. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

(4) Contents of report. The written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(2) and (3) shall include:

- (a) The name of the student; the names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, as applicable, the name of the principal or designee who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant to 603 CMR 46.05(5)(c).
- (b) A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- (c) A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and

reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.

(d) Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.

(e) Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, and any other related matter.

(5) Individual student review. The principal shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

(a) review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;

(b) analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;

(c) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;

(d) agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

- If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

(6) Administrative review. The principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

(7) Report all restraint-related injuries to the Department. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(4) to the Department postmarked no later than three school

working days of the administration of the restraint. The program shall also send the Department a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the principal pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. The Department shall determine if additional action by the program is warranted and, if so, shall notify the program of any required actions within 30 calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s).

(8) Report all physical restraints to the Department. Every program shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding the use of physical restraints. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

### **Complaints Regarding PFSJ's Restraint Practices**

#### **A. Informal Resolution of Concerns**

A PFSJ student or his or her parent or guardian who has any concerns regarding the use of Physical Restraints on PFSJ students may discuss the concern with the PFSJ principal. The principal shall attempt, within his or her authority, to work with the student or his or her parent or guardian to address the concerns regarding the Physical Restraint.

#### **B. Complaint to Executive Director**

A PFSJ student or his or her parent or guardian who has a complaint regarding a specific use of a Physical Restraint on a PFSJ student or regarding PFSJ's practices relating to Physical Restraints may submit a written complaint to the school's Executive Director. If the complaint is related to a specific incident regarding the use of Physical Restraints, the written complaint should be sent within twenty

(20) school working days of the parent/guardian's receipt of the written report, and should contain (a) the name of the student; (b) the name of the school where the Physical Restraint occurred; (c) the name of the individuals involved in the Physical Restraint (if known); (d) the basis of the complaint; and (e) the corrective action being sought. The school's Executive Director or his or her designee shall conduct an investigation into the complaint within ten (10) school working days of receipt of the complaint. The principal of the school and the Executive Director will collaborate in writing a report regarding the merits of the complaint and a proposed resolution and will send their report to the individual submitting the complaint.

### **REVIEW**

The principal shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

- (a) review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
- (b) analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
- (c) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions,

and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;

(d) agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

**Administrative review.** The principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider:

- patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved;
- the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students;
- the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint.

The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint Reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints. For additional information regarding special circumstances for waiver of reporting requirements please see 603 CMR 46.07

## **BULLYING**

Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School (PFSJCS) is a safe, secure, and positive community for all members. We show respect for every individual and support a healthy school atmosphere. We value diversity and appreciate different cultures and beliefs. We believe in equality and the need to treat all people with respect, in words and in actions. Every member of our school community has the responsibility to uphold our Code of Conduct and to assure that every individual is treated fairly. We will work together to create an educational environment in which everyone feels valued and respected.

Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School **will not tolerate** any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or retaliation by any school member in our school building and grounds, on our buses, and/or in our community. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore safety and respect to our school.

We will support our commitment to a safe and respectful environment through all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement. We understand that a safe community depends on *every member* modeling respectful communication and action.

**BULLYING is:** the repeated use by one or more or by any member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor of an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination

thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to their self or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber- bullying.

1. Physical intimidation and/or bodily harm including, but not limited to: shoving, pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, and/or negative facial/physical gestures;
2. Threats and/or damage to an individual's property and possessions;
3. Verbal and/or written threats/embarrassment including: gossiping, teasing, name calling, and/or insulting someone concerning: personal information, physical features, race, sexuality, religion, or other personal traits;
4. Group targeting and/or exclusion;
5. Cyber-bullying through technological and/or electronic devices including, but not limited to: computers, internet, cell phones, telephones, text messages, social networks, email, instant messages, postings, and blogs; and
6. Retaliation in any form of intimidation, reprisal and/or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, and/or provides information during an investigation of bullying.

## **B. Leadership**

All levels of PFSJCS leadership including: The Board of Trustees, Executive Director, Principal, Dean of Students, administrative leaders, educational leaders, student leaders, and parent leaders will have the responsibility to promote school safety and the understanding of and respect for each individual.

## **C. Reporting Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and /or Retaliation**

PFSJ expects staff, faculty, students, parents, guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Dean of Climate and Culture, Vice Principal, Principal and or the Executive Director. **All claims of bullying will be thoroughly investigated.**

1. ***Staff and Faculty Responsibilities:*** Staff and faculty members are required to report immediately to the Executive Director or Principal any instance of bullying, cyber-bullying and/or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. If a staff or faculty member witnesses an act of bullying, cyber- bullying and/or retaliation in progress, the staff or faculty member is expected to take reasonable steps to stop the act by communicating directly with the individual(s), or requesting help from the

Executive Director, Principal, Counselor, or Nurse. Staff or faculty must follow up any incident by completing an Incident Report Form.

2. ***Student Reporting:*** Student reports may be made to any member of our staff and faculty. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age- appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff or faculty member. Reports of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or retaliation may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff or faculty member shall be recorded in writing on the Incident Report Form. Staff/faculty receiving the student report must put it in writing by completing the Incident Report Form in a timely manner and turning it in to the Executive Director or Principal.
3. ***Parents, Guardians, and Others:*** Reports made by parents, guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff or faculty members may be made in person, on the phone, or by computer. Parents, guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing on the Incident Report Form. Parents, guardians, and others may complete the Incident Report Form themselves, or send an email. Reports may be made to the Deans of Students, Principal and or the Executive Director. Anonymous reports may be made at any time and will be investigated. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may also be made anonymously.

#### **D. Responding to a Report of Bullying, Cyber-bullying or Retaliation - Preliminary Steps**

PFSJ is committed to ensuring a safe and respectful school environment and protecting the physical and emotional wellbeing of all of its community members. PFSJ will take appropriate steps to secure the safety and wellbeing of all school members.

#### **E. Conclusion**

PFSJ will take whatever action is necessary to provide a safe and respectful environment for all school community members. We will do an annual review of our Safe School Community Development Plan to assure that it meets the needs of our community members, and will add to and/or revise any part of the plan that does not provide the highest level of safety and support. The revised plan will be amended in all Student and Staff Handbooks, posted in the school and on our school website, and in all appropriate written reports and shared information.

Please remember, our first concern will always be the safety and security of our community members. Should an incident occur that calls for intervention by local authorities to ensure this safety and security, they will be contacted. In extreme cases and when appropriate, we will seek legal recourse and prosecute to the fullest extent of the law.

#### **NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE**



## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Any instance of discrimination, civil rights violation, or safety concerns should be reported immediately to the Deans of Students, Executive Director or the Principal. It is the policy of Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all of its students, without distinction based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, class, disability, gender, gender identity, sex or sexual orientation.

Discrimination, sexual and bias motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and are in opposition to our mission and will not be tolerated. It shall be a violation for any student, teacher, administrator or other member of our school community to engage in harassing, sexual and bias motivated harassment or violate the civil rights of any other member of our school community. Conduct amounting to a hate crime is a particularly serious infraction that will result in referral to law enforcement agencies.

## **COMMITMENT TO PREVENTION**

Our school is committed to prevention, remediation and accurate reporting of sexual bias incidents and civil rights violations so that all students can enjoy a safe and tolerant learning environment where individual differences are respected. The school undertakes to engage in activities and programming such as training of all school personnel, intended to foster respect for all community members. The Board of Trustees have therefore adopted the following policy:

### **Discrimination/Harassment /Sexual Harassment**

*Discrimination/Harassment/Sexual Harassment Policy: PFSJCS is committed to maintaining an environment free of harassment based on gender, gender identity, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. We expect all members to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to show concern for fellow members and visitors.*

#### **1 Discrimination/Harassment**

The harassment of individuals by school members on the basis of gender, gender identity, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status of any form will not be tolerated by the School.

Harassment is behavior that is not welcome by an individual and is considered by the individual (and would be by any reasonable individual) to be humiliating, demeaning or offensive. Behavior is considered harassment when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassment can be physical or verbal behavior and can include stereotypical statements, derogatory statements, abusive language, and discriminatory remarks that are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, cause the recipient humiliation, or interfere with the recipient's performance.

All members should take special note that retaliation against an individual who has

complained about harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the School.

## 2 Discrimination/Sexual Harassment

Because the School takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a school that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for school conduct which we deem

unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

## 3. Definition of Sexual Harassment

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this - “Sexual Harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition for reward

or;

such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by an individual for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised benefits constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment. While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

Unwelcome sexual advances -- whether they involve physical touching or not;

Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life; comment on an individual’s body, comment about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;

Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;

Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and Discussion of one's sexual activities.

All members should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization.

### **Complaints of Harassment/Discrimination/Sexual Harassment**

If any of our members believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting the Executive Director, Principal or Director of Academic Support Services. They are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

### **Harassment/Discrimination/Sexual Harassment Investigation**

When we receive a complaint we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When we have completed our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate we will also impose disciplinary action.

### **Disciplinary Action**

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our members, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action, as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

### **State and Federal Remedies**

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below.

Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim.

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity: FOR EMPLOYEES Commission (“EEOC”)  
One Congress Street, 10th  
Floor Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 565-3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (“MCAD”) Boston Office: Springfield  
Office:  
One Ashburton Place, Room 601 436 Dwight Street, Suite  
220 Boston, MA 02108 Springfield, MA 01103  
(617) 727-3990 (413) 739-2145

## **HAZING POLICY**

- “Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.”

Section 18 of Chapter 269 states,

- “Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students shall have a right to express themselves by the dress and hair style of their own choosing provided students meet their responsibility to dress and groom in a manner that conforms to the reasonable and acceptable standards of health, safety and cleanliness, will not cause a disruption of the educational process, and is not offensive and/or does not endanger the health, safety and welfare of the student or others. Students are permitted to dress in compliance with this dress code in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

Students are prohibited from wearing clothing, jewelry and/or accessories that have slogans, comments or designs that are obscene, lewd or vulgar; are directed towards or intended to harm, harass, threaten, intimidate, or demean individual groups or individuals on the basis of sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, genetic information, or gender identity; and/or advertise alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or illegal drugs. Students may not come to school shirtless, pant-less or shoeless. Feet must be covered at all times.

All students dressed in accordance with this policy should not experience student or staff repercussions related to their apparel regardless of how their clothing coincides with their body type, gender, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, genetic information, or gender identity.

Parents/guardians will be notified if a student has arrived to school in clothing that is not suitable for school, and the student will be provided with a school issued suitable item of clothing to wear (e.g., sweatshirt or T-shirt from the school store) during the course of the school day, asked to turn clothing inside out, sent home to change their clothing or to borrow clothing from a classmate/friend to wear during the course of the school day.

Students are expected to follow all school rules with respect to wearing any protective clothing, safety glasses or other protective or safety equipment that may be required for participation in specialized programs.

The school administration shall train staff about this policy to ensure equitable and consistent application of this policy. Any discipline that is to be imposed for a violation of this policy shall be administered by the Vice Principal.

\*This Dress Code applies to ALL students including dual enrollment students and seniors.

### **PANTHER POINTS**

Students who perform in positive ways and enhance the quality of life to the community are awarded “Panther Points”. These points can accumulate into rewards that include but are not limited to: special recognition at school assembly, take-out lunches, gift certificates, field trips and more.

### **CELL PHONE USAGE**

Cell phones can be used only before school starts and after school ends. Once school begins they need to remain completely powered off and stored in personal lockers. Phones however, will be permitted with faculty instruction and during lunch periods. Parents/guardians who need to contact their students can call the school at 413-536-3201 to relay messages.

Violations of this policy will be treated as follows:

**Offense 1** – the phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the school day

when it will be returned to the student.

**Offense 2** – the phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the student’s parent/guardian can come in to pick it up.

**Offense 3** – the phone will be confiscated and held in the office until the student’s parent/guardian can come in to pick it up. The student will be issued a restorative justice project to be completed in a timely manner.

**VALUABLES**

Students are advised not to bring valuable items to school such as MP3 players, iPods, gaming units cameras (digital or video), passes or tickets to area venues and/or shows, expensive clothing or jewelry, etc. (Please note: this also includes money) If the student must bring these items to school they should be aware that PFSJCS is not responsible for the theft or loss of said item. Students should keep all personal belongings with them or in their lockers at all times.

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

| You have a right to.....   | AND | You are responsible for.....   |
|--|-----|--|
| Attend school and be granted the opportunity to receive a quality education  |     | Attend school regularly and on time, complete assignments, and strive to do the best work possible.  |
| Be made aware of school rules and policies, and always be treated in a matter consistent with these policies.        |     | Be familiar with the Code of Conduct and behave in a manner that will not jeopardize the safety of others.   |
| Have the opportunity to present your version of the facts in all matters concerning discipline.                      |     | Be truthful and respectful when giving your account of situations.   |
| Be safe in the school environment.   |     | Behave in a manner that will not jeopardize the safety of others.  |
| Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of disability, race, religion or sexual orientation. |     | Work to your best ability in all academic and extracurricular activities.  |
| Express yourself by the dress and hair style of your own choosing provided students meet their responsibilities.     |     | Dress and groom in a manner that conforms to the reasonable and acceptable standards of health, safety and cleanliness, will not cause a disruption of the educational process, and is not offensive and/or does not endanger the health, safety and welfare of the student or others. |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Submit written grievances or complaints about school-related matters or school Personnel.</p>   | <p>Abide by school expectations and accept responsibility for your own actions in regards to acknowledgement of inappropriate behavior.</p> |
| <p>Be allowed the opportunity for the free expression of ideas not including slanderous, vulgar or obscene words or images or speech that substantially disrupts the school.</p> | <p>Use language that is appropriate and respectful when expressing ideas and opinions.</p>  |

### **SUPPORT OF STUDENT ADVOCACY**

In support of self- advocacy, we have developed a reporting process by which students who have a concern about or with a teacher or staff, they can seek and find resolution. Initially, the student has the right to attempt resolution or repair with teacher/ staff of directly. We suggest the following steps as guidelines for reporting and resolving a concern:

1. Student is encouraged to meet with the teacher of concern outside of class time
2. If this does not resolve or if the student feels they cannot meet with the teacher of concern, the student is encouraged to meet with another teacher in the department or meet with the department chair to assist in resolving the issue.
3. If this is not acceptable, or the student feels more assistance is needed, the student is encouraged to speak to the Dean of Climate and Culture; Guidance Counselor; Social Worker or another adult from whom they may feel comfortable seeking assistance.
4. The student may talk it over with a trusted friend or adult in the building; maybe ask them to help you speak with the teacher/staff.

In the case that a student substantially disagrees with a teacher or staff, they may file a complaint/grievance with the school administration, guidance counselor/social worker. Also, it remains true that any student can report a concern directly to any trusted friend or adult and ask them to follow up with administration. (In person or in writing).

**In no circumstances do the above supports prohibit the student from filing a grievance or complaint for bullying/harassment/discrimination or other violations as outlined per policy. Such complaints and grievances may be filed without these processes be followed.**

## **STUDENT PROTEST/CIVIL ACTION**

Students have the right to engage in organized civil protest and are encouraged to utilize the strategy thoughtfully and fully planned. For the purpose of maintaining safety and to support student voice, organizers who choose to engage in any civil protest that affect the daily operations of the school day or school related events should make administration aware of the action within a reasonable time period prior to the action. Off campus and out of school time actions which include the use of the school name and/or symbols/identity are included in this expectation. Administration's response will solely focus on the safety and instructional time of students, staff, and the daily operations of school. Administration will work out a protocol to be adhered to by staff and students to ensure minimal loss of instructional time, alignment with curriculum and learning outcomes, as well as disciplinary action for infractions of discipline during the civil action.

## **COMPUTER AND INTERNET POLICY**

Internet and computer access at PFSJCS is to be considered a privilege offered to enhance your learning. It is not a right. Therefore, student access may be limited or revoked by school officials if this privilege is abused or violates acceptable use. Students engaged in unacceptable use of the Internet and computers will also be subject to disciplinary action in conformity with the PFSJCS Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

All student use of computers and the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, students are responsible for acceptable use of a computer network. The computer network is provided for students to conduct educational research and support educational endeavors.

The PFSJCS administration, faculty, and staff believe that the benefits to students from access to information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed any potential for abuse. PFSJCS maintains tools that block access to inappropriate sites. Ultimately, however, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using computers and the Internet.

## **STUDENT ACCESS**

All PFSJCS students will take part in an annual grade-level appropriate discussion of our school's Acceptable Computer and Internet Use Policy with their teachers before being authorized to use the computer and the Internet.

## **ACCESS TO STUDENT FILES**

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the use of computers and the Internet. Pursuant to local, state, and federal laws, administrators and staff may provide access to student files and records to law enforcement authorities. All files will be subject to our Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

## **PERSONAL SAFETY**

PFSJCS in its commitment to promote a safe and secure learning environment, has high-end filtering software to filter inappropriate sites. However, the filtering software cannot ensure that all inappropriate sites are blocked. Students are expected to adhere to the PFSJCS Code



of Conduct and Discipline Policy. Any deliberate destruction, modification, and tampering of technology equipment will be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. Any activity that inhibits or interferes with the normal operation of the hardware and software that comprise the PFSJCS computer network is also subject to disciplinary action.

### **ACCEPTABLE USES OF COMPUTERS AND INTERNET**

1. Using email for educational purposes is allowed.
2. Abiding by generally accepted rules of network etiquette including but not limited to: being polite, using appropriate language, respecting the privacy of other's work, and demonstrating courtesy toward others.
3. Documenting and obeying the copyright laws.
4. Reporting misuse of technology to appropriate school authorities
5. Using technology resources to ensure fair access to all students
6. Using computing and communications facilities in a manner consistent with local, state, and federal laws and policies.
7. Notifying our teacher immediately if there is a problem with our computer.

### **UNACCEPTABLE USES**

1. Providing private or personal information about yourself and others.
2. Viewing or sending obscene or patently offensive material.
3. Accessing another person's file or account.
4. Giving out your password to other students.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

For a student to be academically successful they need to be in school regularly and they are responsible for getting to school. PFSJCS does provide transportation to/from school for students in Holyoke, Chicopee and Springfield. Additional arrangements can be made as needed. Students who fall below an 80% attendance rate will have a meeting scheduled with the school social worker to attempt to work together to find a solution to the attendance issue. Excused absences will not lower a student's attendance rate.

### **SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION**

PFSJCS will implement a substance abuse prevention program appropriate for high school students that demonstrates cultural competency.

Training and Professional development will be provided to all staff on implementing programs and effective strategies for preventing substance use. Staff will also learn ways to

recognize the signs when students are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

### *Substance Use and Abuse Screening*

As recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, and subject to Department of Elementary and Secondary School appropriation, PFSJ will screen students in all grades annually using a DESE approved assessment tool. Parents and guardians will be notified at the beginning of the year of the school's plan to screen and will be provided with an opportunity to opt out of the screening. The option will require written notification to the school by the student's parents or guardian. Information collected during the screening shall be considered confidential and shall not be disclosed without the written consent of the student, or parent or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or when disclosure is otherwise required by state law.

The Substance Abuse Policy shall be reviewed and revised on a yearly basis.

Resources and Services:

- Partnerships with community agencies that provide substance abuse services, (Gandara Center, BHN, Phoenix, etc.).
- Prevention and treatment education to parents/guardians.(At least twice a year)
- In school substance abuse counseling (individual and group)
- School wide initiatives to promote a drug and alcohol free community.
- Peer counseling
- Discipline Policy and Protocol Regarding Drugs and Alcohol

PFSJ Charter School has a zero tolerance policy regarding drug and alcohol possession and consumption. It is our aim to keep a safe community that is drug and alcohol-free. Students who are found to be in possession of drugs, alcohol or illegal substances on school property (campus, field trips, busses, etc.) will be investigated and disciplined accordingly.

Depending on the severity of the offense, consequences may range from suspension to expulsion. PFSJ will be in accordance with the rights granted to students and parents under G.L. c. 71 §37H, §37H½ §37H3/4.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 96, this policy shall be posted on the PFSJ website and notice shall be provided to DESE and all students and parents.

### **TARDIES**

Students need to arrive at school on time in order to be successful members of the community and to receive the full benefit of our academic program. Students who arrive after 8:15 AM must report to the office and will be marked as late. When a student has been marked late 5 times within a one month period, they will have a

meeting with the Social Worker and/or the Vice Principal to determine what supports are required.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students may receive excused absences for contagious or debilitating illness, doctors' appointments, family emergencies, or extenuating circumstances. Parents or legal guardians should call in to the main office of the school before 9am to alert the school of an excused absence. Excused absences will not be counted against students; however, a student requiring more than a week's worth of excused absences will likely be asked to meet with the school Social Worker and teachers to create a plan to support students in fulfilling academic benchmarks.

## **CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE**

PFSJCS is a college preparatory high school where the majority of our students during their Senior year attend Holyoke Community College (HCC). Class attendance is mandatory and students can only miss three (3) classes before they lose credit for the class. In addition, if they are late to class three (3) times, it equals an absence. It is a very tightly structured system.

## **ADVISORY ATTENDANCE**

Our goal is for all students to have the skills they need to graduate and be successful in their future educational goals. We believe that Advisory Period is a critical periods in the day, providing vital information to students and following a specific curriculum, and supports their academic work. Students will receive a PASS or FAIL grade on their transcript for Advisory. These grades will be based on attendance and participation.

## **AFTERSCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAM**

PFSJCS has an afterschool program which focuses on:

- 1) Providing academic support for students who are behind in schoolwork; (regardless of reason).
- 2) Providing remedial instruction for students who are missing basic skills; (regardless of reason) needed to succeed in academics.

Expectations of Students Participating in Afterschool:

- 1) Sign-in to the afterschool program

- 2) Bring all outstanding work to the program.
- 3) Get right to work! (Review the Class Expectations section of this handbook for further information. Students that do not follow the rules will not be permitted to participate in the Program.

## **ENROLLING IN CLASSES**

### **Course Planning Meetings**

New students will discuss potential course offerings at their intake meetings, and courses will be finalized during the summer. Returning students will fill out course selection forms in collaboration with scheduling staff, guidance counselors and/or advisors. Considerations for course selection include:

- Courses required for graduation
- Courses a student did not pass and needs to re-take
- Electives that a student has a particular interest in
- Maximum course capacity

All class spots are filled at random, and we will do our best to ensure that each student gets their first or second choice in all electives (essentials). Priority will be given for these classes based upon graduation requirement needs. (1st – Seniors, 2nd – Juniors, 3rd – Sophomores and 4th– Freshmen)

### **Add / Drop**

At the beginning of each semester there will be a one-week add/drop period during which students may change their class schedule if they are unsatisfied with the electives that they chose in their course planning meetings. Students' advisors will need to sign off on any changes made during the add/drop period. Students will only be able to add a class if there are extra spaces for them. During the add/drop period, spaces in a given class will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Priority will be given for these classes based upon graduation requirement needs. (1st – Seniors, 2nd – Juniors, 3rd – Sophomores and 4th – Freshmen) Once the add/drop period is over, students are required to attend the classes they are enrolled in, no exceptions. (Please refer to the attendance policy for further details.)

## **SPORTS MEDICAL CLEARANCES**

All students must pass a physical examination prior to participation in High School Athletics. A physical exam covers the student for 13 months from the exam date. A student's eligibility will terminate once a physical has reached the 13 month limit. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Licensed Physician, Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner.

Physical examination forms and sport forms are available from the school nurse. Students should carry emergency medication such as inhalers and Epi pens with them

during sports. It is the responsibility of the parent to report any new injuries or serious illnesses to the coach, nurse, or athletic trainer. Should an injury or serious illness occur during or between sports seasons, a doctor's note is required to return to sports participation. All medical notes must be submitted to the health office.

### **PFSJCS and HCC**

The senior program offers students the opportunity to showcase three years of college preparatory education and social justice values. Students are allowed to apply for the Early Admissions program at Holyoke Community College. If they pass the college's placement exam, they are able to take classes at HCC among college students and receive dual enrollment credit, meaning students achieve high school credit and college credit simultaneously at no cost to their families. The impact of this program not only prepares students for the rigor of college courses, but also decreases the financial burden of college for our students' families. Many students are able to transfer credits they acquired during their senior year to the 4-year college they plan to attend.

The senior program also offers students the opportunity to gain career experience through the internship program. As per our charter, all seniors are required to complete 50 hours at an internship in a career field of their choice. Our College and Internship Coordinator networks with businesses and organizations in Western Massachusetts to ensure our students have meaningful and engaging internships. We provide transportation to and from internships via a van service. This year, seniors are currently interning at a political leader's office, a software development firm, non-profits that share our passion for social justice, graphic design firms, and the medical field to name a few. Students graduate from Paulo Freire with the professional skills necessary to be successful in the working world and a clearer vision of their career goals.

### **ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY AND INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to produce academic work to the best of their abilities. It is essential that students produce and complete their own work. Cheating (Plagiarism) will not be tolerated. The submission of work that is not one's own or the failure to properly cite the work of others will result in disciplinary action. Students should consult their teachers if they have any questions regarding these expectations or if they are unclear on proper citation of sources.

## **PAULO FREIRE SOCIAL JUSTICE CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE- Adopted 5-24-12**

This complaint procedure shall be included in our Student Handbook and made available upon request to any member of the public.

1. A parent, guardian, or other individuals or groups who believe that the Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School has violated or is violating any provision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00 may file a complaint with the charter school's board of trustees.
2. The board of trustees shall respond no later than 30 days from receipt of the complaint in writing to the complaining party.
3. The board of trustees shall, pursuant to a complaint received under 603 CMR 1.10, or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to ensure compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, and 603 CMR 1.00. The Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School and the specific individuals involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.
4. A complaining party who believes the complaint has not been adequately addressed by the Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School board of trustees may submit the complaint in writing to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, who shall investigate such complaint and make a written response.
5. In the event the charter school is found in non-compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00, as a result of a complaint or upon investigation, the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may take such action as it deems appropriate, including but not limited to suspension or revocation of the charter under 603 CMR 1.13, or referral of the matter to the District Attorney, the Office of the Attorney General, or any other agency for appropriate legal action.
6. A parent, guardian, or other individuals or groups who believe that the Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School has violated or is violating any state or federal law or regulation regarding special education may file a complaint directly with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**Parents Right-To-Know  
Opt-Out Provisions for Directory Information**

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter School releases the following Directory Information without the consent of parents or students over the age of 18: student's name, date and place of birth, address, phone number, electronic mail address, grade level (e.g. undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), dates of attendance, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and major field of study. Directory Information is defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

If you do not want this information released, please check below, sign, date and return this from to Paulo Freire Social Justice Charter school.

\*\*\*\*\*This notice must be filed each school year\*\*\*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ DO NOT release the information listed above without my prior consent.

**Please print:**

Student's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature (age 18 or older) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_