

# FOCUS LEARNING ACADEMY OF NORTHERN AND CENTRAL COLUMBUS K-8



## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

***FOCUS PLEDGE:***

**I will be respectful.**

**I will be responsible.**

**I will be a problem solver.**

**I will be an achiever.**

**I am an everyday hero.**

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**Values Behavior Outcome (VBO):**

The VBO is a blueprint for our culture. It makes clear the specific behaviors & results we want from each of our values. The behaviors outlined in the VBO are essential to how students are to engage in the classroom, and school. Our goal is to create an educational environment where everyone consistently engages in behaviors that produce exceptional outcomes. At FLA, our mission is to equip students with the necessary skills to thrive in high school and college, foster cultural fluency, enhance their effectiveness in society, and provide intellectual and social fulfillment that brings lasting happiness in life. Moreover, we are committed to nurturing greater moral awareness among our students, empowering them to make informed and thoughtful choices when shaping their characters. To ensure the achievement of these goals, we have the following expectations for all students:

## Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus



### VALUES — BEHAVIOR — OUTCOME

#### This is the FLANC way.

It spells out the standards for how we behave toward each other, our students, and our community.

Values	Behavior	Outcome
<b>Stand Up &amp; Own It</b> <i>Make a difference every day.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act with purpose.</li> <li>Do the right thing, especially when it's hard.</li> <li>Own your work. Put your name on it.</li> </ul>	<b>We can count on each other.</b> <b>Our students can count on us.</b>
<b>Power of the Team</b> <i>Think we, not me</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest the time to care, listen, &amp; communicate.</li> <li>Ask for help, give help. Make each other better.</li> <li>Respect differences.</li> </ul>	<b>Great place to work.</b> <b>Great place to learn.</b>
<b>Passion for Growth</b> <i>Pursue excellence</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get focused, stay focused.</li> <li>Embrace productive discomfort.</li> <li>Be coachable.</li> </ul>	<b>Equipped with skills.</b> <b>Ready for tomorrow.</b>

## ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY AND PROCEDURES

Focus Learning Academy believes daily attendance is a foundational piece of a student's academic success. In creating an environment for that academic success, the school works with students and their parents/guardians to encourage consistent ongoing attendance. Regular school attendance and classroom interaction are important parts of the educational process. Prolonged or repeated absences disrupt not only the education of the individual but also the continuity of the process in the entire classroom. Focus urges parents/guardians to minimize the time their students are absent from class. Focus is responsible for knowing where students are each day. Please help us keep an accurate account of your child's daily attendance.

**Please report all absences to the office by calling 614-547-0920 and press 1.**

Please include the following information:

- Person calling
- Student's name
- Parent/guardian phone
- Student's grade
- Date
- Reason for absences

Parents/Guardians may call the 24-hour attendance line at 614-547-0920 (press 1) to report that a student will be absent from school. Focus kindly requests that parents/guardians call the office before 9:00 a.m. if their child will be absent. If a parent/guardian does not contact the office when their child is absent, the school will verify absences by phone the day the absence occurs.

The statutes of the Ohio Revised Code governing school attendance are specific and leave little option for school authorities to excuse students from school except for:

- Personal illness
- Death in the family
- Quarantine of the home
- Religious holidays
- Medical or dental appointment (partial days in most cases)
- Family Emergency
- Field Trips
- Illness in the family
- Volunteers to serve as precinct officer for elections

Focus strongly discourages vacations or extended absences during the days school is in session. If a parent/guardian wishes to take a child out of school for any period of time for reasons other than those listed above, the parent/guardian must contact the office in advance.

### **Truancy**

Ohio law specifies that a student is excessively absent with a nonmedical excuse or without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for thirty-eight or more hours in one school month, or sixty-five or more hours in a school year. A student is considered habitually truant if the student is absent without a legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 total hours in a month or 72 or more hours in a school year.

Focus will contact parents when students have reached an excessive amount of absences and will request a meeting if a student becomes habitually truant. If a student is habitually truant, Focus will work with parents and the student to have a plan to help increase attendance.

### ***Behavior Expectations:***

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Rules are essential to the functioning of any organization or community. At FLA, we have tried to make rules few in number and clear in purpose. Fundamentally, students are expected to be responsible for their conduct and contribute to the community's general well-being. Therefore, it is likely that everyone will understand and obey all rules.

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### ***Academic Integrity:***

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The school's expectation for student behavior is described in its honor code. Students are expected to have integrity and self-discipline and respect themselves, others, and the school. The school considers academic cheating or plagiarism incidents as severe breaches of academic integrity. Examples include:

- Copying another student's classwork or homework
- Asking another student questions during a test or copying another student's test answers
- Turning in any material claimed as one's own but coming from another source (for example, copying material from an online resource without crediting the source).

These actions are dishonest, unacceptable, and violate the honor code. Academic dishonesty is one of the most severe violations of school expectations and may result in suspension and other behavior consequences.

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### ***Daily Rules:***

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The guiding principle for all daily rules is respect. We strive to create an environment where students learn to show respect for themselves, others, and their surroundings. Rudeness, unkindness, or malicious behavior, will not be tolerated. This includes behavior in class meetings, all-school functions, and while on school transportation. Throughout the day, students are expected to demonstrate the basics of courteous behavior. Students should say "please," "thank you," and "excuse me" when appropriate.

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### ***Assembly Behavior***

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In any form of assembly or other formal gathering, students are expected to:

- Come to order and give their attention to the speaker when asked for the first time
- Refrain from all shouting and screaming – enthusiasm and approval can and should be expressed by applause and orderly cheers
- Wait to be dismissed
- Leave without pushing or crowding
- When the peace sign is in use all talking and moving must cease.

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### ***Noise***

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Because classes and other school activities are always in session, every effort must be made to maintain reasonable quiet and order in the hallways, entryways, and outside areas adjacent to classrooms and offices. Electronic devices are not permitted on the school campus. Teachers and staff will confiscate all contraband – cell phones, music players, tablets, etc. – and will not be returned until a parent comes to retrieve it..

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### ***Campus Cleanliness***

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Maintaining the attractive appearance of the campus is the joint responsibility of all community members. Everyone is responsible for disposing of litter properly, whether one's own or someone else's. To minimize trash on campus, students should keep all personal property with them or in the designated areas. All students are responsible for respecting each other's and the school's property and, therefore, must refrain from writing on, marking, decorating, borrowing, without permission, or otherwise defacing school property or the property of others. Students must also use the proper bathroom correctly. This includes wiping up water that is spilled, waste on the floor, sinks, and toilet

seats, and picking up paper that you drop. In addition, sanitary napkins should be disposed of in the proper place.

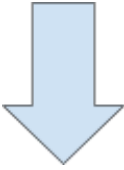
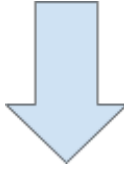
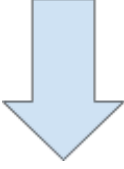
### ***Disciplinary Policies and Procedures***

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The school has the right to impose discipline and penalties for conduct occurring on and off-campus. For example, violating specific rules in this handbook may result in further discipline. In addition, off-campus behavior may be punished when it constitutes a significant rules infraction, violates fundamental standards of ethics and morality, and constitutes a criminal offense (whether or not the student is charged with a crime). Students who break the rules are referred to the Dean of Students, Principal, or Superintendent. Multiple minor infractions may be treated cumulatively as a major infraction. A student who has committed numerous minor infractions is subject to all the penalties in this handbook, including detention, loss of privilege, suspension, probation, and expulsion.

## **FLANC 2025-2026 Behavior Strategies** **Flowchart**

***PBIS Expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible & Ready to Learn***

<p><b>Level I Minor Behavior Violations</b></p> <p>Disruptive Behavior</p> <p>Insubordination</p> <p>Profanity</p> <p>Inappropriate Tone/Attitude</p> <p>Inappropriate Hallway Behavior</p> <p>Refusal to Complete Assignment</p> <p>Electronic Communication Devices</p> 	<p><b>Level II Behavior Violations</b> <i>Repeated Level I Offenses &amp; Serious Misconduct</i></p> <p>Leave Class without Permission</p> <p>Minor Theft</p> <p>Fighting</p> <p>Unauthorized Use of Internet</p> <p>School Bus Disruption</p> <p>Cheating or Plagiarism</p> <p>Vandalism</p> <p>Sexual Misconduct</p> 	<p><b>Level III Behavior Violations</b> <i>Repeated Level II Offenses, Illegal or Unsafe Misconduct</i></p> <p>Physical Assault, Major Fighting</p> <p>Leave School without Permission</p> <p>Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment or Threats</p> <p>False Alarms and/or Bomb Threats</p> <p>Tobacco use, Smoking or Electronic Cigarettes</p> <p>Sexual Offenses</p> <p>Use, possession, sale or distribution of drugs or alcohol</p> <p>Firearms look-alike</p> <p>Food Fight</p> <p>Major Theft</p> <p>Use, possession, sale or distribution of explosive, incendiary device or poison</p> 
<p><b>Classroom Strategies to Correct Behavior</b></p> <p>Model, role-play, and re-model PBIS expectations and classroom rules</p> <p>Positively reinforce desired behaviors</p> <p>Review classroom management &amp; organization</p> <p>If the behavior continues after three warnings, call home and document.</p> <p>If the behavior is documented multiple times without a positive change, conference with student/parent and create a behavior contract.</p> <p>Take a break within the classroom,</p> <p>Take a break with a buddy teacher.</p> <p>On the Google Form: Use the DISTRICT ID # (four digit #)</p>	<p><b>Administrator will select from the following strategies to correct behavior by applying Progressive Discipline</b></p> <p>Conference with student/parent and Administrator</p> <p>Referral to student behavior support team</p> <p>In school suspension (ISS) with classwork</p> <p>Out of school suspension (OSS) with classwork</p> <p>Extended stay in CCI room</p> <p><b>Administrator follows through with consequences</b></p> <p><b>Administrator consults with teacher and provides feedback</b></p>	<p><b>Administrator will select from the following strategies to correct behavior by applying Progressive Discipline</b></p> <p>Conference with student/parent and Administrator</p> <p>Referral to student behavior support team</p> <p>In school suspension (ISS) with classwork</p> <p>Out of school suspension (OSS) with classwork</p> <p>Extended stay in CCI room</p> <p>Participation in substance abuse counseling program</p> <p>Restitution Expulsion</p> <p>Criminal charges may be filed</p> <p><b>Administrator follows through with consequences</b></p> <p><b>Administrator consults with teacher and provides feedback</b></p>

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### ***Dress Code:***

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FLANC asks students to be appropriately attired at school. The dress code aims to create an environment where all students, teachers, and staff feel comfortable; therefore, these guidelines should be taken seriously.

### **Uniform:**

All FLANC students must be in proper uniform attire. A uniform consists of:

#### **Girls:**

- Long, black skirt. Skirts should not be too tight or too large.
- Uniform Shirt.
- Blue or black hijab with no design, jewelry, or other adornments
- Closed-toed shoes
- No jewelry, make-up, hoodies, or sweaters with designs
- The FLA sweater, dress cardigan in either black, dark blue, or white may be worn. It must not have a hood.
- Clean, pressed, black dress pants. Pants must not be too small or too large. The cuffs must not have holes or be ragged. No holes are allowed in the pants

#### **Boys:**

- Clean, pressed, black dress pants. Pants must not be too small or too large. The cuffs must not have holes or be ragged. No holes are allowed in the pants.
- Uniform shirt
- Collars must be buttoned. No designs are allowed on the shirt.
- Closed-toed shoes
- No jewelry, make-up, hoodies, or sweaters with designs
- The FLA sweater, dress cardigan in either black, dark blue, or white may be worn. It must not have a hood.

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### ***Dress Down Days:***

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All clothing must be clean, tidy, and in good repair

- Undergarments must not show
- Stomachs, chests, and buttocks must be covered
- All shoulders must be covered
- Skirts, shorts, and pants must be of a decent length
- Hats and visors are not permitted
- Footwear is required at all times

Those who are not appropriately dressed or groomed will be asked to change clothes. Parents will be notified of dress code violations. A violation will result in detention and may result in further action. Students out of uniform may be returned home. Parents are responsible for making sure students wear uniforms.



### ***Personal Safety and the Safety of Others:***

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#### **The following is prohibited:**

- Possession or use of any gun or other weapon, toy or real (including stun or taser guns), fireworks, or other explosives
- Smoking
- Possession or use of alcohol or other drugs
- Leaving campus or a school activity without authorization
- Entering a classroom before an adult is present
- Gambling, which includes pools for sporting events
- Unsupervised use of bats, balls, or other sporting equipment
- Rollerblading, skating, or skateboarding
- Hitchhiking to and from school
- Selling food, candy, drinks unless authorized by administration.

### ***Respecting Property:***

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Absolute respect for the property rights of others is expected of all school members. Violating these expectations will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. The following are prohibited:

- Stealing or vandalism in any form, including the unauthorized “borrowing” of another’s belongings
- Taking and/or eating food from the cafeteria without permission or at the undesignated time
- Unauthorized use of athletic equipment
- Removing books from the school without permission
- Defacing or vandalizing desks, walls, bulletin boards, or other property
- Selling any items for any reason (students who wish to sell items for a charitable purpose must apply to the Dean of Students or Principal for permission to do so)
- Littering or not picking up after oneself or others
- Food or drink outside specified areas

In addition to respecting property belonging to the school or others on campus, students must respect the property of the neighboring areas.

### ***Personal Property and School Property***

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#### **Desk Usage:**

- Desks can be used for school supplies and personal items only
- Desks should remain clean and neat at all times
- Desks are subject to inspection at any time

#### **Personal Property:**

Book bags are authorized for students but must remain in a teacher-designated area.

- Book bags are subject to search at any time by the building administration
- Students are subject to being searched at any time by administration with reasonable suspicion
- Students discovered with unauthorized items will face consequences such as the loss of bookbag privileges. In such cases, they will be required to carry a transparent bookbag, which will be provided by the front office. Any violations of this rule will result in further action. If a student refuses to comply with the established regulations, the school administration reserves the right to impose a suspension.

- The Principals, Superintendent, or Dean of Students, may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to assist the school administrators in inspecting lockers, desks, bags, students, and their contents for purposes of enforcing school policies

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### ***Cafeteria/Lunch Rooms***

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#### **All students must obey all rules posted in the cafeteria:**

- No book bags or food should be taken into the cafeteria area during lunch
- Students are expected to say “please” and “thank you” to the people serving the food and monitoring the lunch area and treat all cafeteria personnel with respect
- Eating is only allowed in the cafeteria
- The table must be cleared off for those who will be coming next
- Eating and drinking are not permitted, in hallways, or playgrounds.
- The responsibility for keeping the dining atmosphere pleasant belongs to the students

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### ***Busing:***

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The same rules and expectations that apply to students on campus apply to students on school buses. Students are responsible for observing bus rules, following all directions given by the bus driver, demonstrating courtesy to others, and exercising responsible, safety-oriented judgment. Students who fail to do so or otherwise compromise the bus environment for themselves or others will be reported to the Dean of Students or Principal and may be suspended from riding the bus. The student’s family would be responsible for providing transportation during a bus suspension period.

All questions concerning the busing program should be directed to the Dean of Students or Principal.

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### ***Internet Usage:***

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Using the internet is a privilege, not a right. Acceptable use of the internet includes:

- Academic Research
- Class Assignments
- Club Participation
- Enrichment
- Computer Skills

Students are NOT permitted to use the internet for socializing, for example, Facebook, blogs, chat forums, e-mail and messaging systems, or access content that is not school appropriate. Students who do not use the internet appropriately or use proxies to get around the school’s filters will have their internet privileges suspended or removed.

# Ohio's Cell Phones in Schools Model Policy

To support school environments in which students can fully engage with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the Board of Education of **Focus Learning Academy** has determined the use of cell phones by students during school hours should be limited.

The objective of this policy is to strengthen **Focus Learning Academies** focus on learning, in alignment with our mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools.

## ***I. Research***

Research shows that student use of cell phones in schools has negative effects on student performance and mental health. Cell phones distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in smaller learning gains and lower test scores. Increased cell phone use has led to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in children.

## ***II. Applicability***

This policy applies to the use of cell phones by students while on school property during school hours.

## ***III. Use of cell phones***

Students are prohibited from using cell phones at all times. This includes Carrying Electronic Communication Device (means any device that is powered by batteries or electricity and that is capable of receiving, transmitting, or receiving and transmitting communications between two or more persons or a communication from or to a person).

## ***IV. Exception***

Nothing in this policy prohibits a student from using a cell phone for a purpose documented in the student's individualized education program developed under Chapter 3323 of the Ohio Revised Code or a plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 U.S.C. 794.

A student may use a cell phone to monitor or address a health concern.

## ***V. Cell phone storage***

Students shall keep their cell phones in a secure place, such as the student's locker, a closed backpack, or a storage device provided by the district, at all times when cell phone use is prohibited.

## ***VI. Discipline***

If a student violates this policy, a teacher or administrator shall take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures (check all that apply):

- ☒ Give the student a verbal warning and require the student to store the student's cell phone in accordance with this policy.
- ☒ Securely store the student's cell phone in a teacher- or administrator-controlled locker, bin, or drawer for the duration of the class or period.
- ☐ Place the student's cell phone in the school's central office for the remainder of the school day.

- ☒ Place the student's cell phone in the school's central office to be picked up by the student's parent or guardian.
- ☒ Schedule a conference with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the student's cell phone use.
- ☐ Other (insert as needed).

## **264.1 Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy**

The following policy must appear in any student handbook, and in any publications that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards for the School and students. Information regarding this policy must be incorporated into employee training materials. Annually, the School shall send a written statement describing the policy and the consequences for violating the policy to each student's custodial parent or guardian, either electronically or with report cards.

The School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying (including cyber-bullying) of any student on school property or at school-sponsored events (any event conducted on or off School property, including School buses and other School related vehicles, that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board). A safe and civil environment in the School is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, are conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the School's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate bullying.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means either of the following: (1) any intentional, written, verbal, electronic, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students has exhibited toward another particular student more than once, and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student; or (2) violence within a dating relationship. The definition of "harassment, intimidation, or bullying" also includes the above described acts which are electronically generated, stored or transmitted, sometimes called "cyberbullying."

The School reserves the right to discipline students' off campus behavior which substantially disrupts the School's educational process or mission, or threatens the safety or well-being of a Student or Staff member. Factors which may be considered in determining whether the behavior warrants discipline include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) whether the behavior created material and substantial disruption to the educational process or the School's mission due to the stress on the individual(s) victimized or the time invested by Staff in dealing with the behavior or its consequences; (2) whether a nexus to on-campus activities exists; (3) whether the behavior creates a substantial interference with a Student's or Staff member's security or right to educate and receive education; (4) whether the behavior invades the privacy of others; or (5) whether any threat is deemed to be a true threat by the administration or Board, using factors and guidelines set out by the courts or by common sense, reasonable person standards.

Some acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyber-bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying that they require a response either in the classroom, School building, or by law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students who commit an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension or expulsion. Due process procedures for suspension and expulsion will be followed, as provided for under R.C. 3313.66. The disciplinary procedures and Code of

Conduct of the School shall be followed and shall not infringe on any student's First Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

All school personnel, volunteers, and students or other persons are required to report prohibited incidents of which they are aware to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Anonymous communications, if necessary, may be made by telephone, electronic mail, or in writing. The Superintendent or his/her designee is then responsible for determining whether an alleged incident constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the reported incident, and prepare a report documenting the prohibited incident that is reported (See **Appendix 264.1-A** Form for Reporting Incidents of Harassment Intimidation and Bullying). Once an investigation is completed, if the reported incident has been substantiated, the Parent of any Student involved in the prohibited incident shall be notified. To the extent permitted by R.C. 3319.321 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. 1232g), Parents have access to any written reports pertaining to the prohibited incident, and, if the School has a website, the School shall post this summary of reported incidents on the School website. Semiannually, the Superintendent or his/her designee will provide the Board President with a written summary of all reported incidents. All School personnel, volunteers, and Students shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy promptly and in good faith.

The School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any victim or person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with School policies and procedures.

Students are prohibited from deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and Students who deliberately do so will be disciplined up to and including suspension or expulsion.

The School shall implement the following strategy for protecting victims from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and from retaliation: supervise and discipline offending students fairly and consistently; provide adult supervision during recess, lunch time, bathroom breaks and in the hallways during times of transition; maintain contact with parents and guardians of all involved parties; provide counseling for the victim if assessed that it is needed; inform School personnel of the incident and instruct them to monitor the victim and the offending party for the indications of harassing, intimidating and bullying behavior. Personnel are to intervene when prohibited behaviors are witnessed; check with the victim daily to ensure that there has been no incidents of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or retaliation from the offender or other parties.

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in seriousness and impact on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "harassment, intimidation, or bullying" will warrant disciplinary action whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (*i.e.*, detention, in- and out-of-school suspension, or expulsion) is a matter left in the professional discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee. The following procedure sets forth possible interventions for the Superintendent or his/her designee to enforce the prohibition against harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

### 1. Non-Disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, intimidating or bullying. If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern at the discretion of the School administration.

### 2. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. In- and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation. Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Directors, a committee of the board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Directors in accordance with Board policy. This consequence shall be reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and/or situations where past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Nothing in this policy prohibits a victim from seeking redress under any provision of Ohio law that may apply.

To the extent state or federal funds are appropriate, the School shall require that all students enrolled in the School be provided with age-appropriate instruction of this policy annually, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations. The School may form a prevention task force and/ or programs to educate students about this policy, such as holding an assembly on harassment, intimidation and bullying for Parents and Students, to raise the level of awareness and help prevent the prohibited conduct.

The School shall incorporate training on this policy into the in-service training required under R.C. 3319.073. The School may provide training, workshops, or courses to other Staff and volunteers who have direct contact with students.

*R.C. 3313.666, 3313.667, 3319.073*

See also Policy 271 Student Code of Conduct; Policy 273 Expulsion and Suspension; Policy 232 Technology and Internet Acceptable Use; Policy 234 Electronic Communication Devices; Policy 261 Student Expression; Policy 262 Student Bill of Rights/Responsibilities; and Policy 264 Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment.

**276 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Seclusion, and Restraint**

This policy governs the use of positive behavioral methods and emergency safety interventions including seclusion and restraint. Any use of emergency safety interventions that does not meet the requirements set forth below is prohibited.

**I. Definitions**

Aversive behavioral interventions: an intervention that is intended to induce pain or discomfort to a student for the purpose of eliminating or reducing maladaptive behaviors, including interventions such as: application of noxious, painful and/or intrusive stimuli, including any form of noxious, painful or intrusive spray, inhalants or tastes.

Chemical Restraint: a drug or medication used to control a student's behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is not (A) prescribed by a licensed physician, or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under State law, for the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition; and (B) administered as prescribed by the licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under State law.

De-escalation techniques: are strategically employed verbal and non-verbal interventions used to reduce the intensity of threatening behavior before a crisis situation occurs.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): is a collaborative problem-solving process that is used to describe the function or purpose that is served by a student's behavior. Understanding the function that an impeding behavior serves for the student assists directly in designing educational programs and developing behavior plans with a high likelihood of success.

Mechanical Restraint: (A) any method of restricting a student's freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal use of the student's body, using an appliance or device manufactured for this purpose; and (B) does not mean devices used by trained school personnel, or used by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including: (1) restraints for medical immobilization; (2) adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; or (3) vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.

Parent: (A) a biological or adoptive parent; (B) a guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State); (C) an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; (D) a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with O.A.C. 3301-51-05(E); and (E) any person identified in a judicial decree or order as the parent of the child or the person with authority to make educational decisions on behalf of the child.

Physical Escort: the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, waist, hip, or back for the purpose of inducing a student to move to a safe location.

Physical Restraint: the use of physical contact that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his/her arms, legs, body, or head freely. This does not include a physical escort,



mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint, or brief, but necessary, physical contact for the following purposes: (A) to break up a fight; (B) to knock a weapon away from student's possession; (C) to calm or comfort; (D) to assist a student in completing a task if the student does not resist the contact; or (E) to prevent an impulsive behavior that threatens the student's immediate safety.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: (A) a school-wide systematic approach to embed evidence-based practices and data driven decision making to improve school climate and culture in order to achieve improved academic and social outcomes and increase learning for all students, and (B) that encompasses a wide range of systemic and individualized positive strategies to reinforce desired behaviors, diminishes reoccurrences of challenging behaviors, and teaches appropriate behavior to students.

Positive Behavior Support Plan: design, implementation, and evaluation of individual or group instructional and environmental modifications, including programs of behavioral instruction, to produce significant improvements in behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of problematic behavior.

Prone Restraint: physical or mechanical restraint while the student is in a face down position.

Seclusion: involuntary isolation of a student in a room, enclosure, or space from which the student is prevented from leaving by physical restraint or by a closed door or other physical barrier.

Student: a child or adult aged three to twenty-one enrolled in the school.

Student personnel: teachers, principals, counselors, social workers, school resource officers, teachers' aides, psychologists, bus driver or other School Staff who interact directly with students.

Timeout: a behavioral intervention in which a student, for a limited and specified time, is separated from the class within the classroom or in a non-locked setting for the purpose of self-regulating and controlling his or her behavior. In a timeout, the student is not physically restrained or prevented from leaving the area by physical barriers.

## **II. Creation of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)**

The School shall establish an evidence-based school wide system of positive behavioral interventions and supports that will apply in all settings to all students and staff. The system shall include family involvement.

The School shall train staff to: (A) identify conditions such as where, under what conditions, with whom, and why specific inappropriate behavior may occur; and (B) conduct preventive assessments which include: (1) a review of existing data; (2) interviews with parents, family members, and students; and (3) examination of previous and existing behavioral intervention plans.

Based on the assessment data, the School shall develop and implement preventative behavioral interventions that (A) modify the environmental factors that escalate the inappropriate behavior; (B) support the attainment of appropriate behavior; and (C) use verbal de-escalation to defuse potentially violent dangerous behavior.

## **III. Prohibited Practices**

The following are prohibited under all circumstances, including emergency safety situations:

Date adopted 5/2020

- A. Prone restraint;
- B. Corporal punishment;
- C. Child endangerment as defined in R.C. 2919.22;
- D. Seclusion or restraint of preschool students (if any);
- E. Deprivation of basic needs;
- F. Restraint that unduly risks serious harm or needless pain to the student, including the intentional, knowing, or reckless use of any of the following:
  - i. Any method that is capable of causing loss of consciousness or harm to the neck or restricting respiration in any way;
  - ii. Pinning down with knees to torso, head and/or neck;
  - iii. Using pressure points, pain compliance and joint manipulation techniques;
  - iv. Dragging or lifting of a student's hair or ear or by any type of mechanical restraint;
  - v. Using students or untrained staff to assist with the hold or restraint;
  - vi. Securing a student to another student or to a fixed object; or
  - vii. Using any other technique used to unnecessarily cause pain.
- G. Any physical restraint that impacts the student's primary mode of communication;
- H. Mechanical or chemical restraints;
- I. Aversive behavioral interventions; or
- J. Seclusion of students in a locked room.

#### **IV. Restraint**

Restraint may be used only in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, when there is an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or to others and no other safe and effective intervention is possible, and, when performed by trained staff, except in the case of an unavoidable emergency situation. The physical restraint must not obstruct the student's ability to breathe.

Staff must:

- A. Be appropriately trained to protect the care, welfare, dignity, and safety of the student;
- B. Continually observe the student in restraint for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- C. Use verbal strategies and research based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control;
- D. The least amount of force necessary should be used;
- E. Remove the student from physical restraint immediately when the immediate risk of physical harm to self or others has dissipated;
- F. Conduct a de-briefing including all involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- G. Complete all required reports and document staff observations of the students.

## **V. Seclusion**

Seclusion shall only be used if: it is a last resort for the student to regain control; it is age and developmentally appropriate; there is an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or others; and there is no other safe and effective intervention.

The room or area used for seclusion cannot be locked, and must provide for adequate space, lighting, ventilation, clear visibility, and the safety of students.

Seclusion shall not be used as: a substitute for an education program, less restrictive alternatives, inadequate staffing, staff training in positive behavior supports and crisis prevention and intervention; a form of discipline or punishment; a means to coerce, retaliate; or in a manner that endangers the students.

Staff must:

- A. Be appropriately trained to protect the care, welfare, dignity, and safety of the student;
- B. Continually observe the student in seclusion for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- C. Use verbal strategies and research based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control as quickly as possible;
- D. Remove the student when the immediate risk of physical harm to self or others has dissipated;
- E. Conduct a de-briefing including involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- F. Complete all required reports and document the observation of the student.

## **VI. Functional Behavioral Assessment**

If the student repeatedly engages in dangerous behavior that leads to instances of restraint and/or seclusion, the School shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) to identify the student's needs and more effective ways of addressing those needs. If necessary, this FBA should be followed by a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) that incorporates appropriate positive behavioral interventions. The use of an FBA or a BIP does not necessarily mean the student is a special education student in itself, but may be used for non-disabled as well as differently-abled or special education students.

## **VII. Training and Professional Development**

The School shall train all staff working with students annually on the requirements of this policy and shall keep written or electronic documentation of the type of training and the participants. The School shall have a plan on training staff working with students, as necessary, to implement PBIS on a system-wide basis. The School shall ensure that an adequate number of personnel in each building are trained in crisis management and de-escalation techniques and that their training is kept current.

## **VIII. Required Data and Reporting**

Staff must document each use of seclusion or restraint and report it to the building administration and the parent immediately. A written report of the incident must be created, given to the parent

within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, and placed in the student's file. This report is subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The School shall report information concerning its use of seclusion and restraint annually to, and as requested by, the Ohio Department of Education.

The School shall make this policy available to parents annually, and shall post this policy on its website.

### **IX. Monitoring and Complaint Procedures**

The School shall establish a procedure for parents to submit written complaints regarding an incident of seclusion or restraint. The Principal or his/her designee must investigate every complaint and respond to the parent in writing within thirty (30) days of filing the complaint.

Parent(s) may choose to file a complaint with the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Exceptional Children, in accordance with the complaint procedures available concerning students with disabilities.

*O.A.C. 3301-35-15; R.C. 3319.46.*

***Parent and Student Handbook Agreement***

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Parents and students are required to read the 2025-26 Focus Learning Academy handbook and sign that they agree to the policies and procedures of the school. Signing this confirms your agreement and responsibilities as members of the school and mission statement. You agree to adhere to all rules and policies listed in this handbook and the rules of individual teachers and staff members of Focus Learning Academy.

**Parent/Guardian Handbook Agreement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the 2025-26 FLA Student Handbook. I will assist my child in following the guidelines in the handbook and accept the consequences of their actions and my responsibility as their Parent/Legal Guardian.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Student Handbook Agreement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the 2025-26 FLA Student Handbook. I will follow the handbook guidelines and accept my actions' consequences.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date