



# HANDBOOK 2010 - 2011

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## Founders

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Linda Allen

Malcolm Brown

Heidi Clarke

Tom Griffin

Joan Heffernan

James Luckey

June Morrone

Sandy Quarto

Paul Rak

George Rezendes

Paul Sheppard

Claire Warren

Joyce Werden

## Governing Board

Anna B. James, Director

Carl Davis, Business Manager

Laura McMahon, Chair

Michael Seroussi, Vice Chair

Jen Spangle, Secretary

Richard Bennett

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## Staff

The IDCS is staffed with experienced professionals whose goal is to provide children with a nurturing, stimulating and differentiated program.

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## **Mission Statement**

Our goal at the Integrated Day Charter School is to facilitate the development of students who will be thoughtful. These students will care and will independently seek knowledge. With a strong sense of self-awareness and respect, our graduates will be able to adapt to an ever-changing world.

## **Vision**

The Integrated Day program is an alternative program which adheres to a developmental approach. Curricular content corresponds to that of the CT State Standards, but the methods used will differ dramatically from the conventional classroom. The ID program appreciates and acknowledges that children pass through various stages on their journey to adulthood. The philosophy underlying the program recognizes that to be actively involved and truly engaged, a learner must have input into both the content of the learning as well as the process by which the knowledge is acquired. Education is viewed as a whole, a dynamic activity which extends beyond the classroom and the school and penetrates the world of the learner. To understand a subject fully, several subject areas must be incorporated, synthesized and investigated prior to the acquisition of true knowledge. The students are expected to identify areas of personal interest, investigate these areas, incorporate various subjects into their investigation and then present what they have learned to the class. Study skills and life skills, such as planning, problem solving, creative thinking and budgeting of time, are directly taught in relationship to a topic which is of personal interest to the student. The culminating exercise is an oral presentation which is viewed by his or her peers and videotaped for portfolio assessment. Personal projects allow the students to have input into the curriculum, allow for greater creativity and instill a sense of autonomy, personal pride and intellectual curiosity.

## **Admission Policy**

The Integrated Day Charter School is a free public school open to all children in Norwich and surrounding areas. Transportation is guaranteed to students in the Norwich school district. Up to 15% of the school population may be admitted from towns other than Norwich. Other towns may elect to provide transportation.

Families interested in participating in the program offered at the Integrated Day Charter School will participate in an informational and educational admission process. The admission process will allow prospective students and their families to learn about the IDCS and will articulate the difference between the IDCS and traditional education. This process is designed to allow students and their families to make an informed choice.

If the number of students applying exceeds the number of spaces available at a given grade level, a waiting list will be established. Students will remain on the waiting list until the caregiver requests removal. If we cannot reach the caregiver using the contact information given on the initial application, the student will be removed from the waiting list. Student applications are available at our web site, [www.idcs.org](http://www.idcs.org), or through the school office.

If a child leaves the program, the first student on the waiting list will fill the remaining space. If we are at maximum enrollment of non-Norwich students (15%), the first Norwich student will be

contacted. If the number of students applying for preschool exceeds the number of available spaces, a lottery will be held to fill the spaces and to establish a waiting list.

## **School/Family Partnership**

### **Governing Board**

The IDCS Governing Board consists of four teachers, four parents and four community members. This Board is concerned with the strategic planning and operation of the school. They are caretakers of the long range, "big picture" plans for the school. The four major committees of the Board are Governance, Planning, Curriculum and Finance. The Board constructs task forces from time to time to deal with short range issues. The school administration is responsible for the day to day operational decisions. All meetings are open to the public and are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm. in the IDCS Conference Room.

### **Foundation**

The IDCS Foundation Board is a non-profit entity (501 © (3)) whose goal is to raise awareness, inform/educate and raise money from corporations/businesses, the general public, and IDCS families. Because it is separate from the school, it can apply for grants for which the school might not be eligible. The goal of the Foundation is to raise enough money to establish and sustain an endowment so that the school can draw (and eventually benefit) from the interest.

The Foundation is currently made up of parents and community members who have expertise in business, law, finance, and the pulse of the surrounding community.

### **School Council**

The School Council is responsible for communicating policy, grant writing, planning parent workshops and special events, aligning school activities with the mission and vision of the school, and approving spending of IDEA funds.

The voting members of the council are the director, three non-rotating teachers, classroom teachers on a rotating basis, one parent from each multi-age level, and two student representatives from the seventh and eighth grade. The council meets at 3:45 on the first Thursday of the month.

Parents, students, and staff are welcome to attend School Council in a non-voting capacity.

### **IDEA: Our Family/Teacher Organization**

The Integrated Day Education Alliance is open to all. This meeting of the IDCS community includes activities such as guest speakers, informational meetings, sharing food, Multicultural Festival, Environmental Fair, Health and Fitness Fair, Math and Science Night, Research Night, Hot Fudge

and Fiction, Gathering and Giving, Game Night, among others. IDEA functions are typically on the first Thursday of most months.

***The committee to plan IDEA events*** meets on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to help with at least one event. Sign up is at the first IDEA meeting.

## **Family Involvement/ Volunteering**

Family involvement is one of the basic tenets of the Integrated Day Charter School. Upon enrolling their children, caregivers accept that they will be called upon to become active participants in the educational process. Parents, students, and instructors work together to establish a developmentally appropriate program for each student.

There are opportunities for this involvement in a variety of arenas. **Caregivers are expected to volunteer inside or outside of the school.** Please read the **Parent Volunteer** handout in your home visit packet. The classroom teacher will contact caregivers throughout the year to schedule volunteer time in the classroom and to secure volunteers for other activities. Volunteers will be expected to follow conduct expectations and sign a confidentiality form. Volunteers are asked to sign in at the main entrance before going to the classrooms.

### **Dining Room Volunteers**

Volunteers are always needed to assist students in setting up and clearing tables and to provide role models. Please call the school if you would like to help in our dining room on a given day. Parents are always encouraged to dine with their children.

## **Home/School Communication**

The staff at the IDCS will strive to keep parents informed of all aspects of their child's experience in school. Some of the resources to meet this goal are voice messaging, conferences (please see the school calendar for dates), phone calls, handbook, school events, volunteer time, web page, email, home/school contracts, newsletters and narrative reports. These reports address all curricular areas as well as personal, social and physical development.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, the professional staff conducts home visits. Teachers go to the homes of the children who will be in their classroom, encouraging open dialogue and an avenue for communication.

A **voice messaging system** is in place and each family has a mailbox on the system. Teachers leave generic and student specific messages. Caregivers are able to leave messages for the instructors as well. This encourages communication and eliminates "phone tag." Voice messaging and the publishing of a School Directory allows for family-to-family communication.

Each family will be given a password and access to the voice mail system by which IDCS teachers and staff communicate on a regular basis with the home. In order to stay informed, at least one adult family member should listen to messages left in their mailbox on a weekly basis. Information on how to use the voice mail system is in the Home Visit Packet.

Families are also given the option of receiving general voice mail announcements via email, as well as weekly handouts. This cuts down on the quantity of paper notices going home. Whenever possible, emails to caregivers are sent on Wednesdays.

Since instructional time is very precious and interruptions can be disruptive, family members are asked to refrain from calling the school to speak to students unless an emergency occurs. Also, students should only use the phone with permission from a teacher. **Do not call your child on cell phones as this is a violation of our electronic device policy. Students should not be calling caregivers unless a change has been made in bussing or pickup for that day.**

Family members are also asked not to interrupt teachers while they are teaching.

## **Communication of School Philosophy, Objectives and Programs**

Workshops are provided periodically to facilitate understanding of the philosophy and methods employed at the Integrated Day Charter School. Workshops are provided in curricular areas, parenting skills, Responsive Classroom techniques and other topics of interest.

### **\*Responsive Classroom**

The Responsive Classroom philosophy and training will provide direct instruction for staff members and students in conflict resolution and proper social behavior.

Students in the Integrated Day Charter School will:

- have input into classroom rules and guidelines. These rules and guidelines will be prominently displayed and signed by all members of the school community.
- be honest and forthright in dealing with social and academic issues.
- exhibit proper behavior, not because they fear being caught, but because they know what is right and good and strive to achieve that goal.
- recognize their ownership of the school and will therefore have a personal stake in the Integrated Day Charter School. This will be reflected in their behavior and care of their physical surroundings.

\*Northeast Foundation for Children website – [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

## **Support Services**

By law, the sending school district must finance the special education services for IDCS special needs students. In-service workshops have been provided by the school and the social worker to identify area agencies to educators.

An inclusion model is employed for delivery of special education services. Special education teachers work in all classrooms and with individual students to insure that IEP objectives are met.

A team consisting of a psychologist or social worker, the classroom teacher and special education teacher, meet regularly to monitor progress.

A social worker is employed by the IDCS. Teachers may refer students to her for counseling.

## Homework

Homework is seen as necessary for academic growth. It is also an opportunity for family members to become familiar with the work being completed at school. The students at the IDCS have homework every evening. Not all homework assignments include a written product. If no written work is assigned, a student should work on his or her personal research project or read a book of choice. The amount of time spent on homework increases as the student gets older. The general guidelines below do not reflect the needs and pace of every student. Some students may complete assignments quickly while others take a bit more time. The following guidelines are suggested:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Minutes Each Day</u>
Kindergarten	up to 15 minutes
1	up to 20 minutes
2	up to 20 minutes
3	up to 30 minutes
4	up to 45 minutes*
5	up to 60 minutes*
6	up to 60 minutes*
7	up to 60 minutes*
8	up to 60 minutes*

Research projects are completed at all grade levels and students should work on them at home. It is impossible to complete all facets of a project during school hours. Research should be considered an ongoing homework assignment and the final presentation should be considered a form of performance assessment.

\*For students above third grade, this time should be in addition to approximately one half hour per day of silent reading or being read to by an adult.

## Overtime

Overtime shall be given by a teacher at the IDCS for one of the following reasons:

- a. The student has failed to complete work on time.
- b. The quality of the work is not up to the student's capabilities.
- c. The student is not using class time well.

Overtime will be held after school on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. with adult supervision, for students in fifth grade and up. An overtime given on Monday will be served the next day and an overtime given on Thursday or Friday will be served the following Tuesday. All other overtimes will be served the following day. Parents will be notified by voice mail

and in writing. Parents will be required to pick up their child at 4:30 p.m. Students can elect to stay for overtime to work on homework assignments and should arrive prepared to work.

Failure to attend a required overtime will result in a make-up overtime the following session (i.e. If a student misses Tuesday, he or she would go on Wednesday). Two such occurrences will result in an in-school suspension. Three occurrences will result in a Home/School Conference meeting with possible suspension from school.

## Preschool Hours

The preschool hours are as follows:

A.M. Class - 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.

P.M. Class - 12:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Morning preschoolers will go home at noon when we have a noon dismissal. On half days with a 1 p.m. dismissal, they are dismissed at the regular time. Transportation for preschoolers on noon dismissal days will be on the regular school buses, with their siblings. The p.m. preschool class will not meet on half days.

If there is a delay due to inclement weather, the a.m. preschool class will not meet. The p.m. preschool class will not meet if school is dismissed early due to inclement weather.

## School Hours

The day begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Please do not leave your children at school before 7:45 a.m. Caregivers who are picking up children at the end of the day should park in the Crown St. or Thermos Ave. lots and wait in front of the lobby in the P.E. wing at 3:00, when "walkers" are released. Please make note of half day dismissal times as noted on the school calendar.

## Dropping Off Students

Caregivers who are bringing children to school should enter via Crown Street, drop children off at the stop sign and exit via Thermos Avenue. Please make sure children are ready beforehand, since there is often a line at the stop sign. **Children should only exit vehicles on the right hand side to avoid the left-hand lane of traffic.** Parents may also park in the Crown St. or Thermos Ave. lot and walk children into the school. School personnel will be available from 7:45 a.m. until 8 a.m. to help children enter the school safely. Please do not drop children in front of the school before 8 a.m. Buses arrive and depart at this time and entering the bus area presents a safety hazard. All children should be in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m.

## Picking Up Students

Caregivers must park in the Crown St. or Thermos Ave. lot if they wish to pick up their child at dismissal time. **First Student does not permit bus drivers to pick up students if any cars**

**are double parked in front of the school.** Buses are arriving and departing from 2:50 until 3:30 p.m.; attempting to park in front of the school presents a hazard to the children.

## **Parking**

Since parking at the school is limited, parents are asked to park in the Crown Street or Thermos Ave. parking lot or designated IDCS parking spots, unless they are dropping off a lunch, picking up a student for early dismissal, or similar circumstances. Only staff members, visitors (non-parent) and guest speakers are permitted to park in front of the school. Handicap spaces are available along the fence facing the river for caregivers with handicap permits. **No one should park in spaces provided for condominium owners or their guests, marked "Permit Parking for Residents Only" or "Visitor Parking for Thermos Residents Only". Do not double park or park illegally or you will risk towing.** The limited number of spaces belonging to the school are clearly marked "IDCS Parking". Parking is prohibited at all times in the FIRE LANE. If you are volunteering at the school, please park in the Crown Street or Thermos Ave. lot. *The first two spots next to the white building in the lower lot are reserved for caregivers dropping off or picking up their children from the daycare (marked "30 minute parking").*

See page 21 for a map of the property/school. **Parking is not permitted along Crown St.**

## **Attendance**

### **See Aug. 1 letter from Amy Sheppard in the Home Visit Packet**

The law requires regular attendance of students enrolled in a public school. A parent or guardian must submit appropriate documentation to the State Department of Education if he or she chooses not to enroll the child.

Truancy is defined as four unexcused absences in one month or ten unexcused absences in a school year. A habitually truant student is defined as a student having twenty or more unexcused absences in a school year. **Student absences are considered unexcused unless the caregiver calls the school the day(s) of the absence or sends a written note when the child returns to school.**

The IDCS Attendance and Truancy Policy is available at [www.idcs.org](http://www.idcs.org) or in the main office.

### **Absentee Call-in Procedure**

When a child is absent from school, the caregiver is expected to call the school each day the child is absent or to state the length of the absence and the expected return date. As a courtesy, please call the school before 9 a.m. on the day of absence. Our office personnel will call home if your child is absent. (This is a safety procedure to be sure the parent is aware the student is not in school that day). *Speaking with the nurse does not excuse an absence. Caregivers must call on the day of the absence or send a written note when the child returns to school, stating the reason for the absence.*

**Dentist and physician appointments should not be made during school hours unless absolutely necessary.** Absences due to a dentist's or doctor's appointment will only be excused by providing a note from the dentist/doctor when returning to school.

**If your child is absent more than five days, a physician's note must be presented when he/she returns to school.** If your child is out on two or more days preceding a weekend and does not return to school on Monday, the weekend days are counted as absences.

### **Tardiness**

Parents should make every effort to make sure students arrive no later than 8 a.m. Teachers conduct a daily "Morning Meeting" at the start of the day and students who are late miss valuable information and community building. **All students who arrive after 8 a.m. must sign in. If your child will arrive after 9 a.m., please call the school so that your child's lunch will not be cancelled.**

Our records are closely scrutinized by the State Department of Education. Excessive tardiness or absenteeism is documented and must be reported.

### **Extended Absence**

The IDCS Governing Board and the School Council strongly recommend consistent school attendance. If there is a family emergency that warrants an extended absence when school is in session, it is the responsibility of the parents to notify the teacher and the director **in writing** at least one week ahead so that work can be provided for the student to complete during missed time. Once the child submits the completed work, the absences will be excused. This procedure is used so that students do not miss required assignments. Excused absences also mean your child will not have to be reported as truant (4 unexcused absences in a month, or 10 in a year). *Caregivers also need to call the school office to give the length of the absence and reason for the absence.*

It is worth noting that several academic studies have established that consistent attendance represents the highest correlation with school success. Further, the State Department of Education closely monitors our attendance records, among other documents. This is a very serious matter.

We are a community of learners at the IDCS. We are best served when we are a full community, pursuing our common goals on a day-to-day schedule.

### **Emergency Dismissal Procedures**

Should an exceptional situation occur between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. (e.g. extreme weather or school maintenance breakdown), it might become necessary to close the school before the normal dismissal time. For that reason, it is requested that parents provide the office with the following up-to-date information:

- 1) current home, cell & work phone numbers, email address
- 2) name and current phone numbers (home/cell/work) of **THREE** people to call in an emergency

If the family moves or changes phone numbers during the school year, the school should be notified immediately. Please keep in mind we may not be able to reach you in an emergency if contact information is not current. **Students may not go home with anyone but their parent, without prior written notice-no exceptions.**

## **Snow Day**

If school has to be canceled or delayed due to hazardous conditions, it will be broadcast on WICH 1310 and also on Channel 3 and Channel 4. Early dismissals are put on our web site ([www.idcs.org](http://www.idcs.org)) as soon as we receive them. Keep in mind we follow the Norwich Public School announcements. The p.m. preschool class will not meet if school is dismissed early due to inclement weather.

## **Health Regulations (Nurse's Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.)**

The health of the children is a cooperative effort between the home and the school. The home should provide each child with a good night's rest and nourishing breakfast. **No child should be sent to school with a severe cold, fever of 100 or higher, sore throat, vomiting, rash or any other symptom of a contagious disease.** Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease.

### **Administering Medication**

- A parent/guardian must provide a completed authorization form signed by a physician, dentist or registered nurse before medication (prescription or over the counter) can be administered. The school nurse or a medication trained classroom teacher will give medication during school hours.
- Medication must be brought to the school nurse by the parent/guardian in a physician, dentist or pharmacy prepared and labeled container. Medication should not exceed a 45 day supply.
- Medication should be picked up by a parent/guardian within one week of the last day of school or whenever a medication is discontinued. Medication not picked up within one week will be discarded according to Connecticut State regulations.

## **Lunch Program**

We will be serving hot lunch beginning the first day of school, September 1 (1 p.m. dismissal). Menus are in your Home Visit Packet. Milk (and juice for students who are lactose intolerant) will be available (\$.40). If you would like your child to receive a hot lunch as soon as school starts, please send enough money for your child's account. If your child orders lunch on occasion, you can pay on that given day, however if your child will be eating on a daily basis, you are asked to pay one week in advance for your child's lunch. Please keep track of your child's balance by marking the hot lunch days on your school calendar (p. 1 of this handbook). When his/her balance is low, please send your next payment.

## **Free or Reduced Lunch**

Free or reduced lunch applications are distributed at the home visit and should be sent in with other forms on the first day of school. Caregivers will be notified as soon as the applications are processed. Applications must be submitted each year. **Free/reduced lunch applications can be also be mailed to the school so that eligibility can be determined before the first day of school.**

**All IDCS families are asked to submit this form since the data affects our grant eligibility.**

Lunch is not served when there is a noon dismissal.

## **Lactose Intolerance/Food Allergies**

If your child is lactose intolerant, please notify the school nurse so that modifications can be made. For students with food allergies requiring epipens, please ask your pediatrician for the medical form that is required and submit it to the nurse. Schools are required to have documentation on file to substantiate any substitutions or modifications that are made in the required meal patterns.

The IDCS has a Plan for Management of Life Threatening Food Allergies, available for parental review. Students with life threatening allergies, as indicated by the caregiver on the yearly registration form, will be asked to complete a Systemic Allergy Record and the child's physician will be asked to provide a letter detailing instructions to follow in the event of an allergic reaction at school. A peanut free table is provided for students with nut allergies.

## **Snacks**

Childhood obesity and poor nutrition have become a nationwide problem. Please provide healthy snacks, such as fruit and nuts, rather than candy and processed snack foods, when sending food to school.

## **Transportation (First Student: 886-4194)**

The Norwich Board of Education is required by law to transport students residing in Norwich who attend the Integrated Day Charter School. First Student is the company providing transportation services. **If a student does not reside in Norwich, he/she cannot use the First Student buses.** Schedules, rules and routes are designed and implemented by First Student. Any comments about service should be directed to the Norwich Board of Education (823-6284) or First Student (886-4194).

Buses arrive at school between 7:45 and 8 a.m. each day. Students are picked up by First Student buses in the morning along with parochial school students and brought to Kelly Middle School. They immediately board shuttle buses for the charter school. Parents should receive a bus pass from First Student in late August listing the bus number and approximate pickup and drop off times. All afternoon bus runs deliver children directly home.

Students can be bussed to established day care centers in Norwich after school instead of home addresses. However, home day care centers need prior approval from First Student. **Please call the school if:**

- your child's pick up or drop off point has changed over the summer
- you have a change in address, home, work or emergency phone numbers
- you need to change your child's pickup or drop off point during the school year

Norwich students are not permitted to bring friends home on the bus unless they have a written note from the parent, signed by main office personnel. Preston and Lisbon buses do allow it.

We must have current contact information in the event your child misses the bus.

### **Bus Discipline Guidelines**

All IDCS students are expected to stay in their seats and obey all bus rules. If a student receives three discipline referrals, the student will be suspended from riding on the bus for two days. If two additional referrals are given, the student will be suspended for one week. Another referral will result in a two week suspension. Parents may call First Student and request a meeting to view the video tape made on the day of the referral.

### **School Policies and Procedures**

All IDCS policies are available for review at the school or at our web site, [www.idcs.org](http://www.idcs.org).

#### **Visiting Policy**

All parents volunteering or visiting the school after eight a.m. must sign in at the front desk.

Many visitors come to the Integrated Day Charter School. Visitors are asked to call ahead and schedule a visit. Parents, caregivers, and visitors must enter and exit the building through the main entrance. Community members and other interested parties are encouraged to visit the IDCS. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are the best days to visit. Student or parent tour guides may be provided to escort visitors through the building or a floor plan for a self-guided tour will be provided.

Upon entering the classrooms, visitors are asked to refrain from engaging instructors in conversation. Instructional time is extremely precious and teachers must focus entirely on the needs of the students. It is requested that visitors strive to be as unobtrusive as possible. Any visitor is invited to schedule an appointment with a staff member if he or she wishes to discuss the philosophy or methodology implemented at the school. The student guide can answer most questions.

Former students are asked to call in advance if they wish to visit. Visitations begin at 3 p.m. so that instruction is not interrupted. However, former students are invited to volunteer in the preK-4 classrooms during school hours if they call a day ahead of their visit.

## **Recess**

Students will have one fifteen-minute recess period during the school day. At this time students will go outdoors, weather permitting. For safety's sake on the playground, we ask students to:

- stay off the bank.
- go DOWN the slide, feet first and one at a time.
- climb UP the plastic rock.
- stay off the "real" rock.

## **Dress Code**

1. No bandanas or hats within the school building or indoors at any school functions.
2. No chains, spikes or studs can be worn, except necklaces, bracelets and anklets.
3. No clothing that advertises alcoholic beverages, drug culture, violence, sexual harassment, swear words, etc.
4. No gang colors, gang paraphernalia or clothing adjustments, such as pant ankles rolled up or pocket hanging out.
5. No slip dresses, strap tanks, cut-off jeans, short shorts, halters, one strap tops, tube tops, swimsuits or apron tops, bare midriff tops
6. Underwear straps cannot be visible.
7. Boxers or other underwear cannot show. T-shirts must cover undergarments.
8. No pajamas, loungewear, or flannel pants.

## **Code of Conduct**

The rules of conduct have been established to reflect the mission (see page 6) of the Integrated Day Charter School. It is assumed that all students are capable of making choices and accepting responsibility for their actions. Redirection of student behavior will be handled in a respectful manner.

## **Suspension/Expulsion**

The Integrated Day Charter School adheres to a zero tolerance policy with regard to physical violence, possession of a dangerous weapon and/or possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia. Such infractions may result in suspension or expulsion. In any case, the parent will be notified by phone and/or in writing. The parent or guardian may be expected to meet with the IDCS director and to transport the child home.

If a parent is asked to come to school to pick up a student who is being disruptive or has committed a level II-III behavior as stated in the IDCS Code of Conduct, the student will be suspended and in severe cases expelled.

If a student is expelled, a hearing will be held by the IDCS Governing Board to review evidence and determine proper consequences. The parent or guardian of the expelled student will be notified of the date and time of the hearing.

A detailed revised Suspension and Expulsion Policy is available in the office for parental review or at our web site, [www.idcs.org](http://www.idcs.org).

## **Health Insurance**

Public Act 07-04 requires caregivers to report annually whether or not the student has health insurance (on annual yellow registration form). Information about the HUSKY program, a state health insurance program, is provided in Addendum B of the Free & Reduced Lunch packet given to all caregivers at the Home Visit.

## **Holidays**

Our school is comprised of many ethnic and religious groups. Out of respect for all of the IDCS families, we choose not to have holiday celebrations. We do include educational opportunities to discuss cultures and communities through history, music, art, and the academics. The school has a long history of its own traditions such as All School, Bread Feast, Multicultural Festival, and the Annual Picnic which provide an opportunity for us to come together. We believe that celebrating these traditions strengthen the fabric of our school community.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are celebrated (or not) in many different ways by children and their families. We feel it is important to acknowledge every child's uniqueness and individuality but prefer (as with holidays) to leave the actual birthday celebration to the family and the home.

## **Invitations**

Invitations to parties (birthday, graduation, etc.) should be mailed to the homes of classmates and not brought to school. When all students in a class are not invited, feelings can be hurt.

## **Handouts**

If you are making copies of a handout to go home with students, it must be reviewed and approved by the director beforehand. Handouts are distributed to classrooms on Wednesdays.

## **E-mails to Parents**

If you would like a school related handout scanned and sent to parents via email (usually on Wednesdays), it must be approved by the director beforehand and submitted by Monday of the week you would like it sent out.

## **Field Trip Policy**

Incorporating real life learning experiences can enrich and provide opportunities that cannot be duplicated within the school building. Due to transportation constraints field trips cannot generally extend beyond the school day.

Field trips shall:

- be of sound educational value.
- provide opportunities not available to the student within the school building.
- make the best use of instructional time.
- be approved by the director.

Permission to go on field trips must be granted by the caregiver with the exception of trips to Otis Library. School age siblings of students going on field trips will not be able to accompany a brother, sister or parent on that field trip, as they need to be in school.

## **Electronic Devices Policy**

Except as specifically authorized by the teacher for a particular event or purpose, headphones, cameras, portable CD players, radios, MP3 players, I-pods, electronic games or similar devices, may not be brought to the IDCS. (Teachers may allow the use of school-owned devices in their own classrooms). If a student is observed using such devices, he or she will be required to surrender it. For a first offense the device will be returned to the student at the end of the day once a parent or guardian has been notified. After the first offense, the device will only be returned to a parent or guardian.

The use of cellular telephones is not permitted at school or school events. Cell phones must be turned off and contained in backpacks. Cell phones found in the possession of students during school hours will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian.

IDCS is NOT responsible for loss or theft of any personal electronic device.

## **Request for Educational Records from Other Schools**

When a student is transferring to another school, a parent must sign a Release of Records form before records can be sent. An exception is a child's health record, which can be sent to the school whenever a request is made by the school the child will be attending. A parental signature on the Release of Records form also indicates the student is withdrawing from the IDCS.

## **Educational Records and Annual Notification Policy**

The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that all record keeping and notification requirements under federal and state statutes shall be carried out by the IDCS.

Parents are permitted to inspect and review educational records regarding their child. An eligible student is permitted to obtain and review records with their parent when they have a reason to examine them. Access may not be denied to the appropriate parties.

Personally identifiable information from a student's educational records may not be disclosed without the prior written consent of the student's parent, except as otherwise permitted by administrative regulations to other school officials within the school who have been determined by the school to have legitimate educational interests.

Parents at IDCS are provided with an opportunity to seek the correction of the student's educational records through a request in writing to the director to review and amend the records or to hold a group meeting with the director, classroom teachers and pertinent specialists. Furthermore, the parent has the right to place a statement in the educational records of the student.

Access to student records are to be made within five days of the date of request, earlier if possible.

Student educational records are confidential and are secure.

Orderly retention and disposition per applicable state statutes of student records is followed.

## **Hazardous Materials Plan**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (40 CFR 763.93) requires that written notice be given indicating the Integrated Day Charter School has a Management Plan for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos-containing materials found in the building. No asbestos containing materials were used in the construction of the IDCS and no asbestos containing materials were found in the building prior to the renovation project. Documentation is on file.

## **Pesticide Plan**

The IDCS has a Pest Management Plan. Parents, guardians and staff who would like to be notified of pesticide applications may make such request by submitting a written request to Carl Davis, Business Manager at the Integrated Day Chart School.

## Internet

IDCS Computer and Internet Agreement and Permission Form After reading the Acceptable Use Policy below, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions outlined. The signatures of both student and parent/legal guardian (next page) are mandatory before access may be granted to the Internet. This document, which incorporates the rules and code of ethics below, as an **Acceptable Use Policy**, reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

### Acceptable Use Policy

- Students will only use the Internet or Email with permission and supervision.
- Students will only use the computers for educational and instructional activities.
- Students will only use computers before or after school with assigned supervision.
- Students will follow rules of etiquette and safety, including polite language.
- Students will obey state, federal and local copyright, privacy and harassment laws.
- Students will take proper care of school equipment and files.
- Students will only use the media center with permission and adult supervision.
- Students will have written administrator approval to use the school logo/name online.

**(see final page for required signatures)**

**I have read the Handbook and reviewed it with my child.**

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM TEACHER ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

As parent/legal guardian of the student below, I grant permission for the named student to access the school's computer including networks, the Internet and Email for school work only. I have read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy. **Either my child has read the policy or I have read and discussed this with my child.** I understand that some materials found on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore, I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to him/her appropriate standards for selecting, sharing, and/or exploring information and media. I agree to hold harmless the Integrated Day Charter School and employees for any misuse to the computer services networks that my child commits.

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Use of Voice Mail Commitment**

**Voice mail is a vital part of communication at the charter school. A commitment to the use of voice mail on a regular basis (several times a week) is necessary for your child's success. Teachers and other staff members leave frequent messages, including personal messages about your child.**

**If you experience difficulty using the voice messaging system, please call the office for assistance. Please indicate your commitment to check your voice mail box weekly.**

**Parent signature:** \_\_\_\_\_