



Family Handbook

2021-2022

Dear Launch Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! We are honored that you have chosen to be a part of our community at Launch. A strong, collaborative community is the key to our success as a school. You have put your trust in us to deliver an outstanding education in every way and we know that together, with your partnership, we will see our students grow as individuals and achieve excellence in so many ways throughout the year!

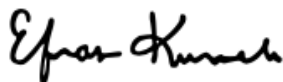
We are Crew. Crew is our Launch family. As an EL Education school, we are guided by a belief that our faculty and staff, students and families work *together* to achieve more than we thought possible. We are guided by our Habits of Heart and Mind - *Integrity and Stewardship, Collaboration and Kindness, Imagination and Spirit, and Dedication and Practice.* These Habits were selected by a panel of families, teachers, alumni, and students to ensure that we are always guided towards excellence and high levels of student achievement.

Everyone in the Launch Crew works together to bring our Habits to life in service of fulfilling our mission: *Launch will prepare students to thrive in college and careers by providing a public education rooted in active learning experiences and powerful character development.* The work that lies ahead will be challenging at times, but even the greatest challenge is overcome through teamwork and support. By working together, as Crew, we will ensure that this mission is a reality for all Launch students.

At Launch, we say ***Ubuntu: I am because we are and we are because I am.*** This notion, which originated in South Africa, guides us as a restorative justice school. The strength of our relationships is the foundation for all we do together. We strive to ensure that every member of our community knows they belong and are essential to our success.

Parents, guardians, students, siblings and other family members and caregivers – welcome to the Launch Crew. On behalf of our entire faculty and staff, we are thrilled to support your child in *THRIVING* each and every day.. We hope that you share this excitement, and know that our doors are open to you. Always feel free to reach out with any thoughts, questions, ideas or concerns. We are your partners!

Sincerely,



Efrat Kussell

Head of School (Principal)

ekussell@launchschool.org

718-715-1180

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FAMILY HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

In the pages that follow, you will learn about Launch's mission and goals for your child's growth, development, and achievement. In order for teachers, students, families, and community members to collaborate around student success, clarity of our program, procedures, and policies is essential. Please carefully review the information in this handbook to be fully informed about your child's experience at Launch and how to get involved and play an active role in our school community. We look forward to answering your questions, gathering your feedback, and learning from your new ideas about how we can continue to strengthen our communication and partnership with you.

CORE STRUCTURES

OUR MISSION

Launch will prepare students to thrive in college and careers by providing a public education rooted in active learning experiences and powerful character development.

OUR APPROACH

At Launch, we are committed to serving all students in our community through the thoughtful implementation of EL Education Core Practices as well as our partnership with NYC Outward Bound Schools. Our students have the opportunity to learn with purpose, develop their character, and unleash their potential through compelling hands-on learning and a deep sense of belonging and personal agency.

We believe that when students are done with school and enter adult life, they will be judged not by performance on tests of basic skills, but by the quality of their work and the quality of their character. As an EL Education school, we are committed to developing the whole child by supporting growth across three dimensions of student achievement: Mastery of Knowledge and Skills, High-Quality Work, and Character.

Our vision of excellence begins with a focus on each individual student. We invest deeply in the EL Education mantra that students must be “well-known.” We focus on knowing all aspects of the academic strengths and areas of growth of each individual student so that we can craft our instruction to meet their needs. We provide students with meaningful, culturally relevant academic tasks that require rigorous thinking and put them at the center of their learning. We support each student in order to maximize their own academic growth and achievement and put them on the path to college and careers. Students encounter work that presents high levels of challenge, and we use innovative co-teaching practices to give all students the appropriate level of support. Joy, energy and purpose permeate our classrooms and students produce work that is of high quality. We focus relentlessly on putting the needs of students first in support of both their academic and personal growth.

At the same time, we focus on a community-based approach to build, repair, and restore relationships. We encourage stakeholders to reflect upon how their values and beliefs impact the greater community. Our Restorative Practices focuses on building trust and a sense of belonging for all our students, which allows us to get to know our students as individuals to provide a range of differentiated supports to meet students’ social and emotional needs and support growth. We help children develop the mindsets to be effective learners and the character that will support them in doing what is right and living life with integrity. Launch develops in its students a strong sense of character rooted in Launch’s *Habits of Heart and Mind*. Launch students who internalize the habits are disciplined in achieving goals, care for others, understand their own strengths and areas of growth, have a strong desire to know and learn, put their all into a task, and never give up.

Focusing on students also means focusing on their families. We work to form strong partnerships with families so that we can meaningfully support students on their paths to college, careers and a life of strong character. We celebrate the rich cultural backgrounds of our students and families and the thriving community that results.

Every day, through our care and commitment to each individual student, we strive to achieve our mission and vision, and support students in “achieving more than they thought possible.”

We believe that the **Expeditionary Learning** instructional model is the framework that will help us fulfill our mission. In addition to the EL Core Practices, our **Habits of Heart and Mind** guide our work.

THE HABITS OF HEART AND MIND

At Launch, we define and value achievement equally across three dimensions: mastery of knowledge and skills, production of high quality work, and character development. Launch explicitly teaches, discusses, and reinforces character development through our Habits of Heart and Mind. These habits articulate the mindsets, skills and dispositions of effective learners and ethical people who are driven to contribute to a better world that is rapidly changing before our eyes. The entire Launch community including staff members and leaders lives by these habits, as they are the foundation upon which we take action, make decisions, and engage with one another.

The Launch Habits of Heart and Mind

Integrity & Stewardship	Kindness & Collaboration
<p>I am a committed citizen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I am able to determine the right way forward in any situation. ● I protect the rights of others. ● I take care of the Earth's resources. 	<p>I am a caring and collaborative team member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I am aware of how my actions impact others. ● I value others' viewpoints. ● I work to achieve the group's goals.
Imagination & Spirit	Dedication & Practice
<p>I am a storyteller and a dreamer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I bring ideas to life. ● I identify new and innovative solutions to complex challenges. ● I honor Brooklyn's history, reflect its present, and create its future. 	<p>I am the leader of my learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I set learning goals, evaluate my progress and change course when I need to. ● I use failures, setbacks, and successes as opportunities for feedback and growth. ● I take great care to produce high quality work I am proud of.

LEARNING EXPEDITIONS

Learning Expeditions are a core EL Education structure used to make the standards and information students will be learning come alive. These 6-8 week cross-curricular, in depth studies offer real world connections that inspire students to higher levels of academic achievement. Learning Expeditions involve students in original research, critical thinking, problem solving, and build character along with academic skills. Students analyze the expedition topic through a number of lenses within their Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Art and Science or Math classes and prepare for culminating events where they use their learning to make positive impacts on the community. Most grade levels will take part in one interdisciplinary Learning Expedition each year. In previous years, some of our Expedition topics have included the Justice System with a focus on mock trial and playwriting in 6th grade, Disrupting Gun Violence in our Community in 7th grade, and the Civil Rights Movement in 8th grade. Expeditionary Learning structures such as fieldwork, experts, and inquiry are incorporated into expeditions as well as all units throughout the year.

Features of Learning Expeditions:

- Learning Expeditions are interdisciplinary, meaning students will typically be studying the same Expedition topic in all of their classes
- Literacy instruction (reading and writing), using appropriately challenging texts, takes place in all content areas through Expeditions
- Fieldwork is a significant component of all Learning Expeditions. Fieldwork is different from a field trip in that students are actively researching and collecting information regarding the expedition topic during these trips.
- The work done during Expeditions builds towards a final project or product that students will create to demonstrate what they have learned through participation in the Expedition
- Students will work with, learn from, and present to experts from the community and beyond to connect the work they are doing to real world situations

CREW AND SEL AFTERNOON

Crew is our small group advisory program designed to deepen relationships between students, staff, and families. Our goal is to be able to provide strong, individualized support to our students by ensuring that they are all well known by at least one person – their crew advisor.

Crew is a habits-graded class that meets every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Each crew will have 13-16 students and two staff members serving as their Crew Advisors. A student's Crew Advisors will know all members of their Crew very well and support them during their time at Launch in a variety of ways. *Each student's Crew Advisors are their parent's main contact at Launch, and should be the first person parents and guardians reach out to with questions and concerns.*

Time during Crew will be dedicated to:

- Social-emotional learning and character development
- Team-building activities and initiatives
- Academic and personal goal setting, reflection and coaching
- Preparation for Student Led Conferences, Celebrations of Learning and Passage Presentations
- Health Education
- Service Learning
- High school preparedness and applications
- Community meetings and celebrations

SEL Afternoon is another component of our social-emotional learning program. Once a week, grade levels end their days with learning about current events, investing in our Black Lives Matter Year of Purpose, practicing mindfulness and self-care, and celebrating our cultures. Once a month our SEL Afternoon is a community meeting time where students perform, experience special programming, and get celebrated for their achievements and accomplishments throughout the month. Whenever possible, we work with outside partners from our community to engage our students and to help them see the resources and opportunities available to them here in Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights.

STUDENT LED CONFERENCES AND CELEBRATIONS OF LEARNING
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Student Led Conferences (SLCs) are a hallmark assessment of all EL Education Schools. At SLCs students present evidence of their growth and learning to their family members and Crew Advisor. SLCs help all students develop their abilities to reflect on their progress, assess their areas of strength and areas for growth, and plan for the future. They are also a time when students hone their presentation skills in front of an invested and authentic audience. Students in all grade levels present a student led conference. SLCs take place in quarter 2 and quarter 4.

Celebrations of Learning are end of year Crew events in 6th and 7th grades which showcase student growth and success across the three dimensions of student achievement. Each Crew will develop and plan a unique celebration highlighting their demonstration of

our Habits of Heart and Mind, content area mastery of knowledge and skills, and high quality work. Families and community members are invited to participate in these celebrations which will be held at the end of quarter 4.

Because these events are such an integral part of the learning process at Launch, we ask families to commit to participating in all of the above events. Crew Advisors will work closely with students and families in the weeks leading up to the events to coordinate scheduling in a way that ensures all students have at least one family member at each event.

OUR SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

For the 2021-2022 school year, Launch has adapted our school year calendar to more closely align to NYC DOE schools in order to address conflicts for families with siblings. We are at school from 8am to 3pm each day.

Students come to the school yard at 7:40am and head upstairs just before 8am each day.

Classes begin promptly at 8:10am, so a student will be marked tardy if they are at the door at or after 8:08am.

Students have 5 morning classes, lunch and recess, and an afternoon class each day.

DAILY BELL SCHEDULE

Time	Activity
7:40	Yard Opens
8:08	Students must be in building
8:10-9:05	1st Period
9:08-10:03	2nd Period
10:06-11:01	3rd Period
11:04-11:59	4th Period
12:02-12:57	5th Period
1:00-2:05	Lunch and Recess
2:05-3:00	6th Period
3:00	Dismissal or Transition to After-School

2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Date	Weekday	Event
August 23,2021	Monday	First day of school for students
September 6,2021	Monday	CLOSED: Labor day - Rosh Hashanah
September 13,2021	Monday	First day for DOE
September 16,2021	Thursday	OPEN: Yom Kippur - Launch in school
October 6-7,2021	Wednesday-Thursday	MAP Assessment #1
October 8,2021	Friday	1:00 PM Dismissal
October 11,2021	Monday	CLOSED: Indigenous People's Day
October 18,2021	Monday	Picture Day
November 2,2021	Tuesday	REMOTE LEARNING: Election Day
November 5,2021	Friday	Quarter 1 Closes
November 11,2021	Thursday	CLOSED: Veteran's Day
November 23-24,2021	Tuesday-Wednesday	SLCs
November 25-26,2021	Thursday-Friday	CLOSED: Thanksgiving
December 20-31	Monday-Friday	CLOSED: Winter Break
January 3,2022	Monday	CLOSED: In-Service Day: No students
January 17,2022	Monday	CLOSED: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 26-27,2022	Wednesday-Thursday	MAP Assessment #2
January 28,2022	Friday	Quarter 2 Closes
February 1,2022	Tuesday	CLOSED: Lunar New Year
February 21-25	Monday-Friday	CLOSED: Mid-Winter Break
March 5,2022	Saturday	Black History Celebration
March 29-31,2022	Tuesday-Thursday	NY State ELA Test
April 1, 2022	Friday	* Half Day - 1:00 PM Dismissal *Quarter 3 Closes
April 11-18,2022	Monday-Monday	CLOSED: Spring Break
April 26-28,2022	Tuesday-Thursday	NY State Math Test
May 2,2022	Monday	CLOSED: Eid al fitr
May 25-26,2022	Wednesday-Thursday	MAP Assessment #3
May 30,2022	Monday	CLOSED: Memorial Day
June 3,2022	Friday	*Quarter 4 Closes * National Gun Violence Day
June 13-14,2022	Monday-Tuesday	SLCs and Passages
June 15,2022	Wednesday	Last Day of School: 1:00PM Dismissal
June 16,2022	Thursday	Prom
June 17,2022	Friday	Graduation

DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival

Time	Event
7:40am-7:57am	Students arrive and gather in the school yard and eat breakfast (auditorium during bad weather).
7:57am	Doors open and students head upstairs
8:08am	Students entering after this time are marked tardy .
8:10am	1 st period begins. Students entering class after this time must have a tardy pass.
8:20am	Launch entrance closes. Students arriving after this time must enter through main entrance and report to the Launch main office. Students who enter class without a late pass from the office may be marked absent for the day.

Beginning at 7:40am each morning students can enter the schoolyard to congregate as they wait for the school doors to open. This is also a time for students to teach outdoor breakfast. They will be supervised by Launch staff during this time. Students will be allowed to enter the building beginning at 7:57am each morning. All students will enter on Bergen through the school yard. Students may visit the corner store prior to school if parents allow, but should not loiter or enter the store after 7:55am as it puts them at risk of arriving late to school. On days that it is colder than 40 degrees, students will be allowed to enter the auditorium through the main entrance of the building at 7:40am.

All students are to report directly to their 1st period classroom upon arriving. On inclement weather days, students are able to eat breakfast in a socially distant setting and prepare for their day in their classroom. 1st Period will begin promptly at 8:10am. **Any student entering the building after 8:08 am will be marked tardy.** The Launch entrance closes at 8:20. After this time students must enter through the main building entrance and report to the Launch Main Office. Failing to report to the main office means that late students will be incorrectly marked absent.

Dismissal

Students are dismissed at **3:00pm** all days.

- 6th and 7th grade students will be dismissed through the stairwell near the main entrance of the school near Troy Ave.
- 8th grade students are dismissed through the entrance nearer Schenectady Ave.
- Students participating in after-school transition directly to their after-school homerooms, and are not allowed to leave the building.

All students are expected to leave the area around the school as soon as they leave the building, and to travel directly home. While Launch staff members supervise dismissal, there have been safety issues in the neighborhood beyond Launch's control. For this reason and out of respect for our community, students are discouraged from loitering in the surrounding area.

The school's playground is used for after-school programs, and is off limits to students not enrolled in after-school between the hours of 3-5:30pm.

Staff members may hold students up to 10 minutes after dismissal without prior notice to families for brief conversations or tutoring. The parents/guardians of any student who is held for longer than 10 minutes for any reason (tutoring or conferencing, etc.) will be contacted by a teacher by 3:10pm.

IF A STUDENT, CLASS OR GRADE NEEDS TO QUARANTINE DUE TO COVID-19 GUIDELINES

Launch is committed to upholding the safest school health policies and procedures we possibly can to combat COVID-19 and to keep our community in school. We meet or exceed the CDC guidelines as well as those of the DOE including regular covid testing for randomly selected members of our community who have filled out their consent forms.

We have trained our entire staff on COVID-19 safety protocols, outfitted rooms with state of the art HEPA air filters, and have a large reserve of PPE equipment on hand in our building. We also conduct regular walkthroughs to ensure that all classrooms are upholding COVID-19 safety protocols.

Class or Grade Level Closures

In the event that an entire class or grade level is quarantined, students will switch to daily remote instruction which will consist of live, teacher-led lessons on zoom. They will follow their usual schedule for the day with classes from 8am-3pm. Students will be sent home with laptops, chargers and headphones. Families will be notified of the duration of the quarantine and any additional information that applies to their child depending on vaccination status and any other relevant information we have.

Zoom: Each class will have one zoom link that will be their virtual “classroom”. These links will be shared out by the first week of academic classes. Launch has a private zoom account that can only be accessed via Launch emails. This means that your child’s zoom class is safe and secure from hackers and infiltrators.

In order to ensure that EVERY student continues to make academic progress when they are quarantined we have some clear norms and expectations for students on zoom:

Zoom Expectations for ALL Launch Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attendance and participation is mandatory to EVERY class- All work assigned in a zoom session must be completed during class time- All Cameras <i>MUST</i> be on.- All students must be sitting up and in uniform and whenever possible, seated at a table or desk- Students should expect to keep their zoom on the entire day except for lunch and their teachers will step in to teach them from class to class. Class will open at 8am and all students must be seated and ready to go at 8:10am.

Individual Student Quarantines

If an individual student has to quarantine, their crew advisor will ensure that all teachers are emailing assignments directly to the student. Your crew advisor will check in with families and the child in quarantine to answer any questions and to offer any support we can.

If the child is well enough to complete assignments, work will be completed on an asynchronous basis. Extensions for major projects or assessments will be granted and all efforts will be made to help each student feel like they are caught up when they return to in-person instruction.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT
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Families are the most valuable partners we have in supporting Launch students achieving our mission. No one knows a student better or cares more about a student’s success than their family. We are fortunate to have our families as partners in this work, and strive to make all families feel welcome and included in the life of the school and the success of their children. Launch families bring an incredible diversity of strength and value to our community, and we look forward to working closely with families over the course of the year.

At the heart of this partnership is meaningful and effective communication between Launch and our families. The foundation for this communication is a deep value for kindness and collaboration. Our goal is that all communication - even in challenging moments - is collaborative and respectful and keeps true to the reason we are all here - to support student achievement. To facilitate this, we have put in place several structures to ensure the channels of communication are clear and always open and effective.

STAFF CELL PHONES

All Launch staff members are provided work cell phone numbers that students and their families may use to contact teachers with questions about academics, behavior, and any other topics that may arise. Teachers will not be available to answer their phones during instructional time, but will check their messages at least once a day. All Launch staff members will return any calls within one business day. Staff contact lists are available on our website. Families and students are asked not to call staff after 6pm. In case of emergency after 6pm, please contact:

- Ms. Efrat Kussell – *Head of School* (principal) at (718) 715-1180

STAFF EMAIL

Similar to cell phone numbers, all staff members have an email addresses and will respond to emails within one business day. Typically, staff email addresses will be the staff member's first initial and last name @launchschool.org (ie: Efrat Kussell – ekussell@launchschool.org).

CREW ADVISORS

A student's Crew Advisor is the primary point of contact for that student's family. Any questions or issues about which a family member might be unsure who to contact should be directed toward their child's Crew Advisor. Crew Advisors will know families and their Crew members well and will be able to address most questions or direct the family member to the appropriate person.

EMAIL AND AUTOMATED CALLING SYSTEM

The primary way that Launch will communicate with families is through email and our text message system. If a family does not currently have a working email, Launch will assist you in setting one up. Email and text communication is the fastest and most effective way for the school to communicate with families, and it is vital that all families are able to receive email and texts from the school about upcoming events, student absences, and in case of school closure. Launch will also use a computerized automated calling system to send out notifications to families. **Families are responsible for ensuring that Launch has working phone numbers** that will allow you to receive these calls, and allow the system to leave a message if you are unable to answer. We ask that you please listen carefully to these calls as they will contain important updates and information.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS DURING THE DAY

While it is generally best to contact a student's Crew Advisor to have questions or concerns answered, in circumstances when a parent or guardian needs to contact someone immediately, **or before the end of the school day, they should call the main office directly at (718) 604-6910.** The office will then answer the question, direct your call as needed or deliver a message. **Students cell phones will be collected at the start of each day, and students will not be able to receive calls or texts during the day so students are able to focus on instruction.** Students will be able to contact home by requesting a pass to the main office.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the New York City Department of Education school closing policy. In the event that the New York City Department of Education is not in session, our school's closing will be announced by 1010 WINS. Launch will also use an automated phone call and text system to notify families in case of school closings and the website will be updated.

CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL VISITS

Usually, parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the school and visit their child's classroom. However, due to Covid-19 we are not permitted to invite guests into the Launch building. We are happy to set up a virtual meeting through zoom or meet face-to-face in the schoolyard.

In the event that we are able to welcome visitors, when visiting the school, all family members must first visit the security desk at the main entrance to the school building to sign in and receive a visitor pass. **Family members must then report to Launch's main office in room 344 before going anywhere else on the 3rd floor.** Launch staff will then direct you to the appropriate location.

WAYS FOR FAMILIES TO BE INVOLVED

There are many formal and informal opportunities throughout the year for families to be involved at Launch. Family and community participation strengthens our work as a school and helps build lasting relationships that support student achievement.

Below is a list of many of the opportunities for families to participate. Please refer to the family calendar and school communication specific dates and times.

Annual Events and Meetings

Academic	Cultural	Community	Parent Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to School Afternoon • Student Led Conferences and Passage Presentations • Parent Teacher Conferences • High School Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asase Yaa Performance • Black History Celebration • End of Year BBQ and Talent Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Breakfast • Days of Service and Better World Day • Community Forums • Walkout to End Gun Violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Parent Association Meetings and/or Workshops • Parent Circles-informal discussions on parent led topics • PA outings - diverse and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum and State Test Webinars • Student Celebrations of Learning • Community Meetings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and staff recruitment events 	<p>culturally relevant family outings to places including museums, cultural centers and city-wide events</p>
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VOLUNTEERING

Families who volunteer both positively impact Launch and gives families a window into the world of their student. While families will not be able to volunteer in the main office this year, there are other opportunities. Please contact Sheryl Davis, Launch’s Parent Engagement Coordinator, at sdavis@launchschool.org or (646) 603-8202.

PARENT ASSOCIATION

The Parent Association is a school-based organization open to all Launch parents and guardians. The goal is to encourage and equip families to be active participants in the social, emotional and educational life of their children. The PA is mindful and knowledgeable about the community’s culture and needs. They host meetings and design meaningful workshops that provide information and address community needs (such as housing, mental health, access to healthy food and safety). Additionally, the PA recognizes the wealth of knowledge and experience that Launch families are able to contribute to the community, and works to find ways to share those valuable resources with staff, students, and the community at large.

Structure

Sheryl Davis, Launch’s Parent Engagement Coordinator, is the leader of the PA. There are three PA Committees including Outreach, Communications and Fundraising. Each committee is led by a parent who volunteers and is voted in.

The PA hosts several activities and events throughout the year including:

- Monthly PA Meetings and Workshops
- Parent Circles (informal safe space conversations)

- Fundraisers
- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
- Black History Celebration Potluck (if the event is in-person)
- End of year BBQ

CONCERNS REGARDING BEHAVIOR OR SAFETY

Launch is committed to working closely with families to ensure that Launch is a safe and positive space for all students. If families have any concerns about behavioral situations or infractions, or if incidents concerning student safety and well being are brought to their attention, families are asked to contact Launch's Restorative team/culture, who will work with families and other school staff to ensure any concerns are appropriately addressed:

- Mr. Antoine - wantoine@launchschool.org - (718) 715-1894
- Ms. Welch - jwelch@launchschool.org - (718) 715-1897

PARENT CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

The process for a parent or guardian to raise concerns is as follows. These steps should be taken in this order:

- The parent or guardian raises their concern directly to the staff member involved
- If the issue is not resolved, then the parent or guardian may bring their concern to Ms. Kussell (Head of School/Principal) at ekussell@launchschool.org or (718) 715-1180
- If you are unsatisfied with the way the situation is resolved after speaking with one of the Principals, parents should contact Mr. Roehm (Executive Director) at either groehm@launchschool.org or (973) 818-8543.
- If the issue is not resolved, it can then be taken to Launch's Board of Trustees. The parent or guardian may put their concern in writing and give it to the Executive Director, or email the concern to a member of Board of Trustees (contact information is available through the main office), who will forward it to a committee of the Board of Trustees to investigate.

- The committee will investigate the concern and respond to the parent or guardian in writing and will provide the Board of Trustees with a report at the next Board of Trustees meeting.
- The committee will be composed of at least two people. The Head of School will not serve on this committee.
- Parents may appeal decisions made by the Board of Trustees to Launch’s authorizing body, the New York State Education Department (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/>).

STUDENT POLICIES

Policies at Launch are thoughtfully written, incorporating feedback from teachers, students, and families, to create a learning community that supports all three dimensions of student achievement: *Mastery of Knowledge and Skills, High-Quality Work, and Character*. Each year we reflect on and modify policies to ensure we are doing the best possible job of meeting the needs of our students. By clearly communicating these policies in the handbook, our goal is to avoid confusion and support the consistent, schoolwide upholding of these policies. We know that this is a critical component of building positive, trusting relationships. Launch deeply appreciates the support of our families in communicating and upholding these policies with their student. If families have any questions regarding the policies, please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s Crew Advisor.

GRADING

Grading Philosophy

Grades at Launch are an indicator of student progress towards mastery of standards. They are an instructional and communication tool to ensure parents, students, and teachers know how students are progressing in classes at a holistic level. The guidelines below clarify the type of assignments assigned at launch, their weighted percentages, and suggested frequency.

Family Communication

Families are a vital support in their child’s education and need to know their child’s progress in order to support best. We communicate about student grades in several ways:

- Families receive four official report cards a year, once per quarter.

- Families also receive a “progress report” every two weeks to be able to monitor their child’s progress.
- Teachers and Crew Advisors communicate with families about grades before they receive any reporting, particularly if the students are failing.

The dates for each marking period, or quarter are:

Quarter 1	Sept 7th - November 5th
Quarter 2	November 8th - January 28th
Quarter 3	January 31st - March 1st
Quarter 4	April 4th - June 3rd

Weight Based Grading

In a weight-based system, categories are assigned to a different classroom assignment. Each category adds up to 100%. A student’s final grade comes from how well they did in each category. The below table indicates the type of assessments assigned and their weight value.

Assignment	Percent Total	Gradebook Frequency
Exams, Performance Assessment, Essay, and Projects	40%	1-2 per quarter
Quizzes, mini-projects, and short response	30%	Once per week
Classwork and Participation	20%	Once/twice per week
Homework	10%	Once per week

Academic grades that students receive in class are based entirely on demonstration of mastery and, in some cases, the quality of presentation or craftsmanship – *not* on effort or conduct. Grades are comprised of Assessments, Classwork and Homework.

%	Mastery Description	What the word/level means
100%-90%	<i>Exceeds Mastery</i>	Student work goes above and beyond the criteria for demonstrating mastery. It may not be perfect, but it reflects in-depth understanding of content and/or excellence in demonstration of knowledge or skills. The work exceeds what is described in the target.

89%-80%	<i>Proficient</i> (Meets target)	Student work meets standards. It is proficient work that demonstrates the essential skills and knowledge of the target.
79%-65%	<i>Developing</i> (Is approaching the target)	Student work demonstrates progress toward meeting standards but is not yet demonstrating grade level mastery of content and skills.
Below 65%	<i>Underdeveloped</i> (Does Not Meet Target)	Student work is significantly below standards and does not demonstrate grade level mastery of content and skills.
	<i>Incomplete</i> (No Evidence)	Student has missing assessments that must be completed before earning a grade.

Habit Grades

We grade our students on their progress and development of demonstrating our school Habits. We believe that a student's character is as important as his or her academic performance. We separate information about a student's academic achievement from information about his or her Habits of Heart and Mind (Habits). The Habits are:

- *Integrity and Stewardship*
- *Kindness and Collaboration*
- *Imagination and Spirit*
- *Dedication and Practice*

Habits grades that students receive in a class are based entirely on demonstration of Launch's graded habits – *not* on mastery of content or academic achievement.

Habit Mastery Level	What this level means
4	Student goes above and beyond and exceeds "consistently." He/She may lead by example or outwardly support others in reaching their targets.
3	Student demonstrates the trait on a regular basis. This is the expected level of frequency.
2	Student has noticeable lapses in demonstrating the trait; some support is required.

1	Student needs significant support to demonstrate this trait. There is significant need for improvement.
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PROMOTION

We work with families to support their child in making high levels of growth and reaching new heights in their achievement each year. We view students holistically for their growth and achievement and believe that every child, when given the right supports, has the ability to achieve at a high level and to be prepared to move up to the next grade level at the end of the school year.

We consider grades, Attendance, Tardiness and State Exam scores when making final recommendations for promotion. When a student is struggling academically, the Assistant Principal of Student Achievement and the Restorative Justice Team will proactively reach out to parents to have restorative conversations around grading and academic expectations in order to ensure that students can get the support they need to be academically successful.

Decisions about promotion will be made holistically on a case-by-case basis based on:

- **Grades:** Mastery grades below 65% put a student at-risk for retention
- **Attendance:** Greater than 10 absences in a year puts a student at risk for retention
- **Tardiness:** Greater than 20 times being tardy in a year puts a student at risk for retention
- **State Exams:** 1s and 2s put a student at risk for retention

Promotion in Doubt

After the conclusion of each quarter, Promotion in Doubt letters are sent home for students who are not meeting one of the promotional criteria:

- An average in core classes below 65%
- Greater than 1 absence per month year to date*
- Greater than 2 tardies per month year to date*

*Parents and students are encouraged to have far fewer than this number of absences and tardies as every moment out of class results in lost learning time and can significantly impact academic progress. **Greater than 3 absences or 8 times being tardy in a school year can significantly limit the quality of high schools students will be accepted to.** High schools look at both 7th and 8th grade attendance records when making decisions about acceptances. Developing outstanding attendance habits in 6th grade is critically important.

RETENTION

Significant research shows that retaining students decreases the statistical likelihood that they will graduate from high school. This is more significant as students get older and for students who are retained more than once. As such, Launch limits our use of retention. Launch does not use retention as a punitive measure or as a tool to promote accountability. Launch only retains students when it is believed that the student would benefit from repeating a grade due to significant academic or social delays. Additionally, decisions about retention for students with IEPs are made based on their IEP promotional criteria. Decisions about promotion are made by the School Leadership Team at the conclusion of Quarter 4.

ABSENCES

Every student contributes to and enhances our community each day. Every minute in school helps students build stronger relationships with their peers and teachers, and helps them make greater progress in all three dimensions of student achievement. Being at school, on time, every day is one of the most important steps for academic success.

We take attendance each day by 8:15. We are committed to student safety. Accurate attendance counts and knowing where students are is critical for this. **Students who arrive late MUST receive a late pass at the entrance between 8:08-8:25am or in the main office after 8:25am to ensure their attendance is changed from absent to tardy.** Otherwise, they run the risk of being marked incorrectly absent.

The following protocols are in place for students who are absent.

- If a student is going to be absent, families should contact Crew advisors.
- An absence is defined as an entire day missed from school.
- An excused absence is an illness, death in family, or family emergency for which the school receives a **written note** from the parent within 3 days of the student's return to school. A student who is absent for illness must bring a doctor's note for the absence to be excused.
- An unexcused absence is one for any reason not listed above or for which a written note is not received within 3 days.

TARDINESS

Arriving on time for school every day is a critical part of being prepared for academic success. It supports students in having a calm, focused start to their day and ensures that they don't miss any critical information or instruction - which starts promptly at 8:10am each morning.

Students are supervised in the school yard each morning beginning at 7:40am. They are allowed to enter the building at 7:57am and transition upstairs to their first period classes.

Students are considered tardy when they enter the building at or after 8:08am. Late students must present tardy passes to teachers upon entering the classroom.

When patterns of absence or tardiness develop, Crew advisors and counseling staff will meet with students and families. The purpose of this meeting will be to problem solve in order to support improved attendance prior to it becoming an issue that affects achievement or promotion.

Attendance Messages

Families will receive a phone call / text message from Launch by 10:30am each day that their child is absent. This is an important step in ensuring families are aware of their child's attendance and enabling us to work together to ensure your child is present and on time each day. If you ever feel you've received an absence message in error, please contact the main office at (718) 604-6910 to address the issue.

UNIFORM

At Launch, we want our staff and students to engage with each other intellectually, through their actions and the exchange of ideas, without being distracted by issues of clothing and dress. For this reason, Launch is a uniform school. Launch students wear a school uniform to show belonging to our community and to create an equitable environment for students where they can focus on their learning.

The Launch uniform is:

Daily Uniform:

Monday - Thursday

Top	Bottom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch Polo, Sweatshirt, or T-Shirt ● College T-shirt or Sweatshirt ● GSS t-shirt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Black pants, skirts, or shorts ● Launch sweatpants ● Close-toed shoes - any sneaker, boot, or shoe
Fridays	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch Polo, T-shirt, Sweatshirt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jeans or Pants (no holes/rips, no leggings) ● Black pants, skirts, or shorts ● Launch sweatpants ● Close-toed shoes - any sneaker, boot, or shoe
Please DO NOT Wear	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tights as pants or jeans on days other than Friday ● Slides or flip flops ● Damaged or Distressed Jeans with “fashion” rips ● Valuable or expensive jewelry ● Hats or other full head covers (do-rags, head wraps) except for religious purposes ● Bandanas ● Sunglasses ● Gloves ● Launch staff may ask students to remove any items that are inappropriate, distracting, or disruptive to the learning process 	

Dress Down or Theme Days

The Celebrations Committee in collaboration with the Culture Team will publicize whole school dress down or theme days. All students will be welcome to participate in these days. Dress down will not be utilized as a reward to visually distinguish one group of students from another.

Game Days or Performance Days

If a club or team is celebrating their performance or upcoming game, coaches or club leaders can encourage students to dress up to show pride in their team or club. Please check in with your manager to inform them of the dress up plan. Please be mindful that

students are still wearing school appropriate attire - no leggings or spandex. Basketball jerseys, if worn, should have a t-shirt underneath.

Uniform Notes

All students must come to school in uniform and **cannot change upon arrival or before leaving at the end of the day**. Students who are missing a uniform item consistently (pants, shirts) will receive a parent phone call by an RJ Coordinator or Associate for further support. Launch will have clean uniform items to give students who may have had an accident to avoid lost learning time. All loaned uniform items should not be returned.

If Launch is unable to loan a student a uniform item, they will be **sent back to class with a pass**, and must **keep the pass throughout the day to show to teachers**.

If a student is wearing a non-uniform item, such as a sweatshirt or hat, **staff members will address it and ask the student to remove the item**. If the student continues to wear the item or puts it back on, it may be **held by the teacher and returned at the end of the day**.

Launch never wants uniforms or clothing issues to be an obstacle to learning, while needing to maintain clear and consistent policies. Launch offers uniform scholarships to families in need of support to ensure their child is in uniform every day. **Families who would like to inquire about uniform scholarships or support please reach out to Ms. Rubin (arubin@launchschool.org)**

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell Phones

Cell phones create a significant distraction from learning. Research has shown that the presence of cell phones, even when turned off, silenced or stored nearby in a book bag can significantly interfere with a student's learning, and that actual physical separation from the phone is the only effective way to overcome this distraction. Our goal is to create a learning environment in which all students are fully present and engaged in learning throughout the day. For this reason, **all Launch students turn in their cell phones each day upon arrival to be stored securely in their homeroom. Students' phones are returned at the end of the day.**

- Each class will collect cell phones into a bin as students come in first period.
- Each student will turn off their phone and place it in a ziplock labeled with their name.
- All phones will go in the bin.

- Teachers will put the bin into the class’s homebase room and lock it in the closet until last period.
- Phones will be distributed at the end of 6th period to students.

If a student is found to have a phone during the day, the teacher will collect the phone and speak to the student privately. If this is an ongoing situation we will reach out to a parent/guardian and discuss possible solutions.

If a student needs to call their guardian, they can, at the teacher’s discretion: The Teacher will provide the student with a pass to the main office.

Students are allowed to wear smartwatches although it’s not encouraged as these are expensive items. Turning off the cell phone will support the student in not receiving notifications throughout the day.

Cell Phones During Trips

Cell phone usage and expectations on trips will be determined on a trip by trip basis, and will be communicated in the permission slip. At times, students may be allowed to bring their phones on trips out of the building in order to take pictures. This is the only allowed use of the phone during these trips, and if students are using their phones for other purposes they will be collected and returned at the end of the day.

Other Electronics

Other electronics such as **tablets and handheld gaming systems should not be brought to school.**

FOOD AND DRINK

Our goal is for students to be free of distractions from learning so that they can focus on their work and achieve at high levels. Both hunger and food can create distractions from learning, so we work to balance these distractions individually with students.

Breakfast

Good Weather Days

Whenever possible, students will eat breakfast OUTSIDE from 7:40am to 8:00am. This is to ensure the safest eating environment possible and to stop the spread of germs. On those days, breakfast will not be served upstairs. If a student is late, we will allow them to have breakfast upstairs for 10 minutes in a distanced setting from their peers. If this becomes a regular occurrence for the student, we will follow up with the family to support timely arrival.

Students will be allowed to bring their own breakfast and eat it in the yard. Students can also bring hot or cold drinks (Ex. tea, hot chocolate, juice, Dunkin Donuts) to have in the yard. They'll be encouraged to finish all drinks downstairs outside.

Inclement Weather Days

Students will eat breakfast upstairs in the classrooms. At these times, we must be mindful to have doors open and windows open to ensure the greatest level of air circulation.

Students will start coming up at 7:55 on those days, wash hands, and have time for breakfast until 8:10 or a bit later at the teacher's discretion. Students will be able to eat school breakfast or outside breakfast should they choose. They must be seated with as much space as possible between themselves and their classmates at that time. They can drink an outside hot or cold beverage (ex. tea, hot chocolate, juice, Dunkin Donuts) in the classroom. Glass bottles ARE NOT allowed in the building for students.

Snack

For health and safety reasons we WILL NOT be having a formal snack time this year. That said, our students go to lunch very late in the school day - 1pm at earliest, 1:40pm at latest. This is different from many other middle schools who have lunch earlier in the day. If a student is hungry and it is getting in the way of their learning, we will allow them to eat a snack mindfully. They can lower their mask, take a bite, and put their mask back on. They may not share snacks with others.

Gum

Chewing gum is permitted at Launch, and Launch trusts and expects students to manage this privilege with accountability and mindfulness. This means gum must not be a distraction from learning and should not be distributed to friends during class, popped, or chewed loudly. Additionally, gum must leave no trace and students must ensure all trash and gum is placed in garbage cans.

TRIPS OUT OF THE BUILDING

Field trips and fieldwork are important parts of our educational model, and there will be many opportunities for students to learn outside of our school building. When a field trip is planned, families will be sent a permission slip 2-3 weeks in advance. The permission slip will contain important information about participation, transportation, and food. Field trips at Launch are critical parts of the learning process, and all students are expected to participate. Participation and the work that takes place is often an important part of a students' grade. Families are asked to ensure they return permission slips by the deadline to ensure students are able to attend.

Additionally, we will use the Weeksville Heritage Center, and other resources within walking distance in our community to support our students' learning. For these reasons, we ask that all families sign the "Neighborhood Trip" consent form at the start of each year. This will allow Launch teachers to bring students out of the building on supervised class activities that are within walking distance without additional written consent.

This year, we are limiting the number of field trips for students in light of COVID-19.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL POLICIES

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

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

A student's parent or guardian has the legal right to inspect and review their child's file upon written request to the Director of Operations. Parents also have the right to representation during any review of their child's record.

Conversations between teachers, administration, and parents and guardians about students, their specific educational concerns, or their past records are confidential. Information should not be shared with staff members or school community members that are not directly involved with the student. If an individual believes that this confidentiality has been violated, the individual should bring their concern to the attention of the Principal. The Principal will review the situation and determine if the policy has been violated. If the Principal determines that an individual has violated the confidentiality policy, he or she will be subject to disciplinary action.

MANDATED REPORTING OF ABUSE

Members of the Launch staff are known as Mandated Reporters in compliance with state law. If a member of the staff suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they are obligated to report their suspicion to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Sign of abuse or neglect may include but are not limited to; patterns of lateness to school and absence from school, late pick-up from school or the school bus; consistently unkempt or dirty; signs of physical abuse.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Any accident involving a student will be documented. The nurse will contact the parent or guardian; in the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the nurse will send a report home with the student.

THREATS TO SELF AND OTHERS

If a student threatens their own life or the life of someone else, this will be brought immediately to the attention of the School Social Worker. If the School Social Worker feels that the child is in imminent danger, the parent will be contacted and a psychological evaluation will be required before the child can return to school. When a student exhibits potentially suicidal behavior and the parent refuses to cooperate with the school or to take alternative preventive measures, the School Social Worker must report this information immediately to the Administration for Children's Services.

MEDICAL AND IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION

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

Parents and guardians are asked to alert the main office and indicate on their child's Medical Information Card with information about any allergies from which their children suffer. Parents and guardians are also asked to advise school administration if they grant permission to take their child to a hospital in the event of an emergency during school hours.

Launch's nurse provided by Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Members is authorized to administer prescribed medication only if the parent or guardian submits

signed documentation from the doctor. Over-the-counter medication CANNOT be administered in the school.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student with a temporary or permanent disability requiring special educational accommodations for medical or health reasons will be asked to complete a current 504 Accommodation Form. LELCS administration, in conjunction with the school nurse, will ensure that all necessary accommodations are implemented in full compliance with any applicable laws. Any required occupational or physical therapy for LELCS students will be requested and administered through appropriate NYC Department of Education offices and personnel. Please see Appendix A for notice of parental rights and procedural safeguards.

TRANSPORTATION

The NYC Department of Education does not provide yellow buses for students after 6th grade. Accordingly, Launch (like most middle schools in NYC) does not offer yellow busing, and will offer students MetroCards to travel to school. MetroCards are given by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) for use by students on city buses and trains. For Grades 3-6, Metrocards are assigned by the OPT based on the distance a student lives from school:

Less than ½ mile	½ mile or more, but less than 1 mile	1 mile or more
Transportation not provided	Eligible for Half-Fare MetroCard (buses only, student pays \$1.10 when boarding)	Eligible for Full-Fare MetroCard for all buses and trains

MetroCard eligibility will be assigned by the OPT after July 15. You can find the approximate distance from your home to the school by using Google walking maps online. For students using buses, the B15 and B65 both stop at the school entrance, and the B43 and B46 stop several blocks away. If you have any questions or concerns about how your child will get to school, please contact the school. We want to ensure that all students can get to school

safely and efficiently, and will be more than happy to work with you to address your questions or concerns.

You may also visit schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Transportation for more information.

If your child has an IEP that requires busing, we will work with the OPT to provide special busing for your child.

STUDENT PRIVACY AND RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Director of Operations a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Director of Operations will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record.

However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- ✓ School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- ✓ Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- ✓ Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- ✓ Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- ✓ Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- ✓ Accrediting organizations;
- ✓ To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- ✓ Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- ✓ State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. If you wish to keep your child's directory information confidential please notify the school's Director of Operations in writing.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice).

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Freedom of Information Law: Launch Expeditionary Learning Charter School complies with the New York State Freedom of Information Law (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law). This means certain school records can be made available to the public upon request because Launch Expeditionary Learning Charter School is a publicly funded school. Copies of our school's FOIL policy are available in the main office. For more information about the process for requesting records please contact the school's Director of Operations who serves as the school's Records Access Officer.

APPENDIX A

Notice of Rights and Procedural Protections Under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Launch Expeditionary Learning Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability in admission, access, treatment, or employment in its programs, services, and activities. Applicants, students, parents/guardians, employees, referral agencies, and all organizations holding agreements with the school are hereby notified of this policy. Any person with concerns regarding the school's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act is directed to contact:

Name: Geoffrey Roehm
Position: Executive Director
Address: 1580 Dean St, Brooklyn, NY 11213
Phone: (718) 604-6910
E-mail: groehm@launchschool.org

This appendix summarizes the procedural protections and rights you have as the parent of student who may qualify for accommodations or services under Section 504 and the ADA.

INTRODUCTION. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, along with the Americans with Disabilities Act, requires that the school district may not discriminate against students with disabilities. Accordingly, the school has adopted policies and procedures to ensure that discrimination does not take place. In the rest of this document, we will refer to these laws as —Section 504/ADA.

IDEA ELIGIBILITY. Many students who meet the definition of an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA also qualify for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This document does not address these students or their parents. Such students are served pursuant to the requirements of the IDEA. The rest of this document addresses only the rights of parents of students who satisfy the definition of an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA but do not qualify under IDEA.

AN APPROPRIATE EDUCATION. If it is determined that your child meets the definition of an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA, then your child will be entitled to a free and appropriate public education. This means that your child's education will be designed to meet his/her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. A free public education means that no fees will be imposed on you except for the same fees that are imposed on parents of nondisabled students. However, insurance companies and other third parties that are obligated to provide or pay for services to your child are still obligated to do so.

NOTICE. You have the right to be notified by the school prior to any action that would identify your child as having a disability, evaluate your child for services under Section 504/ADA, or place your child in a program based on a disability.

EVALUATION. Prior to conducting an evaluation of your child for purposes of services under Section 504/ADA, the school will seek your informed written consent. An evaluation will not be conducted unless you give consent. However, school officials may review existing records, test scores, grades, teacher reports, and recommendations and other such information without your consent to the same extent they would do so for nondisabled students.

If an evaluation is conducted, the school will make sure that:

- All testing and other evaluation procedures are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used;
- They are administered by trained personnel in conformity with the instructions provided by the producer;
- They include tests and other evaluation materials designed to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those designed to elicit a general IQ score; and
- Tests are selected and administered to best ensure that they accurately measure what the test seeks to measure, rather than any sensory, speaking, or manual impairments the student may have (except when the test is designed to measure sensory, speaking, or manual skills).

An evaluation that satisfies these requirements will be conducted prior to your child's initial placement and conducted or reviewed prior to any subsequent significant change in placement.

If your child is identified as an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA the school will periodically reevaluate your child as appropriate.

PLACEMENT. If your child is identified as an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA, placement decisions about your child will be made by the school's 504 Team, which will include at least three professional staff members who, collectively, are knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. You will be invited to participate in any meeting of the 504 Team if your child's

placement and/or services are to be discussed. The 504 Team will also ensure that your child is placed in the least restrictive environment.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT. If your child is identified as an individual with a disability under Section 504/ADA, your child will be placed and served in the least restrictive

environment. This means that your child will be served with nondisabled students in the regular education environment to the maximum extent appropriate. Prior to removing your child from the regular education environment due to his/her disability, the school will consider the use of supplementary aids and services. Your child will be removed from the regular education environment only if he/she cannot be served satisfactorily in that environment even when supplementary aids and services are provided. If it becomes necessary to serve your child in an alternate setting due to disability, the school will take into account the proximity of the alternate setting to your home.

EXAMINATION OF RECORDS. You have the right to see and examine any educational records that pertain to your child or are relevant in serving your child.

HEARINGS. If you disagree with a decision of the 504 Team regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child you have the right to an impartial hearing. You have the right to participate in such a hearing and to be represented by a person of your choice, including an attorney.

If you wish to request a hearing, you must make a written request for a hearing within 30 calendar days from the time you receive the written notice of the decision of the 504 Team that you disagree with. Your request for a hearing must be filed with the school's Section 504 Coordinator.

Upon receipt of a timely request for a hearing, the school will notify you of the date, time, and location of the hearing. If you disagree with the decision of the hearing officer, you have the right to a review of that decision by a court a competent jurisdiction.

OTHER COMPLAINTS. You also have the right to file a complaint with the school's Section 504 Coordinator pertaining to harassment, retaliation or discrimination against your child in ways that do not involve your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement.

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS. You also have the right to file a complaint with the United State Office for Civil Rights.