

先鋒中英雙語學校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Family Handbook

TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

It is our belief that for each student and guardian to best understand the expectations and consequences for behavior in our school, we must work as a team to explain the information contained in this handbook. Please take time to review the handbook at home.

Please **read** the handbook with your student(s). The following policies are of particular interest in helping your child succeed: attendance rules, bus rules, meal routines and expectations, arrival and dismissal procedures, recess, restroom and hallway rules, technology policy and homework policy.

Parents/guardians must annually acknowledge that they have read and understand the Family Handbook on the school's online registration system at the start of the school year.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Summary of Revisions

Date	Revision/Edit
10/9/2017	Added “or designee authorized by parent” to Early Pickup paragraph.
10/9/2017	Revised Fundraising section – removed board committee that no longer exists.
10/9/2017	Revised Hazing section of Code of Conduct with latest MGL 269, section 17 and 18.
10/9/2017	Added note to Grievance Policy.
10/9/2017	Made “student confidential health file” be the consistent term in the Head Injury Policy
10/9/2017	Removed sharing food with siblings in Lunch Routines and Expectations section.
10/9/2017	Added reference to Liaison paragraph of the Homeless Student policy.
10/9/2017	Fixed minor typos throughout.
12/19/2017	Change word “hours” to “work” in high school CAS graduation requirements.
12/31/2017	Eliminated blank pages that were on pages 89 and 92.
12/31/2017	Truancy section – change “Springfield Juvenile Court” to “Juvenile Court” (page 41).
12/31/2017	Add page break (page 72) so title of section is at top of page.
1/11/2018	In Grievance Policy, remove paragraph “Composition of Grievance Committee” per legal counsel because that description is in the Board of Trustees bylaws.
3/15/2018	Add Work Permit section.
8/20/2018	Revised high school incomplete work policy to add mandatory study hall.
8/20/2018	Revised middle school grading to be letter grades starting in 2018-2019.
8/20/2018	Revise curbside drop-off/pickup procedures.
8/20/2018	Revise Stanford 10 grade span in standardized testing paragraph section.
8/26/2018	Update Title IX coordinator.
8/26/2018	Update Snack/Lunch section, add USDA required text regarding free/reduced lunch, meal charge policy, USDA non-discrimination notice, and links to non-English version.
9/20/2018	Revise Search and Seizure Policy text per legal counsel from “reasonable cause” to “reasonable suspicion” in first paragraph (page 36).
11/15/2018	Revise National Honor Society Guidelines.
3/25/2019	Add School Wellness Policy to Appendix.
4/25/2019	Revise vendor name for school lunches.
8/24/2019	Revise arrival, dismissal, bus information, and curbside drop-off/pick up procedures, add high school final exam schedule information, add school council and SEPAC info, update contact information of outside agencies, revise text with minor edits throughout.
9/7/2019	Fix typo
7/27/2020	In Educational Program section, add reference to EL and SPED FAQs in Appendix
10/20/2020	Fix typo in Table of Contents
10/20/2020	Revise Health section with minor edits
8/13/2021	Revise text throughout to make current.
9/18/2022	Revise text throughout to make current. Revise high school cell phone norms and dress code policies (K-8 th cell and dress code policies remain the same as in prior years).
10/4/2022	Revise Rules of Observation.
5/6/2023	Revise Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Code of Conduct, and Expulsion Policy. Add School-wide Education Services Plan
11/6/2023	Revise Equal Opportunity statement on page 9.
11/16/2023	Revise Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan, Code of Conduct, Physical Restraint policies and procedures to incorporate new regulations in MGL c.71 s. 37H3/4 (b) An Act Addressing Barriers to Care for Mental Health. Revise dress code section to add note about change to middle school

	dress code. Revise school meal info to reflect universal free meals for everyone.
12/4/2023	Update USDA Nondiscrimination statement to correct USDA link that no longer worked on the USDA website.
12/5/2023	Update page 64 (remove “time out” as consequence for minor infractions), pages 74-75 (add text to section on interim alternate educational setting (IAES), page 76 (clarified sentence about PRS), page 107-108 (add procedures to physical restraint policies and procedures)
12/5/2023	Revise Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures to include restraint prevention, behavior support, prevention of dangerous behavior and use of time out sections. Also minor text editing to fix grammar.
12/18/2023	Update meal services website link on page 26. Minor updates to grammar in various places.
12/19/2023	Fix typo.

先鋒中英雙語學校
Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

2023-2024

Family Handbook

Revised December 19, 2023

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先锋中英雙語學校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS).

Your support and participation are vital to the fulfillment of our mission. As an essential step in involving you in your child's education, we have prepared this Family Handbook.

The Family Handbook includes information about the school policies and procedures that will contribute to the development of our community and the success of our School. The *Code of Conduct* and *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* describe the policies and procedures that encourage appropriate conduct and ensure a safe learning environment. We encourage you to read this Handbook thoroughly, discuss it with your child, and refer to it frequently throughout the year.

The school administration may amend or update the policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook at any time during the school year.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or your classroom teacher.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Wang
Principal

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PVCICS School Calendar

Please see the school website www.pvcics.org for the most up to date calendar.

MISSION

The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) is a K-12th grade educational program that produces academically strong students highly proficient in Chinese and English. The program goals are:

- To develop proficiency¹ in Mandarin Chinese.
- To maintain and extend students' proficiency in English.
- To develop high levels of academic attainment, meeting or exceeding national and state standards, through rigorous study and instruction aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- To develop students' understanding of other cultures and the ability to interact successfully with others whose language and/or culture differs from their own.

The Chinese name for PVCICS is 先锋中英双语学校 (“xian1 feng1 zhong1 ying1 shuang1 yu3 xue2 xiao4”², literally “Pioneer Chinese English Bilingual School”).

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

"We believe that all students should learn or maintain a second language, beginning in elementary school, and should be expected to master that language. This expands opportunities to communicate with others, to work in an increasingly competitive worldwide economy, and to understand the diversity of cultures." The Massachusetts Common Core of Learning³

The core of PVCICS's educational philosophy is that through early and sustained immersion in the Chinese language with culture integrated throughout, students will achieve high academic attainment, be highly proficient in two languages and develop sensitivity and tolerance for other cultures.

PVCICS uses a one-way immersion model to teach Chinese in a classroom where the majority of students speak English as their native language. Language immersion programs use a proven educational methodology that has been around for decades. As is normal for immersion programs, PVCICS's physical school space promotes bilingual/biliterate skills in English and Chinese by using separate classrooms for each language.

PVCICS's use of an early language acquisition strategy is a key feature of the program. Because Chinese is a tonal language with a logographic writing system⁴, not based on the Latin alphabet, it is important to start learning it at a young age, when children are developmentally attuned to distinguishing tonal and visual variations. Using immersion is an optimal approach because it provides more contact hours for English speaking students to achieve proficiency. PVCICS's extended school day allows for additional instructional time for Chinese Language Arts, culture and enrichment activities. PVCICS provides students with an education that includes Eastern and Western cultural perspectives. PVCICS fosters a nurturing learning environment and instills in all students an appreciation of Chinese cultural perspectives, including the value of hard work, respect for family, community, and scholarship.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PVCICS is governed by the Board of Trustees. The Board has the responsibility for the success of the school

¹ Throughout this document, proficiency means reading, writing, listening and speaking.

² Pinyin Romanization for the Chinese characters.

³ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edreform/commoncore/beliefs.html>

⁴ In tonal languages, the tone of a word is a high-low pitch pattern permanently associated with it. A change of tone alters the word's meaning. In logographic languages, a single grapheme (an atomic unit in the written language) represents a word or a morpheme (a meaningful unit of language).

and is accountable directly to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that the school meets the terms of its charter. The Board sets policy for the school and hires the school leadership. The school leadership hires the staff of the school. Working through the school leadership, the Board ensures that all laws and regulations are being followed and that day-to-day operation is consistent with the mission of the school. In consultation with the school leadership, the Board develops and approves the budget for the school.

Board meetings are open to the public and meeting dates are posted on the school website and at the school's main office. Requests by the public to speak to the Board of Trustees must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees at least forty-eight hours before the meeting of the Board of Trustees. Correspondence to the Board can be sent to the school's main office. The request must fully disclose the topic to be discussed. Public comment will occur according to the agenda for the meeting.

SCHOOL VALUES

PVCICS's school values are:

德 智 体 群

de2 zhi4 ti3 qun2

Character Wisdom Health Teamwork

Students engage in educational activities that develop these values. PVCICS's Code of Conduct emphasizes behavior that reflects these values. PVCICS expects all members of the school community to work together to develop these values in themselves and each other. PVCICS considers parents to be partners in educating children and will empower them to play an active role in promoting the school's culture and ethos.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students may discuss school work with their peers and teachers, however if their education is to be meaningful and valuable, each student's work must ultimately be her, his or their own. Academic honesty and integrity are critical components of PVCICS's educational program. Cheating and plagiarism are strictly forbidden.

Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Intentionally using or giving unauthorized aid on any work, for example, homework, projects, tests, quizzes, exams, term papers, lab reports, computer programs;
- Passing information, either general or specific, about a test or quiz to any student who has not yet taken it;
- Taking someone's idea or words and presenting them as your own work;
- Copying the school's software, using illegally copied software in computer rooms or the library, or copying an electronic file;

NOTE: Violations of academic integrity will result in loss of credit for the work, parent contact, and/or disciplinary action.

ADMISSIONS

PVCICS is a public charter school and although any Massachusetts resident may apply, preference in the admissions lottery is given to those who reside in PVCICS's region of service and to those who are siblings of enrolled students. Students typically enter in Kindergarten, 6th or 9th grade. In grades 1-5, if a student has withdrawn, then that slot may be "backfilled" if it is before February 15 and there are students on the waiting list. No tuition or application fee is required. PVCICS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language, gender identity, or academic achievement.

The school holds public Information Sessions for prospective families and then conducts the first admissions lottery no later than March to assign students to a waiting list for the coming September. As openings occur, the top person on the list is offered the slot. Following the admissions lottery, parents are notified of

acceptance or waiting list status. Once a student is enrolled at PVCICS s/he has a secure space for subsequent years, unless the student has withdrawn.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Safety concerns are paramount during arrival and dismissal time. Students in grades K-5 should not walk alone in the parking lot at any time. At regular morning arrival and afternoon dismissal, parents should adhere to the Curbside Drop-off and Pickup procedures on the website on the Transportation webpage. It is important to drop off your child(ren) **before** 8:30 AM and to pick them up on time at dismissals. Please follow the marked parking and traffic pattern to prevent accidents. Please be advised that parents must adhere to the drop off and pickup procedures for their child(ren) and use the assigned entry doors. It is crucial the fire lane in front of the school is clear. We assign staff at key locations during drop off and pick up to maintain security and then secure the facility at 8:30 AM. After 8:30 AM, parents are required to come to the front office and sign their children in. We appreciate your cooperation and support for these procedures.

For Kindergarten and 1st grades, school begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 3:30 PM. For 2nd grade and higher, school begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 4:00 PM.

Arrivals

School begins at 8:30 AM. It is critical that all children arrive between 8:10 AM and 8:20 AM to be on time for the start of class. School doors open at 8:10 AM. Attendance is taken promptly at 8:30 AM. (See the Attendance Policy in the Appendix). Please reinforce with your child(ren) that they must go directly to class. Should they arrive after 8:30 AM, parents are required to check in at the front office with their child to get a tardy slip and proceed to their classroom.

Dismissals

For Kindergarten and 1st grades, the school day ends at 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday. For higher grades, the school day ends at 4:00 PM and a staggered dismissal schedule will be used to ensure safety in the parking lot. Details are sent to parents/guardians with the staggered dismissal schedule annually before the start of school and in the Curbside Drop-off and Pickup procedures on the website on the Transportation webpage . If anyone other than the parent/guardian is picking up the child, that person must notify our main office in advance or the parent should use the School Dismissal Manager (SDM) software to provide the information about the pickup person. If a parent can not access SDM, then a written note signed by the parent/guardian is required in advance of the pick up time to grant that permission. Students in grades 6 and higher, may sign themselves out unless parent/guardian informs us otherwise in writing in advance to our office.

Because of school related after hours activities and the need to secure the facility, students and families are required to leave the property promptly at dismissal. The playground and surrounding grassy areas are reserved for school use until the after school extracurricular and athletics programs are done.

Early Dismissal / Change in Dismissal

While it is **strongly** discouraged because of the negative impact on the educational process, if you need to pick up your child early or there is a change in the way a child will be going home, please update School Dismissal Manager and inform both the office and the child's teacher in advance in writing. ***Parent/guardian or designee authorized by parent/guardian to pickup their child, must sign your child out at the office.*** It is important that we have an accurate count of students actually in the building in case of emergency. To maintain a learning environment free of interruptions, please adhere to the following early pickup timeframes listed on our website on the Transportation webpage which are repeated below:

- K and 1st graders – early pickup is before 3:00 pm in the front office.
- 2nd-8th graders – early pickup is before 3:15 pm in the rear playground. Note: high school classes end at 4:00 pm so there is no early dismissal pickup.
- **There is no early pickup from 3:15-3:45 pm.**

Should you need to pick up your child early, please plan accordingly and understand that your child is still responsible for their assigned homework and/or class work. Please review the Attendance Policy in the Appendix.

Carpools

For families that regularly carpool, parents must arrange their own carpools and notify the school's main office about carpool arrangements including the schedule and the names of other families in your carpool. The carpool schedule should clearly show the days of the week the child will carpool and with whom the child is leaving school with. This is so that school staff know which students should be gathered together for dismissal. Carpools should be designated in the School Dismissal Manager online.

If for some reason a student in a carpool has to leave school early (e.g. s/he is sent home early due to illness), then it is the responsibility of that student's parents to notify the other members of the carpool. The school will not call the other drivers in the carpool.

If there is a change to the carpool members or drivers, then it is the responsibility of the carpool parents to notify the other members of the carpool and the school office of the change in advance in writing. The school will not call the other members in the carpool.

Playdates

If a student has a playdate with another PVCICS student after school that changes their normal pick up person, the parent must provide a written note granting permission to release their child to the "playdate parent" and update School Dismissal Manager. Parents/guardians and students may not use the school phones to make social plans. Please arrange playdates ahead of time and keep the office and teachers informed if the playdate affects your child's pick up.

Bus Services - Remote Bus and Local Shuttle

PVCICS offers two bus types of bus service to students. Busing is not guaranteed and there are limited seats available. One bus service is for **remote** stops that are further from school and a bus fee is required (unless eligible for free busing). The other is a **local** shuttle for stops that are near school. Registration is required for both the remote bus and local shuttle using the online registration and payment system.

Remote bus fees are set annually by the school administration. Students with Massachusetts Direct Certification as economically disadvantaged, receive free bus service on the supported remote bus routes. To qualify for free busing on remote buses, please complete the Massachusetts Direct Certification process at <https://dtacconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/>. Note: this is the only way to qualify for the free busing and PVCICS staff are glad to help with the process if needed.

Only regular riders will be allowed to board their regular buses. If your child needs to ride a bus other than your child's regular school bus, or needs to be dropped off at a different bus stop on the regular route other than the assigned one, parents should submit a written request to the office at least one day **before** the date requested. Requests made on the same day may not be granted. It is up to the parent/guardian to make other arrangements.

Please see the Transportation Policy for more information. Please see the school website for current bus schedules and links to register and pay (if applicable) for busing.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

For Families Driving their Child(ren) to and from School

Parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from school grounds unless students are taking the PVCICS school buses. There is no supervision on the school parking lot during arrival and dismissal times except at the curbside drop off and pick up areas. Parents are responsible for supervising their children during non-school hours when they are on school premises. Anyone using the playground and parking lot during non-school hours are expected to abide by the same playground and parking lot rules that the school has during school and after-school hours. This includes parents, guardians, students, siblings and friends who are on the school property. Failure to do so may be cause for loss of privilege of using the facility after hours. **All parents or designees authorized by parents must sign their child(ren) out** with the on duty staff person or at the office for an early pick-up.

For Families Whose Child(ren) are using the PVCICS Local Shuttle and Remote Bus Service

Five Star bus company provides PVCICS's local shuttle and remote bus service. Please see the Transportation Policy in the appendix and school website for more information on bus service. If your child is *not* riding the bus on a particular day, you must notify the school office prior to 2:00 pm of that day and preferably a day in advance so we can revise the bus rosters. If you are picking your child up at school, you should follow the drop off and pick up procedures for students being driven to school. Using the School Dismissal Manager is the most reliable source for providing information about changes in your child's bus ridership. Please do not depend solely on sending a note with your child, or verbal directions to the student without informing the office.

Note: For further details regarding arrival and dismissal procedures that are effective on the first day of school, please see transportation info posted on the school website and/or sent separately to parents/guardians.

ATHLETICS

PVCICS's middle and high school students may participate in recreational and competitive athletics teams. There are additional athletics policies and procedures for participation in these athletic teams. Parents must complete all required permission and health forms prior to the student joining a team. Please see the Athletics webpage on the school's public website for details and a copy of the Athletic Handbook, as well as a link to the online registration system.

ATTENDANCE***Absences***

Massachusetts General Laws require children to attend school regularly. Parents and guardians are essential to good attendance and are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly on time and for the full hours school is in session. PVCICS expects students to attend school daily to receive the maximum benefits of our program. In cases of excessive absences, a 51A report may be filed with the Department of Children and Families. Our Attendance Policy is included in the Appendix.

Tardiness

If a student arrives after 8:30 AM, that student will be considered "tardy". Five "tardys" add up to an unexcused absence. (See Attendance Policy). When a student arrives to school on time but is not in the classroom by 8:30, the student will be sent to the office to get a "tardy" slip and will be marked tardy. We strongly encourage families to use the 15 minutes, 8:10 - 8:25 to drop off their children to ensure they are in class and ready to begin with the rest of the class at 8:30. Persistent tardiness will result in a telephone call, a letter from the school and/or a meeting between parents, student(s) as appropriate, and the administration. In cases where persistent late arrivals continue, a 51A report may be filed with the Department of Children and Families.

Snow Days

Parents should call PVCICS and listen to the voicemail message for school cancellations. You can also listen to TV (Channel 22 and 40) to find out about school closings due to weather. ***If the Hadley Public Schools close or have a delayed opening due to weather, then so will PVCICS.*** Except in extraordinary circumstances, PVCICS will not close school early because it would be difficult to arrange transportation and make sure parents are home to receive children. If you become concerned about road conditions, you may pick your children up early. It would be helpful to call ahead. PVCICS has an automated calling system where special announcements having to do with weather closings will be transmitted to all families on the system. Please make sure we have your correct phone numbers and check with the school office for more information.

Withdrawals and Transfers

Parents/guardians must notify the Principal concerning the transfer of their child to another school. PVCICS considers a student withdrawn from the school once the parent/guardian has provided written confirmation in a withdrawal letter. We will consider it a de facto withdrawal if a student does not attend class during the first five days of the school year. This applies specifically in cases where a parent has been unresponsive in submitting a withdrawal letter and where we have credible information that the child is enrolled in another school or not living in the area. Upon withdrawal, the withdrawn student will not have any digital access to school resources. For example, withdrawn students will not be able to access their school email accounts, google classrooms, shared documents etc. Before a student transfers or withdraws, the student must return all books and other PVCICS property to PVCICS and pay any outstanding balances.

The Massachusetts student record regulations expressly permit PVCICS to transmit, without a parent's consent, student records to any school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer as per 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(g).

BIRTHDAYS

Due to Massachusetts nutrition guidelines encouraging healthy celebrations, we do not allow birthday or holiday food items. It can be upsetting to your child when food items are brought to share and your child is not able to do so. You will be called to pick up the food as it will not be served. If you wish to bring a **non-food** item to share with your child's classmates to celebrate your child's birthday, please let the teacher know at least a week in advance. Out-of-school party invitations should **not** be brought to school.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

PVCICS is committed to providing all students with a safe, respectful learning environment that is free from bullying. PVCICS treats all members of its community with kindness and respect in an inclusive environment. Please be advised that any and all acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation are prohibited in the school. This includes all PVCICS sponsored activities on and off campus. PVCICS's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is crafted carefully to comply with state law and provide protections against bullying to all students and staff.

PVCICS has made a commitment to help students develop the interpersonal skills necessary to work effectively and cooperatively with others and therefore not tolerate bullying. Along with PVCICS's Code of Conduct, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan provide a foundation for all members of PVCICS's community to build a safe and kind environment for learning.

Bullying is defined as follows:

“The repeated use by one or more individuals of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target, that:

- (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- (ii) Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- (iii) Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- (iv) Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or

- (v) Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.”

Bullying can be physical or psychological and includes such behaviors as name-calling, excluding, teasing, pushing and verbal threats, and includes cyber-bullying. In the event that we receive a report of alleged bullying, school administration will take all steps required within the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to promptly investigate and remedy bullying situations. Parent and student notification of bullying incidents, as well as the investigation and response to such incidents, will be made in accordance with our policy and in keeping with all students’ privacy rights. PVCICS takes its obligations under the Anti-Bullying law very seriously. PVCICS strives to take into account all perspectives, including student and parent input; however parents may not be informed during the investigation period should the staff feel doing so would compromise the investigation at school. The investigation period may or may not include parents at the discretion of the school. The final determination of whether specific conduct constitutes bullying lies with PVCICS staff. Parents will be notified of the final determination. For specific information about PVCICS’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, please see the Appendix or visit the school’s public website at <http://www.pvcics.org> .

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

The school property includes the grounds outside, the building, furnishings inside the building, educational materials (books, study materials, workbooks, musical instruments, etc) and the school vehicles. All students, parents and school community members should take care of the school property.

When using disposable materials such as paper, pencils, glue, markers, etc. please be environmentally conscious and minimize waste so use these items with care. When discarding materials, please sort them for recycling.

Students and parents/guardians will be held responsible for any damage that can be attributed to misuse of school property. Because desks, cubbies and lockers are school property, they may be searched by any school staff member who has trustworthy information to cause reasonable suspicion that such cubby, locker or desk may contain stolen property, weapons, drugs, or other contraband of any kind.

Textbooks, workbooks and other study materials are assigned to students for their personal use during the school year. Students are expected to treat all school property with care so that textbooks and other reusable materials will be returned in good condition when requested by staff and/or at the end of the school year.

Parents/guardians will be expected to pay for lost, stolen, or damaged books, computers, and materials before new ones are issued.

Before a student transfers, withdraws, or graduates, the student must return any textbooks, library books, computers, or equipment and pay any outstanding fines. The student will have all of their teachers sign off on the student checkout sheet. High school students who fail to return PVCICS property or pay owed dues will have their final transcripts and diplomas withheld. Graduating high school seniors will also be ineligible to attend all senior activities, including, but not limited to, prom and graduation.

Parents and children are also held responsible for damage of the school building and equipment such as musical instruments and sporting equipment that can be attributed to misuse. Graffiti (writing on walls, play equipment, etc) is considered vandalism and may result in disciplinary consequences. **Parents/guardians will be billed for any structural repair needed for damage inflicted to desks, chairs, walls, etc. due to through misuse.**

CLOTHING

In order to reduce distraction from learning and minimize peer pressure, all students should wear practical and comfortable clothes to school, appropriate to age, grade, and weather conditions. Clothing that causes a

distraction, offends others, or upsets the decorum of classes is not allowed. Appropriate dress for all students is required throughout the school year to maintain a positive learning environment. To help clarify what “appropriate dress” means, see the list below and understand that these rules apply to all K-8th students.

In 2023-2024, PVCICS is implementing the dress code that was used in high school in 2022-2023 for the middle school. This different dress code applies only to middle and high school students and is in the Appendix.

- Shorts and/or skirts should be at least to mid-thigh and not shorter.
- Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
- Tank tops should have a wide strap (at least three fingers wide) and should not gap away from the body. An athletic team tank should have a t-shirt under it.
- Closed toe shoes should be worn. Shoes are required at all times.

Any hats, sunglasses, long coats, or other clothing that negatively affect the educational process for other students and/or staff will not be allowed. The student will be asked to change their clothing to comply with the school’s definition of appropriate dress.

Bare midriffs and suggestive or revealing clothing are not appropriate for school. Clothing which advertises alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco products, or illegal substances is not appropriate. Clothing with any sexual, racial, or ethnic negative connotation is considered inappropriate. Students wearing inappropriate clothing must change to other appropriate clothing, turn it inside out, or cover it in some other way. Parents will be informed and asked to immediately bring appropriate clothing for the student if the student does not have appropriate clothing to wear at school. Parents are encouraged to support this policy.

Students will need a T-shirt, comfortable pants (shorts ok), and sneakers for Physical Education (PE) class. Proper attire is part of the PE grade for students. Sneakers are usually the most appropriate and comfortable closed-toe footwear for school; **platform shoes, flip flops, or sandals are dangerous, especially for gym and recess, and should not be worn to school.** Students should not wear cleats to school. Please plan to have your child(ren) wear sneakers or other closed-toe footwear.

Sneakers are a requirement for physical education (PE) classes. If a student does not bring sneakers for PE, the student will not be able to participate and a letter stating the need for sneakers will be sent home after the third offense. The class schedule will provide the days that a student has PE class. Students may bring the PE attire on class days or store them in their cubby or locker. Parents/guardians should remind students to bring dirty clothing home to be washed.

Students in the grades K-2 should keep a complete change of clothing at school in case of spills, etc. All students are encouraged to keep an indoor pair of shoes in school that they can change into if the playground is likely to be messy (i.e. muddy, snowy etc.). Indoor shoes help reduce the amount of dirt that comes into the school after outdoor activities so that the school stays cleaner for everyone. Bedroom slippers are not considered to be indoor shoes, however, soft soled shoes such as moccasins are appropriate. Please check with your child’s classroom teacher to verify appropriate footwear for the classroom.

Parents/guardians are urged to label all children’s clothing, especially sweaters, coats, jackets, hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves. Labels help minimize the number of lost items.

Lost and found items are collected and stored for a very limited time near the front offices. Items with a student name on them are returned to that student to the best of our ability; however PVCICS is not responsible for lost items. Unclaimed items are regularly donated to charity, so please routinely check for lost items.

CODE OF CONDUCT

PVCICS strives to build a community of students who exhibit the school values of character, teamwork, wisdom, and health. All members of the school community are encouraged to develop strong communication skills that foster teamwork, respect for each other, and a character that exemplifies being a solid citizen in the community. Treating others as they want to be treated and taking care of "our" school helps children, parents and teachers define appropriate behaviors that meet those ends. Please see the Appendix for PVCICS's Code of Conduct.

PVCICS uses Restorative Practices throughout the school to help build community and resolve conflicts. The focus is on personal accountability to oneself and the community. When possible, circles are utilized to develop trusting relationships and build resilience for change.

Students in grades 6 and higher may be given detention for disciplinary infractions. Factors such as the student's age, disability status, behavior patterns, and other factors are taken into consideration. Detention is a quiet period held during lunch or after-school with a staff member in an office and/or classroom where the student may work quietly, and if a lunch detention, have lunch. For an after-school detention, the parent/guardian is required to pick up their child at school after the detention. Failure to report for an assigned detention may result in further disciplinary action. When a student is absent or dismissed early from school on the day of an assigned detention, the detention will be reassigned to the next day the student attends school. **No postponement of assigned detentions is possible. Detention decisions will not be reversed due to parent request.** They are given based on teacher/staff discernment.

COMMUNICATIONS

School News and Other Information

School news and other information will be sent home in digital or hardcopy form, or posted on the public website. The school is working hard to conserve paper and is using Google Classrooms for posting information and assignments. If hardcopies are sent home, they will be sent with your child in their folder or backpack.

Please check your child's folder or backpack at the end of the day so that you don't miss any important information. Do not expect to use the school (e.g. cubbies/lockers, etc.) for sending invitations or distributing non-school-related information. If you have an email address, the school may send information to you electronically, so please check your email for important information and announcements. If you don't have an email id, you **must** inform PVCICS that you need information sent in hardcopy. **Note: Confidential information will not be sent by email unless specifically requested as it is considered a public document.**

Contacting Teachers

Our teachers welcome your input and encourage you to maintain a dialogue with them. If you need to call a teacher, please call the school office and leave a message. You may use email or send in a note with your child, including information about when and where the teacher may contact you. Please be aware that teachers are generally not available to talk on the phone during school hours because they are teaching. This is to help maintain confidentiality for your child as well as respect the time you may need to discuss issues with the teachers. Please do not expect to speak with teachers at arrival or dismissal times as they are on duty. Instead, call or email to make an appointment to meet with them at an agreed upon time.

Contacting Administrators

The school administrators are available by phone and email. The Principal holds monthly Conversation Times for "drop-in" conversations. Please feel free to contact the administrators if you have questions or concerns. You are encouraged to schedule meetings with administration and most meetings are in a virtual format. The administration wants to give your topic the attention it needs and scheduling can help provide you the time you need.

For parent requests such as asking for particular classroom assignments and/or staff assignments, please understand that PVCICS generally will not honor those requests. PVCICS makes classroom assignments after considering many factors and employs a highly qualified staff that provides support to all students. Because of the nature of PVCICS's inclusive and cooperative educational environment, all students are very likely to come into regular contact with all PVCICS staff members.

Contacting Students

During the day you may leave messages for students in the office. These will be delivered when time allows. Students will be called from class only for emergencies. Students will only be allowed to use the school phones with their teacher's or a staff member's permission and typically these are for emergencies. **Parents should not email/text their students' cell phones because students should not have cell phones in use during class or during school.** There are times that a teacher or a staff member, along with the student, will contact a parent/guardian regarding a student's classroom behavior.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

All parents/guardians are expected to participate in parent/teachers conferences twice a year in the Fall and Spring semesters. The conference days are indicated on the school calendar. Signing up for conferences will be online and be held virtually via live video conference call. If necessary, a conference might be in person. These conferences have two major objectives. The first is to provide an opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to build a working relationship based on mutual understanding and support for each student. The second is to share insights and perceptions, and explore goals for your child, while reviewing work in the portfolio with the teacher and your child.

Conferences are scheduled in 20 minute blocks for grades K-5 and in pre-scheduled blocks of time for grades 6-12. Students in grades 6-12 may participate in their conference with their parents. It is important that parents set up a separate meeting if additional time is needed to discuss issues in more detail so conferences can stay on schedule.

During parent/teacher conferences, students are dismissed early so that teachers can be at the conferences. Students in middle and high school are encouraged to attend their parent/teacher conference. When needed for K-5 grade students, parents are required to make their own after-school childcare and/or transportation from school if the scheduled conference is after dismissal.

If a conference is in person, students and/or siblings are not to be left unattended on school property while parents are at conferences. The school does not provide childcare during parent/teacher conferences. Parents may be asked to reschedule if their child(ren) are found to be unattended on school property during conferences.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

The school counseling department supports the educational mission of PVCICS by providing services that promote the development of all students in three domains: academic/technical, achievement, social/emotional growth and college and career readiness. The Massachusetts Model for School Counseling, based on the American School Counselor Association National Model, is the template used to create a comprehensive school counseling program. The school counselors work in collaboration and in consultation with teachers, parents, administrators, school staff, and the school psychologist and community partners to promote student success.

The comprehensive school counseling program is delivered through:

- Classroom guidance
- Individual planning sessions
- Short term Individual counseling sessions

- Small group
- Workshops for parents and students. For high school students, these will focus on post-secondary planning and the college financial aid process.

The content of a comprehensive school counselor program includes but is not limited to:

- Academic planning
- College planning (primarily for high school students)
- Career awareness, readiness and exploration (primarily for high school students)
- Personal/Social /Emotional Support, Prevention and Intervention

Counseling services are available to all students to assist in educational, career, and social/personal matters specifically related to school. Individual student counseling is provided on a short-term basis. The counselors will furnish referrals for students and families to outside counseling agencies if the need for more lengthy or specialized services should arise. Counselors are members of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team and Student Support Team (SST). The counselors assist each student in developing and implementing a successful plan for school that meets their individual goals and objectives. For high school students, this plan includes post-secondary school plans. Students and parents should feel free to consult with the counselors at any time during the school year. *As with teachers and administrators, contact the counselor and make an appointment.* During the year, the counseling department will organize programs and workshops for students and parents/caregivers to assist students.

DISTRIBUTION OF NON-PVCICS MATERIALS

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other material to students/staff or post them within the school or on school grounds may do so only with the approval of the Principal. All flyers must clearly state the name of the sponsoring organization, contact name(s) and contact information. Organizations must clearly indicate on the flyer that the event is not sponsored by PVCICS.

DONATIONS

PVCICS appreciates voluntary donations of school supplies and other items on its “wish lists”. Donations of other supplies are appreciated throughout the year but if there is something you are considering donating but it is not on a school wish list, please let the Principal or office know so that we may coordinate the donation with other possible donations. Donations are tax-deductible and you should consult with your tax advisor on how to do this.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Curriculum and Instruction

PVCICS’s curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks/Common Core. In grades 11 and 12, PVCICS’s curriculum is also aligned with the International Baccalaureate standards. PVCICS students receive instruction in core subjects (Chinese, mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies) and in arts, health, and physical education. Subjects taught in English are taught by a teacher with native English proficiency. Subjects taught in Chinese are taught by bilingual Chinese/English teachers with native or near-native proficiency in Chinese. Art, music, health and physical education may be taught in English or Chinese.

Elementary School

At PVCICS, elementary school is grades Kindergarten through 5. In grades K-1st, 75% of the daily instruction is in Chinese and 25% in English. In grades 2-5, 50% of the daily instruction is in Chinese and 50% in English. **In grades K-5, the core subjects of math and science are taught in Chinese.** Middle school is grades 6 through 8.

Middle School

At PVCICS, middle school is grades 6 through 8. In grades 6th and higher, 25% of the daily instruction is in Chinese and 75% in English. All core subjects are taught in English except for Chinese, which is roughly two hours per day. In middle school, there are two “threads” of Chinese courses, one for students who typically entered PVCICS in elementary school and one for students who typically entered PVCICS in 6th grade. Placement into the appropriate Chinese course is based on the school’s assessment of the student’s Chinese language proficiency.

High School

PVCICS’s high school program is designed to be an academically challenging college preparatory program with an international focus. As in middle school, all core subjects are taught in English except for Chinese, which is roughly two hours per day. Starting in 9th grade, there are three “threads” of Chinese courses, ranging from novice to advanced levels. Placement is determined by the school’s assessment of the student’s Chinese language proficiency. The 9th and 10th grade program prepares students for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme in 11th and 12th grades.

PVCICS is an “IB for All” program meaning every 11th and 12th grader takes all IB courses. There is no other curriculum offered and students have three options in how they will engage with the IB curriculum:

1. Students enroll in the full International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP) meaning they take all IB courses while completing additional DP requirements. Upon successful completion of these requirements, students will earn an International Baccalaureate Diploma and a Massachusetts high school diploma.
2. Students take all International Baccalaureate courses but do not opt to do the full DP. At the end of each individual IB course, students who choose this option will earn an IB certificate upon successful completion of the externally assessed IB course exam. Upon successful completion of these requirements, students will earn a Massachusetts high school diploma.
3. Students take all IB courses, but can choose not to take the IB exam and will thus only earn PVCICS high school credit and not IB credit for the course. Upon successful completion of these requirements, students will earn a Massachusetts high school diploma.

As an IB World School, PVCICS shares a common philosophy with other IB schools around the world, namely a commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that will prepare students for college and beyond. For further information about the IB, visit <http://www.ibo.org>.

Supporting English Learners

As a public charter school, PVCICS supports students who have limited English proficiency and adheres to all state and Federal regulations related to English Learners (ELs). Please see the Appendix for a FAQ “English Learners in Public Charter Schools”.

Supporting Students with Disabilities

As a public charter school, PVCICS supports students who have disabilities and adheres to all state and Federal regulations related to special education. Please see the Appendix for a FAQ “Students with Disabilities in Public Charter Schools”.

Textbooks, Library Books, Computers and Materials

All textbooks, library books, computers and instructional materials furnished by PVCICS are school property. Please see the Care for School Property section for additional information.

School Community Time and Student Performances

School Community Time for K-5 will be held once a month on the first Friday of the month. During this time, various grades gather for School Community Time. This school event allows students to get to know students in other classrooms. It is an important time for the students to share in a common event, whether it be singing

or doing an activity together. Sometimes School Community Time is in the gym, outside, or in the classrooms when students are working in multi-grade groups doing an activity.

One aspect of School Community Time is student performances in front of the rest of the school. These are an integral part of the overall program of PVCICS. The main objective is to allow students the opportunity, at some point in the year, to present themselves in front of an audience with confidence and with a high degree of proficiency. During the school year, PVCICS may hold student concerts that are open to families. Not all concerts are open to families, however, due to state regulations for health/fire safety and the current parking needs.

EVALUATION

Report Cards

Report cards are generated twice a year at the end of Fall and Spring terms and starting in 2020-2021, all report cards are online in the PowerSchool Parent Portal. At the parent conferences, held twice during the school year, teachers will discuss students' performance and progress. If there are any issues during the year, teachers will contact the student's parents/guardians to discuss remedies to the areas of concern.

Promotion or Retention

The student's best interests are always considered when recommending promotion or retention for academic reasons. Each case is decided on its own merits after all factors are carefully considered. **The teachers and administration reserve the right to make all decisions regarding retention and/or promotion.** The following criteria may determine promotion or retention to a grade level:

- Academic achievement as indicated by a current report card, ability level or standardized test results.
- Emotional and social maturity as determined by the classroom teachers.
- Chronological age and physical development as compared to peers.
- Number of previous retentions.
- Support programs.
- Attendance records.
- For grades 6-8: two or more failing courses in a given semester or school year.
- For grades 9-12: total accrued credits at the end of each school year. Please see the sections on High School Class Status and High School Graduation Requirements.

Grading System for Elementary School: Grades K-5

Students in elementary (grades K-5) receive standards-based report cards describing how well they have performed on the curriculum standards for each core academic subject. They also receive indicators that reflect their performance in work habits and social/emotional skills, such as completing work on time and demonstrating respect for others and for the classroom environment.

K-5 Work Habits and Social/Emotional Indicators

- 4 – Student consistently demonstrates this skill
- 3 – Student demonstrates this skill most of the time
- 2 – Student demonstrates this skill some of the time
- 1 – Student requires ongoing intervention to develop this skill

K-5 Academic Performance Skills Indicators

- M – Mastery (Grade 3-5 only) —Exhibits a deep understanding of the grade-level standard consistently and independently
- P – Proficiency—Exhibits a solid understanding of the grade-level standard with minimal assistance
- A – Apprenticeship—Exhibits a basic understanding of the grade-level standard with some assistance

- E – Emerging—Exhibits minimal understanding of the grade-level standard with significant assistance

Grading System for Middle School: Grades 6-8

Students in middle school (grades 6-8) receive letter grades as described below⁵. Middle school lays the foundation for high school and letter grades allow middle school students to adjust to letter grades before reaching high school. The following grade scale is used in middle school. All term and final grades are reported as letter grades. In order to pass a course, a student must earn at least a 60 percent (a “D-” or above).

Numerical Range	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
31-59	F
0-30	F

Middle School Incomplete Work

If a student has been unable to complete work due to excused absences or extenuating circumstances as determined by the teacher and/or administrator, teachers will determine the deadline for submitting the missed work and will inform the student.

Assessment is an important part of learning, and students benefit from timely feedback. To ensure that required assignments are submitted on time, a student may be assigned to a mandatory supervised study hall at the end of the school day to complete missing work. This will override all other activities (such as sports or clubs) unless the missing work is submitted before the scheduled supervised study hall. The study hall is to be used to complete a missing assignment which must be handed to the supervisory teacher at the end of the supervised study hall.

If the make-up period falls at the end of a semester, then the student may be given an Incomplete (“I”) on the report card. If a student does not turn in a required course assessment, he or she may be given an Incomplete in the course until which time the assessment is completed and turned in.

Middle School Course Failure

A middle school student who earns a failing grade for a course must provide evidence of course content by the start of the next school year. If the schedule permits, a student may make up a failed course while taking the current grade level course in that discipline. A student may repeat a course only due to failing that course. A student may not repeat a course to improve a passing grade. If it is not possible to repeat a course during the school year, please see the Middle School Summer Studies section below.

Middle School Summer Studies

Middle school students who earn a failing grade as a final year end grade for a course, will be required to do summer study to demonstrate meeting the curriculum standards for the failed course. PVCICS offers a limited summer school program that is subject to enrollment, however will accept summer school work from courses

⁵ Prior to 2018-2019, middle school students used standards-based grading as used in K-5.

pre-approved by the school. It is the student’s responsibility to cover the expenses for summer courses needed for failed courses. An official transcript of summer school coursework must be sent to the school prior to the start of the next school year. The summer school grade will not be indicated on the student’s report card or transcript.

Grading System for High School: Grades 9-12

Students in high school (grades 9-12) receive letter grades as described below. All 9th and 10th grade courses are designed as preparation for the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum in 11th and 12th grades. As a result, all 9th and 10th grade courses represent what other schools may reasonably call **Honors** in the first two years of high school. Grades in the IB curriculum reflect the attainment of knowledge relative to established standards that are equally applied.

- **Grade Scale:** All term and final grades are reported as letter grades. In order to receive credit for a course, a student must earn at least a 60 percent (a “D-” or above).
- **Grade Point Average (GPA):** The grade point average is based on a standard scale below. Because PVCICS does not level its courses, the GPA is unweighted and is computed at the end of each school year.
- **Class Rank:** PVCICS does not report rank in class except by percentile when requested by colleges, universities, and scholarship services as part of the application process.

Numerical Range	Letter Grade	International Baccalaureate (IB)	Value in Grade Point Average (GPA)
97-100	A+	7	4.3
93-96	A	7	4.0
90-92	A-	6	3.7
87-89	B+	5	3.3
83-86	B	5	3.0
80-82	B-	5	2.7
77-79	C+	4	2.3
73-76	C	4	2.0
70-72	C-	4	1.7
67-69	D+	3	1.3
63-66	D	3	1.0
60-62	D-	3	0.7
31-59	F	2	0.0
0-30	F	1	0.0

- **Honor Roll:** PVCICS recognizes high school scholarship by announcing a scholastic honor roll at the end of each semester for high school students. All students who carry a minimum of five major subjects and who receive no grade below C in any subject are eligible for the honor roll. Students earn High Honors for all A’s in all major subjects; Honors for A’s and B’s in all major subjects; and Honorable Mention for A’s and B’s in all but one major subject if a C in that major subject is offset by an A in another major subject. A major subject is one carrying 1 credit or more for the year. All other subjects are minors.
- **National Honor Society (NHS):** High school students are selected for membership into the PVCICS Chapter of the National Honor Society by meeting the following criteria: Scholarship: To be eligible for membership, a high school student must earn a grade point average of at least 3.3. Each September eligible high school students will be invited to a preliminary meeting to receive an information packet which must be completed by the stated deadline. More details are in the Appendix.
- **Athletic Eligibility:** All information about eligibility requirements, physicals, and fees may be obtained by reading the Athletic Handbook that is available on the school website or by contacting the school’s Athletic Director.

High School Class Status

Students receive eight credits in 9th and 10th grades for passing all non-elective courses each year. International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) candidates receive seven and a half credits in 11th and 12th grades for passing all courses each year. Non IB DP students do not take Theory of Knowledge so receive seven credits in 11th and 12th grades for passing all courses each year.

A student must accumulate the following minimum number of credits to maintain class status:

High School Minimum Promotion Requirements	
Sophomore	7 credits
Junior	15 credits
Senior	21 credits
Graduating Senior	28 credits (minimum required to graduate)

Periods of instruction, promotion and retention of a student on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall be an IEP team decision conducted in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and are not to be governed by the provisions of the preceding paragraphs.

High School Graduation Requirements

All students must accrue a minimum of 28 credits to graduate to earn a PVCICS Massachusetts high school diploma by meeting the following course requirements (1 credit = 1 year of study). PVCICS’s graduation requirements exceed the Massachusetts state required course of study and a student must fulfill all their graduation requirements prior to the graduation ceremony in order to participate in the ceremony.

Minimum High School Graduation Requirements: All students in high school are required to meet the Massachusetts State requirements, as well as Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter Schools’ graduation requirements (total of 28 credits) and IB requirements.	
Grade below 60 is failing.	
4 credits of English	8 credits of Chinese
4 credits of Mathematics	1 credit of Art appreciation
4 credits of Science	1 credit of Music appreciation
4 credits of Social Studies/History	2 credits of PE (Health included in PE)
IB Extended essay (4000 words)	IB Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) work
IB Theory of Knowledge Course (IB Diploma Candidates)	
MCAS: All Massachusetts students must pass the 10th grade MCAS English and Math tests, plus a Science MCAS. PVCICS administers the MCAS Biology test in 9 th grade for the Science MCAS. Students are required to earn a minimum MCAS score on the English Language Arts, the Mathematics tests, and Science tests to earn a high school diploma. See http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html for the state required minimum scores.	

High School Course Prerequisites

The prerequisite for the course in each discipline is a passing grade in the previous course. A student may make up a failed course while taking the current grade level course in that discipline if the schedule permits. If not possible, see Failure and Make-up Policy below.

High School Incomplete Work

If a student has been unable to complete work due to excused absences or extenuating circumstances as determined by the teacher and/or administrator, teachers will determine the deadline for submitting the missed work and will inform the student.

Assessment is an important part of learning, and students benefit from timely feedback. To ensure that

required assignments are submitted on time, a student may be assigned to a mandatory supervised study hall at the end of the school day to complete missing work. This will override all other activities (such as sports or clubs) unless the missing work is submitted before the scheduled supervised study hall. The study hall is to be used to complete a missing assignment which must be handed to the supervisory teacher at the end of the supervised study hall.

If the make-up period falls at the end of a semester, then the student may be given an Incomplete (“I”) on the report card. If a student does not turn in a required course assessment, he or she may be given an Incomplete in the course until which time the assessment is completed and turned in. This may apply to course assigned Internal Assessments (IAs) as well as exams.

High School Failure and Make-up by Repeating a Course

A student who earns a failing grade for a course must recover credit for that course by the start of the next school year. If the schedule permits, a student may make up a failed course while taking the current grade level course in that discipline. A student may repeat a course only due to failing that course. A student may not repeat a course to improve a passing grade. If it is not possible to repeat a course during the school year, please see the Summer Credit Recovery section below.

High School Final Exams Schedule

All high school students are required to take final exams (“Finals”) at the end of each semester and these are given during the last three full school days of the fall and spring semesters. All final examinations shall be given under the supervision of PVCICS personnel. Final exams count significantly towards the final grade in a class, so it is essential that students be present during exams. Due to snow days, the final exam dates will shift when there are snow days. High school parents and students should not schedule vacations or other activities that cause the high school student to miss final exams.

If a student has a legitimate scheduling conflict (as determined by the Principal), the student’s parent/guardian must notify the school, in writing, at least three weeks in advance. Failure to do so may result in a failure for the exam missed. If the student has an emergency, the student must alert the school as soon as possible.

No student shall be exempted from the exams without prior approval of the Administration. No student shall take the final exams before the regularly scheduled time. Under normal non-emergency circumstances, a missed examination must be made up within two weeks after the last day of final examinations for that semester. For the spring semester, the missed exam will be given in the summer and the student will be given an Incomplete grade for the spring semester and receive a final grade in the fall.

High School Summer Credit Recovery

PVCICS offers a limited summer school program subject to enrollment. PVCICS will only accept summer school credit from courses pre-approved by the student’s counselor. Credit is granted only to summer courses that are taken due to failure. No more than two summer school courses will be counted toward graduation requirements. Enrichment courses are not eligible for credit. Credit for 9th and 10th grade PVCICS courses may be awarded from summer courses taken at other high schools. For credit for 11th and 12th grades IB courses, students may earn credit through college coursework completed during the summer. It is the student’s responsibility to cover the expenses for credits needed for failed classes. Please note there are placement tests and costs associated with taking summer college courses. An official transcript of summer school coursework must be sent to the student’s guidance counselor and the summer school grade and credit earned will be indicated on the student’s transcript. Summer school grades are not included in the calculation of GPA.

Age of Majority - 18 years old

NOTE: When a student turns 18 years old, school communications regarding student records will go to the student and their parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will continue to receive school communications unless that student has informed the school they do not want the parent/guardian to access the information.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important part of our curriculum and teachers decide what field trips match the curriculum best. Parents are always notified of specific field trips when they occur. Voluntary donations to help cover the cost of trips are welcome. Parents/guardians are asked to help with chaperoning when necessary. Parent chaperones are expected to supervise assigned students to assist in making the field trip safe and enjoyable. Parent chaperones may not bring additional guests or family members on the field trip. If there are more parents/guardians volunteering to chaperone than there are slots for chaperones, a lottery will be used to select the chaperones. Parent chaperones must undergo a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check prior to being allowed on the field trip. Should a parent not be chosen through the lottery, that parent should not attend the field trip or just show up at the site. It causes many difficulties and possible awkward situations.

Parents are asked to sign a permission slip allowing their children to participate in field trips at the start of the school year. Prior to each individual trip, an *additional* permission slip describing the trip and asking for a donation to cover the cost of the field trip will be sent home. Children are required to return this additional form and any other required information to participate prior to the date of the field trip. Parents can opt to keep their child home on a day of a field trip if they choose to; this will be considered an unexcused absence. If the child attends school on the day a field trip is planned, the student will be expected to participate in it.

FOOD FOR SNACK/LUNCH

Parents should pack nutritious and healthy snacks every day for their child(ren). Students eat snack in their classrooms every day. Parents should also pack a lunch and drink if they are not buying the school lunch and milk. Drinks should **not** be soda, energy drinks or other high sugar content fluids. PVCICS has filtered water available through the water fountains. Students can bring a refillable water bottle to use during the day. PVCICS encourages families to reduce single use plastic containers by using reusable containers.

All students eat breakfast and/or lunch in their regular classrooms or outside according to their grade's daily schedule. Breakfast and lunch time routines and expectations are in the Appendix and they are designed to make sure there is a safe environment during breakfast and lunch. Please review these with your child(ren).

PVCICS provides a school breakfast⁶ and school lunch from an outside vendor. To order breakfast and/or lunch, parents/guardians should go to the online lunch ordering website and follow the instructions sent to parents prior to the start of each school year. If you have any questions, please check with the office staff.

For students who bring snack/lunch from home, please be advised that no refrigeration or warming facilities are available. We encourage students to bring healthy low-sugar items. It is a long day and snacks are essential. We encourage students to bring home all trash and uneaten food, so please pack accordingly (re-closeable containers, bags for scraps...). PVCICS recycles and bio-composts most lunch waste, however we would like students to not waste food so want them to bring home uneaten food.

Life Threatening Allergens and No Sharing of Food

Please note PVCICS does not allow peanut products into the school building. It is a **peanut-safe** building because we have students with life-threatening allergies to peanuts. We appreciate your understanding of this requirement. As such, students are not allowed to share their breakfast, snack or lunch and if we find any food item with peanuts in the school, we will take it to the office and return it to the parents at the end of the day.

⁶ School breakfast is new starting 2022-2023.

In addition to peanuts, when the nurses determine there are other allergens that are life threatening to a student, that student's classroom will be notified so that that allergen is not brought into the school. All parents must notify the nurses at the beginning of school, if their child(ren) have allergies.

Free and Reduced Price Food Services

Starting in 2022-2023, all public school students in Massachusetts receive free school meals (breakfast and lunch). Parents/guardians who need financial assistance with other programs, should complete a Free/Reduced Lunch application. Please check the school website, <https://pvcics.org/student-resources/lunch>, for the free/reduced lunch application or check in at the front office for the paperwork.

PVCICS participates in the National School Lunch Program and will take part in other food programs that may become available to assure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, no child who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a free breakfast and lunch or other food simply because proper application has not been received from his parents or guardians.⁷

In addition, Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 210.10(a)(1) General Nutrition Requirements states "Schools must provide nutritious and well-balanced meals to all the children they serve."

Meal Ordering Online

PVCICS has a meal ordering system (pvcics.boonli.com) that must be used. However if a student forgets their breakfast and/or lunch on any given day the student will be provided what is available for that meal.

PVCICS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School Educational Foundation is a separate 501c(3) nonprofit organization whose purpose is to raise funds for the school, both through fundraising and through private grants. It is governed by its own Board of Directors. They distribute the money they raise by contributing to the school's general fund. Parents are encouraged to financially support the PVCICS Educational Foundation by contacting the Executive Director.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising helps PVCICS meet its educational objectives by supplementing its budget. Fundraising occurs in several organizations:

⁷MASC Legal References: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760), Child Nutrition Act of 1966, P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended M.G.L. 15:1G; 15:1L; 69:1C; 71:72

⁸ Note: for SY22 and SY23, all school breakfasts and lunches are free for everyone due to Covid-19 funding by the state. In Massachusetts, all school meals are free for everyone effective SY24.

- *PVCICS Educational Foundation* – see section on this above.
- *Family Association (FA)* – see section on this in the Parent Involvement section. This organization is a separate non-profit organization run by parents/guardians. They plan and implement fundraising programs to supplement school and classroom activities. The FA fundraising activities are conducted with input from PVCICS staff.

GIFTS TO EMPLOYEES

All PVCICS employees are public employees and there are regulations governing gifts. The State Ethics Commission's website states: *"In general, a public employee may not accept any gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the position he or she holds. Public employees may accept gifts that are worth less than \$50, but they have to disclose in writing that they have done so if, based on the specific circumstances, a reasonable person would think that the public employee might unduly show favor to the giver or the giver's child, or be influenced by the giver."*

The law prohibits gifts to public employees, not gifts to public agencies. You may give gifts to a public school, or a particular classroom, and the \$50 limit does not apply.

The Ethics Commission recently created an exemption to permit class gifts to teachers. A teacher may accept a gift, or several gifts during the school year, from public school students and/or their parents and guardians, with an aggregated value of up to \$150, if the gift is identified only as being from the class, and the identity of the givers and the individual amounts given are not identified to the recipient. Gifts received pursuant to this exemption are not required to be disclosed. The donor is unknown, so a reasonable person would not conclude that the gift would influence the teacher's conduct with regard to any individual or would cause the teacher to favor any individual." For more information, see: <http://www.mass.gov/ethics/gifts-to-public-school-teachers-and-staff.html>

HEALTH

School Nurse

PVCICS has school nurses on-site full-time during school hours. The nurses assist students who become ill or are injured while at school. Parents will be notified, if necessary, whenever a student has been referred to the nurse. Please encourage your child(ren) to visit the nurse only when necessary to reduce the number of students who make multiple daily visits to the nurse's office. Each classroom has a supply of band-aids for non-emergency situations. The nurse may contact you if your child(ren) has made multiple trips to the nurse within a given period of time. Please note that nurses and staff do not put sunscreen, insect repellent, or other topical preventive lotions on students during the school day. Sunscreen (or any topical preventive lotions) should be applied (if wanted), prior to arriving at school.

Parents or students are invited to consult with the nurse on matters related to hygiene, nutrition, medication administration, substance abuse, depression, child abuse and neglect, or other issues of concern. If your child has any specific health, safety, or security needs, please inform both the homeroom teacher and the school nurse so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Finally, please do not stop into the Health office and expect to have a conversation about your child without an appointment. This includes at drop off. The nurses follow FERPA regulations and discussing your individual child's needs in the public space of the office is difficult. If you need to relay information that cannot be done through an email or phone call, please make an appointment.

Physician

PVCICS has the services of a consulting physician in case the School Nurse requires it. The physician is on-call only and not on-site.

Health and Immunization records

State law requires all new students and every Kindergartener, 4th, 7th and 10th grade student to have an updated health record, including immunization records, on file in the school office at the beginning of the school year. This law also indicates that a student without such proof of immunizations may be excluded from attending school. For new students, please give your child's Certificates of Immunization to the school nurse for compliance, prior to your child's first day at the school. To read the laws surrounding school immunization, please use the following link: www.mass.gov/dph/imm
In addition, the school requires an updated Emergency Contact Form for each child at the beginning of each school year. The Emergency Contact Form is included in the on-line summer enrollment forms and if necessary, hard copies are available in the front office.

Medication

The administration of medication to students by a school nurse should only take place if the student's health is jeopardized without it. No initial dose will be given at school. No medication of any kind will be dispensed by the school nurse without a **written, signed parent/guardian permission** form. A **physician's order is also required** for dispensing any prescription medication and it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to request this from their physician. Written, signed parent/guardian permission is required prior to dispensing "over-the-counter" medications. Medication must be given to the school nurse by the parent/guardian in its original container. All scheduled medications are kept in a locked cabinet (at room temperature or refrigerated if required) and dispensed only by the school nurse or trained personnel. If a student needs scheduled medication during a field trip, the nurse will make arrangements with the parents on how this will occur. Emergency medications such as inhalers and epi pens are not locked.

Health Screenings

Schools are required by Massachusetts General Law to provide health screenings for students (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 57 and 105 CMR 200.000) and follow up with the results of these screenings with families and referrals to primary health care providers as necessary. Health screenings are not meant to be diagnostic, but are tools that may indicate a need for medical follow up. If a student fails our screening, then the parent must get a screening from their physician. Parents who do not wish their child to have an in-school screening must submit a written request to the school nurse.

Vision and Hearing: Vision and hearing screenings are intended to help identify children with common vision and hearing problems as early as possible, thus supporting educational achievement. Vision screening is done yearly in grades K-5 and in grades 7 and 10. Hearing screening is done yearly in grades K-3 and grades 7 and 10.

Postural Screening: Postural screening provides the opportunity for early detection, regular monitoring and treatment of spinal abnormalities during the period of rapid growth in adolescence. The state of Massachusetts mandates that all students in grades 5 through 9 be screened for scoliosis. Your child's posture will be screened beginning in the fifth grade.

Heights and Weights: The state of Massachusetts mandates that height, weight, and Body Mass Indexes (BMI) be calculated on children in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. BMI (Body Mass Index) for children is based on height, weight, gender and age.

SBIRT: Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is an evidence-based practice used to identify, reduce, and prevent problematic use, abuse, and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs. SBIRT is an early intervention approach that targets those with non-dependent substance use to provide effective

strategies for intervention prior to the need for more extensive or specialized treatment. This screening will be performed for Grades 8 & 9.

A Healthy School Environment

No alcohol, drugs and smoking (in any form, including “vaping”) by adults or students is permitted in or around the school buildings. This includes the playground and parking lots. Expect to be asked to remove yourself from the property should you engage in any of the above substances. PVCICS’s Weapons and Controlled Substance Policy conforms to state law: according to Massachusetts Law Chapter 71: Section 37H ” Any student who is found on school premises, or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.”

PVCICS strives to be a “fragrance safe” school. We ask that staff, parents, students and community members refrain from using “added scents”, such as perfumes, after-shave, and other strongly scented items or those applied with aerosol spray containers, at school and at school functions. PVCICS recognizes that exposure to fragranced products can cause people with some chronic illnesses, such as asthma, allergies, sinus problems, rhinitis and migraine headaches, to suffer severe symptoms. PVCICS has students, staff and visitors with health conditions that are affected by fragrances. In an effort to keep the environment healthy and comfortable for all individuals, it is respectfully requested that anyone who comes to PVCICS be as fragrance free as possible. Repeated disregard for this policy by students may result in disciplinary consequences. Parents/Guardians and other visitors to the school may be asked to reschedule their visit to the school. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the school nurse.

Required Notice: The Asbestos Management Plan for PVCICS is available in the school office and this serves as annual notification to families, employees, and the public that the building occupied by the school was tested for asbestos materials and lead. The building was also inspected for PCBs. The school has a report stating that no asbestos, lead or PCBs were found in the building.

Participation in School Activities

If a child must be excused from certain school activities such as physical education activities because of injury or illness, a parent needs to provide a **written note from their child’s doctor** stating the reason and duration. A phone call or note from the parent requesting an excusal will not suffice. For middle and high school after-school sports, parents must complete required state forms regarding health/concussions available on the PVCICS website (click on Athletics). PVCICS’s Head Injury Policy is in the appendix and on the PVCICS website (click on Athletics). For high school students only (grades 9-12), physical exams are required of all students participating in school athletics. PVCICS’s Policy Regarding Pregnancies is in the appendix.

Illness and Absence

If your child will be absent due to illness, a parent must call the school by 8:30 AM or log the absence on the School Dismissal Manager software to inform the nurse. If we have not been notified by you, the absence will be considered unexcused. Written documentation from a health professional stating the reason and duration of the absence is required for absences of 3 or more consecutive days. See the Attendance Policy in the Appendix for more information.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

In general, these symptoms warrant keeping a child home for the day:

- Fever of 100 or more: Stay home for 24 hours after the fever is gone.
- Vomiting or diarrhea: Stay home for 24 hours after the last episode.

- Sore throat. Note that Strep throat may be present without fever, and may have symptoms of headache and stomachache.
- *Runny nose, cough*
Often a day or two of rest, and a light diet with extra fluids will help resolve a cold and will help in minimizing the spread of cold virus at school. A child who is feeling run down, losing sleep due to their cold or actively sneezing and coughing is not going to be able to attend to learning.
- *Earaches*
If an earache lasts more than a day or if pain is severe, please see your health provider.
- *Impetigo or other skin rash*
Please have these identified and treated 24 hours before returning to school. Consult with the school nurse with any questions.
- *Pinkeye or conjunctivitis:*
A draining, itchy eye that is red must be treated with antibiotic eye medication before the child returns to school.

Please understand that parents will be asked to take their child home if the child returns to school before the 24 hour period expires.

Communicable Diseases

The school will notify parents/guardians when cases of serious communicable diseases occur anywhere in school. If a student has or is exposed to any serious communicable disease/illness, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school immediately and the school nurse may recommend that the student be sent home (if already at school) or stay home for the appropriate time as defined in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. Parents should not send a child to school under the following circumstances. It is the parent/guardian's obligation to inform the school of any of the following:

- Child has had a fever, diarrhea, and/or has vomited within 24 hours (**The fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting must be gone without medical intervention such as Advil, Tylenol, etc.**)
- Child has conjunctivitis ("pink eye")
- Child has strep throat
- Child has open sores, ringworm, or infectious skin ailments or contagious illness
- Child has head lice. Note: if after treatment, there are no live lice but nits (lice eggs), the child may return to school.
- Child has other serious communicable disease (e.g. flu, chickenpox/varicella, measles, hepatitis A, impetigo, whooping cough, meningitis, COVID-19 and/or a variant, etc.).

Covid-19

PVCICS adheres to the latest DESE and MA DPH Covid-19 guidelines. The latest state information about Covid-19 is posted on the school's Covid-10 webpage. Information about Covid-19 is also available on the state website: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information>.

In-School Illness or Injury

A child with minor bumps, bruises or abrasions will be treated at school by the nurse or staff member. In the case of fever or other signs of illness, the parents/guardians will be called and the child sent home. If a parent or guardian is not available and reasonable attempts have been made, the nurse will contact the people identified as emergency contacts. The child should be picked up **within 45 minutes** by an identifiable adult (ID may be required) who is on the child's approved pick-up list. If the child is part of a carpool, we ask that parents contact the other carpool drivers to let them know their child went home sick and will not be part of

the carpool. Note: A sick child will not be allowed to stay at school because a parent/guardian is unable to come to school. **Emergency contacts will be called** to take the student home. This is to mitigate possible contagions being spread while waiting around.

In the event of a major injury or serious illness, every attempt will be made to notify the parents/guardians or the emergency contact person. The school will call 911 for ambulance services. If the child is in stable condition, the ambulance will take the child to the nearest appropriate hospital or if appropriate the one requested by the parents/guardians on the medical emergency form. If the child is in an unstable condition, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital. The parent/guardian is financially responsible for all expenses incurred by the ambulance and hospital.

Religious Objections

If parents have any objections based on their religion to routine physical examinations, first aid in emergencies, or other medical procedures that might occur in school, it is important that they contact the school in writing prior to the start of the school year so that the information may be recorded. Notwithstanding the receipt of such notice, if a staff member believes that the student is experiencing a medical emergency, they will contact 911 for assistance.

Wellness Policy

PVCICS's School Wellness Policy is in the Appendix and describes the schools overall goals for student wellness.

HOLIDAYS

Each year, holidays such as Halloween, Valentine's Day, and Saint Patrick's Day may occur when school is in session. To minimize the distractions that can occur in school, costumes, food, candy, cards, or other miscellaneous items representing the holiday are not allowed.

HOMEWORK AND PRACTICING

Teachers design homework lessons in academic subject areas to reinforce daily class work. The practice of completing a day's homework is an important discipline to establish early in a student's academic career. All homework is to be completed as assigned, and parents/guardians are expected to review assignments. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to provide a quiet, well-lit space, helpful for studying and practicing, and equipped with the materials and supplies needed to complete assignments at home. Your child's teachers will be happy to make suggestions to you about assisting your child with homework and setting the right environment. Please note: there are a variety of ways families can support their children in practicing their Chinese. You are encouraged to check with the teachers for a list of suggestions including various websites that are beneficial for various ages and proficiencies.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All programs, activities and employment opportunities at PVCICS are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability. PVCICS has a Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy which is in the Appendix. If you believe that you or your child have been subjected to illegal discrimination or sexual harassment at PVCICS, you may file a complaint with the Principal, who is the school's Title VI Coordinator, the Athletic Director who is the school's Title IX Coordinator and/or the 504 Coordinator. To reach any of these personnel, please use the contact information on the cover of this handbook. Using the PVCICS complaint process does not prevent you from also filing a complaint with an outside governmental agency, as outlined in the Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT (FOR AGES 14 AND OLDER)

Employment should not interfere with school obligations and students aged 14 and older should carefully

make the decision before obtaining a part-time job as to whether they can balance the time demands of school and work. PVCICS reserves the right, at any time, to withdraw a student's working papers if the student is failing coursework. A student under eighteen (18) years of age, must complete and submit working papers before beginning a job. In Massachusetts, these papers are called a work permit if one is 14 or 15 and an educational certificate if one is 16 or 17. These forms are available from the Massachusetts Youth Employment Permit website, PVCICS's Guidance Counselor and/or main office.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We believe that education is enhanced by strengthening the ties between school and home, so parental involvement is an important facet in the school. Voluntary parental contributions help us to enrich our program and keep costs down.

Volunteers

There are a wide variety of ways in which parents can contribute as a volunteer for the school. Parents should contact the Family Association or school about volunteering. Please make sure you give PVCICS specific information about the skills and resources you wish to volunteer to the school community. PVCICS welcomes parents who wish to volunteer in the classrooms however to maintain the Chinese immersion environment, no English is used in the Chinese classrooms and as such, we ask English speakers to volunteer in the English classrooms. Additionally, having constant visitors or frequent drop-in visits disrupts the flow of the day and is not recommended so please make an appointment with the classroom teacher to discuss how you can help.

NOTE: Although Covid-19 restrictions have eased in SY23, PVCICS is limited in school parent volunteers in the building but welcomes parents to volunteer for outdoor activities when necessary.

Volunteers will be asked to undergo a confidential CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check prior to being a volunteer if they will have unmonitored access to students. The school may also perform a confidential SORI (Sex Offender's Registry Information) check. Volunteers must follow all school policies and procedures. As a volunteer, discretion and confidentiality must be exercised. Volunteers must not discuss students, teachers or classroom issues with others. If an activity occurs that is not in keeping with the school policies, the Principal or designee reserves the right to relieve the volunteer of his or her responsibilities.

Family Association

PVCICS's Family Association is open to all parents/guardians of currently enrolled students. It is legally a non-profit organization and was formed to support the students and overall success of the school. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate. For more information, contact the Family Association officers. The Family Association maintains a website and group email. The Family Association focuses on involving parents in the school, including coordinating volunteer opportunities, fundraising, and encouraging parents to attend school events. The Family Association Facebook and other social media outlets are meant specifically for promoting positive activities of the school and are open to parents/guardians of currently enrolled students. Other family members, such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. should not request membership. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to keep extended members of a family informed.

RECESS, RESTROOM and HALLWAY RULES

PVCICS recess, restroom and hallway rules are below and we encourage parents/guardians to review these periodically with their child(ren). Everyone wants an orderly, safe environment.

Hallway Rules

- Students will walk quietly and orderly, on the right hand side whenever proceeding through school hallways.
- Students will not push, step on, or touch other people around them.
- Students will show respect for hallway displays by not damaging them and inappropriately touching them.
- Students will show respect for school property and those who keep the building clean and safe by keeping

their hands and feet off of the walls. Students will not write on the walls.

Recess Rules

- Students should keep their hands to themselves. There should be no fighting, pushing, hitting, kicking, biting, or pulling on each other's clothes.
- There will be no foul language, either verbal or gestures.
- There will be no throwing of objects, including but not limited to snowballs, sand, mud, pebbles, water, or mulch.
- Students should stay within the fenced playground areas and not go beyond the playground boundaries.
- If a ball leaves the playground area, students should inform a teacher on duty. Our students are not to go beyond the boundaries of the playground without explicit permission from a staff on duty.
- Only one student should be on a swing at a time. The rider should sit and not stand, twirl, swing side to side, nor jump off the swing.
- The top of the play structures are off limits.
- Slides are to be used sitting facing forward and going down only. Only one student at a time.
- There will be no roller blades, no skateboards, no trading cards, and no electronic devices including game boys, CD players, tape recorders, cellular phones, cameras, etc. **Under no circumstances are photos allowed to be taken on school property without explicit permission.** It is a safety and confidentiality issue.
- Equipment from home is not allowed without explicit permission from the staff on duty. Any equipment brought from home that is allowed is considered general playground equipment for community use i.e., the owner of the equipment may not refuse a student's request to participate.
- If a student takes out any playground equipment, the student is responsible for returning it to its proper place.
- Play equipment must be used in the area designed for its use i.e, basketball should be kept on the blacktop; soccer balls in the field; jump ropes on the blacktop or concrete.
- Jump ropes can be used under adult supervision only. They should not be wrapped around any body part or play structure.
- Playground equipment should not be thrown against the building.
- Stay off of and out of trees, planters, any area not designated for play.
- Picnic tables are for sitting at, not climbing or standing on and should be cleaned up after use. Picnic table umbrellas should not be tampered with - they are for sun or rain protection.
- Students will not re-enter the building without permission from the teacher on duty.
- If any problems arise during recess time, students should inform the teacher on duty.
- Footwear must be worn at all times. All students must wear boots and snow pants to be in the snow.
- Pushing students in the snow is not allowed at any time, i.e. no "King of the Hill."
- Trays or other sliding objects are not to be used.
- Students should not climb tall snow banks and should only slide down low snow banks onto the snow, not onto the pavement – one at a time.
- Students should leave other students' snow projects/forts alone.
- Snow is not to be picked up and thrown at any time.
- Students in grades K-3 must wear hats and gloves during cold winter weather.
- Students must respect all recess staff.
- Recess activities may never involve throwing objects in a hurtful manner at other students.
- Except for registered service animals, no pets are allowed on the play areas.

Restroom Rules

- Bring a pass from your classroom with you.
- Privacy will be respected.
- Conduct will be quiet and orderly.
- Behavior is expected to be appropriate and will be monitored.
- Writing utensils of any kind are not allowed in the restroom.
- The stalls, toilets and sinks are not to be climbed on or written on.

- Hands should be washed before leaving the restroom. Used paper towels should be put in the garbage can.
- Parents will be informed if their child acted inappropriately in the restrooms and will be held responsible for costs associated with any damage to the restrooms caused by their child.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

PVCICS uses a school wide intervention model called Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This model integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. PVCICS is committed to ensuring that your child makes effective academic progress and develops age appropriate social emotional skills. Through ongoing staff training and development of improved practices such as team problem solving, and tiered interventions, students will receive the necessary level of support as soon as it is needed to promote growth and development. For more information on MTSS, please contact the Director of Student Services.

SAFETY

Emergency Contact Forms

Prior to the start of each school year, parents or guardians must complete an emergency contact form for each student. This form is online in the PowerSchool Parent Portal for parents/guardians to complete before the start of the school year. Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the school in writing of any changes to their emergency contacts so that information is current. It is very important that these forms are updated regularly as we depend on accurate information when the need arises to call an emergency contact. If/when any of your contact information changes, please contact the main office as soon as possible to lessen the possibilities of missing important information.

Child Abuse and Neglect

If any school staff member suspects that a student is being abused or neglected, they are required by law (chapter 51 A) to report it to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF). PVCICS has a procedure in place for reporting the information. All reports are confidential. Educational neglect is one section of the law. Excessive unexcused absences, which include tardies, must be reported.

If PVCICS is contacted by the MA Department of Children and Families because they are investigating a report filed by a third party, then PVCICS staff are required to release information about the student to them without prior parental notification.

School Visitors

To maintain building security, all visitors, including parents will not be allowed in the building except in rare occasions. Parent meetings will be held virtually whenever possible.

When a visit is allowed, all visitors, including parents, are required to sign in at the school office and to wear a visitor's pass. Faculty and staff have been instructed to stop and escort anyone not having a pass immediately to the school office for identification. If you are planning to visit the school or would like to meet with a staff member, please schedule an appointment in advance. Please also sign out when you are leaving so we have an accurate count of people in the building in case of an emergency.

Classroom Observations

Outside professionals (typically specialists in the field of education) may observe in classrooms with prior approval; however please understand that observations often can distract students and thus the educational process. As such, specialists must schedule observations in advance and must adhere to the classroom observation rules in the Appendix.

Fire, Shelter-in-Place and Lockdown Drills/Evacuations

PVCICS has regular fire, shelter-in-place and lockdown drills throughout the school year. A critical response team has been established and trained in all areas regarding school safety. The team oversees all fire drills, shelter-in-place, lockdown drills, evacuations and safety concerns. Specific signals and procedures have been established for all types of disaster drills. Safe areas have been designated and teachers are equipped with instructions.

Money and Other Valuable Property

Students should leave all money, jewelry, electronic devices and other personal property at home. PVCICS assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such articles and cannot take class time to locate “lost” items. Additionally, students should not be buying or selling items at school unless at an authorized school fundraiser.

Candy/Soda, Electronic Devices, Gum, and Toys

Students may not bring candy, soda, gum, toys, stuffed animals, personal fidgets, playing cards, electronic items or other non-school related items to school (including on the school buses, in the playground, etc.) and to school-related events while school is in session. After-school events and activities may amend these rules as needed however these are the default rules. Electronic items include digital tablets, DS3’s, digital cameras, cell phones, any other electronic devices that are not related to school. Toy weapons or any item resembling a weapon or being used as a weapon, are strictly prohibited.

These types of items cause distractions amongst students. If a student brings these items to school, then the student will be asked to put them away or to turn them over to supervising staff for the rest of the day. The parent/guardian will be informed to not send such items to school again. Items turned over to the school, will be returned at the end of the day or at an agreed upon time to the student’s parent/guardian, or if the student takes the bus, as soon as the parent/guardian can pick them up. Note: if the administration deems it acceptable to return the item to the student, then this will be done.

Cell Phones⁹

Specifically for cell phones and other similar digital communication devices, PVCICS has a policy of “off and away.” This means the device must be turned off and left in a locker or backpack during the day. It should not be on during school hours. If the student is concerned about safety, the device can be turned into the office at the beginning of the day and then retrieved at the end.

Digital Capture of Photo or Video images

Students are not allowed to capture photos, voice recordings, or video images of any person(s) in class or on school property at any time. This includes film and digital cameras, laptops, the video component of a video phone, photo or video recorders, or through the use of any other technology used to capture photos or record video images. Exceptions can be made for students fulfilling the requirements of an activity assigned by a teacher.

The secret use of sound or videotaping devices is illegal (MA General Law Chapter 272 section 99). Videotaping or sound recording a class or individual without the permission of everyone involved is a criminal offense with severe penalties. Students engaging in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action.

Video Security

PVCICS uses video security cameras located inside and outside the building to support the school’s efforts to maintain a safe and secure school environment while protecting individuals and their property from harm. Video surveillance may be used in proceedings related to law enforcement for purposes authorized by school

⁹ Note: starting in the Fall 2022 semester, there is a new cell phone policy for high school students in the Appendix.

policy, this Family Handbook, and related laws. Students observed by video surveillance in acts which break school policies, procedures, or disciplinary guidelines will be subject to the consequences or sanctions imposed for violating those policies, procedures or disciplinary guidelines. Surveillance footage is for administrative use only.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council (SC) gathers input from representatives of the school community and communicates this to the Principal. The Principal will notify the SC of the proposed changes to school policy and include a timeline for the collection of feedback. The SC is composed of parents of currently enrolled K-12 grade students and represent the school's region of service as per MGL 59C.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY

All students enrolled at PVCICS shall be free from arbitrary search of his/her person, personal property, or school property assigned to him/her and seizure of such property. There shall be reasonable suspicion for school personnel to conduct a search of a student's person, personal property, or school property assigned to them. The school shall conduct general searches of the school and school property if it is determined there is justification for the search.

Search of a student's personal property, or any school property assigned to them, is conducted in the student's presence, except in cases of emergency where there is danger to the safety or security of the school or a person in the school. In those cases, the student will receive notification as soon as possible. Illegal items (including, but not limited to, weapons, controlled substances, explosives and other items determined to be a threat to the safety/security of the school/person(s) in the school) will be seized by school personnel. If a search reveals items or activities in violation of state law, the school is required to notify the local Police Department.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEPAC)

Mission: The mission of the PVCICS SEPAC is to work by Communicating, Evaluating, Advising and Educating within the school community for understanding of, respect for, and support of all children with special needs in the school community.

Meetings: The schedule for the SEPAC is posted on the school website, www.pvcics.org, click on "SEPAC" and the schedule is determined by the SEPAC. The SEPAC is a parent-run organization that welcomes questions and feedback. Current SEPAC members determine the agenda for each meeting and has included topics such as: Staff days ("meet your student's special education teacher), parent information nights, and the presentation of Parental Procedural Safeguards for Special Education Families. SEPAC is an open forum for all PVCICS families to attend. SEPAC meetings are held virtually online to allow convenient participation.

SEX EDUCATION PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

In accordance with Chapter 71, Section 32A, of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Principal or designee will notify parents of any curriculum that primarily involves the issue of human sexuality prior to teaching of these units. Please see the Appendix for the Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education policy for additional information.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

As a public charter school, PVCICS is required to administer the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) test starting in third grade. Note: PVCICS complies with state testing as per the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requirements and will administer whatever state required testing is required.

Chinese language proficiency will be assessed using standardized tests appropriate to each grade level.

To help prepare for the college admissions process, students in grades 8-10 will be informed of their options to take the PSAT. High school students will be informed of their options to take ACT and SAT tests. Parents are responsible for any fees associated with these tests and eligible students may receive fee waivers according to College Board rules. PVCICS's College Board School Code is **220667**.

STUDENT CUBBIES AND LOCKERS

Students in the grades K through 3 will be provided a school “cubbie” in their classroom to house their coats and backpacks. Students in grades 4 and higher will be provided with a school locker unless it's deemed appropriate to restrict use. Because the lockers are in the hallway, students may use their lockers during scheduled locker breaks. Students are expected to keep their cubbies or lockers clean. Food items should not be stored long-term in them.

Students may not switch cubbies or lockers without the teacher's prior approval. PVCICS is not responsible for students' lost or damaged property. All valuable items stored at school are the student's and family's responsibility. PVCICS encourages all students who have the use of a lock for their lockers to use it as intended and lock it.

Note: If students are issued a school lock, and the school lock is damaged or lost, parents/guardians will be expected to pay a replacement fee. The office will keep a copy of your student's locker combination on file.

STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School rules and regulations apply to all school-sponsored activities. Student extracurricular activities including dances, socials, field trips and other school-sponsored activities are a privilege for students at PVCICS. Failure to meet the expectations stated in the Student Code of Conduct section of this Handbook, both while in school and in the community, may result in revocation of such privileges. Additionally, to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity offered by the school, students must be present in school for the entire school day on the day of the extracurricular activity. (i.e. can't be out sick during the school day then come in after-school to participate in their extracurricular activity).

STUDENT RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

PVCICS is dedicated to complying with all Federal and State confidentiality laws protecting the privacy of students and their families. Except for school personnel, the student's parents/guardians and certain other exceptions named in the state regulations, no individual or organization is allowed access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian.

Information regarding a student will be shared only with parents or guardians, appropriate members of the school's faculty and staff, and any professional consultants retained for the purpose of measuring and/or improving instructional quality. When information regarding student performance is made public, it will be presented in such a way as to avoid the identification of individual students.

When a student turns 18 years old, school communications regarding student records will go to the student and their parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will continue to receive school communications unless that student has informed the school they do not want the parent/guardian to access the information.

Parents must provide the school with copies of all legal documents regarding custody arrangements and ensure that the school has any updates to these legal documents and custody arrangements.

Record Request from Eligible Students or Parents

The eligible student or the parent, subject to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07 (5), shall have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents (see below).

Record Request from Non-Custodial Parents

Requests for student records from the non-custodial parent are in accordance with state law on student record access for non-custodial parents (General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H). It is necessary for the non-custodial parent (defined within this statute as the parent without physical custody) to submit a written request for records to the Principal annually.

Request for High School Transcripts

Transcripts for high school students may be requested using a transcript request form available in the main office. Please complete the form and return it to the main office. Note that requests must be made with enough lead time for processing in advance of any scholarship or college application deadline.

SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

See “Substance Use Prevention and Substance Abuse Education Policy” and the “Substance Abuse Information and Tips for Parents” in the Appendix.

TECHNOLOGY

See “Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, Including Email and Internet” in the Appendix.

TRANSPORTATION

PVCICS provides free local shuttle busing to nearby stops and fee-based busing to the farthest southern and northern areas of its region of service. Riding the school bus is a privilege not a right. Any infraction of the bus rules may result in the loss of this privilege. Parents must register for busing in advance using the school website’s online registration system. Information about transportation is sent to all families before the beginning of each school year. PVCICS offers free busing to families in the Massachusetts Direct Certification database and information about this is at <https://dtacconnect.eohhs.mass.gov>. Parents must notify the school by using the School Dismissal Manager software in advance if they need to change their regular bus schedule. Please contact the office for further information.

For everyone’s safety, the school buses are not a “drop-in” service. Students who do not regularly ride the bus will not be allowed on the buses unless their parent has requested bus service in writing and paid all required transportation fees in advance of the needed bus transportation. The buses are generally full and it is unlikely that there will be seats available for students who do not ride regularly. Do not make plans for your student to ride the bus until you have heard from the office that your request has been approved.

Please see the PVCICS Transportation Policy in the Appendix.

WORK PERMITS

In Massachusetts, students under 18 years of age need are required to obtain a work permit if they are seeking employment. For instructions click on <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-get-a-work-permit>

APPENDIX

Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, including Email and Internet

It is school policy that all technology used to access the school network will be used in a responsible, legal and ethical manner. The use of the school network must be in support of education and research that is consistent with the academic policies of the school. Use of the network for any illegal or commercial activities is prohibited. Prior to a student having access to the network, a signed parental permission form must be returned to the office.

A responsible network user will:

- Use language that is considered appropriate.
- Conform to copyright laws, the International Baccalaureate/PVCICS academic honesty policy and always give credit to the author of the material used.
- Never reveal personal information about any user such as address, telephone number, credit card numbers, social security number, etc.
- Never post identifying information about and/or photos of students and staff on the network.
- Never circulate inappropriate comments or gossip about anyone.
- Neither tamper with the computers nor alter, delete or destroy anyone else's files or data.
- Only access websites that are appropriate and connected to the area of study being researched.

NOTE: Inappropriate use of the network will result in the student losing the privilege of access to PVCICS' network

A responsible network user must be aware that:

- Use of the network and e-mail is a PRIVILEGE, not a RIGHT.
- The school network is to be used only for educational purposes.
- PVCICS network services and e-mail are the property of PVCICS and are not private. If necessary, network files and e-mail communications can be monitored.
- Violation of this policy will result in the possible loss of network privileges, disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Conduct and prosecution under state and federal law.

E-mail Policy

PVCICS presently provides school e-mail services only to students in middle and high school. These students should use school computers only for access to school email accounts for specific teacher-supervised assignments.

For PVCICS high school students, school email accounts will be used to:

- Communicate with teachers regarding classroom and International Baccalaureate (IB) assignments.
- Share information while working on group projects.
- Receive reminders regarding deadlines such as for SAT and college applications.
- Receive communications from the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Parents must give permission before PVCICS provides school email access to your child. PVCICS email accounts are for internal school use and limited to the "pvcics.org" domain. Students can only send and receive email from outside domains (i.e. outside of pvcics.org) that are authorized by the school. For example, students may receive email from the International Baccalaureate Organization and *managebac* for the IB Program.

Guideline for Home Use of E-mail

Because so many young people use email at home, we feel it is important to emphasize the following guidelines for safe and courteous email use:

- Be aware that people you meet online may misrepresent themselves. Do not arrange to meet with someone you have met online without the approval of your parents.
- Do not give out personal information, home address, phone number, credit card or other financial information, etc.
- Do not give out any information about anyone else. Respect people's privacy.
- Do not send viruses, spam, chain letters, or anything that could be harmful.
- Be polite. Refrain from swearing, name-calling, and mean-spirited or tasteless comments.
- Do not use code words or symbols that would be offensive. Remember, rude or threatening email can be more than impolite; it can be considered harassment.
- Be aware that email is not private. It can easily be transmitted to a mass audience. Don't say anything you would not want to hear on the evening news.
- Remember also that email is not anonymous and can be easily traced.
- Remember, although email has the relaxed feel of casual conversation, avoid sarcasm and be very careful not to say something that might be misinterpreted.
- Do not open any attached files if you are not expecting them or do not know what they contain. That is how viruses are spread.
- Remember that the student is representing the school when using a school issued email id and as such it should not be used for non-school related communications.

**** End Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, Including the Internet ****

Attendance Policy

Approved 9/7/2017 by the BOT, revised 8/24/2019.

Regular attendance in every class is essential to the learning process and teaches students effective work habits and responsibility. PVCICS believes that only through regular and punctual attendance can students take advantage of the educational opportunities we offer. The school cannot teach students who are not present. It is essential parents partner with us to assure that students attend school every day of the school year (M.G.L. c 76, s. 1). The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and PVCICS must closely monitor school attendance and enforce all attendance laws and policies in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76. The Commonwealth and PVCICS must also track and report chronic absenteeism, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act.

School Hours: Students should arrive by 8:25 am. At 8:30 am, classes start and students need to be in class ready to participate. Students not in their class at 8:30 am will receive a tardy. School ends at 3:30 pm for grades K-1 and at 4:00 pm for grades 2-12. Afternoon dismissals for grades 2-12 are staggered to reduce traffic congestion and the schedule is sent to parents/guardians before the start of the school year.

School Attendance: Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any period of six months. **Massachusetts law allows for penalties if a student is absent for more than 7 days in a 6-month period (Massachusetts Law Chapter 76, section 2).** In addition to this law, each school may have its own attendance policy with which parents/guardians should be familiar.

Notification and Contact Information: Chapter 76, section 1A of the Massachusetts General Laws states that parents/guardians must be provided each year with the instructions for calling a designated phone number at a designated time to inform the school of the absence of a student and the reason for the absence. In addition, parents/guardians must provide the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number so that they may be contacted during the school day so the school may call and inquire about said absence. These numbers must be updated as needed.

<p>TRUANCY</p> <p>Unnecessary absence due either to a student’s willful decision or a parent’s inability or unwillingness to ensure attendance is a violation of law and district policy. Parents who support or enable a chronic pattern of unnecessary absences for children under the age of 16 may be subject to agency or court action. The Attendance Officer may file a report with the Department of Children and Families for educational neglect and/or file a “Failure to Cause” at Juvenile Court on said parent or guardian. Chronic truancy and excessive absenteeism may also result in the Attendance Officer filing a “Child Requiring Assistance” (CRA) or Care and Protection petition with the Juvenile Court</p>
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Should students need to miss school on occasion for legitimate reasons, including serious illness, religious observances, college visits, and bereavement, the following policy is intended to make clear the difference between excused and unexcused absences and to comply with Massachusetts State Law. Students are expected to attend school each day and for the entire day. If a student needs to miss school for any reason, the following will apply:

High School (Grades 9-12)

Attendance is taken each period of each day. Students, regardless of their grade in the class, will not earn credit for any class in which they exceed the minimum requirements for attendance. This will be calculated by unexcused absences, tardies and early dismissals. After 5 unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home

requesting an attendance meeting with the goal of generating a plan to prevent further absences. After 8 class unexcused absences in a semester or 16 in a year, an attendance hearing will take place so that families can provide documentation that some absences should be excused. Only proper documentation will change the absence from unexcused to excused.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities: Students must be in attendance for 5 class periods in order to be eligible for participation in any student activity (co-curricular or athletic) that afternoon, evening or weekend. Exceptions to this rule may only be granted by the Principal.

Absences that may be excused are listed below. They require appropriate documentation to be excused. Students are responsible for any work missed due to the absence. Please note that a parent note does not excuse any absence. **A note or phone call from a parent/guardian does not excuse an absence but does verify that the student is not truant. Additionally, a parent or guardian who picks up their student early does not excuse an absence and the student will be marked absent unexcused in any classes missed until proper documentation is received.**

Students may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine with a doctor's note written on official letterhead attesting to the student's inability to attend school.
2. Doctor, dentist or other medical appointment with a note from the provider verifying an office visit and on official stationery. Students are expected to return to school after their appointment whenever possible.
3. Bereavement or serious critical illness in a family.
4. Observance of major religious holidays.
5. Court Appointment as documented by official court note.
6. Grade 11 and 12 students may take visitations (2 days) as documented by official college note or correspondence.
7. School-sponsored activities.
8. Inclement weather where school is cancelled.
9. School-related transportation issues (i.e. bus is late).
10. Dismissal by the school nurse. Students who become ill in school will need to be dismissed from the health office in order for the absence to be excused.
11. Suspensions, as they are school-generated, are considered excused absences. Students are responsible to complete work assigned by teachers.

Make-up Work: Tardies, absences, early dismissals, and missed work are disruptive to the educational process. Therefore, it is imperative that missed work due to absence(s) be completed according to the following timeline:

- a. For an absence of 1 day, work is due on the second day after the absence.
- b. For an absence of 2 days, work is due on the 4th day of attendance after the absence.
- c. All work due on the day of the absence is due immediately on the first day the student returns.
- d. The student is responsible for scheduling makeup time for any missed assessments, projects, labs, etc. within the above time frame.
- e. Work not completed within this timeline may not be accepted for credit.
- f. In the event of extenuating circumstances or serious illness, parents and/or students may contact the teacher to request an extension. Requests must be made in a timely manner and it is at the discretion of the teacher and/or Principal to extend an assignment.

Please note that vacations, external sports and activities, and scheduling conflicts and convenience do not excuse absences or excuse assignments as late. If a student will be absent for any of the above reasons, students are responsible to hand in work when it is due.

Reasonable accommodations to the above policy can be made for students who are absent due to a disability in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or IDEA.

In addition, PVCICS sets a calendar for students and parents prior to the school year and this schedule offers two final school dates depending on the number of snow days. Parents and guardians of high school students need to consider that snow days will extend the school year and change the final exam schedule. As these exams count significantly towards the final grade in a class, it is essential that students arrange to be present during exams. If a student has a legitimate scheduling conflict (as determined by the Principal), they are to alert the school, in writing, at least three weeks in advance. Failure to do so may result in a failure for the exam missed.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

Students are expected to be punctual to school and to class and to attend the entirety of their classes. For this reason, five (5) tardies will equal an unexcused absence and missing more than 20 minutes of a class will equal an absence. This includes visits to the bathroom. Visits to the nurse will only be excused with a note from the nurse. Parent work schedules, oversleeping, poor weather conditions, car problems, or riding with another person are not considered legitimate reasons for tardiness.

If a student is being dismissed early, the parent is required to input the information into the School Dismissal Manager prior to the start of the school day. No student may leave until a parent has signed them out in the main office.

Students who have reached the age of 18 and have completed the Rights of the 18 Year Old paperwork must abide by the above policy.

Any vacations taken during school time are actively discouraged and will not be excused. When a parent or guardian absents a student from school for a trip or vacation, the parent/guardian and student assume all responsibility for work missed, with the understanding that classroom lessons and discussion cannot be duplicated. **If a family needs to take a trip, the absence will be unexcused and the family may be expected to provide or access tutoring, at the parent's expense, upon return to school.** Parents and students are expected to notify their teachers at least 3 weeks in advance.

Students absent due to college visitations, driver's test, job interviews, armed services interviews or any other planned absence need to provide written confirmation and documentation at least 48-hours in advance.

A letter will be sent home when a student has missed 5 class sessions/days of school alerting the parent/guardian that there is a concern. After 10 absences, a meeting will take place to generate a plan and to allow families to provide documentation that some absences will be excused (please see above). After 15 unexcused absences, a determination will be made whether a student will lose credit for the courses missed.

Elementary and Middle School (Grades K-8)

PVCICS recognizes that elementary-aged children may get sick more often as their immune systems develop. For this reason, the Elementary and Middle School has established slightly different guidelines. Despite this, it is important that parents recognize that daily attendance is fundamental to a child's success at school. It is imperative that we communicate about your child's attendance so they can be their most successful. PVCICS will monitor all students' attendance and late arrivals closely. If the school has concerns about the number of student's absences or late arrivals, parents will receive a letter notifying them of the situation. The guidance counselor, director of student services, or Principal will contact parents if the problem continues and will set up a meeting to discuss the issue. This plan supports the school and family partnership to ensure that all children have good attendance.

In addition, Massachusetts General Law Section 76 sets guidelines and requirements for student attendance that PVCICS must honor.

Absences

- Parents/guardians are asked to call the attendance school number 413-582-7040 **before 8:30 AM** and report your student's absence on this voicemail system. If you do not call this number, you will receive a message from our School Messenger system and your child will be marked as an unexcused absence.
- Please include the reason for the absence so we can determine if it is "excusable" or not. Under Massachusetts law, only the superintendent and/or his/her designee (in this case the Principal) can officially excuse absences.
- Any vacations taken during school time are actively discouraged and will not be excused. When a parent or guardian absents a student from school for a trip or vacation, the parent/guardian and student assume all responsibility for work missed, with the understanding that classroom lessons and discussion cannot be duplicated. **If a family needs to take a trip, the absence will be unexcused and the family may be expected to provide or access tutoring, at the parent's expense, upon return to school.** Parents and students are expected to notify their teachers at least 3 weeks in advance.

Excused Absences

The following absences can be excused

- Illness (with a doctor's note on letterhead)
- Death/major family crisis
- Court case
- Religious in nature
- Suspensions

Tracking Absences

- Absences are tracked daily by our office staff.
- A doctor's note is required when your child is absent three or more consecutive days from school or when concerns have arisen about a child's attendance.
- After five unexcused absences a letter of concern will be mailed to parents/guardians. Once a child has reached 10 unexcused absences, a conference will be held involving the Principal or designee and the guidance counselor to create a plan to address this concern.
- *Please be aware that five unexcused tardies will equal one absence.*
- When a student accumulates a number of absences it begins to seriously impact his/her learning. Therefore, please plan family vacations to coincide with the regularly scheduled school vacation days. Anticipate that the five allotted snow days will in fact be a part of the regular school year when considering dates for vacation.

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

Tardiness

- Children are expected to be in their classrooms **no later than 8:25 AM** ready to begin class.
- Arriving on time helps children settle into their day in school. At that time teachers may set morning meetings, set their agendas and give directions.
- Students who are tardy must sign in at the main office and take a late pass to class.
- Tardies will be monitored by the office staff. Once a child has received 10 unexcused tardies a letter will be sent home.
- A conference will be held when a student reaches 20 unexcused tardies. That conference will be held with the parents, an administrator, and a guidance counselor to develop a plan to improve the child's/parent's timeliness.

On-going Absenteeism and Tardiness

- A child's attendance and timeliness to school are very essential to their academic success.
- Once a student reaches **15 unexcused absences or 30 unexcused tardies**, the school will consider this level to be neglect of parental responsibility of ensuring that a child attends school on a regular basis. The school will contact Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Dismissals

Please note that only the school nurses can excuse an early dismissal from school for illness. Please schedule student activities and appointments so they do not interfere with the learning process.

**** End of Attendance Policy ****

Bullying Prevention And Intervention Plan
Version 11-16-2023. DESE approved 12-5-2023.

PVCICS is committed to providing all students with a safe, respectful learning environment that is free from bullying. We will treat all members of our community with kindness and respect in an inclusive environment. Any and all acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation are prohibited in our school. This plan has been developed to help school staff and students respond effectively to reports and observations of bullying, and provide a guideline for preventing bullying through education and anti-bullying programs.

This plan applies to students and all members of school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and paraprofessionals. All of the procedures outlined herein for refraining from, reporting, investigating and remedying bullying behavior apply to students and all of the aforementioned school staff.

PVCICS recognizes that certain categories of staff and students may be more vulnerable to being targets of bullying based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics. These differentiating characteristics may include, but are not necessarily limited to, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. PVCICS takes specific steps to support vulnerable individuals on an individualized and as-needed basis, and provides all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

DEFINITIONS:

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Bullying as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to intimidation or threats (in person or via an electronic device), physical or verbal assaults, repeated exclusion from a social group, and the taking or breaking of a student's property.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying also includes:

- i. the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- ii. the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions listed in (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying; and
- iii. the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions listed in (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Hostile Environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

GOALS:

PVCICS will not tolerate bullying of any kind in our school. Preventing bullying is critical for creating and maintaining a safe, secure and positive school climate, which in turn supports academic achievement, increases school engagement, respects the rights of all individuals and groups, and purposefully builds community. PVCICS is committed to protecting all students from bullying, regardless of their legal status.

The Principal will make clear to students, families and staff that bullying in the school buildings, on school grounds, on the bus or school-sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions held in any location is prohibited, and will not be tolerated.

Bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are prohibited:

On School Grounds. Including property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school.

Off School Grounds. Including at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING PROCEDURES:

Reporting bullying or retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school staff member is required to report immediately to the Principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.

PVCICS expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Principal or designee. PVCICS will implement strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying, or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

PVCICS will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, and an email address. The Principal will receive all reports.

Use of the PVCICS Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the Principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, online, and in information about the policy that is made available to

parents or guardians.

Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

Upon receipt of a complaint, report and/or allegation of bullying, the Principal (or his/her designee) will conduct an initial investigation as soon as possible. The timeliness of an investigation will depend upon such factors as the number of individuals involved, the number of witnesses to be interviewed, the availability of witnesses, the school schedule and other factors. A team of staff will be convened to investigate the bullying incident, make a determination, and assess the needs of the target and aggressor. This team will be comprised of the Principal, a school counselor or school psychologist, a teacher, and any other pertinent staff.

When it is determined by the Principal and/or team that bullying has occurred, the Principal or designee will:

- Act promptly to provide a remedy to the target(s), including in-school counseling support as needed and a referral to appropriate outside resources for the target and their family.
- Assess the target's needs for protection and take action to restore a sense of safety.
- Notify parents/guardians of action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action against the aggressor(s), as outlined in the school handbook. A range of disciplinary actions may be taken against the aggressor, including but not limited to: in-class consequences, suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary action will balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.
- If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.
- If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement.
- Notify the parents/guardians of the target and aggressor consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR sect. 23.00 and FERPA.
- Address the school climate, as necessary. One strategy that the Principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.
- Notify law enforcement pursuant to regulations.
- Provide in-school counseling and/or referral to necessary outside resources as appropriate for the aggressor and affected family members.
- Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

If it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, he or she may be subject to disciplinary action.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES:

School-wide: School Counselors, School Nurses, Special Education Teachers, Teachers, Paraprofessionals and Administrators will all work together to prevent and address bullying issues.

School Counseling Services: Counseling is available to students either through their school counselor or school psychologist. Counseling staff offer interventions to prevent bullying as well as support for both targets and aggressors. School counseling services will be offered in both English and Chinese.

Students With Disabilities: As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 37O, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that the student may participate in, or is vulnerable to, bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. This will include a particular focus on the needs of students whose disability affects social skills development.

Referral to outside services:

When and where it is appropriate, School Counselors, School Psychologists, Nurses and/or Administrators will make referrals to out-of-school services for students and families. A listing of available counseling, family support, and crisis services will be maintained at the school on a yearly basis.

PROGRAMS:

PVCICS will implement an anti-bullying program as a required part of the curriculum at each grade level. It will be based in age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention using evidence-based curricula. PVCICS will also hold students and adults responsible for behaving with respect toward one another at all times. Instruction will include appreciation of human differences and understanding about differences. Prior to SY21, PVCICS used Second Step and Steps to Respect. Starting in SY21, PVCICS is using Move this World.

The Principal will oversee the implementation of the school's empathy/social skills and anti-bullying curriculum to all students in the school.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

In order to monitor the success of the *PVCICS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* and to help determine the effectiveness of interventions, curricula and actions the school will collect student and staff survey data, parent survey data, and the number and nature of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation instances. A school task force will be created to oversee the implementation of this policy during the academic school year.

Reports of the data will be forwarded to the Principal's office at the end of each school year and presented to the administration.

PVCICS annually reports bullying incident data to DESE, including but not be limited to the

number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation, the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying or retaliation, the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation, and any other information required by DESE.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PVCICS shall provide professional development to school staff addressing the prevention, identification and remedying of bullying. Professional development will also include current research, especially in regards to at-risk students; information regarding the power differential that is often part of bullying; and internet safety as it relates to cyberbullying. A yearly training on the school's anti-bullying policy and reporting procedures will be given to all staff.

Annual Staff Training on the Plan. Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to receive the training during the school year in which they are hired.

Ongoing Professional Development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
- the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying
- internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
- building relationships and communicating with families
- constructively managing classroom behaviors
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies

- applying constructive disciplinary practices
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students

PARENT/GUARDIAN EDUCATION:

PVCICS will provide information every year to parents/ guardians of enrolled students about anti-bullying procedures, the school internet safety policy, and the anti-bullying curriculum being used at school. The PVCICS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and related information will be posted online for families to view.

PVCICS will offer a yearly workshop about bullying for parents and guardians and provide information regarding the dynamics of bullying, online safety and cyberbullying, and reinforcing the bullying curriculum at home.

Parents who require assistance or desire to file a complaint should utilize DESE's Problem Resolution System, located at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/intake/default.html>.

*** End of Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ***

**Alleged Bullying/Harassment/Aggression
Incident Report Form**

Please see, the school website page for the form: <https://pvcics.org/about-pvcics/bullying-prevention>

*** End of Alleged Bullying/Harrassment/Aggression Incident Report Form ***

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Protocol

All PVCICS staff are required to report allegations of suspected abuse or neglect by any staff member of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School to the Executive Director or his/her designee. If the alleged suspected abuse or neglect involves the Executive Director or a person related to the Executive Director the report should be made directly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Whenever an incident of suspected abuse or neglect by any staff member of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) is reported the Executive Director or his/her designee shall investigate the allegation. If, as a result of this investigation, there is "reasonable cause to believe" that a child is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse by the staff member, including sexual abuse or neglect, the Executive Director or his/her designee will notify the parents of the child, notify the Chairperson of the PVCICS Board of Trustees and shall report the condition to the MA Department of Children and Families (DCF, formerly called the MA Department of Social Services (DSS)) as per the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51-A. Immediately when a 51-A report is made, the accused may be suspended without pay. The Executive Director or his/her designee shall consider the results of the DCF investigation and other relevant information to determine whether further disciplinary action, including termination, shall be taken or whether the accused staff member shall be reinstated if there is no indication that the staff person acted inappropriately. The above process will be followed in the same manner if the allegation involves the Executive Director or a person related to the Executive Director but in such circumstances the investigation shall be done by the Board of Trustees and all filing notice shall be done by the Chair of the Board.

Upon notification that an outside person or agency files a 51-A report with DCF raising concern about suspected abuse of a child in the program by a staff person, the Executive Director or his/her designee shall work to determine if there is "reasonable cause to believe" that a child is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse by the staff member, including sexual abuse or neglect. If there is "reasonable cause to believe" that a child is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse by the staff member, including sexual abuse or neglect, the accused may be suspended without pay. The Executive Director or his/her designee will review the results of the DCF investigation and other relevant information to determine whether further disciplinary action, including termination, shall be taken or whether the accused staff member shall be reinstated if there is no indication that the staff person acted inappropriately. Depending on the results of the allegation and the regulations of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), the person can return to work. However, until the investigation is complete, the allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member will not work directly with children.

The Executive Director or his/her designee will also notify ESE after filing a 51A report or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity. PVCICS will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect in any way the EEC office and the DCF deems necessary.

In the event that a staff member suspects abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, family member, or any person who may be associated with that child, that staff member notifies school administration and the school psychologist, counselor or administrator files the report of suspected abuse or neglect to DCF. All staff are mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Information containing definitions and signs of child abuse and neglect are distributed to school personnel through the Staff Handbook.

To report abuse or neglect, call any time, Child-At-Risk Hotline 1-800-792-5200

Department of Children and Families: (617) 748-2000 Boston; (413) 775-5000 or (800) 842-5905 Greenfield.
Department of Early Education and Care: (617) 988-6600 Boston. (413) 788-8401 Springfield.

**** End of Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Protocol ****

Classroom Observation Rules for Outside Professionals and Parents

Version 10/3/2022

A mutually agreed upon date and time must be scheduled through the Director of Student Services. Once this appointment has been made, a copy of the rules of observations will be sent to the observer by mail, or hand-delivered to the parent at school (e.g. at drop off/pick up time), if requested. The rules for observations will not be sent with a student.

- No more than 30 – 60 minutes for parent observations.
- No more than 3 hours for professional observations.

Please be respectful of the time and leave at the agreed upon time to avoid the uncomfortable situation of being asked to leave.

If an outside observer would like to see the entire school day, s/he must schedule more than one observation. Observations in classrooms are a general disruption to the educational process. Therefore it is highly recommended that no more than one observation per semester be requested.

Co-Observer: If a professional is coming to observe in his/her professional capacity, the school will have an observer of equal role also observing at the same time (i.e. outside psychologist observing – the school will have the school psychologist observe simultaneously). In this case, the scheduled visit must correspond with the availability of the observer the school is providing.

List of rules for the visit: (Sent to the observer prior to the visit)

1. The date and time of the observation must be arranged in advance.
2. The observer must report to the office, sign in, wear a visitor's badge, and wait to be escorted to the classroom.
3. The observer will not use a cell phone or other recording device during the observation.
4. The observer will not interact with any students, teachers, or staff at PVCICS; this is an observation, not an interview or consultation time.
5. The observer will stay in the general classroom with the students and teacher. Small groups and individual sessions are too disrupted with additional adults in the small spaces reserved for services.
6. The observer has the right to take notes and does not need to share these notes.
7. The observer may not request copies of lesson plans, grade books, or any other materials.
8. The observer must arrive on time. Should the observer be more than five minutes late, the observation must be rescheduled.
9. The observer must leave directly after the observation, at the agreed-upon time, without attempting to discuss any part of the observation with staff or students.

*** End of Classroom Observation Rules ***

Code of Conduct

As of December 5, 2023

The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School's Code of Conduct establishes clear standards to help students understand the behaviors expected. In accordance with MGL C. 76, s. 5, PVCICS is committed to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation are not tolerated and where any form of harassment is unacceptable. PVCICS's Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy is available in this handbook.

PVCICS's Code of Conduct will be taught as part of the daily classroom program, especially during the beginning of the school year. Students will be encouraged to discuss the Code of Conduct and to develop additional classroom rules and routines. Parents are asked to discuss the Code of Conduct with their children, explain their meaning and help their child to choose appropriate behavior. The Code is as follows:

- Respect Yourself - do your best work, be truthful and honest.
- Respect Teachers and Staff - work cooperatively, listen to and follow directions.
- Respect Other Students - help other students learn, do not hurt anyone on the inside or the outside.
- Respect all School Property - keep the school building and property clean and orderly, take pride in your school.
- Conduct yourself in a safe manner.

Expected Student Behaviors for all PVCICS community members:

- Speak respectfully to staff and peers
- Be honest and compassionate to others
- Solve conflicts respectfully
- Complete one's own work with pride (no cheating or having someone else do your work)
- Raise your hand to speak in class discussion or during meeting or lesson and/or wait your turn to speak.
- Lower your hand and listen quietly when someone else is speaking
- Keep your hands and body to yourself (no bumping, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, etc)
- Walk quietly in the school building
- Always ask a teacher's permission before leaving a classroom
- If you leave the classroom without an adult, carry a pass from a teacher
- Refrain from taking things from other people that do not belong to you; treat others as you would like to be treated.

Minor infractions to expected student behaviors and to any additional rules developed in the classroom are defined as those infractions that are addressed by the teacher or staff person responsible for the student when the infraction occurs. Examples of consequences for minor infractions are: loss of recess or other privileges, being required to make amends and or apologize, and notification to a parent or guardian.

Major disciplinary infractions are those problems that must be addressed by the Principal. A major infraction might consist of several minor incidents, or one serious incident of violent or illegal behavior (any unsafe, violent, or uncontrollable behavior, using any object as a weapon, fighting, stealing, possession of a weapon or illegal substance, etc.). Whenever a major disciplinary infraction occurs, the Principal or another administrator will send an email documenting the infraction and what occurred. A phone call may also be placed to make the guardian aware of immediate consequences if necessary.

PROVISIONS GOVERNING DUE PROCESS for DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS and SERVICES DURING REMOVALS

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in removal from the classroom (i.e., suspensions) are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide you with information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at long-term suspension hearings (including hearings concerning removals that exceed 10 cumulative school days per school year). If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform PVCICS immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and PVCICS's attorney is not present, then PVCICS will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. PVCICS hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

Any and all notices referenced herein shall be provided in English and the primary language of the home, if other than English.

A. NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves weapons, drugs, assault on school staff.

Specifically, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal. Any student who assaults a Principal, assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the Principal. At the hearing, the student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to GL c. 71 §37H shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent.¹ The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel, at his or her own expense, at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under PVCICS's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section D. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the

¹ At PVCICS, the Executive Director serves as the superintendent.

period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

B. NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H½

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.

Suspension Following Criminal or Felony Delinquency Complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal or felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal if he or she determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student is entitled to receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The superintendent's decision shall be the final decision of PVCICS with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion Following Felony Adjudication or Admission

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The superintendent's decision shall be the final decision of PVCICS regarding the expulsion.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H½ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under PVCICS's Education Service Plan, which is described below in

Section D. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

C. NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H¾

This section governs all student offenses that may be subject to short- or long-term suspensions that *do not* involve dangerous weapons, controlled substances, assault on school staff, felony or felony delinquency charges, and/or felony delinquency findings or admissions, all of which are governed by G.L. C.71 §§37H and 37H½, as detailed above.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Principal is required to exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. The following document outlines student and parent rights when the Principal is considering and/or decides to implement a removal from school as a consequence for student misconduct.

Any decision-maker at a student disciplinary meeting or hearing under G.L. c. 71 §37H¾ must consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. Any decision-maker at a student disciplinary meeting or hearing shall not suspend or expel a student “until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to the specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive; or in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. “Alternative remedies” may include but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. PVCICS implements a school-wide model to re-engage students in the learning process, which includes but not be limited to positive behavioral interventions and supports models and trauma-sensitive learning models. (The school-wide model is not considered a direct response to a specific incident.)

Students who are suspended under §37H¾ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under PVCICS's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section D. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

Notice of Suspension and Hearing under §37H¾

Unless the Principal determines that an emergency removal is required (*see Emergency Removals section below*) or decides to implement an in-school suspension of ten or fewer consecutive days (and no more than 10 cumulative days per school year) (*see In-School Suspension section below*), the Principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent with verbal and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The Principal is required to provide this verbal and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice must set forth the following information:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;

- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the Principal, the student's short- and long-term suspension hearing rights and the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the superintendent (see Hearing Rights section below).

The Principal is required to make and document reasonable efforts to notify the parent verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The Principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts, and therefore may conduct a hearing without the parent present, if the Principal has sent written notice (by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and parent) and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Emergency Removal

A Principal has the authority to remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the Principal determines that the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal is required to notify the superintendent immediately in writing of an emergency removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal is required to:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the Hearing Rights outlined below;
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent;
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with the rights outlined below in the Hearing Rights section, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

The Principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Hearing Rights

Principal's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}: Short-term Suspension

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

The purpose of the hearing with the Principal is for the Principal to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident; provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances of the alleged incident; and determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the

consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Principal is required to discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student and parent both shall have an opportunity to present and offer information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal is required to provide written notification to the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

Please note that if the student is in grades pre-K through 3, the Principal is required to send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Principal's Hearing under §37H³/₄: Long-term Suspension

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights during a long-term suspension hearing:

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

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

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

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal;

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

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal has the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the superintendent.

In order to appeal the Principal's decision to impose a long-term suspension, the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension (in the alternative, within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension the parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion.

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

The superintendent must make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has attempted to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. The superintendent hereby notifies all parties who may be involved that an audio recording of the hearing will be made. A copy of the audio recording shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.

The student and parent shall have all the rights afforded them at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension, as detailed above in the sections entitled Principal's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}: Short-term Suspension and Principal's Hearing under §37H^{3/4}: Long-term Suspension.

The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the

Principal's decision. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school.

In-School Suspension under §37H^{3/4}

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal is required to inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Principal must inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day that the Principal decides to impose an in-school suspension, the Principal must make reasonable efforts to verbally notify the parent of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The Principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the Principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of verbally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The Principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension (and inviting the parent to a meeting with the Principal, if such meeting has not already occurred). The Principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

Removal from Privileges and Extracurricular Activities

The Principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. A removal from privileges and/or extracurricular activities is not subject to the procedures set forth herein.

Education Services and Academic Progress under §37H^{3/4}

Students serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

Student who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan.

D. SERVICES DURING REMOVALS AND SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

Students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension; make up assignments; and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

PVCICS has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

PVCICS's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning.

If PVCICS expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days, PVCICS is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

Discipline of Special Needs / 504 Students

The disciplining of special needs students is governed by state and federal Special Education law and by the regulations that were created to implement these laws. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C., Section 1400, et. seq.; 34 C.F.R., Section 300.519-529 et. seq., and the Massachusetts General Laws c.71B.

In general, the discipline of a student who has been identified as having special needs pursuant to 603 CMR S28 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be subject to the requirements of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can meet the requirements of the regular discipline code, or if a modification is necessary.

If a modification is necessary, it will be described in the student's IEP.

A record of all suspendable offenses committed by special needs students will be kept.

Special needs students who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination as to whether the conduct is related to the student's disability. Additionally, in certain circumstances, special needs students may be removed for additional periods of up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct.

A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days, or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern, are considered to represent a change in placement. Within ten (10) days of a removal that constitutes a change in placement (i.e., a removal of more than ten (10) consecutive school days or a pattern of removals), the student's IEP Team will convene to review all information in the student's file, including the IEP, in order to:

- (a) develop or review a Functional Behavioral Assessment of the student's behavior in order to modify a behavioral intervention plan or to develop an assessment plan;
- (b) identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s); and
- (c) determine the relationship between the disability and the behavior – a "manifestation determination."

The parents as well as the student's special education team shall review all the relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability; or was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP.

If the team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the school may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to any students without disabilities, except that the district must still offer an appropriate education program to the student with disabilities that may be in some other settings. The DESE must also be notified of the suspension. If the team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of a disability, the team shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan, provided that such an assessment was not conducted prior to the determination. In the situation where a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, the team shall review the plan, and if necessary, modify it to address the behavior. The student will be returned to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and school agree to a change in placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the disciplinary matter involves a weapon, illegal drugs, a controlled substance, or the infliction of serious bodily injury upon another person. The IEP Team determines the IAES, which shall enable the student to continue to progress in the general education curriculum and make progress toward IEP goals and provides services to address the problem behavior. Any decision made by school personnel pursuant to this paragraph is subject to expedited appeal to a Bureau of Special Education Appeals Hearing Officer, who may approve, disapprove or modify the school's decision. The school may also seek an appeal through the Bureau of Special Education Appeals if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result an injury to the student or others, the student shall remain in the disciplinary placemat until the decision of the hearing officer, or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards.

Students Not Yet Determined to be Eligible for Special Education or Section 504 Accommodations

Protections for students who are eligible for special education are applicable to general education students if the school had knowledge prior to the misconduct that the student was disabled. Under the law, a school district is presumed to have "had knowledge" that a general education student was disabled if the student's:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) has "expressed concern in writing" to the school distinct that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) has requested a special education evaluation of the child; or
- District staff have "expressed concern" directly to the special education direction or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

If there was no prior knowledge, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request an evaluation. Subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then the student receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility. During this period, the student may be suspended or expelled under standard school policy. Students determined to have a disability must receive appropriate educational services.

Hazing

The following Code of Conduct provisions for Secondary schools is required by MGL Ch. 269, Sections 17-19. Section 17 of M.G.L. Chapter 269 states,

“Whoever is a Principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished

by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

Section 18 of M.G.L. Chapter 269 states,

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

PVCICS complies with Section 19 of M.G.L. Chapter 269 pertaining to issuance of sections 17-19 to students and student groups, teams and organizations annually and reporting.

**** End of Code of Conduct ****

Complaint Procedure*Revised 12/5/2023*

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

Regulatory Authority:

603 CMR 1.00: M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B; c. 71, § 89.

**** End of Complaint Procedure. ****

Curbside Drop-off and Pickup Procedures

Please see the school website's Transportation webpage for the latest procedures.

***** End of Curbside Procedures *****

***English Learners in Public Charter Schools:
Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services***
from MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, September 2014

Dear Parent: This document explains the rights of children who are English learners (ELs) to attend and receive language support and other services in Massachusetts public charter schools. As defined in state law, an English learner is a student who does not speak English, or whose native language is not English, and who is not able to do ordinary classroom work in English. This includes students who, without language support services, would have trouble understanding lessons in school, or completing work in school because they are still learning English. In this document, an English learner will be referred to as an “EL.” Charter schools must accept and enroll ELs admitted through the lottery who wish to attend the school. The school must provide direct instruction to help ELs learn the English language, and subject matter instruction (for example, science or history) that is presented in English using strategies that help the student better understand the content. Full and equal access to the programs and services offered at the school must be made available to ELs. This is a summary of your child’s rights to attend and receive language support and other services from his or her charter school.

1. Can my student who is an EL go to a charter school?

Yes. Charter schools are open to all students within the school’s service area, on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to choose who will be admitted in a fair way. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of getting in and have an equal right to attend.

See: M.G.L. c. 71 §89 (l) states that charter schools shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, *national origin*, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or *proficiency in the English language* or a foreign language, and academic achievement. (*Emphasis added*)

2. What if I don’t want language support services for my student?

If you reject language support services for your student, the school still has to make sure that your student has “meaningful access” to the curriculum and can effectively participate in the classroom work. Your student should be placed with a classroom teacher who holds a Sheltered English Immersion Endorsement or an English as a Second Language (ESL) license, which means that the teacher has had training on the language needs of ELs. The charter school has the continued responsibility to monitor your student’s progress as an EL. If it appears that he or she is unable to participate effectively and meaningfully in his classroom, the school must reconsider the instruction that it provides.

Upon identifying a student as an English learner, the charter school will provide the parent or guardian with its EL policies and all needed forms in a language that they can understand.

3. My student will need help learning English. What language support services will be made available at a charter school?

Students in charter schools must have access to the same services they would receive if they were in any other Massachusetts public school. If your student is admitted to a charter school, you should expect that the school will conduct a home-language survey and test your student to determine if he or she needs language support services. If language support services are needed, the school must provide them.

Under Massachusetts law, students who are identified as ELs are generally provided a sheltered English immersion (SEI) program and receive English as a second language instruction (ESL). This requirement applies to all public schools including charter schools, regardless of the number of ELs enrolled at the school. EL programs must have two components:

- **Sheltered English immersion.** Sheltered English immersion includes teaching in a way that will make the content of lessons more understandable, and using ways of teaching that will help the student learn the English language. Sheltered English immersion classes must be taught by specially trained teachers, and must address the same curriculum as the other students receive.
- **English as a second language (ESL) instruction.** ESL instruction provides specific, direct instruction in the English language that is delivered by a licensed ESL teacher. ESL is meant to teach students English language, grammar, vocabulary and usage, and includes instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing at a level the student can understand. Students of different ages and language groups may be included in the same ESL classroom. The hours of ESL instruction provided to your student will depend on how well your student speaks, listens (understands spoken English), reads, and writes English. For more information please see the “**Transitional Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners**” found here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/resources.html>

4. What other programs and services might my student receive if he or she attends a charter school?

As in every public school in Massachusetts, EL students must be given full and equal access to the programs and services of the school. Information and notices to ELs and their parents must be provided in a language they can understand

- ELs must receive supports such as guidance and counseling, in a language they can understand.
- ELs must not be separated from students who are not ELL students except when necessary in order to provide their English learning program.
- ELs must be allowed to participate fully in all academic courses.
- ELs must be taught to the same academic standards and curriculum as other students.
- ELs must have equal access to all programs and services at the school including Title I, Section 504 disability accommodations, and special education, and all clubs, student organizations, activities and sports teams.

Relevant Laws and Regulations:

Charter School Statute: G.L. c. 71 §89

Charter School Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §1.00

Massachusetts law-- English Language Education in Public Schools: G.L.

c.71A Massachusetts **Education of English Learners** Regulations: 603 CMR

14.00 Federal Civil Rights Law: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Federal Civil Rights law: Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

Federal law: ESEA/ NCLB: *the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* Governs elementary and secondary education. NCLB is available as Public Law 107-110 **Title III — Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students: PART A: 'English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act'**

If you have any questions, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign (phone: 781-338-3227; email:

charterschools@doe.mass.edu) or Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (phone : 781-338-3584; email: ell@doe.mass.edu).

For additional information regarding EL education and the rights of parents and students, please refer to the following:

- Office of Civil Rights Enforcement Office: phone: 800-421-3481; email: ocr@ed.gov; website: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/
- State regulations: 603 CMR 14.00: Education of English Learners Regulations-- 14.06: Parental Right of Enforcement <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html?section=06>
- Requirements for the Participation of English Language Learners in ACCESS for ELLs and MCAS: A Guide for Educators and Parents/Guardians <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/ell.pdf#search=%22ELL%22>

Source: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/sped/default.html> .

***** End of English Learners in Public Charter Schools:
Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services*****

Expulsion Policy*BOT approved 11/5/2015***PROVISIONS GOVERNING DUE PROCESS for DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS and SERVICES DURING REMOVALS**

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in removal from the classroom (i.e., expulsions) are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide you with information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform PVCICS immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and PVCICS's attorney is not present, then PVCICS will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. PVCICS hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

Any and all notices referenced herein shall be provided in English and the primary language of the home, if other than English.

A. NOTICE OF STUDENT AND PARENT RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves weapons, drugs, assault on school staff.

Specifically, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal. Any student who assaults a Principal, assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal. Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the Principal.

PVCICS shall provide written notice to the student and his/her parent of the charges and of the reasons and evidence for expulsion before an expulsion takes effect; and the student's right to a hearing with the Principal before the expulsion takes effect, including date, time and location.

The student's parent or guardian will be present at the hearing. The student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses, and cross examine witnesses presented by the school, at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to GL c. 71 §37H shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director and shall be notified in writing of the following process for appealing and the opportunity to receive educational services.

The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director in writing of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel, at his or her own expense, and has the right to present oral and written testimony and cross examine witnesses presented by the school, at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. The student's parent or guardian shall be present at the hearing.

The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion.

Students who are expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of expulsion under PVCICS's Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section C. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

B. NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER G.L. c. 71 §37H½

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.

Expulsion Following Felony Adjudication or Admission

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses, and cross examine witnesses presented by the school, at said hearing before the Principal. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Executive Director's decision shall be the final decision of PVCICS with regard to the expulsion.

Students who are expelled under §37H and 37H½ are entitled to receive educational services during the expulsion under PVCICS's School-wide Education Service Plan, which is described below in Section C. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

C. SERVICES DURING REMOVALS AND SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

Students who are expelled from school have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of expulsion; make up assignments; and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

PVCICS has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan (see Appendix) for all students who are expelled from school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

PVCICS's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring and online learning.

If PVCICS expels a student, PVCICS is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Any and all notices referenced herein shall be provided in English and the primary language of the home, if other than English. Notice of such alternative educational services shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student, and contact information for a specific school district staff member to arrange services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

*** End of Expulsion Policy ***

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Notification

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Principal or his/her designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records with written parental consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

More information can be found at the Family Policy Compliance Office's Web site at www.ed.gov/policy.

** End of FERPA Notification **

Grievance Policy

As of 1/11/2018.

Note 10/2017: Grievance Committee has been combined with the Personnel Committee.

It is the policy of the PVCICS Board of Trustees that all grievances shall be resolved as close to their source as possible. All members of the school community, and all outside parties involved in a dispute are encouraged to deal directly with the other parties involved. In general, any grievance should only move to a higher level of authority after direct communication between those initially involved has failed to produce a resolution.

Students and staff may bring a grievance asserting violations of state or federal laws or regulations or Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) staff or family handbook policies to the PVCICS Board of Trustees Grievance Committee.

The PVCICS Board further holds that any party with a valid grievance should be able to find satisfaction in the resolution of their grievance. All members of the school community, as well as the Grievance Committee, will be expected to make all reasonable efforts to reach a solution that is acceptable to all parties involved. Any party bringing a grievance to the Grievance Committee will be made aware of all requirements for filing a grievance, as well as all avenues for resolving a grievance.

An exception to the grievance policy exists for violations of any provision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00. A parent, guardian or other individuals or groups who believe that the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School has violated or is violating any provision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, or 603 CMR 1.00 may file a complaint with the charter school's Board of Trustees following the PVCICS Complaint Procedure.

Authority and Role of the Grievance Committee:

The role of the Grievance Committee is to review a complaint that has not been resolved at the staff or administrative levels, and to provide mediation where appropriate. The committee must balance their duty to protect the interests of the Charter and the school as a whole with the concerns of the party filing the complaint. In general, it is the opinion of the Board of Trustees that the interests of the school and those of the individuals within should coincide if viewed from an appropriate distance. It is the job of this committee to find and take such a view. In cases where the parties fail to reconcile their differences through this process, the committee can make recommendations to any party for corrective action. In cases where the committee feels the scope of the dispute warrants an opinion of the full board, the committee will present the case to the board and request a vote.

To these ends, the Grievance Committee is authorized by the full board to review the conduct, relative to a specific complaint, of all employees and representatives of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School. The Grievance Committee shall be authorized to make recommendations designed to resolve existing complaints (and to avoid future complaints) regarding staff conduct and educational policies. The Committee shall also have the authority to review the actions of any parent, student, or any other individual or group involved in a formal written complaint.

A Note Regarding the Nature of the Grievance Process:

The Board of Trustees is aware that any complaint or issue that reaches the Grievance Committee level will naturally have a strong emotional element. It is the job of those on the committee to evaluate the issue in a thoughtful and respectful manner, without allowing the emotions involved to overwhelm their work. The committee will be as impartial as possible, and strive not to prejudge any individual or situation. Any party involved in a grievance should be prepared to present a factual account of the situation, to remain respectful of other people and other perspectives, and to allow the committee reasonable time to do its work.

Steps of the Complaint Process

Step One: A parent, guardian, or other individuals or groups should contact those directly involved in the issue or decision. With issues relating to students, begin by speaking with the lead teacher. Communicate the complaint as clearly as possible, and identify actions that will lead to a resolution of the issue. Work in a cooperative environment to resolve the complaint based upon the actions identified.

Step Two: If the complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, speak with the Principal of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School and develop a plan to resolve the issue. With issues relating to students, this plan may warrant input from the lead teacher. Any such plan may require review and revision during the process. The Principal will set a timeframe for response, not to exceed thirty working days.

Step Three: If you feel your complaint remains unresolved after providing the Principal time to respond, notify the chair of the Grievance Committee of the Board of Trustees. You will be asked to file a formal written report detailing the specifics of your complaint, and requesting that the Grievance Committee review your case. Your report must clearly document the efforts made to comply with steps one and two of this process. Each party named in your complaint will receive a copy of your report. No anonymous complaints will be accepted by the Grievance Committee.

Step Four: Your written report will be taken to the Grievance Committee of the Board of Trustees. If the committee believes that more effort can reasonably be made to resolve the issue at the staff or administrative level, it will return the complaint to the appropriate level. If the committee finds that steps one and two of this process have been exhausted, it will schedule meetings with all parties involved in the complaint, including PVCICS staff requested by parties involved in the complaint. The purpose of these meetings will be to gather information, determine specific points of conflict, and identify possible solutions. The committee will provide an initial response to your report within ten working days.

Step Five: The Grievance Committee will review the conduct, decisions and policies that were involved in the complaint, and work with each party to develop a plan that will address the concerns of all those involved. The Grievance Committee may, if appropriate, schedule a meeting that includes all parties involved in the complaint and PVCICS staff requested by parties involved in the complaint in order to present the previously identified concerns and solutions, and work to mediate a resolution that is acceptable to all parties. The Grievance Committee will attempt to hold this meeting within thirty working days of receipt of the formal written complaint, but each complaint will warrant its own schedule. The committee will issue a formal written response to the complaint report at the end of this process and distribute it to all parties involved in the complaint, including PVCICS staff requested by parties involved in the complaint.

Step Six: The Grievance Committee can bring a complaint to the full Board of Trustees for a vote if the committee believes an issue concerns the conduct or welfare of the entire school.

Step Seven: A complaining party who feels their complaint has not been adequately addressed by the Grievance Committee or the Board of Trustees can submit the complaint in writing to the Commissioner of Education, who shall investigate such complaint and make a written response. The laws governing Massachusetts charter schools are M.G.L. c. 71 section 89, and 603 CMR 1.00. A copy of these laws will be provided by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School upon request.

** End of Grievance Policy. **

Head Injury Policy

The following policy applies to all students at PVCICS in accordance with Massachusetts State Law 105 CMR

201.00 and as specified by PVCICS.

The Executive Director shall be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy. The information regarding how to access this policy will be included in the family and staff handbooks.

I. Definitions: The words below as used in this policy shall be defined as follows unless otherwise stated per Department of Public Health in Massachusetts law 105 CMR 201.00: Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities.

Athlete: A student who prepares for or participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.

Athletic Director: An individual employed by a school district or school and responsible for administering the athletic program or programs of a school. The term Athletic Director refers to the Director and Assistant Directors.

Certificate of completion as defined by PVCICS: Written proof that the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) concussion course was completed.

Coach: An employee or volunteer responsible for organizing and supervising student athletes to teach them the fundamental skills of extracurricular athletic activities, referring to both head and assistant coaches.

Concussion: A complex disturbance in brain function, due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, resulting in neurometabolic dysfunction rather than structural.

Diagnosed: A physician's or nurse practitioner's opinion, derived from observation, examination, and evaluation of procedures or tests, that a patient has or has had a concussion.

Extra-curricular Athletic Activity: An organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or teacher; including but not limited to Alpine and Nordic skiing/snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country and track and field, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, wrestling, and outing clubs. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

Head Injury: A direct blow to the head or indirect trauma to the head including a concussion or traumatic brain injury. A scalp or facial laceration alone is not a head injury.

Neuropsychologist: A professional who is licensed as a psychologist and certified as a health service provider by the Board of Registration of Psychologists pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 118 through 129A with additional specialized training and expertise in the applied science of brain-behavior relationships and who has specific experience in evaluating neurocognitive, behavioral and psychological conditions and their relationship to central nervous system functioning. The neuropsychologist has specialized experience in administering and interpreting neuropsychological tests and has duties which may include, but are not limited to pre-injury measurement of the cognitive abilities that may be disturbed by a concussion, testing within the first few days post-head injury, and periodic retesting to track resolution of the student's symptoms and improvement in cognitive functioning. The neuropsychologist may also advise school staff regarding the student's need for post injury academic accommodations.

Nurse Practitioner: A duly licensed and registered nurse authorized to practice in an expanded role as a nurse practitioner whose professional activities include performing physical examinations, diagnosing health and developmental problems, managing therapeutic regimens, and ordering therapies and tests.

Physician: A duly licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy. **Physician designee as defined by PVCICS:** A qualified health care professional licensed by the State of Massachusetts, working in the same professional capacity and physical space as a particular physician. This shall include fellow physicians, nurse practitioners, and neuropsychologists.

Game play as defined by PVCICS: Participation in an extracurricular activity for the purpose of competition including scrimmages.

Pre-injury academic level as defined by PVCICS: The level of academic performance achievable by the student prior to sustaining a head injury as assessed by school staff and baseline ImpACT neurocognitive testing if completed.

School Nurse: A nurse practicing in a school setting who is licensed to practice as a Registered Nurse by the Board of Registration in Nursing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112, who is licensed to work as an educator in a school by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to 603 CMR 7.00: Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval, and who is appointed or assigned to a public school by a school committee or a board of health in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 53 or employed by a superintendency district comprised of several towns in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 53A and 53B or, who is employed, in the case of a charter or private school, by a board of trustees.

Student: A person enrolled for part-time or full-time attendance in an educational program operated by a school or school district, including home schoolers.

Teacher: Any person employed in a school or school district under a license listed in 603 CMR 7.00: Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval or person employed to teach students in a non-public school.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): Means a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. TBI may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head. TBI includes, but is not limited to, a concussion.

II. Pre-Participation Requirements For Students Participating in Extracurricular Athletic Activities:

1. Prior to participation in extracurricular athletic activities, students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to view the Head's Up Concussion video presented by the Center for Disease Control or complete the free on-line concussion training provided by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). The link to both resources can be found on the extracurricular athletic activity permission slip form and on the athletics page of the school website. There is a section of the permission slip form where the student and at least one parent/guardian must indicate that they have viewed the video or completed the NFHS training at least once within the past twelve months. Parents with limited English proficiency will be given translated written materials containing the same information as in the on-line resources.

2. The extracurricular athletic activity permission slip form & Pre-Participation form must be completed by a parent/guardian and submitted to the athletic director before the start of every athletic activity the student participates in. Students will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity without the completion of the form in its entirety, including the required signatures, regardless of the circumstances. When the activity has ended the form will be given to the school nurse and become part of the student's confidential health file.

3. All permission slip forms and Pre Participation forms will be screened by the athletic director and/or school nurse to identify students that have had a prior head injury. In the event that a student has had a head injury in the past, it will be reported to the school nurse and/or school physician for appropriate follow up.

4. Verification of documentation of physical examination shall be performed by the athletic director and/or school nurse prior to student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities, consistent with 105 CMR 200.100 (B) (3).

III. Education for Coaches/Staff:

1. All school staff including, but not limited to, athletic directors, coaches, teacher and parent volunteers for extracurricular athletic activities, school physician(s), and school nurses will be required to complete the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) concussion course on a yearly basis and submit the certificate of completion to the athletic director.

2. It is the responsibility of those listed above, and other staff deemed appropriate by the administration and/or athletic director and school nurse, to complete the concussion training and submit the certificate of completion before participating in any capacity in extracurricular activities requiring physical exertion.

3. In the event that a coach or faculty advisor fails to complete step one before the start of an extracurricular athletic activity, the administration, athletic director, and/or school nurse reserve the right to exclude said person from the activity until the certificate of completion has been submitted. The activity may continue in the interim as long as there is another individual deemed qualified by the administration and/or athletic director to participate in that activity.

All coaches/advisors of extracurricular athletic activities will be given hard copies of the head injury reporting form, the medical clearance form, and the graduated re-entry plan with associated materials before the start of the activity. Additional copies will be kept by the school nurse and the athletic director and are available on the athletics page of the school website.

IV. Reporting a Head Injury:

1. If a suspected head injury, based on subjective and objective demonstration of signs and symptoms, is sustained during any extracurricular activity:

a. It is the responsibility of the coach/faculty advisor to call 911 immediately if (a) the student loses consciousness at any time, (b) there is a progressive decrease in mental status or neurological function, (c) the student demonstrates irregular breathing patterns, or (d) seizure activity is observed. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must then be notified as quickly as possible.

b. The student must be removed from the activity, including practice and game play, for the remainder of that day if the student is symptomatic but stable.

c. The coach or school staff member that was witness to the event must contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of said student to provide a verbal report of the event as quickly as possible.

d. The head injury reporting form needs to be completed by the coach/faculty advisor as soon as possible after the event and submitted to the athletic director or school nurse the next business day. It is the responsibility of the athletic director and/or school nurse to notify each other when a head injury is reported. Within twenty-four hours of receiving the head injury reporting form, the athletic director will provide a copy of the report, as well as the medical evaluation form and the graduated re-entry plan, to the parent(s)/guardian(s). After doing so, the athletic director or school nurse will document it on the bottom of the head injury reporting form. The head injury report will then be given to the school nurse and become part of the student's confidential health file.

e. The student must be evaluated by their primary care provider or another equally qualified health care professional (physician, nurse practitioner, or neuropsychologists). Parent(s)/guardian(s) may choose to take the athlete to their primary care physician, health clinic, or to the emergency room. Regardless of the method for evaluation, medical authorization is required for the student to return to extracurricular athletic activity. If a concussion is diagnosed medical authorization is required before returning to school (see the Medical Evaluation section below).

2. If a suspected head injury occurs during school hours or at a school sponsored event, the same protocol as listed above shall be followed.

3. If a suspected head injury occurs outside of school hours and not at a school related event or extracurricular activity, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be responsible for completing the report of a head injury, which can be found on the athletics page of the school website. Once completed, the report should be given to the school nurse no more than one business day after the incident to ensure appropriate follow up. Medical evaluation is still required (see the Medical Evaluation section below).

V. Medical Evaluation:

1. All students are required to submit part one of the medical clearance form, completed and signed by a physician or designee before returning to extracurricular athletic activity. If a concussion is diagnosed, part one of the medical clearance form needs to be completed before returning to school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should bring the medical clearance form to the physician, nurse practitioner, or neuropsychologist evaluating the student following the injury.

2. In the event that a student is evaluated in the emergency room, part one of the medical clearance should be completed by the student's primary care physician at a subsequent visit or the provider to whom the student was referred by the emergency room for follow up care; this individual must be the provider that will be monitoring the student through his/her recovery. In the event that the appointment with said provider is scheduled more than one school day after the emergency room visit and a concussion was diagnosed, the student should not come to school until after that appointment. If the emergency room physician deems it appropriate for the student to return to school, supporting documentation needs to be provided, including the need for academic accommodations if appropriate, to the school nurse on the day of return. Part one of the medical clearance form still needs to be completed as instructed above.

3. Student athletes will be required to submit part one of the medical clearance form in order to begin the process of returning to extracurricular athletic activity. See the section below titled Returning to Activity After Diagnosis for further information.

Upon completion, part one of the medical clearance form should be given to the athletic director or school nurse and will become part of the student's confidential health file.

VI. Returning to Activity After Diagnosis:

1. Academic Modifications and Performance:

a. After a head injury a student may require academic modifications until the recovery process is complete. If the medical clearance form indicates that academic modifications are necessary, the school nurse and/or athletic director will coordinate with the guidance department to ensure the student's needs are being met. All students, regardless of the extent or nature of the head injury, will be provided academic modifications if appropriate.

- b. All students recovering from a head injury will be allowed to access the school nurse as needed for rest periods and symptom management as deemed appropriate by the school nurse.
- c. All students must be performing at their pre-injury academic level before participating in school related athletic activities of any kind, including but not limited to extracurricular athletic activities. Athletes will not be allowed to begin the re-entry to activity process until they are performing at their pre-injury academic level. Academic modifications will be provided as necessary until that time.
- d. All students in the process of rehabilitation after a head injury should check in with the school nurse and/or guidance department daily to ensure the rehabilitation process is successful and effective for the student.

2. Graduated Re-entry:

a. After it has been determined that the student is performing at their pre-injury academic level, and part one of the medical clearance form has been completed, a written graduated re-entry plan will be initiated to return the student to full participation in extracurricular athletic activities. The written graduated re-entry plan is mandatory for student athletes. The purpose of the graduated re-entry plan is to prevent further complications after a head injury by appropriately returning to play and to provide essential documentation of that process (see the graduated re-entry plan form).

b. Each step of the plan will last a minimum of one full day. Each step must be dated and initialed by the coach/faculty advisor or athletic director on the day of completion. The plan will be dated and initialed by the parent/guardian, or by school staff when appropriate, for students who do not participate in athletic activities.

c. The student must remain symptom free for the entire period of activity at each step to move onto the next step. If symptoms return at any point during the re-entry process, whether it be with activity or not, the athlete will return to rest for at least one full day. When it is appropriate the athlete will resume the graduated re-entry plan one step prior to the step at which symptoms occurred. The athlete is not permitted to participate in game play until step five of the graduated re-entry plan is complete and part two of the medical clearance form has been obtained. See the Medical Clearance section.

d. The six steps of the graduated re-entry plan are as follows:

Step One: Rest. Student may be present at extracurricular activities, whether it be practice or game play, but for viewing purposes only. Student must remain benched at all times.

Step Two: Light exercise. Student may complete light non-contact exercises such as walking or riding a stationary bike. Student may NOT participate in weight lifting or other strenuous activity.

Step Three: Activity specific play involving light exercise without body contact such as running. Student may participate in all activities of practice that involve light exercise with NO body contact.

Step Four: Full practice without body contact and resume resistance training. Student may fully participate in any aspect of practice that DOES NOT involve body contact.

Step Five: Full practice with body contact. Student may fully participate in all practice play.

Medical clearance: Part two of the medical clearance form must be completed before the student proceeds to step six. See the Medical Clearance section below.

Step Six: Return to full play. Student may fully participate in all aspects of the activity, including game play.

e. The administration, athletic director and school nurse reserve the right to keep a student at any step for longer than one full day, even if the athlete is symptom free, if deemed in the best interest of the student.

Once the graduation re-entry plan has been completed it will be given to the school nurse and become part of the student's confidential health file.

VII. Medical Clearance:

Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Athletic Director or School Nurse a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (Medical Clearance and Authorization Form) prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals as authorized by 105 CMR 201.011(A). The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate.

The administration, athletic directors, and school nurses of PVCICS reserve the right to keep a student out of play or to only allow partial play, even if the student has medical clearance, if it is deemed in the best interest of the student.

*** End of Head Injury Policy ***

High School Cell Phone & Other Electronics Norms

Effective: Fall Semester 2022 with re-evaluation during semester at any time to determine if these norms continue to be in effect. If these norms will not continue, the default will be to return to the “OFF and AWAY” policy currently in the Family Handbook that apply to K-8th graders.

Rationale: High school students are preparing for independence & being young adults responsible for their own learning & time management. Students would like more freedom to learn to self-regulate their own cell phone use. Teachers want to be able to use cell phones as a tool for learning & have them easily available (not off in lockers). However, teachers also find cell phones to be a major distraction, and need to have regulations & consequences in place for non-compliance to the norms. In addition, this approach aims to standardize the norms between all classrooms, so they are applied fairly and consistently.

Cell Phone Norms:

- High school students and teachers may have cell phones on silent, on their person.
- Parents should NOT contact students during school hours (& vice versa). For emergencies, only contact during explicit lunch time (11:50-12:30 MTThF or 12:17-12:57 W) or after 3:50pm, end of the academic school day. If a true emergency occurs during class time, the student can always be contacted by calling the PVCICS main office. However, parent texting or calling students during class hours is highly distracting and discouraged, and “consequences for noncompliance” will apply even if the cell phone contact is from parents/family members.
- **Non Academic Use of Cell Phones:** High school students and teachers may use cell phones for non-academic use during passing time between classes, during lunch, during after school activities and on the bus (as permitted by the coach, teacher supervisor, or bus driver). This policy change is for high school students only on the 2nd floor (“the high school floor”), so please refrain from using them in hallways & bathrooms on the 3rd floor, so as not to confuse middle school students whose policy will still be “OFF & AWAY ALL DAY” (High school students are role models for K-8 students).
- **Passing time Between Classes:** As stated above, students may check their phones during the transition time between classes. However, this shouldn’t prevent students from continuing to follow expectations, get ready for class, gathering materials, and check-in with teachers as needed.
- **During Class: Silent & Put Away Default:** At the start of each class period (when passing time is over), cell phones become silent and away. They are put in backpacks or pockets, so students can focus on learning in class. They are not left on top of desks or hidden under desks; the goal is that they are not instantly accessible. This is so students and teachers can focus on learning. This applies to all academic classes, electives & specials.
- **In Class Exceptions:** Teachers at any point in the class may request or allow students to use cell phones for learning & academic purposes (ex: look up information quickly, play kahoot, practice a quizlet etc). Students may also request to use them. However, the teacher will announce usage for that lesson or give explicit permission to a request from a student. If no permission is given, the default during class time is silent and put away.
- **Study Halls:** The purpose of a study hall is to have time to complete homework and to get help from teachers for academics. Study hall, when done well so students can focus, reduces the burden of homework at home, provides a quiet place for taking tests and individual support (“tutoring”). Cell phones should be silent and away during study halls so students can focus on learning. Students can ask permission to use a cell phone for academic purposes, and that will be at the discretion of the study hall teacher. The default will be silent and away.

- **Standardized Testing:** Midterms/ Finals/ MCAS/ IB Exams/ PSAT/ SAT/ STAMP etc. Cell phones are OFF and in backpacks at the front of the room, or on a table at the front of the room (not silent, but completely turned off). Students found with cell phones on them might have their standardized test invalidated.
- **Bathroom Breaks During Tests:** If a student uses the bathroom during an in-class test or quiz, cell phones must be left on the teacher's desk prior to entering the bathroom. This is to prevent cheating on in-class exams.

Cell phone charging: Emergencies Only: Students may use power strips in classrooms and bring their personal chargers to charge their cell phone for emergencies only. Students should NOT interrupt class to charge their cell phone. Any devices left unattended are the responsibility of the student alone (not teachers, peers or other staff). Power strips need to be used for computers as a priority and not cell phones, and the school currently does not have enough power strips for every student to charge their cell phone.

Earbuds/Headphones Norms:

- **Non Academic Use:** High school students and teachers may use earbuds or headphones for non-academic use during lunch, during after school activities and on the bus (as permitted by the coach, teacher supervisor, or bus driver). Earbud or headphone settings should be low so the student can still hear teachers, other students, or bus drivers. This is in case of an emergency and to continue positive communication.
- **In Class: OFF and Put Away Default:** At the start of each class period, earbuds & headphones are put away. They are put in backpacks or pockets, so students can focus on learning in class. Students should not use earbuds or headphones during passing times between classes.
- **In Class Exceptions:** Teachers at any point in the class may request or allow students to use earbuds or headphones for learning and academic purposes (e.g. to watch videos independently, work in a music elective, etc.). Students may also request to use them. However, the teacher will announce usage for that lesson or give explicit permission to a request from a student. If no permission is given, the default during class time is off and put away.
- **Study Halls:** The default will be off and away. Music can be a big distraction and slow effectiveness of completing assignments.
- **Hoodies/Hair/Hats or other ear coverings:** Teachers may ask students to remove any item covering their ears to check if there are ear buds distracting the student (this is instead of changing the dress code to prohibit these items). Students that cannot self-regulate may be asked to NOT wear these items to school and/or be prohibited from having earbuds, etc. Students should follow the high school dress code.

Computer Norms: Norms are regulated by another document. However, the default is that computers are in your backpack, unless the teacher explicitly requests their use for the activity. Computers may be used for non-academic purposes during lunch only. During study halls, computers are only used for academics or school related activities (e.g. clubs, sports, personal email, college applications, etc), but not for entertainment (e.g. video games, music, movies etc.). Teachers should set up seating so student computer screens can be monitored. Teachers can request a student put away a computer at any time. See consequences for noncompliance.

Appropriate Content: Internet access via cell phones or other electronic devices needs to comply with the school internet use policy, and only school appropriate content should be viewed.

Delivery Apps: Apps, such as DoorDash and others like it, are prohibited from use during school and at school events. For safety reasons, the school cannot have random strangers delivering items to school.

Wifi use with Cell phones: Student wifi could get too slow when there high school students's computers and their cell phones all the same network. Keep cell phone OFF the school wifi, unless using it for academic purposes (make sure the cell phone settings has "wifi-off") or during lunch (students may have the password set up, but keep the cell phone set with "wifi off"). Students that do not self-regulate may be subject to being prohibited from accessing the school wifi and other disciplinary action.

Consequences for Noncompliance/Struggling to Self-Regulate:

This includes cell phones, earbuds, headphones, computers or any other electronic device that is distracting to learning, including but not limited to e-readers, e-books, Apple watches and any digital device, etc.

- Teacher may ask student to put cell phone/earbuds/computer etc. away. Teachers might give a zero for class participation (if that is a part of their class).
- Teacher may ask student to place cell phone/earbuds/computer on their teacher desk or in a location in the room. Teachers will respect student privacy and not look in private devices, the goal is to remove the distraction. Student loses device for duration of class period, but it remains in the room with the student and is returned at the start of passing period. Parents/guardians are notified. If student does not comply with request, further disciplinary action and consequences may be initiated.
- Parents/guardians will be notified for continued noncompliance or noncompliance in multiple classrooms. This will be tracked across classrooms.
- Teacher may confiscate the cell phone/earbuds/computer and place it in a secure location. The item will be turned into the main office (at convenience of the teacher, but no later than the end of day), and parents/guardians must pick it up. The main office will contact parents/guardians when they receive the cell phone/digital device.
- Student might be required to turn in their cell phone/earbuds/computer at the main office at start of every day, if self-regulation is not possible. The cell phone will be returned to them or their parents/guardians at the end of the day.
- Parents/guardians may be asked to have the student leave the item at home, if self-regulation is not possible.

Liability: PVCICS is not responsible or liable for any damaged property of electronic devices (computers, cell phones, ear buds, other etc.) in applying or following any of these norms. Students use and bring these personal devices to school at their own risk and are solely responsible. Students will be required to acknowledge reading the rules above and abide by them.

*** End of High School Cell Phone & Other Electronics Norms ***

Middle and High School Student Dress Code¹¹

Effective for High School Students on August 31, 2022. Effective for Middle School Students on August 30, 2023.

Dress Code Philosophy

PVCICS's middle and high student dress code supports equitable educational access and is written in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Our values are:

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self expression.
- Student dress code enforcement should not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- School staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.
- Teachers should focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent and/or inequitable discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

Our student dress code is designed to accomplish several goals:

- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as chemistry/biology (eye or body protection), dance (bare feet, tights/leotards), or PE (athletic attire/shoes).
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable.
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, invade the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar or obscene, or that reasonably can be construed as containing fighting words, speech that incites others to imminent lawless action, defamatory speech, or threats to others.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

¹¹ *Inspired in part by [Oregon NOW Model Dress Code](#)*

DRESS CODE

PVCICS expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the school's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

1. **Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.**

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with opaque fabric. However, cleavage should not have coverage requirements. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

2. Students **Must Wear***, while following the basic principle of Section 1 above:

- A **Shirt** (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), **AND**
- **Pants/jeans or the equivalent** (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), **AND**
Shoes.

**Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular way or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example, closed toe shoes for lab safety, athletic shoes for PE, etc.).*

3. Students **May Wear**, as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:

- Hats facing straight forward or straight backward. Hats must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff.
- Religious headwear
- Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood overhead is allowed, but the face and ears must be visible to school staff).
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants and "skinny jeans"
- Pajamas
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops
- Athletic attire
- Visible waistbands on undergarments or visible straps on undergarments worn under other clothing (as long as this is done in a way that does not violate Section 1 above).

4. Students **Cannot Wear**:

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting/suggesting drugs, alcohol, vaping or paraphernalia (or any illegal item or activity).
- Bullet proof vest, body armor, tactical gear, or facsimile.
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.

- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands and visible straps are allowed)
- Swimsuits (except as required in class or athletic practice).
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance or as personal protective equipment (PPE)).

5. Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 1 and 4 above. Students in violation of Section 1 and/or 4 will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day:
 - Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
 - If necessary, students' parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
 -
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- School staff shall not enforce the school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.
- Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. "Shaming" includes, but is not limited to:
 - kneeling or bending over to check attire fit;
 - measuring straps or skirt length;
 - asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or in hallways in front of others;
 - calling out students in spaces, in hallways, or in classrooms about perceived dress code violations in front of others; in particular, directing students to correct sagged pants that do not expose the entire undergarment, or confronting students about visible bra straps, since visible waistbands and straps on undergarments are permitted; and,
 - accusing students of "distracting" other students with their clothing.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances and prom. Student athletic apparel will be defined by safety and competitive performance standards.

Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the Principal.

*** End of Middle and High School Dress Code ***

Meal Time Routines and Expectations

These meal time routines and expectations apply to all students. They provide a safe, calm, and pleasant meal time experience for students. The routine is followed consistently so that students know what is expected and what to do. This makes the whole process run efficiently for students and staff.

Meal time duties are shared and rotated amongst staff members. The school meal vendor delivers breakfasts and lunches that have been ordered in advance. These meals are sorted so they can be delivered to classrooms and distributed to students. Each classroom roster lists who has ordered a meal and for lunch, which entrée was ordered. To use the online meal ordering system, see the instructions sent to parents prior to the start of the school year.

Students will eat their meals in their assigned classrooms and classroom rules apply. The seating assignments are done by classroom teachers and rotate throughout the year. The goal is to reduce the stress that students may feel if they have to decide who to sit with at meal time and encourage students to get to know everyone in their class. Students who bring food from home should bring any needed utensils for eating their meal.

When students are done eating, they are responsible for cleaning up. PVCICS recycles food containers and as much of its meal waste as possible. As such, the students are trained in the proper disposal procedures during the first weeks of school. The goal is to instill in students a sense of responsibility for the environment.

Those students who bring meals from home are asked to take their trash and left over food and drink home. This allows parents to be aware of what is being eaten and to help with minimizing trash at school.

Students will be assigned a “meal cleanup job” that rotates throughout the year so that all students are responsible for helping to clean their meal time areas. Classroom teachers pre-assign students to wipe tables and sweep under the tables. The cleaning assignments rotate so that during the year, every student will have a meal cleanup job. Staff who are on duty often help students with cleaning. Cleaning up doesn’t take long since everyone is working together. The goal is to instill in students a sense of teamwork, shared responsibility for meal times and for keeping the school property tidy. We hope that students also learn to appreciate the work that our janitors do every evening cleaning the school.

Expectations

Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately during meal time. The expectations below apply to regular classroom time. These expectations are in place for maintaining student safety, encouraging a calm and safe eating environment.

1. The students should walk during meals if they need to leave their seats. Running, skipping or other faster modes of movement are dangerous when other students are eating because those eating could be startled or bumped into and choke.
2. The students should sit properly at their assigned tables. This means their legs are under the table, they are sitting on their “bottom”, not on knees, feet, etc, and they should be facing their food (i.e. not sitting sideways). This is so there is enough space around the table for everyone to sit comfortably as well as reduce the movement around the table to decrease accidents.
3. To limit the number of students walking around the meal area at any given time, and to limit the opportunities for accidents, spill, and crowding, students will sit at the assigned spot until meal time is over.

4. The conversations at each table will be appropriate for conversation while eating. The room in which the meal is eaten will determine the language the students will be encouraged to speak. The conversation noise level should not be so loud as to cause anxiety for other students. When the noise level rises above the comfort level and students or staff ask for the level to be lowered, the students and staff will be reminded of the need for a quiet, calm meal. On the rare occasion where the noise level or behaviors are unsafe or inappropriate in other ways, the staff will make necessary changes with logical consequences when appropriate.
5. The student is to eat only the food provided for him/her/them and refrain from asking for or accepting food from another person.
6. The student is to keep his/her/their hands to him/her/their self and refrain from touching any food, lunchbox, milk, or other item that is not his/hers/theirs, thus creating a calm and safe eating environment.
7. The student who orders a school meal is to sort his/her/their meal trash, separating any recyclable plastic (such as forks, spoons and plastic containers holding fruit items), or metal materials (such as ketchup packets), etc. from the compostable items before disposing of them. The student who brings a meal from home is to pack his/her meal trash and left over food items, and take that home at the end of the day.
8. If a student spills food or makes a mess, s/he/they is responsible for cleaning it up. There are brooms, dustpans, paper towels and disinfecting solutions available for these rare situations.

** End of Meal Time Routines and Expectations **

National Honor Society (NHS) Guidelines

Students are selected for membership into the PVCICS Chapter of the National Honor Society by meeting the following criteria:

Scholarship: To be eligible for membership, you must be a junior or a senior with a grade point average of at least 3.3. Each September students who meet the GPA criteria will be invited to a preliminary meeting to receive an information packet which must be completed by the stated deadline. Failure to do so makes the student ineligible. All packets that are completed on time are then given to the NHS Faculty Council for consideration for the next steps of the process. As per NHS regulations, the names of the faculty on the Faculty Council are confidential and not released.

Leadership: Students may fulfill this requirement through active participation in at least two different types of activities. This may include athletics, clubs, and community organizations in grades 9, 10, 11 and/or 12. At least one activity must be a school-based activity. Demonstrated commitment is important. In addition to leadership in extracurricular activities, the faculty council looks for students who lead others in a positive way in the classroom and in their extracurricular activities. Positive attitude and academic initiative in the classroom are as important as assuming leadership roles in activities.

Service: Each candidate must submit evidence of some type of service in the school or in the wider community within the previous 12-month period. This service must be documented and signed by an adult sponsor. Service outside the school is encouraged and should demonstrate commitment (more than one-time activities such as walks for charity). Work that is required of students for Girl/Boy Scouts, religious organizations or other considerations may not be used to fulfill NHS requirements. Work that is paid and/or considered job training will also not be accepted. If you need clarification on whether your chosen service project fulfills the NHS criteria, ask the National Honor Society Advisor.

Character: The faculty council requests confidential feedback and comments from the entire faculty and staff about each candidate's 12-month period. This service must be documented and signed by an adult sponsor. Documentation should note students who adhere to school wide expectations and who are dependable, trustworthy, sincere, friendly, diligent and helpful to peers and staff.

NHS Application Procedures:

The student is expected to complete the information packet thoroughly and return it on time. All materials submitted are reviewed by a five-member NHS Faculty Council who must vote unanimously to elect a member. The National Honor Society Advisor is a non-voting member of the council.

The selection process takes place each fall and involves juniors and seniors. New members are inducted into the chapter at a ceremony to be held in the fall.

Following acceptance and induction, a member is expected to be involved actively in all NHS meetings as well as maintain the four established criteria. A member who misses two meetings may receive a warning letter; after the third absence, the member may receive a letter of dismissal.

In accordance with the National Honor Society contract that all members and their parents sign, any case of cheating or plagiarism will result in automatic suspension from the honor society.

*** End of National Honor Society Guidelines ***

Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, PVCICS has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of PVCICS students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, PVCICS will give written notice to the parents/guardians of students in the grades that will be offered the courses and curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Principal will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the Principal requesting an exemption. Any student is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school, and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Principal.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Executive Director for review of the issue. The Executive Director or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Executive Director's decision may send a written request to the Board of Trustees for review of the issue. The Board of Trustees will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision.

*** End of Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education ***

Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures

Version 12/5/2023

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- (a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
- (b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Please note that the regulations do not preclude any teacher, employee or agent of a school from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Definitions.

- Physical Escort means a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.
- Physical Restraint means direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.
- Prone Restraint means a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.
- Seclusion means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined below.
- Time-out means a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

PVCICS's written restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention are reviewed, provided to program staff, and made available to parents of enrolled students annually.

Restraint Prevention

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) is guided by the principle that the use of restraint can be prevented by implementing proactive procedures that prevent serious challenging and concerning behaviors from occurring. PVCICS uses the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process to identify students needing academic and/or non-academic intervention and support. By monitoring, assessing and intervening to support a student's physiological and social-emotional well being, challenging and concerning behaviors are prevented or mitigated. The school will also involve parent/guardians and students in discussions about preventing the use of restraints and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure.

PVCICS operationalizes the following:

- Implement school-wide, evidence-based systems that focus on the whole student, including each student's social emotional wellbeing.

- Integrating social-emotional learning school-wide to teach and acknowledge appropriate behavior before relying on disciplinary consequences.
- Using alternatives to physical restraint such as de-escalation strategies and proactive behavior support plans that motivate students to develop self-management of their behaviors and teach them to seek support to be safe with themselves and others.
- Using MTSS meetings to identify students who need behavioral support and provide that support as early as possible, and with the intensity needed to meet the student's need.
- Establishing a tiered continuum of behavioral interventions based on social-emotional curricula such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework, conflict resolution, restorative circles, trauma-informed practices, and other approaches.
- Monitoring progress to assess (a) the fidelity with which support is provided and (b) the impact of support on student academic and social outcomes. Use data for continuous improvement of support.
- Forming collaborative cross-functional teams of educators to review a student's intervention plan if there are ongoing behavioral concerns.
- Engaging and communicating with parents/guardians in the planning and implementation of supports.

Behavior Support

PVCICS teaches all students (Tier 1) the expected behaviors for school. PVCICS trains staff to be culturally sensitive and use trauma informed practices to create a safe, supportive school culture. Students practice the expected behaviors and are encouraged to maintain positive behavior. Students identified to receive additional supports (Tier 2) may attend small group social skills instruction, collaborative problem-solving circles, and self-management (reflection, regulation, decision-making, etc.) supports. For higher need behavior (Tier 3), there may be individualized counseling and/or a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) that provides information about the causes and frequency of the behavior. The FBA can result in a behavior support plan that includes strategies for:

- Providing students with regular opportunities to engage in calming activities, physical activities, such as taking a walk or running, to help students regulate their emotions and reduce behaviors.
- Teaching replacement behaviors, especially functional communication, that can serve as alternatives to the behaviors;
- Changing the consequences for behaviors so that undesirable behaviors are no longer rewarded and so that, instead, prosocial behaviors are strengthened, and;
- Modifying the antecedent and contextual events so that "triggers" for behaviors are eliminated or ameliorated, and stimuli associated with desirable behavior are added and enhanced.
- Providing research based interventions and/or connections to mental health and community agencies.

If a student engages in concerning behavior, staff are encouraged to contact building- based supports: MTSS teams, school psychologist, social worker, counselors, or special educator for assistance in developing behavioral supports that may reduce the likelihood of severe concerning behavior.

Prevention of Dangerous Behavior

Behavioral intervention and supports include preventing dangerous behavior such as student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide through individual sessions and/or small group sessions with counselors, the school psychologist, health/nursing staff, behavioral specialists and/or other appropriate staff. Should the level of need require individual crisis management and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student, the school will connect with crisis and emergency support agencies to help students.

For students identified as eligible for special education services, additional supports may be provided through their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and such students retain all rights afforded to them under state and federal special education laws at all times. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior, 603 CMR 46.03(3)(d)

Use of Time Out

Time-out is a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. Time-out can be inclusionary or exclusionary.

Inclusionary time-out is when the student remains in the classroom but is temporarily away from full participation in classroom activities. For example, student may be redirected to do calming activities until ready to return to classroom activities.

Exclusionary time-out is a staff- directed behavioral support where the student is separated from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or by actual physical separation. Exclusionary time-out should only be used when the student is displaying behaviors that present, or potentially present, an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom. Staff-directed exclusionary time-out is not a disciplinary consequence for noncompliance, or for incidents of misbehavior that are no longer occurring. Exclusionary time-outs can occur in spaces designed exclusively for calming, are other classrooms or safe spaces.

The following procedures apply to exclusionary time-out:

- The exclusionary time-out space must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming.
- The staff implementing the exclusionary time-out should have completed the necessary in- depth training (16 hours).
- A staff member must continuously observe the student during exclusionary time-out. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times with the following notes:
- If it is not safe for the staff member to be present in the time-out space with the student, the student may be left in the time-out space with the door closed however, there should be a window to allow for observation of the student anywhere in the room.
- For students displaying self-injurious behavior, a staff member must be physically present in the same space with the student.
- Exclusionary time-out shall end as soon as the student has calmed.
- If an exclusionary time-out is expected to last longer than 30 minutes, there must be approval for the continued use of time-out by the Principal. It is recommended that the Principal be contacted at the 20-minute mark. The Principal may not routinely approve such requests but must consider the individual circumstances, specifically whether the student continues to be agitated to determine whether time-out beyond 30 minutes is justified. If it appears that the use of exclusionary time-out exacerbates the student's behavior, or the continuation of the exclusionary time-out beyond 30 minutes has not helped the student to calm, then other behavioral support strategies should be attempted.
- A time-out log should be kept for any student who has been removed from their educational setting because of unsafe or disruptive behavior either by staff direction or by the student's choice. The time-out log will list: date/time of time-out, staff supervising the student, location of time-out, whether time-out was student choice or staff directed, door shut or open, if door shut, how long, total duration of time-out, and whether there were injuries to student or staff. The time-out log should be kept by the student's teaching team or if applicable, the student's IEP case manager. Copies of the time-out log should be shared with the Principal each week.

Use of Physical Restraint.

- Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion are prohibited in public education programs.
- Prone restraint is prohibited in public education programs except on an individual student basis, and only under the following specific circumstances:

- The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
- All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
- There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
- There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
- The school has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in Massachusetts regulations and such use has been approved in writing by the Principal; and
- The school has documented the foregoing in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.
- Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort and is prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.
- Physical restraint shall not be used:
 - As a means of discipline or punishment;
 - When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including but not limited to asthma, seizures, cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
 - As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
 - As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.
- Physical restraint is limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
- Nothing in the Massachusetts regulations prohibits the rights of: any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or the exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter of neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

All Staff Training.

Annually all program staff are trained regarding PVCICS's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used. Training occurs within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. Training includes information on the following:

- (a) The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;
- (b) The program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
- (c) Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;
- (d) When behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;
- (e) Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
- (f) Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training in the use of physical restraint.

In-depth Training for Selected Staff in the Use of Physical Restraint.

At the beginning of each school year, the principal or designee shall identify shall identify program staff who are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Such staff shall participate in in-depth training on the use of physical restraint and such training shall be competency based of at least 16 hours with an annual refresher training thereafter.

In-depth training in the proper administration of physical restraint includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- (a) Appropriate procedures for preventing the use of physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- (b) A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- (c) The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- (d) Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
- (e) Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
- (f) Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint.

(1) Trained Personnel. Only public education program personnel who have received in-depth training shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. *These training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.*

(2) Use of Force. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

(3) Safest Method. A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in the regulations. Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted, are prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.

(4) Duration of Restraint. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

(5) Safety Requirements. Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

(a) No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.

(b) Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

(c) If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the Principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.

(d) Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.

(e) After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Reporting Requirements.

(1) Informing the Principal. The program staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the Principal of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report for review by the Principal no later than the next school working day. If the Principal administered the restraint, she shall prepare the report and submit it to the Superintendent for review. The Principal maintains an on-going record of all physical restraints.

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

(3) Contents of Report. The written report includes:

(a) The name of the student; the names and titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers; the date; the time the restraint began and ended; the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, as applicable, the name of the Principal or designee who approved continuation of a restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant to.

(b) A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff were engaged immediately before the restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.

(c) A description of the restraint including the holds used and reasons; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of any injury to the student and/or staff during the restraint and resultant medical care.

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

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

(4) Individual Student Review. The Principal conducts a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the Principal shall convene one or more review teams as the Principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. If the Principal directly participated in the restraint, the Superintendent shall lead the review team's discussion. The Principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

The review shall include at least the following:

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

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

- (c) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future; and
- (d) an agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

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

Report of Restraint-related Injuries to DESE. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, PVCICS sends a copy of the written report to DESE postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. The program shall also send DESE a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the Principal for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint.

Reports to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. PVCICS collects and annually reports data to DESE regarding the use of physical restraints

Complaint Procedures. A parent/guardian, student or representative who has a complaint regarding the school's restraint practices may report the matter to the Principal or designee. Complaints must be filed, in writing, within 60 school days of the event giving rise to the complaint and must include (1) a description, in as much detail as possible, of the restraint and the surrounding events; (2) the date and location of the restraint; and (3) all persons who have knowledge of the restraint and surrounding events (witnesses), as can be reasonably determined.

The school will investigate the reported events, including interviewing witnesses deemed necessary and appropriate, and reviewing all written documentation leading up to and pertaining to the incident and all reports filed to determine the facts relevant to the complaint. Such investigation will generally be completed and a written disposition made within thirty (30) school days of receiving the complaint. If this timeline is not met, the reason(s) for not meeting will be documented. If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial disposition, he/she may appeal to the Executive Director or file a complaint via the Complaint Procedures in the Family Handbook.

**** End of Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures****

Policy on McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

Legal Reference: Title I, Part C, No Child Left Behind Act, 2002

Introduction

The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) serves students from the Pioneer Valley region of Massachusetts. The school reports to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) as a district and therefore is responsible for all policies that are required of all districts in the Commonwealth.

Purpose of the Homeless Education Assistance Act

The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is to ensure that each homeless child or youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. PVCICS shall ensure that every effort is made to comply with this legislation for its students and to cooperate and collaborate with other district schools to remove barriers to enrollment of homeless students.

Definition

PVCICS is in compliance with the ESE which has adopted Section 725 (2) of the Act regarding the definition of homeless children and youth:

- Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or have a primary nighttime residence in a supervised, publicly or privately, operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

This definition shall include:

- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- Unaccompanied youth—a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian; and
- Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

Liaisons

The McKinney-Vento Act requires the PVCICS along with every school district to designate a staff person to serve as the Homeless Education Liaison whose role it is to assist homeless students to enroll in school and to ensure that they receive the educational services for which they are eligible. This liaison may have other duties within the school district. The liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with:

- Local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families;
- Other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and
- State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in school, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students. For specific liaison, see the [Notice of Civil Rights Coordinators](#) page in this Handbook.

Enrollment

Parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in any school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living and eligible for, including PVCICS, rather than remaining in the school of origin.

Homeless students wishing to enroll in PVCICS and are sheltered in its region of service shall submit an application and participate in the lottery process to acquire a position on the waitlist according to the guidelines of the school's Enrollment Policy. If the student's name is next for an enrollment position and the student does not have immediate access to the documents usually required for enrollment such as school records, immunization records or proof of residency, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families will be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible.

Furthermore:

- Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing;
- Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they get permanent housing;
- Homeless Education Liaisons must assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records;
- Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Transportation

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or to the school where they are to be enrolled. To the extent practical and as required by law, PVCICS will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services.

Furthermore:

- If the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the district in which the school of origin is located, that district must provide or arrange transportation.
- If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his or her education at PVCICS, that district and PVCICS must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to school.
- If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

Access to Comparable Services

Homeless students are to be provided services and education programs comparable to those received by other students and for which they meet eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs; programs for students with disabilities; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and school nutrition programs.*

Note: *To expedite the delivery of nutritional benefits, PVCICS may accept documentation that students are homeless from a local district educational liaison or the director of the homeless shelter where the students reside as the determination of eligibility for free lunch.

Access to Preschool

An important goal of McKinney-Vento is to afford homeless preschoolers the same opportunity to enroll, attend and succeed in preschool as non-homeless preschoolers, thereby minimizing their educational disruption due to homelessness. The PVCICS Homeless Education Liaison must coordinate and collaborate with community resources to assist homeless families with students attending PVCICS and who also have

children of preschool age to remove barriers to the enrollment of these homeless children in child care and early education programs.

Dispute Resolution

If a dispute arises over the enrollment decision of a homeless student, PVCICS must provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth with both a written statement of the school enrollment policy and a notice of the right to appeal the decision. The homeless student will remain enrolled in the school pending resolution of the dispute. PVCICS shall refer the student to the Homeless Education Liaison, who will expeditiously carry out the dispute resolution process. The final decision in such a situation resides with the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education or a designated representative.

Unaccompanied Youth & Children and Youth in State Care or Custody

Unaccompanied youth are youth who are homeless; not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian; and not in the custody of a state agency. This definition includes youth living on the street, in inadequate housing, denied housing by their families, those who have left home voluntarily, even when their parent/s want them to return home, and youth doubled up with friends or relatives. Also, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has determined that children and youth in state care or custody who have been placed out of their homes into temporary, transitional, or emergency living placements while awaiting foster care placement are therefore homeless.

Unaccompanied youth or students in state care or custody who are awaiting foster care are entitled to the same educational rights and services, including transportation, under McKinney-Vento as any homeless child or youth in the care of their parent/s or guardian/s.

***** End of Policy on McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act *****

Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy

I. Introduction

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School is committed to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, gender identity or sexual orientation are not tolerated and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable. This policy is intended to help each member of the community to be unencumbered by unwelcome comments or gestures that would interfere with his/her feeling of safety while at school.

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School strictly enforces a prohibition against harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, of any of its employees, students, or parents by anyone, including any fellow student, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, parent, or other third party, as such conduct is contrary to the mission of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School and its commitment to equal opportunity in educational programs and employment.

Discrimination and harassment consist of unwelcome conduct, whether oral or physical, that is based on a characteristic protected by law, such as sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, gender identity or sexual orientation. Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School will not tolerate harassing or discriminatory conduct that affects employment or educational conditions, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's school or work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment. Discrimination and/or harassment of employees, students, or parents occurring in the school or workplace is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School. For purposes of this policy, "workplace" or "school" includes school-sponsored social events, trips, work related travel or similar events connected with school programs or employment.

Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination, harassment or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include termination of employment, school-related discipline, or reporting to state/federal agencies.

II. Definition of Discrimination and Harassment

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether oral, written, or physical, that is based on sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Oral abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.

- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group (as described above) to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Many forms of harassment and discrimination have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI and Title IX) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S.

Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

“Sexual harassment” is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and oral or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities or as a basis for employment decisions.
- Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work or educational environment.

Under the definition stated above, direct or implied requests by a teacher, supervisor, parent, or any individual in a position of work or school authority for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job or school benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, continued employment, better grades, recommendations or other advantages constitutes sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may be considered sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that are inappropriate and that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment. In each case, such a determination will depend upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, comments about an individual’s body, comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Discussions of one’s own sexual activities or inquiries into others’ sexual experiences.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons.

The definitions of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment are broad. In addition to the above examples, other unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of creating a school or work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to either male or female employees, students or parents also may constitute discrimination, harassment and/or sexual harassment.

III. Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

If any Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School employee, student, or parent believes, in good faith, that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School through the Civil Rights Officer (Officer). This may be done orally or in writing. Teachers or other staff members who observe incidents of harassment involving students should report such incidents immediately to the Officer. The Officer, being aware of harassment involving any employee or student, is obligated to follow the school policy for documenting and resolving the situation.

If another school community member wishes to file a complaint, he/she may do so with the Officer.

IV. Complaint Investigation

When the Officer receives a complaint of discrimination or harassment, he/she will investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation may include an interview with the person filing the complaint and also may include interviews with witnesses or other individuals who the Officer believes would be useful to the investigation. The Officer also will interview the person alleged to have committed the discrimination or harassment. When the Officer has concluded his/her investigation, the Officer will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of the investigation. The Officer will keep confidential written records of the pertinent information and the investigative process.

The complaint investigation procedures are designed to promote the sensitive handling of harassment and discrimination issues, the thorough investigation of complaints, facilitation of a prompt and expeditious internal review, and a fair and equitable resolution of the complaint.

An employee, student, or parent may select any of the routes identified below to discuss a concern or file a complaint of discrimination or harassment. School community members are encouraged to attempt resolution personally at the onset of the unwanted behavior by telling the offending party to stop. The school community member may seek advice and help from appropriate individuals within the administrative office without being required to file a formal complaint.

Please note that while these procedures relate to the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School policy of promoting a workplace and educational setting free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School's authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace and educational conduct which the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School deems unacceptable.

A. General Policies

1. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any employee, student, or parent for processing, in good faith, a complaint, either on an informal or formal basis, or for participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
2. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any employee, student, or parent who, in good faith, has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing of a complaint or for otherwise participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
3. Whenever possible, a conference should be scheduled during a time that does not conflict with regularly scheduled work and/or school programs.
4. Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School will work with an individual who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment; including conducting an investigation and holding conferences, in order to fairly and expeditiously resolve the complaint.
5. When a student has filed a complaint, guidance counseling services will be offered individually to any students involved to support them as they participate in the investigative process.

B. Procedures

1. Informal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns.

Before initiating the formal procedure, the school community member should, if possible, resolve any complaint regarding an alleged discriminatory practice on an informal basis.

- a. The *student or parent* can raise the issue with the teacher or the Civil Rights Officer of Pioneer Valley

Chinese Immersion Charter School who is located in the school office at 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA (telephone: 413-582-7040). The name of the Officer is posted in the public areas of the school and in other school publications, including the Family Handbook.

b. The *employee* can raise the issue with the Civil Rights Officer at the school office, which is located at 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA (telephone: 413-582-7040). The name of the Officer is posted in employee areas, in the public areas, and in other school publications, including the Staff Handbook.

c. The Officer shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the complaint fairly and expeditiously within ten (10) school days of receiving the complaint. Attempts will be made to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the employee, student, or parent who has made the complaint. If the employee, student, or parent is not satisfied with the resolution, or if the employee, student, or parent does not choose informal resolution, then he/she can begin the formal complaint process.

2. Formal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns.

a. The employee, student, or parent may file a written complaint to the Civil Rights Officer (Officer) of the school located at 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035. The name of the Officer is posted in public and employee areas of the school and in publications by the school, namely the Family Handbook and Staff Handbook. The employee, student, and parent are expected to file a written complaint no later than twenty (20) school days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. The employee, student, or parent shall write a letter that will state the name of the individual and the location of the school where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint and the corrective action that he/she is seeking.

b. After receipt of a filing of the formal written complaint, the Officer shall promptly give written notification to the appropriate school member identified in the complaint. This written notification shall include a copy of the complaint letter filed with the Officer.

c. The Officer will conduct the necessary investigation promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of its investigation, the Officer shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed. If further documentation is needed, the Officer shall present to the appropriate individuals, written requests for additional information pertaining to the complaint.

d. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For example, sometimes the employees, students, or parents that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The Officer, however, will try to facilitate the process so that the complaint is handled as quickly as is feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within twenty (20) school days. When more than twenty (20) school days is required for the investigation, the Officer shall inform the school community member who filed the complaint that the investigation is still ongoing.

e. After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the Officer shall request a meeting with the person against whom the complaint was filed to discuss the findings, and, at the same time, to give the person against whom the complaint was filed an opportunity to respond to the findings, and to seek to resolve the complaint.

f. When feasible and appropriate, the Officer will make every attempt to resolve the issue within the time parameters of this initial meeting; however, more than one meeting may be necessary. The Officer shall strive to complete both the investigation and the resolution of the complaint within twenty (20) school days. When more than twenty (20) school days is required for the investigation and resolution process, the Administration shall inform the school community members involved in writing that additional time is needed for the resolution process.

g. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached through the informal or formal resolution procedures detailed above, the employee, student, or parent has the right to appeal the decision by filing a grievance according to the guidelines specified in the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School Grievance Policy.

h. If, after completing the procedures set forth in the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School Grievance Policy, the employee, student, or other school community member is not satisfied with the outcome, he/she may file a complaint with an appropriate state or federal agency. Moreover, it should be noted that using the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School's complaint process does not prohibit the individual from filing a complaint with these agencies.

i. For *students or parents* complaints may be taken to:

U. S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
Tel: 617-289-0111
Fax: 617-289-0150

Program Quality Assurance
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906
Tel: 781-338-3300

j. For *employees* or applicants for employment, complaints may be taken to:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 994-6000

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
JFK Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, Massachusetts 02203
617-565-3200 or 800-669-4000

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
1801 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20507
202-663-4900

Each agency has a specific time period for filing a claim. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) allows at least 180 days (may be longer in some circumstances) to file a complaint, and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) allows at least 300 days to file a complaint.

V. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by a Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School teacher, student, parent, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party, the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School will take action that is appropriate under the circumstances. Action may

range from counseling to termination of employment, discipline, up to and including expulsion, or reporting to state and/or federal agencies.

**** End of Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy ****

Policy Regarding Pregnancies

“Pregnant students are permitted to attend classes and participate in extracurricular activities throughout their pregnancy. Exceptions will be made only when a physician expressly prohibits the student’s participation.”

PVCICS does not require a pregnant student to obtain a physician’s certification that the student is able to continue in school. PVCICS will provide reasonable accommodations for students with medical conditions relating to pregnancy to the extent such accommodations are provided to students with other temporary medical conditions. After giving birth, the student is permitted and encouraged to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the pregnancy leave.” Legal Reference: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 84.

*** End of Policy Regarding Pregnancies ***

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notification

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of*–
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use –
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. PVCICS has adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. PVCICS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. PVCICS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. PVCICS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

*** End of PPRA Notification ***

Notice of Civil Rights Coordinators to the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

This notice provides information regarding legislation that guides the school in its employment and educational policies. PVCICS follows the laws that have been promulgated to insure the equal enjoyment of all opportunities and privileges regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation. PVCICS is an equal opportunity employer that complies with provisions of Chapter 622/282, Title IX and the Drug Free School Act of 1988.

Title IX

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972). In compliance with these regulations, PVCICS has a designated Title IX Coordinator: Nicole Cronin, Athletic Director.

McKinney-Vento, Section 725(2)

Children and youth in a state care or custody who are identified as homeless have the same rights as other homeless students to fully attend and participate in all school activities classes, educational opportunities, meals, social and athletic events, clubs, teams, and other services. For attendance at PVCICS, the child has the right to apply for enrollment according to the school's Enrollment Policy. For further information please contact: Marilyn Kusek, Director of Student Services and Homeless Education Liaison.

Title VI

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.). In compliance with these regulations, PVCICS has a designated Title VI Coordinator: Kathleen Wang, Principal and Civil Rights Officer.

Section 504

No otherwise qualified individual...shall solely by reason of handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973). In compliance with the above regulation, PVCICS has designated a Coordinator of 504 activities. If there are any questions regarding PVCICS's compliance with Section 504, please contact: Marilyn Kusek for grades K-8 and Maria Paoletti for grades 9-12.

Special Education

603 CMR 28.00 governs the provision by Massachusetts public schools for special education and related services to eligible students and ensures that they receive individual educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. If there are any questions regarding PVCICS's compliance with Special Education benefits, please contact: Su Lu, Special Education Administrator.

Contact designated coordinator/liaison for Title IX, Title VI, McKinney-Vento, Section 504 and Special Education compliance at PVCICS, 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035 (413-582-7040).

Inquiries regarding compliance with any of the above laws may also be directed to:
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Director of Civil Rights,
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148 or Dept. of Health, Education & Welfare, Boston, MA
02114.

*** End of Notice of Civil Rights Coordinators ***

School-Wide Education Service Plan

As of May 5, 2023

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾, the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) must provide opportunities for students to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work, as needed, in order to make academic progress during the period of his or her in school suspension, short-term suspension (10 days or less), long-term suspension (10 days or more) or expulsion. All services provided under this plan will be based on and provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students. The Principal or a designee will notify students and parents of the opportunity to receive educational services under this plan, and arrange such services at the time a student is removed for disciplinary reasons. PVCICS will facilitate and verify enrollment of students upon the student/parent/guardian's selection of an educational service.

I. Students suspended for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

A student suspended for 10 consecutive days or less, even if resulting in more than ten days of suspension cumulatively in the school year, will be provided with the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension. Suspended students will be assigned a school-based liaison who will provide the suspended student with a list of assignments to be completed by the student during the period of disciplinary removal. Students will have a time period equal to the number of days suspended to complete all assignments and assessments (for full credit) that were missed during the suspension.

Even though students suspended out of school are not allowed on school property while they are suspended, if meeting with a teacher is determined necessary by the student's assigned liaison for the student to continue making academic progress, a student may be allowed to meet with a teacher during the teacher's contractual work hours.

II. Students suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expelled.

Students suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expelled will have the opportunity to access one (1) of the following options to facilitate their continued academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion:

1. Tutorial Services: The suspended or expelled student will be assigned to a tutorial session to be conducted virtually or at a public location to be determined by PVCICS. The tutoring will be provided by a qualified PVCICS personnel or contracted providers as assigned by the PVCICS. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c. 69 §§1D and 1F. The student's tutoring schedule is determined by the school.
2. Online Classes through approved program: The suspended or expelled student will be assigned classes through an online program approved by PVCICS. These can be completed at home with oversight by a PVCICS staff member. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c. 69 §§1D and 1F.

To access one of the two alternatives listed above, you must contact the Principal.

***** End of School-Wide Education Service Plan *****

***Students With Disabilities in Public Charter Schools:
Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services***

from MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, September 2014

Dear Parent: This document explains the educational rights of students with disabilities to attend Massachusetts charter schools and to receive appropriate special education services in those charter schools. Both federal and state law requires that admission to a charter school be conducted without regard to or consideration of whether the child has a disability, and so charter schools are open to all students, whether or not they are eligible to receive special education services. Charter schools must provide special education services, up to the limits specified under the state charter school law, to all eligible students. This is a summary of your student's rights to attend and receive needed services from his or her charter school.

◆ **Charter schools accept and serve students with disabilities.**

Charter schools are open to all grade-eligible students within the school's service area on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to randomly determine who will be admitted. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of getting in regardless of, and without any consideration of, any need for special education services.

See: M.G.L. c. 71 §89 (l) states that charter schools shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, *mental or physical disability*, age, ancestry, athletic performance, *special need*, or proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, and academic achievement. (*Emphasis added*)

- ◆ Charter schools must ensure that your student receives special education services if the student has been determined to be an eligible student with a disability by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

Charter schools must ensure that students with disabilities receive the special education services to which they are entitled. The services may consist of special education instruction and related services in the least restrictive environment, or consist only of related services needed to access the general education curriculum. The amount and location of services (where services will be delivered) is determined by the student's IEP team and is documented in the student's IEP. As determined by your student's IEP team, your charter school will provide services in a placement that is:

- Full inclusion- the student is in the general education classroom for 80%-100% of the school day; or
- Partial inclusion- the student is in the general education classroom 40-80% of the school day; or
- Substantially separate- the student is out of the general education classroom more than 60% of the school day.

- ◆ Your student must receive related services if the IEP team determines the student needs them.

Charter schools must provide related services to students with disabilities if the IEP team determines that the services are necessary for the student to benefit from special education or, if the student does not require special education instruction, that the related services are necessary to ensure the student's access to the general education curriculum. Examples of these services include: speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological counseling, and/or adjustment counseling.

- ◆ **Charter schools are required to meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws.**

Charter schools are required to provide a free appropriate public education to qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Such education consists of general education accommodations and related aids and services designed to meet the individual educational needs of students with disabilities as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 regulations could consist of education in general education classrooms with accommodations, education in general education classes with supplementary services, and/or related services. Schools would include these services in a “504 Plan.”

- ◆ **For students who may require special education services that are beyond what the charter school is required to provide, an IEP team meeting will be convened to arrange for provision of needed services.**

If the IEP team convened by the charter school believes that your student may require a full-time day or residential special education program, the charter school will convene a separate placement meeting to determine the appropriate placement. You will be invited to the meeting, as will the school district of the town where you reside. When the meeting occurs, the placement team must first consider whether the school district of residence has an in-district program that is able to provide the services that are recommended by the IEP team, either alone or as a supplement to services available at the charter school. If there is such in-district programming available, the placement team must propose an in-district program to the parent (which may be delivered in the charter school itself, through a program located in the school district of residence or a combination of both), the student will remain enrolled in the charter school, and the charter school retains programmatic and financial responsibility for the student. Please note that the charter school has full discretion over where it will propose to deliver any in-district programming, and is not required to contract with the school district of residence for service delivery unless the charter school chooses to do so.

If the placement team, including the school district of residence, agrees that the student cannot be served in-district, then the placement team shall determine that the student requires an out-of-district placement, in which case the student’s enrollment and responsibility for the student’s special education program reverts to the school district of residence.

Because enrollment at the charter school is always voluntary on the part of the parent, the parent may elect to disenroll from the charter school and enroll, instead, back at the school district of residence or another school for any reason and at any time. However, the charter school may not require the parent to disenroll as a condition for receiving any service, except when the student’s special education placement has been determined, as above, to be an out-of-district program.

See: Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2014-5: Charter School Responsibilities for Students with Disabilities Who May Need an Out-of-District Program - 603 CMR 28.10(6)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2014-5ta.html>

Relevant Laws and Regulations

Charter School Statute: G.L. c. 71 §89

Charter School Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §1.00

Massachusetts Special Education Law: G.L. c.71B

Massachusetts Special Education Regulations: 603 C.M.R. §28.00

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 *et seq*; and 34 CFR Part 300

If you have any questions, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign (phone: 781-338-3227; email:

charterschools@doe.mass.edu) or Office of Special Education Planning and Policy Development (phone: 781-338-3375; email: specialeducation@doe.mass.edu).

For additional information regarding special education and the rights of parents and students, please refer to the following:

- Notice of Procedural Safeguards <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/>
- Parent's Guide to Special Education http://www.fcsn.org/parents_guide/pgenglish.pdf

Source: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/sped/default.html> . Note: this webpage also has this notice in other languages.

***** End of Students With Disabilities in Public Charter Schools:
Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services*****

Substance Use Prevention and Substance Abuse Education Policy¹²

We at Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (“PVCICS”) appreciate that, as a community, we are uniquely situated to adopt a proactive stance to prevent the use and abuse of substances by our student body. As such, we are committed to collaborating with the Massachusetts Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education (“ESE”) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”), to provide its students with information on the dangers of opioid, alcohol, and other substance use, identify and support students who may be at risk for substance abuse, and to implement evidence-based, developmentally and culturally appropriate prevention programming.

I. Educational Materials for Students and Parents; Student Athletes

PVCICS provides all students with health and wellness education, which shall include developmentally appropriate information about the risks of substance abuse, and may include some or all of the following:

- The adverse effects of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs;
- The distinction between drug use and drug abuse;
- Factors that cause, affect, and increase the risk of addiction; and
- Methodologies available to treat alcohol and substance addiction.

Student athletes, because of an increased risk of injury and the resultant need for pain management, may be at heightened risk of opioid abuse. In recognition of this risk, PVCICS shall ensure that athletes and their parents are provided with athletics-specific written information on opioid abuse prevention. This material can also be accessed through PVCICS’s website.

Links to relevant information and resources concerning substance abuse are available on PVCICS’s website.

II. Staff Support and Outside Referrals; Communication¹³

PVCICS employs a variety of professionals such as counselors, school psychologists and nurses to provide health and wellness services to students. These professionals will also receive and provide staff training concerning substance use and abuse problems that students may experience. Due to daily interaction, PVCICS staff members are uniquely situated to identify changes in performance, demeanor, and/or appearance that may indicate a student’s use or abuse of substances. Our staff will receive training on recognizing and intervening on behalf of students who are at risk of using or abusing substances.

School staff, as appropriate, will facilitate referrals to outside support organizations. Staff will ensure that ongoing communication occurs between staff, parents/guardians, students, and outside providers.

III. Substance Use Prohibition

Students shall not use, consume, buy, sell, or possess any tobacco, alcohol, and/or drug on school property or at any school function. This prohibition includes any and all beverages containing alcohol;

¹² This policy was prepared in accordance with MGL c. 71 s. 96. See <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section96> for more information.

¹³ PVCICS’s implementation of this policy shall comply at all times with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Massachusetts student records regulations (603 C.M.R. §§23 et seq.), and all other federal and state laws applying to student privacy rights.

any tobacco products, including but not limited to “natural” or vapor/e-cigarettes; or any controlled substance (including but not limited to marijuana). Any student who is found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol before or during school or a school-sponsored event will not be permitted to participate in school and/or the event, and may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with PVCICS’s Code of Conduct, including suspension and/or expulsion.

***** End of Substance Use Prevention and Substance Abuse Education Policy *****

Substance Abuse Information and Tips for Parents

Substance Abuse Information & Treatment

Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline (<http://helpline-online.com/>) provides free and confidential information and referrals for addiction treatment as well as other recovery support services. 1-800-327-5050

Youth Central Intake (1-617-661-3991 or 866-705-2807 toll free) provides information and facilitates access to a range of services for Massachusetts youth with substance use issues, including residential and outpatient treatment.

Tips for Parents

Talking to Your Middle School-Aged Child about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs -
<http://files.hria.org/files/SA1020.pdf>

Alcohol and Other Drugs: Is Your Teen Using? -
<http://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/ALCH/SA1066.html>

Tips for Protecting Your Kids from Addiction Brochure-
<http://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/ALCH/SA3534kit.html>

Transportation Policy

Parents/guardians should recognize that bus (including shuttle bus and van) transportation provided by PVCICS is a **privilege, not a right**. PVCICS's policy is that unless otherwise specified, your child will go home on the bus assigned. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility, not your child's, to communicate any change in transportation plans. Please utilize the School Dismissal Manager to provide the information.

If your child needs to ride a bus other than your child's regular school bus, or needs to be dropped off at a regular site other than the assigned one, parents should submit a written request to the office before the date requested.

For the safety of all, proper conduct on school buses must be upheld and PVCICS reserves the right to install video cameras on school buses. Students are under school care from the time they board the bus in the morning until they are dismissed from the bus at the end of the day. Therefore, improper behavior on a PVCICS school bus will result in consequences imposed by the school. Students may, at the discretion of the Principal, be suspended or expelled from riding the bus, for behavioral issues. In this instance, no refund or reimbursement will be made. Absence from school does not constitute a reason for refund. Payments for bus fees are due and payable upon receipt. Unpaid bus fees may result in your student no longer able to ride the bus. PVCICS is not responsible for personal valuables left on the school bus.

The following Bus Safety Rules must be adhered to by all, whether going to and from school, or traveling to athletic events and field trips:

Bus Safety Rules

- Obey the instructions of the bus driver, teacher or chaperone.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Adhere to any health safety rules (e.g. for Covid-19) as required.
- Keep head, arms, legs, or any body part and all objects inside the bus.
- No loud arguing, provocative behavior or fighting.
- No pencils/writing instruments should be out of backpacks during the ride because they can become projectiles *without explicit permission from the driver*.
- No animals or dangerous items (lighters, sharp objects, fireworks, explosives, etc.) on the bus.
- No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus due to choking hazard.
- Use an indoor voice and respectful language; this includes calling students names, telling inappropriate jokes, making fun of other students, etc.
- No use of digital/electronic devices that prevent the student from listening to and/or seeing the driver's instructions (e.g. headphones, earbuds, virtual reality goggles, etc.) *without explicit permission from the driver*.
- Respect property: no littering, defacing, stealing or spitting.
- Electronic devices such as cell phones, iphones, ipods, ipads, and electronic readers, which allow students to read, do homework and quiet age-appropriate activities may be allowed at the discretion of the driver and/or administration. If students have cell phones for emergency use, the student may contact a parent, with the bus driver when the bus is at a bus stop.

Any bus driver may refer a student to the school for improper conduct on their bus. Should a Bus Safety Rule be broken, the consequences are as follows:

- First offense – A written or telephone warning to the home, and possible additional consequences, such as loss of privileges, cleaning the bus, etc., depending on the nature of the offense

- Second Offense – A second warning to the home and further additional consequences, such as a written plan and meeting with the bus driver, etc. The warning will inform the parent/guardian that another incident may result in suspension from the bus.
- Third Offense – A phone call to parents/guardians, informing them of the bus incident and the number of days of bus suspension.

Please note that in the event of a serious violation of the Bus Safety Rules, the PVCICS reserves the right to suspend a child from the bus for a first or second offense. ***Children must attend school when suspended from the bus.*** Any absence as a result of a bus suspension is considered unexcused.

Students waiting to board buses in the morning should be at their assigned bus stops five minutes before the scheduled bus time. They need to wait until buses have come to a complete stop and put out a stop sign before approaching to get on. When parents/guardians are at the bus stop, whether in the morning or the afternoon, the parent/guardian must park, get out of his/her/their vehicle and escort the child to/from the bus stop. The parent/guardian must wait with the child until the child boards the bus in the morning and must meet the child as s/he/they gets off the bus in the afternoon. **Parents/guardians are not permitted to drive next to the bus and drop off their child(ren).** This is a safety issue and must be followed. Not following the procedure may result in a suspension for safety of all the students and staff.

Except in cases of extreme emergency, no student(s) will be allowed to ride a bus other than his/her/their regularly assigned bus. In such cases, the student may receive permission from the school office after a specific written request from a parent/guardian. The school will then give the driver written permission and information about the appropriate stop.

No stops to pick up or discharge passengers will be made by any bus driver other than at officially designated places.

Parents/guardians are responsible for picking up their child(ren) at the bus stop after school. They may also have another previously authorized adult to meet their child(ren) at the bus stop by filling out a form in advance with the school office designating who is the authorized adult and what days s/he/they will be picking up the child(ren).

The bus driver will wait no more than five minutes for parents to arrive at the bus stop. In the event a parent/guardian, or person approved to pick up the child(ren) is not at the stop within the five minute window, the driver will call the PVCICS school office and the child(ren) will be returned to school. The parent/guardian will need to pick up the child(ren) there within an hour of the call home notifying them to pick up the child(ren). If the school can not reach the parent/guardians, then the people on the student's emergency contact list will be called. If no one on that list can be reached, then the school may contact outside agencies for assistance.

For the safety of all riders, parents/guardians are **not allowed** to step onto busses without explicit permission from the bus driver.

Re-Admittance Procedure

Prior to the student being readmitted to the bus the parent must meet with the bus supervisor and provide assurance that the student's behavior will conform to the rules and regulations for riding the bus.

The Principal may refuse to re-admit any student to the bus who willfully creates a disturbance or deliberately disobeys the bus driver transportation. Depending upon the severity of the offense, the student may be suspended from the bus even if this is the student's first offense. Any student who ignores a bus suspension and attempts to ride the bus will be excluded from the bus and is subject to a bus suspension for an additional 5-30 days, to be determined by the Principal.

**** End of Transportation Policy ****

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

*Note: this statement is available in other non-English languages at,
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cr/fns-nondiscrimination-statement>*

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**** End of USDA Nondiscrimination Statement ****

Wellness Policy

Background

In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the U.S. Congress established a new requirement that all school districts with a federally-funded school meals program develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity by the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

PVCICS's Wellness Policy is based on the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA, see www.nanacoalition.org) model policy that meets the federal requirement.

PVCICS's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

The Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (PVCICS) is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School that:

- PVCICS will work to engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing its nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- PVCICS will work to ensure that foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- PVCICS will work to provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- When practicable, PVCICS will participate in available federal school meal programs.
- PVCICS will work to provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Council

PVCICS will create and maintain a school health council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The school health council will consist of a group of individuals representing the school community.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served at PVCICS

Meals served at PVCICS should be appealing and attractive to children; be served in clean and pleasant settings and meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and

regulations. Meals should offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;¹⁴ serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk¹⁵ and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Free and Reduced-priced Lunch. PVCICS will work to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals¹⁶. PVCICS will select a food services management company that will provide meals that meet federal dietary guidelines.

Meal Times and Scheduling. PVCICS:

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of Meal Provider and Staff Professional Development. At this time, PVCICS will contract out the school meal program to qualified nutrition professionals.

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. PVCICS will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. PVCICS will work to disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, and parents. If feasible, PVCICS would like to be able to offer special snacks based upon Chinese cuisine at various times during the year as part of the cultural enrichment activities.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. PVCICS will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually. This applies not to school meals, but foods and beverages sold individually through fundraisers, school functions etc. To the extent possible, PVCICS will consult with a qualified nutrition specialist about foods and beverages sold individually to students prior to the event. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in PVCICS's elementary grades should be sold as balanced meals. If available as individual items (*i.e.* not a balanced meal), foods and beverages should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables. Beverages and foods sold should follow nutrition and portion size standards:

¹⁴ To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. PVCICS will try to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

¹⁵ As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*.

¹⁶ It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water¹⁷ without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- A food item sold individually:
 - Should have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts¹⁸, seeds, butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
 - Should have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;¹⁹
 - Should contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and should contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.
- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).²⁰

Portion Sizes:

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
 - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
 - One ounce for cookies;
 - Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;

¹⁷ Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a “Food of Minimal Nutritional Value” (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).

¹⁸ PVCICS has a peanut-safe building so no peanut products are allowed in the building.

¹⁹ If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added* sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from *total* sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added* sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

²⁰ Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.

- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Fundraising Activities. To support children’s health and school nutrition-education efforts, PVCICS will encourage fundraising activities that promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Rewards. PVCICS will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior,²¹ and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations. PVCICS will work to limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one per month. Each celebration should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). PVCICS will work to disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day should meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. PVCICS aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. PVCICS will work to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is aligned with the MA Health Curriculum Frameworks;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

²¹ Unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan (IEP).

- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on understanding food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communication with Parents. PVCICS will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. PVCICS will work to send home nutrition information and information about physical activity opportunities, and provide nutrient analyses of school meals. PVCICS will work to encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. PVCICS will work to provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, PVCICS will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages²² is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors such as sales of local fruit, vegetables, and healthy foods for fundraisers is allowable.

Staff Wellness. PVCICS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will work to plan and implement activities, and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. When PVCICS 's staff reaches sufficient size, it should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, and a local health professional to develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, should receive physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for middle school students) for the entire school year. All physical education should be taught by a physical education teacher qualified to teach in a public charter school. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic

²² PVCICS will not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess. All elementary school students should have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

PVCICS should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity and Punishment. Teachers and other school personnel should not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School. PVCICS will work to assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, PVCICS will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The Principal or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies and will report on the school's compliance to the chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

School food service staff (or the outside contracted vendor) will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Principal.

The Principal will develop a summary report every three years on PVCICS's compliance with its established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the Board of Trustees and also be distributed to PVCICS's school health services personnel and parents.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of PVCICS's wellness policies, PVCICS will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.²³

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, PVCICS will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. PVCICS will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**** End of Wellness Policy ****

**** End of PVCICS Family Handbook *****

²³ Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the *School Health Index* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Changing the Scene* from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education* from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.