

# LION LEADERS IN OUR OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

CHARTER SCHOOL



# Student - Family Handbook 2022-2023

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# Welcome to Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School (LION) is a place of self-discovery and challenge. At LION, we believe that every person is capable of excellence and that a continuous process of self-discovery, driven by reflection and feedback, develops one's best. To cultivate everyone's unique abilities, LION maintains a learning culture that stimulates character strengths and engages academic curiosity and leadership. The LION character development process is built upon the belief that character growth is the foundation for post-secondary success. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare each student to develop a foundation of personal excellence.

The LION philosophy is for people of all ages, abilities, and cultures. Families and students who are committed to going after their best, closely examining the meaning and direction of their lives, and putting time and effort into their education will be able to meet the academic, personal, and social challenges that await them in the LION Program.

We ask you to join us in taking on a personal challenge to strengthen family ties and to support our students as they strive for academic excellence and excellence in character.

Sincerely,



Celia Sosa  
Executive Director

## MISSION STATEMENT

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School's mission is to develop the character of each student. We unite students, families, and staff in helping each individual achieve their best academically, and in sports, the arts, and service to the community. We believe that passion for learning, self-discovery, leadership, and social conscience are the foundation for success in college and fulfillment in life.

## LION'S SIX PILLARS

Character  
Leadership  
Family  
Community  
Social Justice  
Curiosity

## LION INCLUSION STATEMENT

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School (LION) is an inclusive community which values intentional equity by providing multiple entry points for student engagement and considering seemingly unequal realities as equal, thus embracing and celebrating differences.

We commit to support the individual needs of every student's potential. LION values the unique perspectives and abilities of each person in our community, and we are committed to fostering growth to each individual's potential. All students will have access to high quality instruction and resources. We ensure the alignment of all curricular resources and practices to meet the academic needs of all students.

We maximize available resources to provide the most equitable educational opportunities and diverse course offerings to all students, empowering them to actualize their own potential throughout LION and beyond, in post-secondary programs. All students have equal access to arts, athletic programming, academic-related services, and student life activities to promote community and social responsibility.

Our community is one in which every family is able to participate fully and to grow in their potential by having equal access to space, resources, programming, and personnel. LION will ensure an inclusive environment for all.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN PLEDGE

As a parent/guardian/caring adult at **Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School (LION)**, I commit to:

- *Work in partnership with LION's staff to support my child's learning and character development.*
  - *development.*
- *Support a home environment conducive to learning.*
- *Maintain clear and frequent communication with the school.*
- *Maintain a schedule for my child as much as possible that maximizes instructional time.*
  - *time.*

**As a parent/guardian at Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School, I agree to uphold these commitments to LION staff, my child, and myself.**

# I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Grades K-8: 730 Bryant Avenue

Grades 9-12: 830 Hunts Point Avenue

Bronx, NY 10474 Telephone: 718-991-5500 Fax #: 347-964-8012 School District 8

## ***Co-location for Grades K-8***

Grades K-8 are located at 730 Bryant Avenue. There are three schools in the building – Bronx Academy of Multimedia (BAMM), Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School, and The Vida Bogart School for All Children (P.S. 352) – We expect all LION students to be cooperative, respectful and courteous to all people in the building. We also expect LION students to move calmly and safely at all times.

## **Phone Calls, Telephones, and Confiscated or Lost Items**

### ***Messages for Students***

Parents/Guardians should communicate with their child before school regarding transportation, after school arrangements, or other matters. Please call the school during the day to leave messages in the case of emergencies.

### ***Student use of School Phones***

If needed, office phones are available for student use for important issues with the permission of a staff member.

### ***Lost and Found***

The school is not responsible for personal property that is lost, stolen, or damaged. Students are encouraged not to bring articles to school that have significant monetary or sentimental value. If students leave anything behind at school, they should check the school's lost and found as soon as possible. Please remember to **label** any item of clothing that your child may remove during the school day. Items left in the school two days after the end of the school year will be donated to charity or to a local non-profit community-based organization.

## **Electronics: Policies and Procedures**

Cell phones have become a way of life, a technological convenience that has impacted all of our lives in one way or another. However, in the school environment, cell phones have become a distraction, interruption, and in some cases can be a method of bullying and harassment. The ringing of the cell phone during class or the text-messaging takes away from the valuable time needed for instruction and most importantly, student learning. We do recognize that cell phones can be a safety/security tool; however, they can be a detriment in the event of a building emergency and our protocol to manage such emergencies in a safe and effective manner. Parents are urged to utilize the school phone to relay any messages that may be urgent in nature to their child. We will do our best to relay any urgent information to your child.

### ***K-8 Device & Cell Phone Policy***

Students are not allowed to use cellular phones, smart watches and other wearable technology, digital cameras, radios, televisions, handheld gaming devices, or any other electronic devices

while at school. From the time a student enters the building until the end of the school day, the above-mentioned devices are prohibited. Certain exceptions will be made for students needing specific devices for a school related activity or a class, as determined by a school administrator or teacher.

Outlined below is our cell phone policy.

- Upon arrival, all middle school students must turn off cell phones and store in their assigned locker.
- Cell phones may not be used at any point during the day. Families and students that need to get in touch with each other throughout the day must do so via the main office phone.
- The Middle School is not responsible for the loss or damage of any cell phones.

### ***High School Device & Cell Phone Policy***

Outlined below is our cell phone policy and consequences for violating the policy.

Upon arrival at school, all students must:

- Turn cell phone off.
- Place cell phone in their backpack and/or locker.

Staff should not see any phone at any time, exceptions include during student's lunch block. If a staff member sees a phone during the school day, it will be confiscated, given to the dean of students and will be given back to the student at the end of the day. If a student refuses to turn in their cell phone or violates the protocol two times, the student will receive a "return with parent letter" and subsequently have a parent meeting where deans will discuss next steps.

Students are allowed to use personal devices during lunch periods only, unless otherwise specified. Please note that LION is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronics that are not in our possession. As always, we appreciate your support in maintaining LION school culture.

### ***K-12 Chromebook Agreement***

Students and parents/guardians must review and sign the Acceptable Use Policy. A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy may be obtained by your student's homeroom teacher.

Students and parents/guardians are responsible for returning all Chromebooks in the same condition in which they were distributed, less any normal wear and tear. Chromebook use is guided by the following:

- In grades K-3, Chromebooks are stored in the classroom and distributed throughout the day.
- They must be put away properly and connected to the chargers.
- In grades 4-12, Chromebooks will be distributed at the beginning of the school year and must be returned at the end of the year. Chromebooks should be

- returned in their original condition.
- Chromebooks must be closed when carried and always carried with two hands.
- Do not lean or write on top of a Chromebook. The screen could crack.
- Save your work to Google Drive.

### *Student Guidelines for Chromebook/Laptop Use*

#### **EXAMPLES OF GOOD CARE:**

- Provide stability when carrying/moving the laptop (e.g., carry with two hands or other physical support).
- Close the laptop before carrying it.
- Walk slowly and carefully when carrying the laptop.
- Place the laptop securely in the desk and not hanging over the edge of the desk or on a crack between two desks.
- Make sure your hands are clean and dry before using the laptop.
- Return the laptop to the appropriate slot in the carts.
- Notify IT immediately if there is a problem with the laptop.
- Correctly shut down the laptop when finished.
- Follow the Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School Internet Acceptable Use Policy when using the laptop.

#### **EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO AVOID:**

- Touch the screen with your hand or any other objects.
- Lift the laptop by the monitor.
- Use the laptop near liquids.
- Eat or drink while using the laptop.

#### **LION STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO:**

- An email account with the following domain: [@student.LIONcharterschool.org](mailto:@student.LIONcharterschool.org). Please be aware that any activity using a student account, school hardware or school internet can be accessed and monitored by LION staff.
- Google App space to store files. The Google Apps services are all accessible by logging into Google's websites. For example, Gmail is accessed via <https://www.gmail.com>, and the entire email address is used as the username.
- Google Drive, which allows students to save their work and has an unlimited amount of storage. Google Drive can store application files, such as Microsoft Word documents, spreadsheets, or PowerPoint presentations (or Google versions of these Microsoft applications). Students can access files from any computer that is connected to the Internet.
- Teacher Assignments on Google Classroom. Teachers use Google Classroom to store assignments and important documents.
- The class homepage, which allows students to view class announcements, homework assignments, and online resources.

## **Food, School Breakfast, and School Lunch**

### *Food/Drinks*

LION wishes to promote healthy eating habits for our students. As such, students should not come to school with soda, artificial juice drinks, candy, sweets, or junk food. Unopened drinks

should be in clear, plastic bottles. Glass bottles are not allowed.

### ***K-12 School Breakfast/Lunch Program***

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School participates in the National School Lunch program. LION will serve breakfast and lunch. Free breakfast and lunch is available for all students in grades K-12. All families are asked to fill out the Family Income Inquiry Form which is available in the Main Office.

## **Inclement Weather Policy and Emergency Evacuations**

### ***Emergency School Closings***

- If NYC DOE Schools are closed, then LION will have a remote day of instruction. All students are expected to follow guidance from division leadership regarding remote instruction.
- If NYC DOE Schools are open, then LION is open (unless otherwise specified).
- If LION needs to open, close, delay an opening, or close when NYC DOE is not open, we reserve the right to do so. You will receive a call to the number listed on record. LION will also post the information on the school's website <http://www.LIONcharterschool.org/> and on the school's social media account(s), which can be found at:
  - <https://www.facebook.com/LIONCharterNY>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/lioncharterschool/>

### ***Emergency Early Dismissals***

- For early dismissal, LION will reach out to parents/guardians by phone, email, and LION will post a notice on the school's website and social media accounts.
- LION will put all K-6 yellow bus service riders on the yellow bus.
- Walkers and MTA bus riders will be sent home immediately.
- Carpool riders and parents/guardians pick-up students will wait at school until they are picked up.

### ***School Evacuations***

If the building has to be evacuated, our students and staff will move to one or more of the following designated safety locations:

- LION High School at 830 Hunts Point Avenue.
- LION Elementary and Middle School Building at 730 Bryant Avenue.
- P.S. 48 at 1290 Spofford Avenue.

## **Transportation**

Transportation eligibility is determined on the basis of a student's grade level and the distance between the student's residence and school. The NYC DOE Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) determines student eligibility for transportation based on a student's grade and the distance the student lives from school. OPT offers the following services for Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School students:

- General Education Transportation: yellow bus service to and from a designated school bus stop.

- Specialized Transportation: yellow bus service to and from an assigned school.
- Student MetroCards: Full and half fare Metrocards for use on public transportation.

For more information on your child's eligibility for transportation go to <http://www.optnyc.org/> or contact LION's Director of Operations at 718-991-5500. Additional information about yellow bus service and MetroCards follows this section.

### ***Stop-to-School Yellow Bus Service***

Yellow bus service is provided from designated stops at designated times to and from public schools receiving this service. In order for a student to receive yellow bus service, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The student must be eligible for full fare transportation.
- The student must be in grades K-6.
- The student's residence must be in the Bronx.

If all of the above criteria are met, LION families may request yellow bus service. Eligible students will be assigned to a bus stop by the school. Students must use the same stop both in the morning and afternoon. If the criteria are not met according to Automate the Schools (ATS), parents/guardians of students in grades K-6 may contact LION's bus coordinator to determine whether they live within walking distance to a pre-existing stop.

### ***Specialized Transportation***

Students who receive special education services may receive other transportation services. The DOE provides specialized transportation to students whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) recommend this service or to other students with disabilities who cannot take public transportation. For more information about specialized transportation visit: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/supports-and-services/specialized-transportation>.

### ***McKinney-Vento Homeless Travel Assistance***

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Chancellor's Regulation A-780 ensure that students residing in temporary living situations have access to the same public education and services that are available to permanently housed students. Students who are defined as homeless by the McKinney-Vento Act are entitled to transportation to and from school, if necessary. If available, buses will be provided to students in grades K-6; if not available, they are eligible for a student MetroCard. For students in grades Pre-K to 6, who are eligible for transportation and receive a student MetroCard, their parents/guardians are eligible for public transportation assistance (a MetroCard) to accompany the child. Students in grades 7-12 are eligible for a student MetroCard. If you have additional questions about McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance, please contact your Division's Family and School Partnership Coordinator or LION's Director of Students and Family Support.

All students are subject to LION's Code of Conduct while riding the bus. Consequences for misconduct could result in suspension – both short and long-term – from the bus. (Please see Section IX of this Handbook, Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct and Responsibility, for the Code of Conduct).

### ***Full-fare transportation—MetroCard***

Students eligible for full-fare transportation may be issued a full-fare MetroCard by asking their school transportation coordinator. A full-fare MetroCard allows an eligible student to travel to and from school and school-related activities by bus and subway. There is no charge to the student.

## **Lockers**

### ***Middle School***

In grades 4-8, students are responsible for remembering their locker combination. Combinations should not be shared with other students and the lockers are not to be shared either. Lockers should be locked at all times. LION holds announced and unannounced locker checks and clean-ups. Students can access their lockers during homeroom, before lunch, after lunch and after school. Lockers are a privilege and may be taken away at any time if they are not used appropriately or are getting in the way of instructional time. Lockers are assigned by students' homeroom teachers. Prior to being assigned a locker, the homeroom teacher will review locker expectations.

Any locks placed on unassigned lockers will be removed with or without the consent of the owner. Students are required to use school issued locks. Lost locks will only be replaced upon receipt of a \$10.00 replacement fee.

### ***High School***

Students will be assigned a lock with the locker. All other locks are prohibited and will be removed. Students should not remove their names from the fronts of their lockers; nor should they trade lockers with other students. Students must only use their own lockers - no sharing of lockers. Students caught sharing a locker will be in violation of school safety policies and may have their locker privileges revoked. Students will be responsible for a replacement fee for lost locks.

Lockers are the property of LION and are subject to random and/or regular searches. Students tampering with or misusing lockers are in violation of school policies. Students should not decorate lockers with anything permanent (e.g. stickers). If a student is found to be in violation of this policy, they risk loss of locker privileges. Students in violation of locker use, including using lockers at the wrong times, will face consequences and are subject to losing locker privileges. The Director of School Culture and Deans of Students will keep a copy of the locker list for their records. All outerwear and "non-dress code items" should be kept in lockers.

## **Textbooks**

Students and parents/guardians are responsible for returning all textbooks and other learning materials distributed to a student during the course of the year in the same condition in which they were distributed, less any normal wear and tear.

## **Health Requirements and Services**

***Physical Examination Requirements*** New York law requires that students attending public schools must receive the following before the beginning of the school year:

1. Physical examination
2. Required Immunizations
3. Interscholastic Sports Examination (if competing in a sports program)

Generally, a child will be enrolled if a physical examination is conducted before the first day of school. Parents/guardians must have a licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner complete, sign, and date the Child and Adolescent Health Examination Form to show that the examinations were completed within the specified time. Incoming students will receive this form in their enrollment packet. During the summer, this form is mailed to all returning students. Parents/guardians can also download this form here: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/health-services>

Additional information is provided below on how to enroll for services at the Urban Health Plan Office located on the 2nd Floor of 730 Bryant Avenue. High School students participating in any sport must also have their licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner fill out an Interscholastic Sports Examination form. The Interscholastic Sports Examination form is mailed home during the summer. Students can also get a copy of this form from the High School main office.

### ***Immunization***

All immunizations must be up to date before school begins. Any student without proper immunizations may not be allowed to attend school until s/he has received all required immunizations.

### ***Administration of Medication***

If your child requires medication while in school, the parent/guardian will need to fill out a Medical Administration Form (MAF), and this form will need to be completed and signed by a licensed physician. More information about 504s is located on the pages that follow this section. **LION requests that whenever possible, medications be administered by the parent/guardian during non-school hours. Students may not have prescriptions or other medications in their book bags with the exception of an asthma inhaler, an epinephrine auto-injector, or insulin/glucagon/diabetes supplies which do require completion of a Medical Administration Form.**

### ***Authorization for Medical Procedures***

If your student needs to receive any medical procedure (e.g., nebulizer treatment), please inform the Main Office of the respective division and provide a copy of the Medical Administration Form. We will work out a medical administration schedule with the Urban Health Plan Office prior to the beginning of the school year. **The Parent/Guardian Consent Form/Physician's Medical Procedure Order must be filled out in order for medication(s) to be administered. These forms are available at the Urban Health Clinic located on the 2nd floor at 730 Bryant Avenue and in the high school nurse's office.**

### ***Health Services***

In the event that a K-8 student becomes ill or is in need of first aid, they will be sent or escorted to the school nurse in the Urban Health Plan medical office located on the 2nd Floor at 730

Bryant Avenue. In the event that a 9-12 student becomes ill or is in need of first aid, they will be escorted to the school Nurse and the parent/guardian will be contacted.

In all non-emergency situations, a K-8 student will be sent or escorted to the Urban Health Plan Medical Office after communicating the situation to a LION staff member to be excused from the scheduled class or activity. If the student is too ill to continue with the normal day, a parent/guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for the student to go home. In all other cases, the student will be expected to return to class directly after being seen by the nurse.

Parents/Guardians must complete and submit the Urban Health Parent/ Guardian Consent Form and the Medical History Forms for their child to be treated by the school nurse or a doctor. If a child is not signed up, they are not eligible for services. We encourage all K-8 families to complete the Urban Health Plan Parent/Guardian Consent Form and the Medical History Forms for their child. K-8 students who are new to LION will receive the Urban Health Plan Parent/Guardian Consent Form and the Medical History Form in their enrollment packet, students who are returning to LION that need a copy of this form can pick one up from the Urban Health office located on the 2nd floor at 730 Bryant Avenue.

### ***Section 504 Accommodation Plans (504s)***

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects students with disabilities against discrimination by requiring public schools to provide eligible students reasonable and appropriate accommodations, so they may participate fully in school. LION works collaboratively with parents/guardians to make certain that all students with special needs are provided services to ensure their full participation in the educational setting. Students may be eligible for health/medical accommodations, educational accommodations, or both. See below:

- Health/medical accommodations refer to the administration of medication (e.g. insulin) and/or specialized medical supports (e.g. nebulizer).
- Educational accommodations are for students who need building, classroom or testing accommodations. For example, students with trouble hearing may need to be seated close to the blackboard. Other students may need breaks, or extra time to take tests.

There are three types of health services and accommodations forms.

1. **Medication Administration Forms (MAFs)** – This form is completed by your child’s medical provider to receive medicine or treatment at school. There are four separate MAFs: asthma; allergies; diabetes; and other health conditions.
  - a. Forms are available in multiple languages here:  
<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/health-services>
  - b. Please submit completed forms to the main office.
2. **Medically Prescribed Treatment (Non-Medication) Form** – This form is completed by your child’s medical provider to request special procedures such as tube feeding catheterization, suctioning, etc. to be performed at school. This form may be used for all skilled nursing treatments.
  - a. This form is available in multiple languages here:  
<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/health-services>

- b. Please submit completed forms to the school nurse.
3. **Request for Section 504 Accommodation(s)** – Complete this form to request special services such as a barrier free building, elevator use, testing accommodation, etc. Do NOT use this form for related services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, counseling, etc. Related services should be provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). There are two separate forms that must be completed: one for parents, and one for your child’s medical provider.
  - a. The forms are available in multiple languages here:  
<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/504-accommodations>
  - b. Please submit completed forms to your school’s 504 Coordinator

Parents/Guardians must submit the appropriate form to request in-school direct health services and/or accommodations. Parents/Guardians may get these authorization forms at the main office of each LION Division or from the New York City Department of Education Website:

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/504-accommodations>

All incoming students, whose parent/guardian have identified their child as being in need of accommodations will receive a copy of the 504 form to complete. All returning students to LION who had a previous 504 accommodation receive a copy of the necessary forms to complete via mail. Parents/Guardians are responsible for completing the form(s) and returning to LION. Please note that some forms may require a health care provider to complete. Completed forms must be returned to LION by the first day of school.

If you believe your child is in need of a 504 accommodation, please contact the School Counselor in the Division that your student is in. The School Counselor will assist you with gathering the necessary information and accessing the “Request Section 504 Accommodations” form and advise you to speak to a doctor (if applicable) regarding your concerns. Once the form is completed by a physician, all information will be compiled and a 504 meeting will be scheduled.

In accordance with the 504 regulations, all pertinent information will be reviewed during the 504 meeting. The decision to provide accommodations is made by a group of individuals who are knowledgeable about the student’s abilities, the meaning of the data and information being reviewed, and the type(s) of accommodation(s) that may meet the student’s needs. This group of individuals is referred to as the 504 Team. LION’s school-based 504 Team invites the student’s parents/guardians to participate in the 504 meeting. LION’s school based 504 Team includes individuals who can: speak to the student’s abilities and skills (e.g. the student’s teacher or guidance counselor); interpret reports or evaluations (e.g. the social worker or school psychologist); and share information about the accommodations available to meet the student’s needs (e.g. the Section 504 Coordinator or Director of Special Education).

The 504 process is overseen by School Counselors who serve as LION’s 504 Coordinator. If a student is found to be in need of the 504, then a formal written 504 Plan will be implemented. Parents/Guardians will receive a copy of the 504 Plan and have an opportunity to review the

recommended accommodations. All teachers that work with the student(s) will be given a copy of the Plan. The information will then be entered into LION's Student Information System, PowerSchool. A yearly meeting will be conducted to review each student's 504 Plan.

### ***Medical Condition or Concern***

It is imperative that the school staff is aware of any medical condition or concern for each student. If it is a sensitive matter, please share it with the Division Director so that we will be prepared to respond to any situation that arises.

### ***Food Allergies and Diabetes***

LION would like to raise every parent/guardian's level of awareness with regard to children with food allergies and/or diabetes. For these students, food can represent a danger and must be carefully monitored. The welfare and safety of all of our students is our top priority. It is the family's responsibility to notify the school of a child's allergies. The family and school team will then work together to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school day. When all parents and school personnel work collaboratively, they can ease the burden of food allergies for a school-age child.

### ***Recess***

Children in grades K-8, weather permitting, will be outdoors for recess every day. Children benefit from vigorous exercise and should be given the opportunity to play outside whenever possible. As the temperature drops during the winter months, please remember that all students can, and generally will, enjoy recess outdoors. During cold weather months LION will take into account if there is snow or ice on the playground, and/or the wind-chill factor. During winter time recess, students are expected to wear their winter jacket, a hat and a pair of gloves. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to alert LION of any specific issues their child has related to weather. If your child has a medical issue that does not allow them to participate in outdoor activities under certain conditions, documentation from the child's physician, a formal Request for Section 504 Accommodations or a Medical Accommodation Request Form may be necessary.

## II. DRESS CODE POLICY

At LION Charter School, we recognize that a clear and consistent school dress code can enhance school culture. All students are expected to adhere to our school's academic and physical education dress code throughout the school year. Students are also expected to be in dress code prior to entering the school building. Dress code items that do not bear the school's logo may be purchased at the store of our family's choosing. Dress code items bearing the school's logo may be purchased from SquadLocker.

We work in partnership with our students and families. If you are having an issue with meeting the dress code policy, please let us know. Call your division's main office and ask to speak to the Family and School Partnership Coordinator.

### Academic Dress Code

#### Shirts

Students may wear:

- A plain white, gray, or navy blue button-down shirt with a collar (long or short sleeves)
- A plain white, gray, or navy blue polo shirt with or without the school logo; logos other than our school's may not be worn
- A plain white, gray, or navy blue turtleneck

#### Bottoms

Students may wear:

- Navy blue, gray, or black colored bottoms.
- Pants, skirts, jumpers, skorts or shorts (tailored to the knee, or no more than two inches above the knee) are all acceptable.
- Jeans, leggings, and sweatpants are not permitted as part of the academic dress code.

#### Sweaters/Jackets/Blazers

Students may wear solid navy blue or gray button up or V-neck sweaters, jackets, or blazers with or without the school logo. Logo's other than our school's logo are not permitted.

#### Sweatshirts/Hoodies

LION logo hoodies and pullovers may be worn at any time.

#### Footwear

Students may wear black, brown or navy blue shoes or boots.

#### Sneakers

Sneakers must be athletic shoes - no flashing lights or wheels.

## Athletic (Gym) Uniform

On gym days, students in grades K-8 must wear their gym uniform and sneakers to school in order to safely and fully participate in all physical education activities.

High School students change into athletic dress code in restrooms before their physical education (PE) or Performing Arts (PA) classes and change back into dress code after PE or PA. Students may come to school in athletic dress code only if their first period class is PE or PA.

Students may wear:

- **Shirt:** navy blue t-shirt with school logo
- **Bottom:** navy blue shorts or sweatpants
- **Sweatshirt/Hoodie:** navy blue with a school logo (optional but recommended for winter)
- **Sneakers:** must be athletic shoe - no flashing lights or wheels

## Dress Down and/or Theme Days

Throughout the year there will be dress down and/or themed days scheduled by each division. Communications will be sent to students and families to indicate when these days are happening.

On dress down days students are not permitted to wear:

- Jeans that are ripped above the knee
- Shorts that are more than two inches above the knee
- Slides (slippers)
- Hair nets
- Du-Rags
- Biker shorts

Any clothing or accessory with offensive, violent, sexual, or derogatory words, pictures, diagrams, drawings, or containing language that demeans a person's ethnic background, color, race, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, or disability are prohibited.

## III. ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential to a student's ability to learn and to flourish at LION Charter School. Many of the academic classes are sequential in the introduction of skills and require students to learn and master these skills if they wish to be successful later in the class. Frequent and/or prolonged absences on the part of a student seriously hinder their ability to learn these skills, along with their ability to be successful, both academically and personally. In addition, students who are late disrupt the classes they enter, which impedes the learning of other students. Each student is responsible for their attendance, in terms of coming to school and arriving on time. Parent/guardian involvement is required to assist the student in meeting this obligation.

### *Reporting Absences*

Parents/guardians need to report all absences to the main office of the student's Division as soon as the need for absence is known. Additional information will be required for the absence to be excused (see below). If we do not receive notification of the absence in advance, we will call the parent/guardian to ascertain the reason for the absence.

### *Excused Absences*

All absences will be reported as unexcused absences unless the school receives the following documentation:

- Doctor's note specifying the excused days (a parent/guardian note indicating that the child was sick is helpful, but will not count towards an excused absence).
- Religious holidays.
- Parent/guardian note indicating there is a family funeral.
- Parent/guardian note indicating there is a family emergency – emergencies include house fires, house floods, or incidents of violence in the home. An emergency is defined by the presence of an emergency response team (fire, ambulance, police, CPS, etc.). Children are expected to be at school as soon as possible after the situation is resolved.
- Court documents mandating a court appearance – the child will be excused only for the day(s) indicated on the court documents.
- High School and College Visits – All High School and college visits must be pre-approved by the school or college counselor at least 24 hours in advance. Please notify the guidance or college office as soon as you have scheduled a visit or are scheduling a visit to a school. Students need to be at school for any part of the day that they are not on their High School or college visit.

### *Unexcused and Long-term Absences*

If your child has an unexcused absence, please contact their Divisional main office immediately and make arrangements with your child's classroom teacher(s) for assignment completion. Depending upon the nature of the illness or emergency, students will be responsible for keeping up with their class work. LION will take the following actions to address unexcused absences:

- After 3 consecutive unexcused absences, LION will follow up with family.
- After 5 consecutive unexcused absences, a home visit may take place on the 6<sup>th</sup>

day and the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) may be notified regardless of reason for an unexcused absence.

- ACS may also be notified when:
  - a suspended student does not return after a period of suspension.
  - a student with special education services does not report to a new placement or a student cannot attend school due to lack of required immunizations.
  - it is necessary to conduct an investigation to confirm a student's residence.
  - a student shows signs of being chronically truant.
  - requested by the Executive Director/ Division Directors if they believe a child to be in danger due to neglect.

### ***Accountability for Unexcused Absences***

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School will call home every day a student is absent.

- After **6** unexcused absences, LION will call the family and a letter will be sent to the family reminding them of the attendance procedure.
- After **12** unexcused absences, the family will be called in for a meeting with school leadership.
- After **18** unexcused absences, the family may meet with the school administration.
- Students are expected to not exceed 18 unexcused absences in any given school year. Students who have **18** or more unexcused absences may be in danger of being retained in their current grade for another year.

### ***Absences around Holidays***

Scheduled holidays and long weekends form natural breaks in the flow of the school year. The days before and after holidays and long weekends include some of the most crucial educational experiences of the year. Projects, important culminating activities, and tests are often scheduled immediately before these vacations begin, and new work is often introduced the first day back. For these reasons, attendance before and after holidays is crucial. Therefore, parents /guardians are asked not to take their children out of school on these days.

### ***Tardiness, Early Dismissals, and Appointments***

Parents/guardians are expected to notify the main office if their child will be tardy or absent by 7:45 am on the day of the absence or arriving late to school.

If your child has an appointment that requires them to leave early, the parent/guardian must notify the Main Office in advance and in writing. All notes must be signed, dated, and include a contact telephone number. Please note that any adult picking up a student early from school must come to the Main Office with the date and time for the early dismissal. It is very important that parents/guardians follow this early dismissal procedure. This will ensure the safety and well-being of every student. Please note that any adult picking up a student early from school must come to the appropriate Divisional office. They will have to show valid, current, state-issued, picture identification and must be listed as one of the contacts on the student's emergency information card before the student will be released to their care.

### ***Arrival to School***

Students are expected to arrive at school between 7:45-8:00 am. Doors to the high school building open at 7:30am. Students who plan on eating breakfast should arrive at 7:45 am. Students **MUST** be in the homeroom and ready to begin instruction by 8:00 a.m.

### ***Elementary School Arrival and Lateness***

Students arriving after 8:20 a.m. in the Elementary School must enter the building through the main entrance and be accompanied by a guardian or family member to sign-in the student with an Elementary School staff member.

### ***Middle School Arrival and Lateness***

**Middle School students must arrive at school by 7:55 am.** Students who arrive late are required to get a late pass from the administrator on duty at the point of entry or the main office.

### ***High School Arrival and Lateness***

**High School students must arrive at school by 7:55 am.** Students who arrive late are required to get a pass from the main office. Students who arrive after 8:05 am. must call home upon arrival. Late students miss valuable class time and do not receive their laptops during homeroom (they receive them later in the morning), further affecting their learning opportunity.

### ***Dismissal***

Students are dismissed at:

- ES: Monday-Thursday 3:00 pm, Friday 12:30 pm
- MS: Monday-Thursday 3:10 pm, Friday 12:30 pm
- HS: Monday -Tuesday 2:32 pm/ Wednesday-Thursday 2:53 pm/ Friday- 12:30 pm

### ***Bussing:***

Yellow school buses will depart the school building at 3:10pm. Students are dismissed by **12:30pm on Friday** for staff professional development. Elementary school students will be dismissed in the yard from 12:20-12:40 pm on Fridays. Middle school students are dismissed at 12:30 pm. Yellow school buses will depart the school building at 12:35 pm. Lunch is provided on early dismissal days. This is the best day for parents/guardians to schedule afternoon doctor and dentist appointments for their child.

Parents/guardians must observe LION's school release times. If parents/guardians are unable to pick up their child on time, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make arrangements for the child to be picked up **ON TIME**. Changes in dismissal processes for any child must be communicated to the Main Office of the appropriate Division prior to 2:00 pm.

## IV. ACADEMICS

### Goals, Motivation, and Standards

The Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School academic program is designed to challenge, engage, develop, and support lifelong learners. In each classroom, students will be challenged by teachers and peers to go after their best to achieve their highest potential. Teachers will facilitate learning through a curriculum that is geared to helping students become more curious about their academics.

Teachers will assist students in:

- Developing the knowledge, skills, and habits they need to make sense of the world around them, solving problems and expressing themselves clearly.
- Developing the character traits represented in the LION Pillars and the positive attitudes and habits that accompany those traits.
- Developing the habits that are essential in preparing for successful post-secondary study.

The LION classroom is a very important arena for character development in which students are asked to consider who they are as learners, what their strengths and challenges are, what attitudes get in the way of their success, and how they will address both these issues. While they learn about academic content, students also learn about themselves. They learn to be persistent, independent, and resourceful problem solvers.

LION employs a rigorous, post-secondary success program with high expectations for student performance and work habits. Students receive homework every day. With LION's high standard of excellence, students must complete homework as assigned, and on a consistent basis.

### Grading at LION Charter School

#### *Elementary School*

Students in grades K-3 are graded based on progress towards grade level standards in each subject area. Character grades are aligned to expectations associated with our LION Pillars and our school-wide agreements. Those grades are reported to parents/guardians every quarter.

#### *Middle School*

Students in grades 4-8 receive two grades quarterly: An achievement grade and an effort grade. The achievement grade will make up 80% of the final grade and the effort grade will make up 20% of the final grade. Just as the achievement grade for each quarter includes grades from data distributed throughout the quarter, effort grades include the same.

#### *High School*

In high school, grades are based on performance in rigorous courses with standards-based curricula. Final semester grades are reported at the end of each semester and determine whether students are awarded credit. Effort grades are aligned to character standards delineated in the High School Effort Rubric.

## Achievement Grade

### *Elementary School Grading Scale*

4 = Exceeds Standards

3 = Meets Standards

2 = Approaching Standards

1 = Not Meeting Standards

### *Middle and High School Grading Scale*

A: 90-100 = Exemplary performance

B: 80-89 = Proficient performance

C: 70-79 = Competent performance

D: 65-69 = Very little performance

F: Below 65 = Unsatisfactory performance

### *GPA Equivalent*

A+ (97-100) = 4.0 C+ (77-79) = 2.3

A (93-96) = 4.0 C (73-76) = 2.0

A- (90-92) = 3.7 C- (70-72) = 1.7

B+ (87-89) = 3.3 D+ (67-69) = 1.3

B (83-86) = 3.0 D (65-66) = 1.0

B- (80-82) = 2.7 F (below 65) = 0.0

## Middle and High School Self Assessment Grade

As stated above, the self assessment grade scale is used as a means to promote character development at LION. Self assessment grade meetings usually take place once a quarter in Middle and High School. Students are required to participate in the self assessment grade effort and attitude evaluations of their classmates and themselves. The meetings offer an opportunity for students to both reflect on and receive feedback about ways they could improve their individual attitudes to help them reach their true potential in the classroom.

LION values both effort and achievement by awarding grades for each of these qualities at the end of a grading period. An achievement grade is a conventional average of each student's graded assignments. It reflects the student's academic achievement based on the quality and quantity of the work completed during the grading period. The effort grade is a reflection of our emphasis on attitude, effort, and work habits. The self assessment grade rubric indicates what grades are associated with certain levels of effort and attitude. For example, a student who is naturally good at math but does not come to class on time and fails to complete homework assignments might earn an 80% average based on their high test grades. This student might get an 80% achievement grade in math, but only a 65% effort grade. Conversely, a student who struggles with math but works hard, asks questions, and takes the initiative to seek help, may earn a 75% achievement grade and a 90% effort grade.

## High School Grades

SEMESTER GRADES		
Overall Quarter 1 (or Quarter 3)	Overall Quarter 2 (or Quarter 4)	Comprehensive Exam (Final or Midterm)
45%	45%	10%

A comprehensive overview of high school grading policies can be found in the High School Grading Policy.

## Report Cards and Progress Reports

### *Report Cards*

Report cards are issued four times a year. The school year is divided into four grading periods after which all students receive a report card with teacher comments. Students will usually receive a report card in November, February, April, and June. Elementary School report cards are sent home with the students in their Bring Everything Everyday (B.E.E.) folders. Middle and High School report cards are distributed at family events or mailed home to parents/guardians.

### *Progress Reports and Report Cards*

Families will receive a progress report at Family-Teacher Conferences held midway through each quarter. The progress report serves as an update on the progress that a student has made halfway through each quarter in both academics and character development.

## Academic Integrity Policy

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School expects each student to exhibit **personal and academic integrity** at all times. Each student, therefore, must respect and preserve their own work and the work of their peers. This applies not only to written examinations but to the authenticity of assessments outside a formal testing environment (e.g. essays, compositions, projects, presentations, homework assignments, etc.).

Each student is responsible for producing **authentic** work that demonstrates originality and one's pride in the final product. An authentic piece of work is one that is based on the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore all assignments, written or oral, completed by a student for assessment must wholly and authentically use that student's own language and expression. Where sources are used or

referred to, whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase, such sources must be fully and appropriately acknowledged.

Violations of academic integrity typically involve one of three areas: **cheating**, **plagiarism**, and **collusion**. **Cheating** is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. The following are some examples of cheating, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work.
- Using notes during an examination (unless permitted by the instructor).
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper/project/assignment in more than one course without consulting with each instructor.
- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including use of commercial term paper services or the internet to purchase/download/copy work to present as one's own.
- Fabricating data (all or in part).
- Submitting someone else's work as your own *without* their knowledge.
- Unauthorized use during an examination of any electronic devices such as cell phones, computers or other technologies to retrieve or send information.

**Plagiarism** is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. Paraphrasing does not simply mean to copy a passage, substitute a few words, and then regard this as the student's own authentic work. When using the words or original ideas of another person, the student must use quotation marks, indentation, or some other accepted means of indicating that the wording is not their own. Furthermore, the source of the quotation (or paraphrased text) must be clearly identified along with the quotation and not reside in the bibliography/works cited alone. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes/citations attributing the words to their source.
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
- Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
- Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- **Internet plagiarism** includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, and "cutting & pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

**Collusion** is defined as supporting the academic dishonesty of another student, such as allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another. The following are some examples of collusion, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Unauthorized collaboration on a take home assignment or examination.
- Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty.
- Submitting someone else's work as your own *with* their knowledge and/or

- assistance.
- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work.
- Offering or receiving compensation to complete work for someone else.

### **Consequences**

At a minimum, a student who violates the above policy will receive two “0’s” for the assignment. The student who hasn’t been honest about their own work must completely redo the assignment in order to replace one of the two “0’s” but the initial “0” stands and is averaged with the redone assignment for the final grade.

In the case of essays, compositions, take-home exams, projects, presentations, and other homework assignments, the student **from whom** the other student “borrowed” will retain their original grade but will have that grade averaged with a “0” for their final grade for that assignment. In other words, both parties involved in the act of collusion are considered dishonest, even if it is revealed that one student completed/submitted the assignment before the other. Each student must protect their own work so that the acceptable act of collaboration does not turn into the unacceptable act of collusion.

- Cheating of any kind on a test or quiz will result in a “0” for that exam. No make-up exam will be granted and the “0” is factored into the class average.
- Any high school student who is dishonest about their work or who participates in collusion may jeopardize their chance of receiving a letter of recommendation from the teacher of the course in which it happened.
- 1st offense
  - Students must attend Office Hours of the teacher in which the violation occurred to discuss why the violation happened and how to prevent it from happening in the future.
  - Teacher will contact the families and inform them of the violation.
  - Teacher submits a log entry in PowerSchool and report infraction to the Director of Teaching and Learning
- 2nd offense
  - Student must meet with the Director of Teaching and Learning to discuss the violation and ways to prevent it from happening again.
  - Student and the Director of Teaching and Learning will contact families together to address the violation.
- 3rd+ offense
  - Student must meet with the Director of Teaching and Learning, who will create an accountability based on the repeated violations.
  - Student and the Director of Teaching and Learning will contact families together to address the violation.

*This policy is adapted from the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and the City University of New York (CUNY) policies on Academic Honesty & Integrity.*

## **Elementary School Retention and Promotion**

Students in the Elementary School must demonstrate grade-level proficiency, as measured by

student work and assessments, to be advanced to the next grade level. Failure to meet standards during the school year may result in possible retention.

Throughout the school year, discussions take place among grade-level teachers and members of the Student Support Team to determine the best interventions for students that are struggling to meet grade level standards. Early in the second semester, a Mid-Year Growth communication will be sent to families indicating if a student is not meeting academic and/or attendance expectations for that point in the school year. By the middle of the 3rd quarter, a communication is sent to families indicating the possibility of Promotion in Doubt for their child. A final determination about placement for the next grade level is made by the Student Support Team at the end of June. Multiple measures of data are reviewed for each student including but not limited to assessment of student work and progress towards the standards in ELA and Math, teacher observation and attendance records.

A great deal of thought and care is put into the placement process for a new school year. Grade-level teachers, special teachers, intervention teachers and administrators all collaborate in the placement process. Our objective in determining class lists is to best meet each child's needs, with the overall goal of creating balanced classes. If a parent has a significant issue regarding class placement for the following year, they may ask to make an appointment with the Division Director to discuss their concerns prior to the beginning of May.

## Middle School Retention and Promotion

Students in Middle School must pass all of their full year courses to move on to the next grade. This ensures that they have mastered material required to prepare for high school as well as the standards established as critical by the State of New York.

A comprehensive student assessment system, aligned with established State and City performance standards, will be used on an ongoing basis to measure student progress toward meeting standards. Factors informing promotion and retention include: standardized tests, performance-based assessments, ongoing assessment of student work, teacher observation and professional judgment, and attendance records.

Students are expected to work towards accomplishing the learning goals set for them and will, as necessary, bring their work up to the standard through their own efforts on the basis of informed feedback and support from their teachers, and by the use of available resources. Students will engage in class work, homework, and all learning activities required to meet academically rigorous and challenging content and performance standards.

In grades 4-7, a student may be retained if one of more of the following criteria applies:

- Failing one or more classes for the year (average below 65)
- Accumulating 18 or more absences
- Reading two or more levels below grade level (as determined by the NWEA MAP assessment).

In grade 8, a student may be retained if meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Failing one or more classes for the year (average below 65)

- Accumulating 18 or more absences
- Reading two or more levels below grade level (as determined by NWEA MAP assessment); and/or
- Failing to successfully complete the Algebra I and Living Environment Regents examination at the conclusion of their 8th grade year.

### **Promotion for Students with Disabilities whose IEPs Specify a Modified Promotion Standard**

When the IEP Team has specified a modified standard on the IEP for the students described herein, the modified standard will be applied, and the procedural components of this regulation will be applicable.

## **High School Retention, Promotion and Graduation**

In our mission as a college-preparatory school, Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School expects its students to exceed minimum state promotion and high school graduation requirements, which are listed below:

- One credit is earned per semester for each completed full-time course that receives a passing grade of 65 or higher.
- 44 Credits are needed for a New York State diploma.
- A specific number of credits is needed in each subject area.
- Passing 5 core Regents exams (65 or higher) is required for a diploma. For additional information see the Graduation Requirements List.
- Minimum Promotion Criteria:
  - 10<sup>th</sup> Grade = 8 Credits
  - 11<sup>th</sup> Grade = 20 Credits (4 in English, 4 in Social Studies)
  - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade = 30 Credits

At the end of the first semester, students who are in danger of not meeting the promotional criteria outlined above will meet with a member of the High School Leadership Team. Parents/guardians are expected to attend meetings that are scheduled to discuss academic progress. During the meeting the student, parent/guardian and High School Leadership Team member will outline the student's current diploma progress and develop plans for improved academic success. Members of the High School Leadership Team remain in regular communication with students and families throughout the spring semester in order to carefully track academic progress. At a minimum, parents/guardians and students are expected to meet to review progress twice during semester two, once following issuance of progress reports and again at the end of the semester. Promotion is finalized at the end of August upon review of additional credits, if any, earned during summer school.

## **Summer Programs**

### ***Elementary School Summer Program***

LION Elementary School offers opportunities for students to build on foundational skills in literacy and mathematics through engaging and authentic activities that promote fluency and growth towards grade level standards.

### ***Middle School Summer Programs***

Middle School students attend summer school at other local public schools. LION facilitates the registration and enrollment process by working closely with families, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships, and the public school's students will attend during the summer. Summer school mandates are based on core-subject failures.

LION Middle School may require academic summer school for students who have failed to meet the grade level requirements for promotion in specific courses. A student may be recommended for summer school if they:

- Earn an average of less than 75% in any subject.
- Have more than 18 absences.
- Are below grade level in reading or math.
- Have been recommended by their Division Director.

Students may take review courses, which focus on critical skills and concepts that students must master in order to be successful. These courses are not designed to be credit courses and do not replace the regular school year courses. Instead, they include a narrower, more focused curriculum that targets individual student skill needs, and emphasizes student attitudes, work habits, study skills, and organization.

### ***High School Summer Program***

Rising sophomores and juniors attend summer school at other local public schools. LION facilitates the registration and enrollment process by working closely with families, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships and the public school's students will attend during the summer. Summer school mandates are based on core-subject failures.

Rising and retained seniors complete online credit recovery and/or full classes at LION High School with the support of High School teachers.

### ***Summer Bridge***

A Summer Bridge Program for rising freshmen. This program focuses on journalism and building reading skills through guided practice and independent reading. This program also provides Common Core Algebra and Living Environment review in preparation for the August Regents exams.

### ***Summer Regents Program***

This is a program to prepare high school students who previously failed the Regents exam to retake the exam in August. Regents prep classes are aligned to New York State Regents curricula.

### ***SAT Prep Program***

SAT Prep programming that connects students with community partners to prepare students to take the SAT. SAT prep classes utilize College Board resources.

### ***Senior College Process Retreat***

Senior College Process Retreat that ensures all seniors have a basic understanding of what they will experience throughout the fall semester as part of their college admission process.

### ***Athletics Camp for High School students***

Our Athletic Director and coaches design and coordinate this camp, which includes open gym hours and weight room access for all new and returning LION High School students in order to promote a healthy lifestyle.

### ***Summer School***

- Rising sophomore and junior students who fail core subjects are required to attend summer school at NYCDOE summer school programs. LION does not operate these programs, but coordinates with students, families, and the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships to facilitate enrollment and registration.
- Seniors that have not met graduation requirements have multiple supports to earn the credits needed to receive a diploma by the end of the summer or, if retained, the end of the next school year. These include online credit recovery programs and in-person classes with low student-to-teacher ratios.

## **After School Programs**

After School Programming varies year-to-year and may include, but is not limited to, the following: Students in grades K-3 may participate in the New York Junior Tennis and Learning or Graham Windham programs. These programs require an application and enrollment, and are filled based on a first come, first served basis. Applications and registration forms are generally available in July, prior to the beginning of the school year.

LION Middle School has partnered with New York Junior Tennis and Learning to provide a more comprehensive after school program. Families can enroll their students at the beginning of each school year and throughout the year as space allows.

In grades 9-12, Period 9 Office Hours take place on Monday and Tuesday from 2:32-3:30 pm and on Wednesday and Thursday from 2:53-3:30 pm.

# V. CO-CURRICULARS

## Athletics

Sports reinforce and teach many of the core principles that Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School hopes to instill in our student body. Sports encourage students to go after their “personal best,” and are an excellent opportunity to develop and test strength of character. We understand and expect that sports may be difficult and challenging, but hope to build a winning attitude that will result in success both on the athletic field and in life.

“Attitude and Effort” include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attendance at practice and games
- Participation
- Work rate and effort
- Commitment to personal and team best
- Behavior
- Sportsmanship: respect for coaches, teammates and opposition

### *Middle School*

LION offers the following seasonal sports for Middle School students in partnership with New York Junior Tennis and Learning:

- Girls Basketball
- Boys Basketball
- Girls Soccer
- Boys Soccer
- Boys Baseball
- Cheerleading
- Lacrosse

### *High School*

Athletics is an amazing opportunity for students to learn outside of the classroom and develop character skills while striving for a collective team goal. It is our goal that prior to graduation, each student successfully participate in two seasons of competitive athletics in the following sports:

- Women’s Varsity Soccer
- Men’s Varsity Soccer
- Men’s Flag Football
- Women’s Flag Football
- Women’s Varsity Basketball
- Men’s Varsity Basketball
- Varsity Baseball
- Varsity Softball
- Junior Varsity Softball
- Women’s Volleyball
- Track & Field
- Cheerleading

All students must read and abide by the *STUDENT ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY RULES AND*

REGULATIONS provided to them by their coach at the beginning of the season. High School student athletes are encouraged to apply to the National Collegiate and Athletic Association (N.C.A.A.) eligibility center if they are interested in competing in Division 1 or 2 intercollegiate athletics.

### ***Student Athlete Eligibility Rules and Regulations***

Eligibility Rules and Regulations shall apply uniformly to all students at Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School. The High School Division Director and the Athletic Director shall be responsible for the examination of records to determine a student's eligibility in all sports. These records shall be subject to an audit by the sports league the student intends to join.

### ***Suspended Students***

Suspended students are not eligible to participate in any team practice, scrimmage, league or non-league game, meet, contest or try-out during the period of their suspension.

# VI. STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS, SAFETY, AND DISCIPLINE

## Student Bill of Rights

All students have the right to feel safe and respected at [Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School](#), across settings, whether in class, in the hallways, on the bus, on the playground, or when engaged in after school activities. Students attending [Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School](#) have fundamental rights. The following sets forth the [LION Student Bill of Rights](#).

- LION students should not feel like another student, teacher, or staff member is harassing, intimidating, or bullying them.
- LION students should not have to endure threats that would cause them to fear their physical safety in the school building.
- LION students should not be subjected to comments or actions that make them feel uncomfortable about any aspect of their identity, including race, country of origin, the way they speak, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, immigration status, skin color, weight, or how they might learn differently.

### *Remedies for Perceived Violations of the Student Bill of Rights*

At the beginning of each school year, all Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School students receive an orientation on the Student Bill of Rights. The orientation includes instructions on what students may or should do in the event they believe their rights are being violated or they feel they are being maltreated.

In the event any students feel that their rights have been or are being violated, there are various potential remedies available to students. Elementary students are encouraged to speak with any adult they feel comfortable with in order to express their concern. Middle and High School students are encouraged to use conferencing as a problem solving or response mechanism. Conferencing provides the opportunity for students to work out a conflict before a situation escalates. Conferences are monitored by a Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School staff member or trained student leader. All students are also encouraged to talk to their parents/guardians about the situation so that school staff can work with the student and parents/guardians to make the student feel safe in school.

Sometimes students need the help of an adult when it is too hard to work something out on their own. Therefore, students should talk to or write to any staff member with whom they feel comfortable. All concerns and claims will be taken seriously and shared with a member of the administrative staff. To the extent necessary, an investigation may be initiated and/or disciplinary measures will be invoked as appropriate to address incidents that are found to be in violation of the Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School Student Bill of Rights.

## Student Safety and Discipline

All LION students are valuable, contributing members of the school community. To maintain an

inclusive, safe learning environment, LION students are expected to respect others, seek to understand, and reflect on their experiences and feedback. Each member of the community bears some responsibility to maintain the school's culture of personal excellence and growth. To this end, LION has safety and disciplinary structures and systems to ensure we cultivate a positive school culture that calls for everyone's best.

Student safety and discipline is fundamental to learning at Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School. While students need a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers and proper materials, they must also have a secure environment in which to learn. It is the policy of Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School that a safe environment conducive to learning shall be maintained at school in order to provide an equal and appropriate educational opportunity for all students.

### ***Discipline***

Students will be subject to disciplinary action if they engage in prohibited conduct (described below) whether on school property, while attending any school-sponsored activity, or while in transit (whether on foot or via vehicle including but not limited to train, bus, or car) going to or returning from a Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School campus. Such disciplinary action may include but not be limited to the following measures: suspension, expulsion, and/or exclusion from school and all school-sponsored activities. Students are also subject to disciplinary action for prohibited conduct committed away from school property and outside school hours if, for example, the conduct is detrimental to the best interests of LION, adversely affects overall school discipline, and/or results in a criminal charge or conviction. LION provides a fair and consistent approach to student discipline, within the context of students' rights and responsibilities pursuant to state and federal mandates and regulations.

### ***Student Support Center***

The purpose of the Student Support Center is to work with students, parents/guardians, and teachers as a support system assisting them in the process of self-discovery. The Student Support Center is a place where students are encouraged to focus on areas of growth. It is a place where students come when they are not fulfilling the standards of personal or community excellence or need space and/or time to reflect in order to be at their best. It is a place where teachers, administrators and students reflect upon what a student's behaviors communicate and how best to meet the needs of students who struggle with meeting expectations.

The vision of the Student Support Center is to help all members of the community engage in reflection to be their best self. The Student Support Center, along with the entire community, works to maintain integrity and set high standards for the school so that we, the LION community, are able to grow as a safe, challenging, and trustworthy environment. It is only through such high expectations that we can create a community where learning and character growth can flourish.

### ***Prohibited Student Conduct***

Infractions that are subject to disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Possession of a bomb or facsimile possession or making a bomb threat.

2. Arson, explosions, use of fireworks.
3. Criminal mischief, including discharging fire extinguishers or setting off a false alarm.
4. Possession and/or use of any type of weapon, including but not limited to loaded or unloaded firearms, knives, razors, defensive weapons (e.g., gas repellent, mace, pepper spray), martial arts devices or any other tool or instrument which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude are capable of inflicting bodily harm (e.g., blackjack, chain, club, pipe, studded bracelet, brass knuckles, etc.). This includes replicas, toys, and fakes.
5. Possession of paraphernalia (including, but not limited to, e-cigarettes, vapes, wrapping papers) and/or use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
6. Arriving at school under the influence of an illegal or controlled substance and/or misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
7. Harassment (see definition below).
8. Bullying (see definition below).
9. Hazing (see definition below).
10. Robbery or theft.
11. Abuse of or destruction of property/vandalism.
12. Fighting another student, on or off campus, within or outside the school day.
13. Unsafe behavior (including, but not limited to horse-playing, running in the building, being disruptive during an emergency drill).
14. Imposing physical harm to a student or staff member (includes unwanted physicality such as kicking, pushing, hitting, spitting, or biting).
15. Unwanted physicality (including, but not limited to, kicking, pushing, hitting, spitting, or biting).
16. Vandalism/graffiti.
17. Sexual activity (consensual) on campus and during school sanctioned activities.
18. Sexual harassment.
19. Sexual assault.
20. Possession and/or distribution of pornographic material.
21. Gang-related incidents and/or evidence of gang affiliation (including, but not limited to, engaging in gang-related activities, gang-related graffiti, evidence of gang-affiliation, the writing of anything gang-related).
22. Gambling.
23. The commission of any misdemeanor or felony.
24. Verbal abuse (including, but not limited to hurtful language, obscene language or gestures, profanity). Violation of privacy.
25. Engagement in conduct (including online and social media activity) which disrupts school or classroom activities and culture or endangers or threatens to endanger the health, safety, welfare, or morals of others.
26. Trespassing on school property while school is not in session.
27. Academic dishonesty/lying (including: plagiarism, cheating, forgery).
28. Leaving the classroom, school building, school property or school-related or sponsored activity without permission.
29. Insubordination (including, but not limited to running away from a staff member, refusal to follow directions, refusing accountability).
30. Bringing prohibited electronics (e.g., cell phones, wearable devices, and other

- smart devices) into the building.
31. Encouraging or assisting another to commit any of the foregoing infractions.
  32. Any threats to commit any of the above infractions.
  33. Any other conduct that the student knew or reasonably should have known was prohibited that warrants discipline based on the review of the Executive Director.

**Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School reserves the right to confiscate drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, lighters, incendiary devices, weapons, etc. immediately upon discovery. Furthermore, students who bring firearms to school will be subject to disciplinary action in compliance with the stipulations of the Safe and Gun-Free Schools Act.**

## **The Dignity Act: Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, and Anti-Bullying Policy**

No student shall be subjected to harassment, discrimination, or bullying by employees or students on school property, at a school-sponsored function and social media. No student shall be subjected to discrimination based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex.

Each of the three Divisions has a designated Dignity Act Coordinator responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to harassment, intimidation and bullying. This includes investigating allegations and submitting timely and accurate reports to the State. Information can be found in the Division Main Office.

### ***Harassment***

The Dignity Act (Education Law §11[7]) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for their physical safety. Such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes, but is not limited to, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex.

### ***Bullying***

Bullying has been described by the United States Department of Education (USDE) as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children and youth that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can occur before and after school hours, in a school building, in places like a playground or bus while a child is traveling to or from school, or on the Internet. According to the USDE, bullying generally involves the following characteristics:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Children who bully use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity, to control or harm

others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- **The Intent to Cause Harm:** The person bullying has a goal of causing harm.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors generally happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

### **Hazing**

The Penal Law defines hazing as a person intentionally or recklessly engaging in conduct during the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury (Penal Law §120.16).

Under the Penal Law, it is also considered hazing, even when physical injury does not occur, if a person intentionally or recklessly engaged in conduct during the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, which created a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person (Penal Law §120.17).

### **Investigating and Responding to Allegations of Staff-to-Student Harassment and/or Student-to-Student Harassment**

Staff who know, or reasonably should know of possible harassment, hazing, bullying, discriminatory, or other inappropriate behavior must take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or determine what occurred and then make a report to school administration. If a faculty or staff member, ES Leadership team member, or Dean of Students determines that harassment or other inappropriate behavior has occurred, they must take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the behavior, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent the behavior from reoccurring. Staff must further understand that these steps must be taken: (1) regardless of whether the student, who is the object of the harassment or inappropriate behavior, makes a complaint, asks the staff and/or school to take action, or identifies the harassment as a form of discrimination; and (2) even if LION's Prohibited Student Conduct or other policies do not require that the misconduct be addressed. Disciplinary measures will be invoked as appropriate to address incidents of discrimination, harassment, or other prohibited behavior.

## **Suspensions**

### **In-school Suspension**

In-school suspensions are issued by appropriate school designees. In-school suspensions may be issued as deemed necessary for unacceptable and/or inappropriate behaviors and attitudes. In school suspensions will not exceed three days. Students will be provided with schoolwork and will have an opportunity to do the work during the day. They may also be required to do community service within the school to offer something back to the community.

### **Out-of-school Suspension**

Out-of-school suspensions are issued by appropriate school designees. Out-of-school suspensions may be issued as deemed necessary for unacceptable and/or inappropriate behaviors and attitudes. Students and families are entitled to due process. For out-of-school suspensions of five days or fewer, due process protections shall include, at a minimum, oral or

written notice of the charges and, if the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence and the opportunity to present their side of the story and an opportunity to question witnesses. For out-of-school suspensions in excess of five days, due process shall include, at a minimum, the procedures explained under “Expulsion Process” below.

Students placed on out-of-school suspension will be removed from the community until they are ready to work within it and respect, follow, and honor all policies and procedures. Beginning on the fourth day of an out-of-school suspension, students will receive alternative instruction. Students may also be subject to alternative placement.

A reentry meeting is mandatory before a student returns to school. After the conference, students are expected to address any teacher(s), student(s) or staff members involved in the incident (s); students are expected to complete a reentry process.

Additional Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities, to include due process protections, are contained in section Additional Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities below.

#### ***Make Up Work for Suspension***

Students who are suspended shall be offered make-up work assignments. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the school and make arrangements for the receipt and return of all assignments. In the case of long-term suspensions, unless other arrangements are made, teachers are to give work in two-week increments, and students must complete and return work before receiving additional work. In High School, credits may be awarded depending on the quality of the work. All Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) mandates will be followed for students with disabilities.

#### ***Provision of Instruction during Removals and Suspensions***

LION will ensure that alternative instruction is provided pursuant to applicable law to a child who has been suspended, expelled or removed from the classroom setting. For a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided until the student has been accepted into another school, or for such a period that LION is required to do so by law, whichever period is shorter.

Alternative instruction will be provided to students suspended or expelled in a way that best suits the needs of the student on a case-by-case basis. Instruction for such students shall be sufficient to enable students to make adequate academic progress, and shall provide them the opportunity to complete assignments, learn the curriculum and participate in assessments. Instruction will take place in one of the following locations: the child’s home, a contracted facility (e.g., in the school district of location), or a room at the school. Instruction will be provided for approximately two hours per day, or such period required by applicable law, whichever period is shorter.

Students who are suspended, regardless of the length of such disciplinary action, will receive instruction, all classroom assignments, and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up

assignments or tests missed as a result of such removal from class. Alternative instruction will be provided by staff employed by LION or by certified teachers from an approved substitute teacher agency.

## Expulsion

Expulsion is the final recourse for students who endanger the well-being of other students, faculty, staff, or other members or visitors to the LION community. Expulsion can be ordered by the LION Executive Director for any behavior or action that warrants serious discipline, including those measures previously outlined in the Prohibited Student Conduct Section of this Handbook or other serious misconduct that the student knew or reasonably should have known was prohibited. A student may also be recommended for an expulsion hearing after accumulating three or more suspensions in one academic year.

### *Expulsion Process*

Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible expulsion, the Executive Director or their designee(s) shall verbally inform the student that they are being considered for an expulsion and state the reason(s) for such actions. The Executive Director must also provide written notification of the intent to convene a hearing to the parent/guardian of the student in the parent's/guardians' dominant language within 48 hours. If possible, the Executive Director or their designee(s) will telephone the parent/guardian to communicate the content of the notice letter after it is sent. However, oral notification may only be used to supplement, not substitute for, the requisite written notice.

The written notice shall:

- Describe the basis for the expulsion;
- Provide information about how the student may complete assignments and engage in academic activities during the time of exclusion from the class;
- Advise the parents/guardians of the student's right to a formal hearing before the Executive Director;
- State that the student has a right to legal counsel at the hearing; and
- Indicate the student's right to question and present witnesses and evidence at the hearing. The Executive Director shall hear and determine the proceeding or may, at their discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall issue a report that is advisory only and the Executive Director may accept or reject all or part of it. The Executive Director's decision to impose an expulsion may be appealed to the Board of Trustees by the parents or guardians in accordance with following procedures.

All appeals must be made in writing and submitted within ten days of the date of the Executive Director's decision to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Once the appeal is received, the record of the hearing before the Executive Director will be reviewed and a decision will be rendered within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal. The Board of Trustees may adopt, in whole or part, the Executive Director's decision, or overturn it.

## Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities Subject to Discipline

In order to protect the rights of students with disabilities, LION shall comply with all applicable provisions of 20 U.S.C. § 1400, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”); 34 CFR § 300; 29 U.S.C. § 794, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and 8 CRR-NY II Part 201, their implementing regulations, and the specific procedures described below whenever students with a disability are subject to disciplinary action. In the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with applicable federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern. LION shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability in the same manner as for students without disabilities as described above.

Generally, students with or suspected of having a disability may be disciplined in the same manner (including but not limited to being removed from a classroom, or suspended in or out of school) as non disabled peers. During the first ten (10) days of exclusion from the educational program, a student with a disability will be provided with alternative instruction to the same extent as students in general education as outlined above. Additionally, under IDEA the removals outlined above are considered a disciplinary change of placement that require further safeguards. A disciplinary change of placement occurs if:

- As a result of a disciplinary action the student is excluded from their current educational program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days; or
- The student has been removed or suspended in the aggregate of more than ten (10) days and the series of suspensions/removals constitute a pattern.

When a disciplinary change of placement occurs, a manifestation determination review (MDR) meeting must be held. A manifestation team convenes to determine whether the conduct was a manifestation of the child’s disability. The manifestation team consists of (1) a representative of the NYC DOE’s Committee on Special Education (CSE) (for students with IEPs) or the 504 Coordinator (for students with 504 Plans), (2) a staff member who is knowledgeable about the child and can interpret information about child’s behavior generally, and (3) the parent/guardian. Other participants may be invited in advance of the MDR meeting, but are not required, including relevant members of the child’s IEP team (for students with IEPs) or of the 504 Team (for students with 504 Plans), as determined by the parent/guardian and IEP team or 504 team members. The manifestation team shall convene immediately if possible, but no later than 10 days after the decision that results in a disciplinary change of placement.

The parent/guardian must be given written notice prior to any manifestation determination review meeting taking place in order to ensure that the parent/guardian has an opportunity to attend. The notice must state the purpose of the meeting, the names of the expected attendees, and indicate the parent/guardian’s right to have relevant team members attend.

The applicable manifestation team must review the child’s IEP and/or 504 Plan together with all relevant information within the student’s file and any information provided by the parent/guardian. The team will review all relevant information pertaining to the behavior that is

subject to disciplinary action and the student's disability, as well as the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior.

### ***Manifestation Finding***

If the manifestation team concludes that the child's behavior resulted from their disability, the IEP team or 504 team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment ("FBA") and implement a behavioral intervention plan ("BIP") as a part of a revised IEP or 504 plan to address the behaviors giving rise to the conduct, unless an FBA and BIP were conducted and implemented prior to the student's violation of school rules giving rise to the suspension, in which case each should be reviewed and revised as a part of a review/revision of the IEP or 504 plan, if necessary, to address the behavior.

Moreover, the child must also be returned to their original placement (i.e., the placement from which the student was removed), unless: (1) the parent and school agree to another placement as part of the newly created or revised BIP, or (2) in cases where the child:

- Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a function under the jurisdiction of the state educational agency or LION;
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the state educational agency or LION; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the state educational agency or LION.

If the child exhibits one of the above three behaviors, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or the 504 Team shall determine an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting ("IAES"), which shall not exceed 45 days if the Executive Director has determined that removal to an IAES is warranted in accordance with the IDEA or Section 504.

## **Student Searches and Investigations**

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or LION's Prohibited Student Conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda" type warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student's parent or guardian before questioning the student. However, school officials must tell all students why they are being questioned.

In addition, the school's Board of Trustees authorizes the Executive Director and their designees to conduct searches of students and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the provisions of LION Prohibited Student Conduct. An authorized school official may conduct a search of a student's belongings that is minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, without reasonable suspicion, so long as the school official has a legitimate reason for the very limited search. Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official should interview the student regarding the physical

evidence to determine if the student will admit that they possess physical evidence that they violated the law or LION Prohibited Student Conduct, or request that the student voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

An authorized school official may search a student or the student's belongings based upon reasonable suspicion, including information received from a reliable informant. Individuals, other than LION employees, will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, or they make an admission against their own interest, or they provide the same information that is received independently from other sources, or they appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. LION employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate.

Whenever practicable, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices and a student will be present when their possessions are being searched.

### ***Student Lockers, Desks and Other School Storage Places***

Policies regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks and other school storage places. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

### ***Documentation of Searches***

The authorized school official conducting the search shall be responsible for promptly recording the following information about each search:

- Name, age and grade of the student searched.
- Reasons for the search.
- Name of any informant(s).
- Purpose of search (that is, what item(s) were being sought).
- Type and scope of search.
- Person conducting search and their title and position.
- Witnesses, if any, to the search.
- Time and location of the search.
- Results of search (that is, what items(s) were found).
- Disposition of items found.
- Time, manner and results of parental/guardian notification.

The Executive Director or their designee shall be responsible for the custody, control and disposition of any illegal or dangerous item taken from a student. The Executive Director or their designee shall clearly label each item taken from the student and retain control of the item(s), until each item is turned over to the police. The Executive Director or their designee shall be responsible for personally delivering dangerous or illegal items to police authorities.

### ***Police Involvement in Searches and Investigations of Students***

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School officials are committed to cooperating with

police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students only if they have:

- A search or an arrest warrant.
- Probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on school property or at a school function. Before police officials are permitted to question or search any student, the Executive Director or their designee shall first try to notify the student's parent/guardian to give the parent/guardian the opportunity to be present during the police questioning or search or consent to the interrogation/search. If the student's parent/guardian cannot be contacted prior to the police questioning or search, the questioning or search shall not be conducted, unless a crime has been committed on school grounds. The Executive Director or designee will also be present during any police questioning or search of a student on school property or at a school function.
- Students who are questioned by police officials on school property or at a school function will be afforded the same rights they have outside the school.

This means:

- They must be informed of their legal rights.
- They may remain silent if they so desire.
- They may request the presence of an attorney.

### ***Child Protective Services Investigations***

Consistent with the school's commitment to keep our students safe from harm and the obligation of school officials to report to Child Protective Services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been abused or maltreated, the school will cooperate with local Child Protective Services workers who wish to conduct interviews of students on school property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse, and/or neglect, or custody investigations as required pursuant New York State Social Services Regulations.

All requests by Child Protective Services to interview a student on school property shall be made directly to the Division Director or their designee. The Director or their designee shall set the time and place of the interview. The Director or designee shall decide if it is necessary and appropriate for a school official to be present during the interview, depending on the age of the student being interviewed and the nature of the allegations.

A Child Protective Services worker may not remove a student from school property without a court order or parental/guardian consent, unless the worker reasonably believes that the student would be immediately subject to danger of abuse if they were not removed from school before a court order can reasonably be obtained. If the worker believes the student would be immediately subject to danger of abuse, the worker may remove the student without a court order and without the parent/guardian consent.

## VII. FAMILY & SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Family and School Partnership Program is designed to emphasize, foster, and develop family renewal by bringing students and parents/guardians together to focus on personal growth. This is achieved through retreats, parent self-discovery, and family Saturdays. The Family and School Partnership Program staff serve as parent/guardian liaisons for the school, assisting parents/guardians, students, and teachers as we work together to help our students to reach their potential. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents/guardians to become active participants in the education of their children.

Family engagement is a very important facet of our school's mission. We believe that the "home is the primary classroom," supporting the character development of students. Parents/guardians are expected to participate and fulfill commitments throughout the year. They are encouraged to attend workshops and participate in leadership committees working to help our community to become like-minded individuals centered on common goals and interests that better our community in all aspects.

At LION our goal is to assist families and provide guidance in the family self-discovery process. Please feel free to contact the Family and School Partnership staff with any concerns or to request assistance in issues that affect your LION students.

### *Admissions*

Families are expected to participate in a family meeting (once admitted via the lottery) in which the rigorous demands of both our academic and character/family programs are discussed. Parents/Guardians are expected to participate in parent events. Parents/Guardians may choose to participate in optional retreats each year where they examine character issues in their own lives and ways to model positive character for their children. Families new to our community are expected to attend a New Family Orientation prior to the opening of the school year.

### *Family Self-Discovery*

The most important aspect of the Family and School Partnership program is the hosting of monthly family events. For each meeting there are designated activities, most connected to parental/guardian personal development.

### *Saturday Family Days*

Family Saturdays are held on specific Saturdays throughout the school year. Students and their parents or guardians are expected to attend these Saturday events together. For families who have students in more than one grade, the parent or guardian is encouraged to attend the fall event for one sibling and the spring Saturday event with the other(s). It is encouraged that in a family where multiple students attend LION, alternate family members attend as representatives for each student in the community. Families are encouraged to discuss this with Family and School Partnership staff.

### *Retreats*

LION offers retreats for students, and parents/guardians with their students. These retreats are focused on taking a deep look at oneself and how attitudes, both positive and negative,

affect the individual as well as the entire family. Retreats are held at different retreat centers in the NYC area or and are generally held Friday afternoon to Sunday at noon, for the Middle and High schools. Elementary families are invited to attend a grade 1-3 family retreat, in which families are invited to participate in a day trip with their child. Families are encouraged to attend one retreat during each school year. Transportation is provided from the school. Retreat dates are announced at the start of the year, and parents/guardians register on a first-come-first-served basis.

## **Family Leadership**

### ***Family Council***

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School parents and guardians will work with the Division Directors to provide parent/guardian input and guidance on issues and matters affecting our students. Family Council is open to all LION parents and guardians. Parents and guardians are notified about meetings via flyers sent home via backpack. Parents and guardians are welcome to add agenda items by reaching out to their Division Director in advance of the meeting.

### ***Family Facilitators***

Parents/Guardians who are interested in facilitating self-discovery seminars should contact the Family and School Partnership staff for more information about training, responsibilities, and other requirements of this role. It is our hope to train parents/guardians to facilitate all groups in the future.

## VIII. FAMILY VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT AND PARENTING RESPONSIBILITY

### *Visitors, Meetings, and Volunteers*

At Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School, we are very fortunate to have supportive families. Our families recognize that educating children is a process that involves partnership between home and school and understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all visitors to our school about expected conduct so that we can work together to ensure a safe and positive school environment for our students. As models for the students, we remind all our families that adults must display appropriate behavior at school. For the protection of the faculty, staff, and students of LION, all visitors – including parents/guardians – are required to sign in at the Security Desk before going anywhere in the building. Upon registration at 730 Bryant, visitors will be sent to the Main Offices on the 1st floor or 4th floor (the location of Elementary School and Middle School, respectively). Upon registration at 830 Hunts Point Avenue, visitors will be sent to the Main Office.

Visitors should report to the Main Office to announce staff of your arrival. A visitor's badge **MUST** be worn at all times while in the building. If any visitors, including parents/guardians, engage in disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior while on school property, or towards any student or staff member off of school property, they can be subject to, but not limited to, the following consequences:

- Removal from the building.
- Barring from school events.
- The police may be called, and a restraining order may be filed.
- Permanent barring from the building.

Disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior includes:

- Endangering the physical safety of another by the use of force or the threat of force. This includes approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them and physical punishment against your own child (some actions may constitute legal offenses). This also includes abusive or threatening emails, phone or social network messages from outside of school.
- Engaging in behavior that disrupts classroom activity or endangers, or threatens to endanger the health, safety, welfare, or morals of others.
- Smoking and/or consumption of alcohol or drugs or accessing the school while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Interrupting a class while in session.
- Refusing to leave a classroom when asked to do so by the teacher.
- Being rude to any staff members in the building.
- Using loud and/or offensive language (parents/guardians should refrain from using profane or obscene language or gestures even if they think they may not

- be in view or earshot of others).
- Making threats of bodily harm, violence, or any type of terrorism, bombing, shooting, or murder.
  - Falsely accusing LION staff members.
  - Refusing to identify oneself to building staff members.
  - Failure to comply with staff instructions.
  - Disrespecting the school environment, including keeping the school tidy by not littering.
  - Damaging or destroying school property.
  - Computer abuse and/or use of computers for non-school related use, including viewing or accessing prohibited sites.

Violation of the aforementioned respect and concern for others' rights will result in disciplinary action. LION reserves the right to remove from school, or otherwise limit the access of, any adult who does not observe proper behavior, or otherwise poses a threat to the well-being of members of our community.

### ***Scheduling Meetings***

Due to the school day schedule and added responsibilities of LION staff members, parents/guardians need to schedule all meetings in advance. Please email or call to schedule a meeting before coming to school, as the teacher you would like to meet with may be teaching or otherwise unavailable. You may also leave a message at the Main Office of the teacher's division. Meetings and conversations with parents/guardians may not happen during instructional time or during times when teachers should be actively supervising students.

### ***Parent/Guardian Volunteers***

We are always grateful for volunteers who can spend time with us during the day. Please call the Family and School Partnership staff member or the Main Office, respectively, in advance to plan volunteering days or to find out what volunteering opportunities are available. All volunteers must have specific assignments.

### ***Parents/Guardians Visiting Classrooms***

If a parent/guardian desires to visit their child's classroom for observation purposes, the parent/guardian must sign in at the Main Office and will receive a visitor's badge. Parent/Guardian visits to the classroom are for observation purposes only and must be scheduled in advance with the Director. Parents/guardians cannot meet with teachers at this time. Requests for meetings with teachers must be scheduled outside of class time.

The Division Director or a staff member from the Main Office will escort the parent/guardian to the classroom. If a parent/guardian will be visiting more than one classroom, a staff member from the Main Office will escort them to each classroom. At the end of the visit, the parent/guardian will be escorted back to the Main Office to sign out of the building.

### ***Family Members as Chaperones***

For many field trips, parent/guardian volunteers will be asked to serve as chaperones. In fairness to the children, and to assure that all parents/guardians have the opportunity to chaperone, parents/guardians may be asked to accompany only one trip. Expectations for

chaperones include:

- Being on time/adhering to schedules;
- Refraining from bringing younger siblings or other children on the trip;
- Wearing a watch or having a cell phone that has the correct time of day;
- Staying with the students at all times;
- Using appropriate language;
- Bringing a cell phone if possible, (for emergency use only);
- Refraining from using a phone for texting, calls or e-mail;
- Taking student attendance often;
- Following bus regulations;
- Refraining from smoking or the consumption of alcoholic beverages;
- Enforcing the teacher's rules; and
- Refraining from loaning money to or purchasing treats for students while on the trip.

### ***Parents/Guardians or Families Members Bringing Items to School***

If a visitor needs to come to school to give their child a forgotten item, they must sign in at the security desk. The visitor will then be directed to the Main Office to drop off the item. A member of the Main Office staff will check the student's schedule and arrange for the item to be delivered to the student. In order to adhere to the building safety procedures, we ask that all parents, guardians, and/or visitors be signed in at the Main Office where LION staff will assist further.

### ***Dismissal***

It is very important that parents/guardians follow the early dismissal procedures. This will ensure the safety and well-being of every student. Each early student dismissal request must be made in writing in the form of a note from a parent or guardian. All notes must be signed, dated, and include a contact telephone number. Please note that any person picking up a student early from school must come to the Main Office. They will have to show valid, current, state-issued, picture identification, and must be listed as one of the contacts on the student's emergency information card before the student will be released to their care. Changes in dismissal procedures for specific students must be communicated immediately.

### ***Late Pick-up of Students***

Families must observe LION's school release times. If you will be running late or are unable for other reasons to pick up your child on time, it is your responsibility as the parent/guardian to make arrangements for your child to be picked up on time. Late pick-up of students in afterschool programs may lead to the student's removal from after school programming.

## **Family Grievance and Complaint Policy**

Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School believes in addressing grievances and complaints at the earliest time possible. As a school which champions character development and values honesty, we encourage you to address your grievances and complaints directly. If not resolved to your satisfaction please address your concerns with the Executive Director. If still dissatisfied with the resolution of the matter, you should bring it to an officer (Chairman, Treasurer, or Secretary) of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees contact list is posted in

the Main Office of each school building. For allegations relating to a potential violation of the Charter Schools Act, Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the school, if you conclude that the LION Board has not adequately addressed your complaint, you may then present your complaint to the school's authorizer, the State University of New York (SUNY) Charter School Institute. If you still believe that the matter has not been adequately addressed, you may also present the complaint to the NY State Board of Regents.

## Parents and Guardians' Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to read this Handbook in its entirety and to know school policies and procedures pertaining to your child's enrollment at Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School. It is also the responsibility of parents and guardians to update all personal information on a regular basis while your child is attending LION, including but not limited to: current address and telephone number(s), current emergency contact information, and current health forms.

The policies, procedures, and guidelines that have been outlined in this Handbook are provided to you as a resource and a blueprint to ensure mutual understanding, cooperation, and acceptance of the values and expectations of the LION school community. Without your commitment to upholding these values and expectations, our work with your child is incomplete.

At the heart of the LION vision lives the belief that the parent/guardian is the primary teacher and that the home is the primary classroom. Student success at LION is directly linked to the commitment of parents/guardians to participate in our program and to demonstrate a willing and enduring commitment to the policies and procedures that allow our school to operate to the benefit of our students. Our expectation is that parents/guardians and school staff will work together in these efforts.

## IX. TITLE I PARENT/GUARDIAN'S RIGHT TO KNOW TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

School districts that receive federal Title I funding must notify parents/guardians of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child.

As a recipient of these funds, Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects they teach.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications. LION is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above for your child's teacher, please contact the Chief Operating Officer.

## Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students who are 18 years of age or older ("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 business days after Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School receives a request for access.
  - 1.1. Parents/Guardians or eligible students should submit to the school's Chief Operating Officer (COO) written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The COO will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request an amendment to aspects of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/Guardians or eligible students who wish to ask Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School to amend a record should write the school's Chief Operating Officer, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from 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) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records. Such volunteers or consultants may include, but not be limited to, an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent/guardian or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent/guardian, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing their 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 without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter 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

## **Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)**

It is the policy of Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School to fully comply with the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). FOIL is a New York State Law that provides the public with the ability to access certain records. Information on the policy and procedures for access to records is posted and available in each school's main office. Please see the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Notice Regulations for Providing Access to Public Records posted in the schools' main office for complete information on your rights and ability to access documents at LION. You can also find out more information about FOIL on our website: <http://www.LIONcharterschool.org>.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HANDBOOK RECEIPT AND REVIEW**

We, the undersigned, have been advised that the Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School Student and Family Handbook is posted online on the school website ([www.LIONcharterschool.org](http://www.LIONcharterschool.org)). We are aware that this handbook contains important

information for parents, guardians, and students. We have reviewed the information and policies contained in the Handbook.

We understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and that failure to abide by the guidelines for student behavior can result in the discipline outlined in this handbook.

We understand further that failure to return this acknowledgment form does not excuse any individual from complying with the Student and Family Handbook.

We are aware that Leaders In Our Neighborhood Charter School reserves the right at any time to amend or to add to the policies, regulations and guidelines contained or referred to in this Handbook.

Directions for return of this form:

1. Student and Parent/Guardian review handbook.
2. Parent/Guardian sign Handbook acknowledgement below.
3. Student returns this page to the homeroom teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Grade

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date