

# **SUMMIT CHARTER SCHOOL**

## Family Handbook



2026-27

# Summit Charter School

## Family Handbook

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## **Introduction**

This handbook has been prepared for our families of Summit Charter School. Please be sure you familiarize yourself with the school policies and refer to this handbook throughout the school year for any questions you may have regarding the Summit program.

## **Mission & Philosophy**

### **Mission Statement**

The Summit Community engages students in learning experiences that stimulate discovery, inspire excellence and nurture a positive influence in an ever-changing world.

**School Motto:** Seeking Excellence

### **Portrait of a Graduate**

The Summit Experience equips our students with a level of confidence that invokes success, self-worth, and the opportunity to thrive in all endeavors. Our graduates are:

### **Academically Prepared...**

A strong academic foundation is the basis for the success of our graduates in their secondary, collegiate, and life-long pursuits. Our students:

- Embrace high expectations and academic rigor
- Think critically and work diligently to solve problems
- Utilize place-based and experiential opportunities to gain a global understanding
- Incorporate technology as a tool to enrich and expand intellectual curiosity

### **Engaged in Community...**

Summit Charter School seeks opportunities and activities that enrich the "whole-child" experience.

Collaborative partnerships between the school, our families, and the greater community contribute to the development of civility and citizenship in each and every child. Our students:

- Appreciate the value of teamwork, parental involvement, and community resources
- Learn to communicate effectively
- Practice community stewardship and service learning opportunities

### **Strong in Character...**

The seven virtues articulated in the school's pledge resonate with all the students and set the tone for individual and school-wide growth. Our students:

- Demonstrate a heightened level of accountability and a shared sense of purpose
- Show respect for their peers, teachers, parent volunteers, and members of the community
- Celebrate diversity as a strength to the community

## **Summit Pledge**

*Each day, in my words and my deeds, I will do my best to live these seven virtues: Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, Self-Discipline, Perseverance, and Giving*

## **Curriculum/Philosophy**

The curriculum at Summit is continually developed and improved through a process using numerous resources and teacher input following the North Carolina State Standards. Each class has a curriculum outlining what should be taught within each specific grade level. The curriculum, like many other things, is an evolving work in progress and one that is examined and updated frequently. Our curriculum is designed to prepare our students above and beyond the State's core assessment standards and to implement innovative lessons that promote student success through place-based learning activities, character education, and whole-child development.

## **Summit Charter School Organizations:**

### **Organizational Chart**

[Administrative Team Organizational Chart linked here.](#)

### **Administrative Team Contacts**

Head of School: Kurt Pusch, [kpusch@summitschool.org](mailto:kpusch@summitschool.org)

Principal: Andrea Chalker, [achalker@summitschool.org](mailto:achalker@summitschool.org)

Director of College Counseling: Lauren Bennett, [lbennett@summitschool.org](mailto:lbennett@summitschool.org)

Business Officer: Betsy Helms, [bhelms@summitschool.org](mailto:bhelms@summitschool.org)

Development Director: Laura Lamong, [llamont@summitschool.org](mailto:llamont@summitschool.org)

### **Board of Trustees**

The school, as an educational institution incorporated under the laws of North Carolina to be run as a non-profit, is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board shall not be less than nine (9) nor more than fifteen (15) voting members. The Head of School, a teacher representative, and the Summit Family Association president serve as ex-officio members. The Board, made up primarily of parents and community representatives, serves a term of 3 years with a maximum of two consecutive terms. After a Trustee has served two (2) successive three-year terms, a Trustee is eligible to serve up to three (3) additional successive one-year terms. The Board, through various committees, concerns itself with school finances, capital needs, staff salaries, and school policies. The Board employs the Head of School, who in turn, recruits the other faculty and staff.

The SCS Board meets no less than eight times each year. All board members are expected to attend, along with the Head of School, an elected teacher representative, and the Summit Family Association representative. Meetings are also open to the public. A list of current board members and a meeting schedule are included on the Summit website. Board meetings will also be announced through the Bear Express and the Summit Family Google calendar accessible on Summit's website.

## **Summit Family Association (SFA)**

The Summit Family Association (SFA) is an active organization that meets monthly, organizes fund-raisers and provides numerous opportunities for families to become involved in various aspects of the school. Parents and teachers are expected to attend meetings and participate in activities. Parents who would like to volunteer for one of these committees should contact the SFA committee.

## **Student Council**

The Student Council of Summit Charter School is organized to give students the opportunity to participate in student government and to experience the many responsibilities that go along with being in a leadership role.

## **Academic Policies**

A curriculum with coherence requires a dedicated effort by the student, teacher, and family. Please familiarize yourself with the academic policies and procedures to better facilitate our students' achievement.

## **Communications**

Communication between the school and the home is one of the most important aspects of the academic program. Summit will exercise the following standard forms of routine communication between the school and family:

- **K-5 Learning Logs:** Students K-5 will be issued a Learning Log/Binder at the beginning of the school year. Learning Logs are to be used to journal the day's events, homework assignments, and family-teacher communications.
- **Volunteer Hours should be recorded on the shared Google Form link provided by SFA.**
- **Interim Reports:** Interim reports may be accessed via PowerSchool.
- **Report Cards:** Report cards will be completed by the teachers at the conclusion of each quarterly grading period and emailed.
- **Conferences:** School-scheduled conferences will be held twice a year to discuss student progress. Conferences may also be held, at any time, at the request of the teacher, parent, or administration.

**Exceptional Children’s Program**

Summit Charter School serves students of various levels and abilities within the classroom, as well as resource room and individualized instruction. If your child has been served by the Exceptional Children’s Program at a previous school, please inform Summit at the time of enrollment to ensure placement and completion of necessary paperwork. If you currently have a child in the ECP, please meet and collaborate with the special education teacher to ensure the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is current and adequate progress is being made. For additional information, or if you suspect your child has a disability, please contact the EC teacher, your child’s teacher, or the EC Director.

**Grading Scales**

Summit uses developmentally appropriate grading scales tiered by base camp level.

**K-3 Standards-Based Grading**

**4 -12**

- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 60-69
- F 59 or below

**High School Honors and Advanced Placement Grade Point Average (GPA) Weights**

**Quality Points**

Students enrolled in Honors or Advanced Placement courses will earn additional points on their GPA as follows:

|                                                                                                                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Honors Courses                                                                                                                                       | .5 |
| Community College Course included on most recent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Transfer List or course taught at 4-year university or college | 1  |
| AP Course                                                                                                                                            | 1  |

**Homework**

Homework for students should help them develop good study habits, foster positive attitudes toward school, and communicate to students the idea that learning takes work at home as well as at school. Homework must be realistic in length and difficulty given the students' ability to work independently. The National Education Association and National Parent Teacher Association both support the limit of no more than 10 minutes a night per grade level. Homework is aligned to extend standards and objectives previously

learned in class. Please communicate with your student's teacher if your student is taking longer than the allotted time to complete.

In fostering our virtue of responsibility, all work is expected to be completed when assigned. Teachers will only assign meaningful and relevant work and use homework to guide their instruction. Exceptions are made on an individual basis as needed. Please communicate with your student's teacher or encourage your students to communicate with their teacher if you need an extension on an assignment.

## **Promotion and Retention**

Promotion and retention decisions in all grades at Summit are based upon a review of a child's academic performance and compliance with the school's attendance policy. Benchmarks will include:

- Formative and Performance-based assessments (i.e. tests, quizzes, nc literacy assessments, projects, written work, etc.) in core subjects- Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies
- Whole-child portfolio assessments (project/assignment completion) in STEAM classes- Art, Music, Health/PE, Spanish, Library, Tech, etc.
- Performance on standardized tests-
  - K-3 NC Literacy Assessments
  - EOG (May)- English/Language Arts, Mathematics (3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades), Science (5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades)
  - EOC - Math I, Math III, English II, and Biology
- Attendance- K-8 students in excess of 18 days (10% of the school year) are subject to retention. 9-12 students who miss more than 5 subject classes (i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> period algebra) throughout the year are subject to academic failure.

If the above measures do not provide clear evidence to support a promotion/retention decision, other data collection measures may be utilized. Despite the performance on the EOG test scores, a child may be retained if he or she does not meet academic or attendance criteria for promotion. Special provisions may apply only in extreme cases.

## **Retention Decisions:**

- In the event a child is to be considered for retention, the teacher or parent/guardian should notify the Principal or Head of School by the end of January.
- Grade-level/Subject Teachers will assemble a portfolio of the child's performance recorded supporting the need for retention.
- The Principal or Head of School will determine if additional data is necessary to finalize the retention decision.
- The grade-level/subject teacher, ELL coordinator, Exceptional Children coordinator (if applicable), school counselor (if applicable), and parent/guardian will meet with the Principal/Head of School to determine the most appropriate course of action.
- The Head of School, under North Carolina law, has the authority to make the final promotion/retention decision.

## **NC Read to Achieve**

Students in third grade must show proficiency in reading in order to be promoted to fourth grade. Proficiency will be determined by the student's performance on the following:

- EOG reading assessment
- State Approved Reading assessment
- NC Read to Achieve test
- Student reading portfolio

Students who do not demonstrate proficiency in one of the above will be required to complete a summer remediation program. The student and family will also be notified that without significant progress in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, retention will be considered.

## **Testing**

Summit Charter School participates in the statewide accountability-testing model (EOG- End of Grade Testing, EOC - End of Course Testing, and ACT Testing) and will administer the standardized tests in accordance with the set guidelines. Testing will be handled by the Testing Coordinator and teachers will be trained prior to administration. All students in grades 3-10 are expected to participate in the state testing program and parents should encourage their children to do their absolute best on these tests. Test results will be shared with parents at the conclusion of testing. The test schedule is as follows:

Grades 3-8:

- Mathematics- Grades 3-8, Math 1- Grade 8
- Reading- Grades 3-8
- Science- Grades 5 & 8

Grades 9-12 End of Course (EOC) Tests:

- Math: Math I, Math III
- English: English II
- Science: Biology

Grades 9-12 College Readiness Tests:

- Grade 10: Pre-ACT
- Grade 11: ACT

\*Students in grades 9-11 will also take internally administered released ACT tests in the fall, winter, and spring for internal benchmarking purposes toward the ACT college readiness benchmark. This data will inform instructional decisions and support staff, students, and families in post-secondary and college planning.

## **Tutoring**

Summit, like all schools in North Carolina, is transitioning towards full implementation of a Multi-tiered system of support framework for serving the academic needs of all students. NC MTSS is a multi-tiered framework that promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices. NC MTSS employs a systems approach using data-driven problem-solving to maximize growth for all.

Whether children are struggling to learn or are advanced learners, we hope to provide the tools every child needs to reach his or her potential.

There is time built into our schedule to provide additional academic support for both advanced learners and children in need of remediation at all grade levels. Some of the assistance will be with computerized instruction, and some assistance will be through additional classroom push-in support. Teachers will be doing continual progress monitoring through formative assessments in the classroom.

If, for any reason, your child is not making expected progress with all of the MTSS components we have in place, we will have a MTSS meeting, which would include you, your child's teacher, the school counselor, the Principal, and other school personnel as required. If the team determines that additional tutoring services are necessary for your child to progress, the school will assist the parents in identifying a tutor. Individual teachers are not permitted to contract with a family for paid tutoring services of students they teach.

## **General Policies**

### **Admissions Policy**

Summit Charter School is a nonprofit, tuition-free charter school authorized by the state of North Carolina. As a charter school, Summit will be open to all students who would otherwise qualify for enrollment in North Carolina Public Schools. The school will not discriminate against any student on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability. Summit's admissions proceedings are guided by North Carolina Legislation G.S. 115C-218.45.

Applications for enrollment will become available by September 1 of each year and may be requested or picked up in the school's office or downloaded from the school's website. Completed applications must be received in hand at the school office by January 16. At that time, the determination will be made as to whether a lottery will be required. If there are more applicants than there are spots available, a lottery will be held at 9:30am on January 31, or the first day of school following January 31, should January 31 fall on a Saturday or Sunday.

To determine space availability, enrollment preference will be given in the following order:

1. Enrolled Summit Students: Students currently enrolled in Summit Charter School do not need to reapply for admission on an annual basis. Returning students are given top priority, and families will be issued an *Intent to Return* form to complete and return to the school during the open enrollment period.
2. Children of Full-time School Employees: Children of full-time Summit employees will be given preference for enrollment when space is available. When no slots are available, or when there are more full-time staff children than spaces available, there will be a staff lottery for that grade level. No more than 15% of the school's total enrollment of children of full-time employees can receive preference.
3. Siblings of Enrolled Summit Students: Siblings of currently enrolled students at Summit will receive preference for enrollment when space is available. When no slots are available or when there are more siblings than spaces available, there will be a sibling lottery for that grade level. The law defines siblings as any of the following who reside in the same household: full-siblings, half-siblings, step-siblings, and children residing in a family foster home.

4. Opportunity Preference: Any former student enrolled at Summit within the last two academic years but left due to an academic study abroad program, competitive admission residential program, or vocational opportunities of the parents, will receive enrollment preference.
5. Legacy Preference: Siblings of former students that completed a total of four years at Summit can receive sibling preference as described above.

**Siblings Enrolling at the Same Time:** Each family will be offered the choice to either enter all of their children into the lottery with one surname or enter each child separately in the lottery. If the family chooses to enter their children with one surname, they must choose the grade level in which they would like their surname entered. If the surname is pulled during the lottery when there are available spots in the grade level, then all siblings will be admitted immediately if space is available in their respective grade levels. If there is no space available, the remaining siblings will be placed on the waiting list in the order of the admitted sibling's placement.

**Multiple Birth Siblings:** If multiple birth siblings apply to the school, their surname will be entered once to represent all of the multiple-birth siblings. If the multiple birth siblings are in different grades, the parent will be asked to choose the grade in which they would like their surname entered. If that surname is pulled in the lottery, all of the multiple-birth siblings will be admitted as space in each respective grade level is available.

**Lottery Proceedings:** in the event a lottery must be held, the Summit Family Association President, the Summit Charter School Board Chairman, the Summit Charter School Head of School, the Summit Charter School Administrative Officer, and one designated witness shall meet on January 31, or the first day of school following January 31, should January 31 fall on a Saturday or Sunday. The lottery will be held at 9:30am at the school, and is open to the public.

The lottery will begin with the highest grade and work down to Kindergarten. The parties will designate a "drawer", and the administrative officer shall act as the recording secretary. The names of the eligible applicants will be folded and placed in a container. The drawer will then draw the names, and the administrative officer shall record the names in the order drawn. Once all available spaces are filled, a waiting list will be established, listing the students in the order drawn as set forth above. This waiting list will be used in the event that a spot opens and the school chooses to fill the vacancy before or during the school year.

The Summit Charter School Head of School will notify each applicant, in writing, of their placement. Each admitted applicant shall accept admission in writing no later than 10 days after notification of admission. If the applicant does not notify the school of its acceptance of admission on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> day, the applicant will be deemed to have declined admission, and the first child on the waiting list will be offered admission.

**Students Applying after the Open Enrollment Period:** Any students applying after the open enrollment period will be placed on the waitlist directly after any waitlisted students from the lottery in the order the application was received.

**Summit Charter School's Right to Refuse Enrollment:** Summit Charter School reserves the right to refuse enrollment to any student or family under the following circumstances:

- The local school board may refuse to admit any student who is suspended or expelled from a school due to actions that would lead to suspension or expulsion from a public school under G.S. 115C-391 until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired.
- A parent or guardian willingly and knowingly provided incorrect information on the enrollment application.
- If a student has accepted enrollment at the school but does not appear at the school in the first 2 days of school, the school will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents. If there is no response from the parent by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of school, Summit reserves the right to remove the student from their enrollment roster and offer a position to the next student on the waiting list.

**Re-enrollment:** Current students at Summit are invited to return the following year and do not have to go through the initial enrollment proceedings. Current families wishing to reenroll will be given an *Intent to Return* form to complete and return to the school during the open enrollment period to allow the school to plan appropriately for the lottery.

**Waitlisted Students:** Students residing on the waiting list may be granted enrollment during the school year if space becomes available. Families will be notified of the opening and will have 10 days to accept the position. If the position is declined or no response is received within the 10-day period, the next person on the waiting list will be offered the position. All students on the waiting list may resubmit their application for the next school year. In the event more applications are received than spaces available, a new lottery will be drawn for that particular grade level under the initial admissions proceedings. The new waiting list will go into effect at the conclusion of the current school year.

## **Athletics and Extracurricular Participation Policy**

Extracurricular activities include ANY athletic team, as well as Lower School, Middle School, or High School clubs that represent Summit Charter School in competitions. To be eligible to try out and remain eligible to participate in any sport, extracurricular competition, or club leadership role at Summit Charter School students must meet the following criteria:

- All students must be enrolled in Summit Charter School to participate.
- All students must be in good academic, disciplinary, and attendance standing throughout the entire time of their respective sport season or extracurricular activity. Violations of the school's Code of Conduct, Academic, and Attendance policies are subject to review by the Administration and may result in a student being placed on probation or removed from the team or club. See Academic and Conduct Eligibility requirements further below.
- All students absent or removed from school for more than half of the day of a contest for any reason may not be in the contest that school day. To participate in a competition, students must be present for a half-day of school. Please review the Attendance section of the handbook for specific times.
- Student athletes must receive a health screening each year (395 days) by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.

- Any athlete who quits a team voluntarily, not including medical reasons, could potentially forfeit being eligible to participate in School athletics for one year, as determined by the administration. This one-year period also applies to any athlete who has been dismissed from a team by a coach or administration.
- Parents and students are responsible for monitoring the progress of their grades throughout the quarter.
- The student must pay the participation fee (per sport season) prior to the first contest in each sport season.
- Concussion Forms must be completed and on file for each school year.

## SPORTS PRE-PARTICIPATION & MEDICAL EXAMINATION FORMS

To be eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletic contests, the student must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S. 90- 9, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2. The required Sports

Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form can be found here:

<https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety-physicians/>. The student-athlete must submit the physical form, concussion statement, NCHSAA athlete participation form (for high school athletes only), and a signed student-athlete handbook to the office prior to the first day of practice or tryouts. The student shall not participate in any tryouts, practice sessions, or contests until the completed physical form has been submitted.

## MEDICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

School coaches must adhere to the School Medication Administration policy, as outlined in the Family Handbook, for all athletic events, including tryouts, practices, and contests.

## CONCUSSION AWARENESS

On June 16, 2011, the Gfeller-Whaller Concussion Awareness Act was signed in an attempt to educate student athletes, parents, coaches, and first responders on the symptoms and expectations related to concussions. To meet these regulations, student athletes as well as their parent/guardian are required to read and sign the *Concussion: Information for Student-Athletes & Parents/Legal Custodians* document located on Summit's website. This is an annual requirement for participation in school athletics. The document is meant to help educate families on the symptoms and obligations associated with concussions. *Information regarding the Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act can be found at <https://gfellerwallerlaw.unc.edu/>.*

## INSURANCE COVERAGE

It is recommended that players be covered by adequate medical and accident insurance.

## ATTENDANCE AT ATHLETIC PRACTICES AND GAMES/MATCHES/MEETS

Students are expected to be in attendance during both contests and practice sessions. Students must be in school attendance for at least half of the school day to participate in practice or contests on the same day or evening. If a student is absent due to illness, injury, or another required school or family commitment, the student should make prior arrangements with the coach to obtain an excused absence. Students will be excused from team practices and/or contests during regular school vacation periods. It is the expectation of the coach and athletic department that the student will notify the coach at least 2 weeks prior to the excused absence.

A participant who fails to attend a regularly scheduled practice session or contest and receives an unexcused absence may be withheld from the next scheduled contest. If an additional unexcused absence occurs, the participant may be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the sports season. Excused and unexcused absences may affect a student-athlete's playing time, as team preparation may have been missed.

Students absent from athletic practice for five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury must receive a medical release from a physician licensed to practice medicine before remittance to practice or contests. Students with potential head injuries must obtain a medical release from a physician licensed to practice medicine before remittance to practices or contests.

## UNIFORMS

Student athletes are responsible for the care, security, and use of uniforms and any sports equipment provided by the school. Athletic participants will be responsible for paying the replacement fee for equipment items issued for use by the school that are deemed abused or not returned. Student-athletes will be withheld from athletics in the succeeding seasons and all school events, as well as field and overnight trips, until this obligation is met.

## INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS, BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT

The Coach, Athletic Director, Principal, and Head of School reserve the right to deny athletic participation to any student whose inappropriate actions or conduct are not explicitly covered in this handbook or individual team rules.

Unsportsmanlike conduct, insubordination, inappropriate behavior/conduct in school or at home or away contests, etc., are not representative of School students, teachers, or families and will not be tolerated. Exemplary actions, behavior, and conduct are expected from all parties in attendance. Any student, parent, or individual who exhibits unsportsmanlike conduct or inappropriate behavior will be barred from any additional athletic events that season. A second offense in subsequent seasons will result in banning the individual from any athletic contests involving the School for the remainder of the school year.

## TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

Coaches or the Athletic Director will provide parents with expected arrival times for practice, games, meets, and meetings. It is expected that parents will respect the coaches' time and be prompt in picking up their children. The Principal or Head of School will handle any issues with parents failing to pick up their child on time, and the student's ability to participate in practice and future games may be jeopardized.

## ATHLETIC GRIEVANCE POLICY

All problems, concerns, or complaints should be brought to the Athletic Director first. The Athletic Director will work with the parent/student to address concerns as needed with the coach. If closure is not reached between the parent and Athletic Director, then the school's grievance policy and procedures should be followed as outlined in the Family Handbook.

## TRYOUTS

The Head Coach of the sport will determine roster sizes. Students are strongly encouraged to be at each tryout session and must be in attendance for AT LEAST one tryout session to be deemed eligible to make a team. Only students currently enrolled at the School are eligible to attend tryouts.

## PLAYING TIME

One of the most emotionally charged issues surrounding an athlete's involvement in athletics is the allocation of playing time. Although attendance, attitude, commitment, effort, and ability all play a role in determining playing time, it is ultimately the coach's decision. At Summit Charter School, our sports teams are competitive, and playing time is not equal across the team. It is the responsibility of each coach to decide who starts a contest, what position the athletes play, and how long they should play. All students, parents, and community members are asked to respect this model and the coach's decision. If a parent or

student has a concern about their playing time in a match, a meeting should be scheduled with the coach to discuss the issue. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the resolution, the parent or student should follow the grievance policy set forth in this handbook.

## **INCLEMENT/HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR SPORTS**

All outdoor sports should follow the Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines found at <https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety-physicals/>

These guidelines are reviewed/revised annually by the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the NCHSAA.

### **Academic Eligibility for Athletics**

Athletes are students first. Student-athletes' grades will be evaluated every four weeks (during each progress report and report card reporting period) by the principal. Any student with an F will be placed on probation until the next reporting period. If the student is unable to improve their grade to a D or better, they will be suspended from participation in the athletic team for a period of four weeks. If the suspension from athletics occurs at the end of a season, the suspension will take effect at the start of the next season in which the student participates. If, upon the next reporting term, the student has improved their grade, they will be eligible to rejoin the team. During the probation period, student-athletes may participate in practice and games as long as they have no missing assignments. If during the probation period a student has a missing assignment, the student will attend the practice or game but will not participate. Coaches will work with students and teachers to ensure the athlete has adequate time, including missing practice as necessary and with explicit permission, to get extra help and complete assignments.

In addition, for high school, students must pass three out of four classes they're enrolled in the previous semester to remain eligible (work-study doesn't count as a class) and must maintain 85% attendance rate or higher (unexcused absences) in the previous semester.

### **Conduct Eligibility for Athletics**

Students who have been suspended from school--in-school or out-of-school--will be ineligible to participate in athletics--practice or games-- for the time of their suspension. Additionally, school administration and the Athletic Director reserve discretion in revoking a student's eligibility for athletic participation for a period of time based on any other concerns with student conduct that may or may not result in suspension from school.

## Attendance Policy

A child's presence for classroom instruction and experiential education opportunities offered throughout the Summit program is an extremely important component of his or her academic success. Parents are strongly encouraged to respect the importance of attendance and are asked to schedule travel and controllable absences around the school's calendar. Absences are coded as either **EXCUSED** or **UNEXCUSED**.

Students are expected to attend class daily as outlined by GS-115C - 378: The North Carolina Attendance Laws (GS-115C-378) expect every student to be in attendance each school day. High School students absent, excused or unexcused, for more than 5 class periods may receive a grade of F for that particular course. Students must recover any absence past 5 class periods.

**EXCUSED** absences are for the following reasons only:

1. Injury or illness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Inclement weather (ice, snow, or floods)
4. Religious observance
5. Quarantine
6. Court or administrative proceedings
7. Medical or dental appointments
8. Prior Approval Educational Opportunity

**In order to excuse an absence for any of the above reasons, a note must be written and given to the student's teacher or the office. Failure to do this will result in the absence being coded "unexcused".**

**UNEXCUSED** absences are absences due to any reason other than those listed above, with no exceptions. School work for unexcused absences may not be made up. Please note that an accumulation of 10 unexcused absences are grounds for truancy, and by state statute. (G.S. 115 C-378) the Head of School must report all cases of truancy to the Department of Social Services. It is also considered to be a violation of the Family Partnership Agreement if a student's absences meet or exceed 10% of the school days to that point of the school year.

9-12 students who miss more than 5 subject classes (i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> period algebra) throughout the year are subject to academic failure. Please be mindful of early dismissal from school.

## Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals

School hours are from 8:30 AM until 3:15 PM. Students are expected to be in attendance during these hours. Late arrivals and early dismissals are very disruptive to the classroom and demonstrate a lack of respect for the school schedule, the teachers, and the students. **A child must be present for ½ of the instructional day in order to be counted as present.** By state law, a note from the parent/guardian is required after an absence in order for the absence to be counted as excused. Without a note, the absence will be counted as **UNEXCUSED**. All tardies and early dismissals will be recorded and reported on progress reports.

Parents or guardians must sign in all late-arriving students at the front office. All early dismissals must also go through the front office. A parent or guardian must sign the student out. No students may be released from the classroom without a call from office personnel. **Excessive early dismissals and tardiness will warrant a mandatory parent conference with the Principal/Head of School and may result in an academic penalty for the class/subject that is missed.**

## **Bullying Policy**

### *Overview*

Summit Charter School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment and does not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. Summit Charter School adheres to the definition of bullying outlined in the 2009 School Violence Prevention Act (see reference at end of document). A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, verbal assaults, cyber-bullying, and social isolation or manipulation.

Summit expects students to immediately report incidents of bullying to a teacher and the Head of School should be informed of all reports of bullying. Teachers who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene and each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. Complaints can be turned in anonymously in writing or by direct report to a staff member. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, and during a school-sponsored activity.

### *Prevention*

Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

To help prevent bullying, the school counselor will facilitate staff development training and classroom lessons on bullying prevention and Summit will continue to utilize character education to cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build the school's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment. Teachers will also ensure that students prone to aggressive behavior and victims of bullying receive in-school counseling services.

### *Procedures*

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited to the following:

- All staff and parents will receive a copy of this policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying at the beginning of the school year or as part of new student orientation
- The school will make reasonable efforts to keep a report of bullying and the results of investigation confidential.
- Teachers who witness acts of bullying shall take immediate steps to intervene. People witnessing or experiencing bullying are expected to report the incident; such reporting will not reflect on the target or witnesses in any way.
- Incidents of bullying can be reported using the following channels:
  - Make a direct report to a school official
  - Complete and send an on-line submission form accessible on the school's website

- o Deposit a report in a confidential submission box located in the library

### *Investigation*

Reported incidents will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken after considering the following:

- Nature, severity, and number of occurrence(s) of the behavioral impact on the target
- Degree of physical, psychological, and social harm on the target
- Student's age, development and degree of maturity
- Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- Prior disciplinary history and continuing patterns of behavior
- Relationship between and among the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

### *Consequences*

Validated bullying behavior and/or acts of aggression will require parent(s) of the involved parties to meet with the principal and disciplinary action will be determined on an individual basis. Bullying is considered a violation of Summit's Family Partnership Agreement. Consequences include, but are not limited to a verbal or written apology, mandatory counseling, detention, and suspension.

### *Definition of Bullying as defined by the North Carolina General Assembly:*

#### *115C-407.15. Bullying and harassing behavior:*

"As used in this Article, "bullying or harassing behavior" is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that:

- (1) Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- (2) Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. For purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics."

### **Classroom Expectations**

Each teacher will teach and post a set of classroom expectations. Expectations are kept short and simple so students can remember them easily. Students should be made aware of expectations and review them often.

## **Class Parties**

Please check with your child's teacher concerning classroom policy.

## **Clubs**

Students should be encouraged to participate in clubs and sports activities. All school-sponsored clubs must seek administrative approval and must be sponsored by a faculty/staff representative. Club involvement and sports events should not interfere with the educational process of the child. If problems arise, please notify the Head of School.

## **Compliance with Other Laws**

The school shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The school shall also comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, whether federal, state, or local. Neither the State Board of Education nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of the school except as may otherwise be provided by law or separate contract. Neither the State Board of Education nor the county board of education is required to monitor the school for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## **Criminal Background Checks**

Summit Charter School believes that a safe and secure learning and working environment should be provided for all students and staff. Anyone who directly or indirectly has contact with children is in a unique position of trust in this society, and the school believes that criminal dispositions against an applicant, employee, or volunteer to the school may have an impact upon these goals and will be considered in hiring and dismissal decisions, as well as in the recruitment and usage of volunteers to the school.

All applicants, employees and volunteers of Summit Charter School must consent to and are subject to background screening initially upon appointment and every three years thereafter. Background screening may include:

Driving records check;

Criminal background check to verify no past history of abuse and/or sexual deviant behavior or other crimes of violence crimes of embezzlement and fraud;

Sex Offender Registry check; and

Employment and/or prior volunteer service reference checks.

Applicants and volunteers shall be required to answer completely and accurately questions on their application with regard to previous criminal history. Failure to do so will subject the applicant to not being hired, an employee being dismissed, or a volunteer request being denied. Applicants, current employees, and volunteers shall notify the Head of School immediately if they are charged with or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or nolo contendere) except minor traffic violations.

Information obtained through the implementation of this policy shall be kept confidential as provided in the North Carolina General Statutes and regulations. The school system shall maintain in paper format only data from a criminal history check conducted through the North Carolina Department of Justice. These records shall be kept in a locked, secure place, separate from the individual's personnel file.

## Code of Conduct

Summit Charter School strives to maintain a culture characterized by the Seven Virtues highlighted in the Summit Pledge: *Each day, in my words and my deeds, I will do my best to live these seven virtues: Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, Self-Discipline, Perseverance, and Giving.* Parents, students, and staff are expected to uphold and reinforce our Seven Virtues, which define Summit's Code of Conduct:

**Honesty:** I will be honest with myself and others

**Respect:** I will treat others the way I would like to be treated

**Responsibility:** I will take responsibility for my behavior and choices

**Compassion:** I will act with compassion

**Self-Discipline:** I will do my best academically, socially, and personally

**Perseverance:** I will work to overcome obstacles

**Giving:** I will help others

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to respect self, others, and their surroundings. Clear, consistent rules are developed, often with input from students. Teachers will work with students to determine logical and natural consequences for rule infractions. Parents will be notified whenever students are physically or verbally aggressive towards others, disruptive of the learning environment, or destructive of property. We value school/home connection and know that student behavior is much more likely to improve at school when we work together (see Parent Partnership Agreement).

## Expectations for Excellence

- School leaders will...
  - Establish and uphold clear expectations for a positive and consistent learning environment
  - Support and empower staff to lead in their classrooms and in their Base Camps
  - Monitor progress of student learning across classrooms and support teachers to address student learning needs
  - Be responsive to parent needs and concerns by communicating concerns to parents in a timely manner and responding to parent emails and phone calls within 24 hours and Uphold the Code of Conduct at all times.
  - Uphold the Code of Conduct at all times.
- Teachers will...
  - Establish and lead a positive and consistent learning environment
  - Plan and deliver engaging, rigorous, standards-aligned lessons

- Be responsive to student progress and needs
  - Be responsive to parent needs and concerns by communicating concerns to parents in a timely manner and responding to parent emails and phone calls within 24 hours.
  - Uphold the Code of Conduct at all times.
- Students will...
    - Engage positively in their learning and remain on-task with assignments
    - Follow classroom expectations and teacher directions to ensure learning time is maximized
    - Ask for help when needed. Give help to others when asked.
    - Uphold the Code of Conduct at all times

### Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Students are expected to follow the guidelines of SCS on campus, on school transportation, or at school-sponsored events on or off campus. Failure to adhere to the guidelines throughout the year will result in appropriate discipline, the purpose of which is to: ● Ensure the safety and sense of well-being of all children at Summit; and ● Help the student to make more positive behavior choices and in some instances, to make restitution to the classroom or school community. Consequences for inappropriate actions may be adjusted to reflect the age and individual needs of the offender.

The Consequences Chart (below) sets forth consequences for violations of behavior guidelines. Teachers and the school administration retain the discretion to modify disciplinary procedures and consequences and/or to take more severe and immediate action when deemed necessary and appropriate.

Please note that the consequences listed are a “menu” of consequences to support consistency and clarity in discipline procedures. The consequences outlined below are not intended to be directly and only correlated with the behavior listed on that line.

| Behavior                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Consequence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Staff Responsible |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Level 1: Actions disrupt flow of instruction and/or school culture, but do not cause additional harm to others</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>For all Level 1 Behaviors:</b><br>Teacher documentation of incident using their own classroom behavior log<br><br>Teacher facilitated consequences as appropriate such as:                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Teacher</b>    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dress code violation</li> <li>● Off-task behavior</li> <li>● Failure to come to school prepared (without supplies, homework, etc.)</li> <li>● Chewing gum</li> <li>● Eating food in class (unless at teacher scheduled times)</li> <li>● *Unauthorized use of device (phone, music, camera, Apple Watch, etc.) / violations of Summit’s Technology Responsible Use Policy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Logical consequence</li> <li>● Verbal warning/reminder</li> <li>● Take 5 (in classroom)</li> <li>● Apology (“Talk it out”)</li> <li>● Conference with student</li> <li>● Loss of participation in class activities/field trips</li> <li>● *Unauthorized device confiscated for at least the remainder of day</li> </ul> |                   |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Level 2: Actions could result in harm to others or the learning environment and are in direct opposition with our culture</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>For all Level 2 Behaviors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-5: Teacher/Student Conference</li> <li>• MS and HS: Detention(s) with written reflection, to be supervised by the teacher who assigned the detention.</li> <li>• Teacher documentation of incident using shared internal behavior log (ie, Google Sheet, Reflection Sheet)</li> <li>• Parent and administrator notification of behavior and consequence</li> </ul> <p>Additional progressive consequences by Teacher or Administrator may include:</p>                                             | <b>Teacher</b>                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 1 behaviors (3rd incident in class)</li> <li>• 3 or more unexcused absences or tardies</li> <li>• Directed inappropriate language, including profanity and disrespect</li> <li>• Failure to follow through with consequences for inappropriate behavior</li> <li>• Failure to follow reasonable request of the adult in charge and/or disrespect</li> <li>• Repeated dress code violations (3rd incident in class)</li> <li>• Repeated technology violations (3rd time in 9 week quarter)</li> <li>• *Plagiarism; cheating on assignment or exam.</li> <li>• Horseplay or rough behavior that could result in an injury</li> <li>• Being dishonest or deceitful</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference with student and parent led by teacher</li> <li>• Temporary removal from class</li> <li>• Community accountability (restitution, service, class meeting)</li> <li>• Loss of participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, band, clubs)</li> <li>• School Counselor notified</li> <li>• Peer mediation</li> <li>• Behavior contract written with student and parents</li> <li>• *Plagiarism or cheating will result in a 0 on the assignment and may include additional consequences outlined above</li> </ul> |                               |
| <b>Level 3: Actions cause harm to property or are repeated behaviors that could cause harm and are in direct opposition with our culture</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>For all Level 3 Behaviors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of incident using Office Referral form.</li> <li>• Parent conference led by Principal and/or Director</li> </ul> <p><b>Progressive Teacher/Administrator consequences including but not limited to:</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Principal</b>              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 2 behaviors</li> <li>• 3 Lunch Detentions in a quarter</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Property damage</li> <li>• Theft</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community accountability (restitution, service, class meeting)</li> <li>• HS students lose off campus lunch privileges</li> <li>• In school or out of school suspension (up to 10 days) (suspension will be documented in student records as required by NC Department of Public Instruction)</li> <li>• Referral to school counseling</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                     |                               |
| <b>Level 4: Actions cause others to feel unsafe and/or cause harm to others or self</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>For all Level 4 Behaviors:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of incident using Office Referral form.</li> <li>• Parent conference led by Principal <u>and</u> Director</li> </ul> <p><b>Progressive Teacher/Administrator consequences including but not limited to:</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Director and Principal</b> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Level 3 behaviors</li> <li>• Fighting/Assault*</li> <li>• Bullying*</li> <li>• Harassment*</li> <li>• Property damage*</li> <li>• Extortion*</li> <li>• Communicating threats*</li> <li>• Discrimination*</li> <li>• Hate language*</li> <li>• Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance</li> <li>• Possession, sale or transmission of tobacco, alcohol and/or controlled substances</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation with other students</li> <li>• Referral to school counseling</li> <li>• In school suspension (suspension will be documented in student records as required by NC Department of Public Instruction)</li> <li>• Short term out of school suspension (up to 10 days) (suspension will be documented in student records as required by NC Department of Public Instruction)</li> <li>• Full consequence may include: • community service, • longer-term suspension, • referral to Board for exclusion or expulsion</li> </ul> |  |
| *Required report to Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and/or law enforcement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |

## Weapons, Dangerous Instruments/Substances, and Firearms

**No unauthorized employee, parent, student or other person shall carry, or engage another person to carry, whether openly or concealed, a weapon, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco on school property at any time. School property includes any school building or bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by Summit or at any school fieldwork function.**

**Drugs and Alcohol** Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling or being under the influence of any of the following substances: narcotic drugs, unauthorized over-the-counter medications, any alcoholic beverage, or any other controlled substance. Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit drugs.

**Tobacco** Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or selling any tobacco product including cigarettes, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or other vaping devices whether nicotine or non-nicotine based, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Students are prohibited from possessing or using any paraphernalia associated with tobacco or vaping use, including pipes, rolling papers, e-cigarette “juices” or their cartridges, lighters, and matches. NC Senate Bill 530/SL 2013-165 defines e-cigarettes and associated products as “tobacco products.”

**Unauthorized Items** In addition to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and weapons, the following items are not allowed at school and are subject to immediate confiscation for return to a parent or guardian: •  
Lighters/Matches • Any other item that prohibits or hinders the fulfillment of the academic mission of the school

**Search and Seizures** School personnel have the authority to conduct reasonable searches and seize materials for the purpose of maintaining a safe, orderly environment and for upholding standards of conduct established by the school. A student’s person, locker, and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever school personnel have reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized material and that the material could be found on the student’s person or in the personal effects. This search will be conducted by a school administrator in the presence of another school administrator and/or the school resource officer.

**Short-Term Suspension** The Principal (and/or his/her designee) has the authority to suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days at a time (i.e. a Short-Term Suspension). There are no appeals for short-term suspensions of 10 days or less.

**Long-Term Suspension/Exclusion/Expulsion** For serious offenses, the Principal may recommend a long-term suspension, expulsion, exclusion, and/or participation in a behavioral contract. Decisions as to long-term suspensions and/or exclusion shall be made by an impartial hearing officer after appropriate written notice to the parties involved. The school's Head of School shall sit as a hearing officer. In his/her absence, the board chair shall either (a) appoint a hearing officer or (b) have the matter heard by a panel of three board members, who shall be appointed by the board chair.

**Appeal Process** If the matter is heard initially by an impartial hearing officer, the student may appeal to a panel of three board members, who shall be appointed by the board chair. An appeal must be requested in writing within ten (10) days of the hearing officer's decision. The decision of the Board panel is final, and there shall be no right of appeal to the full Board. If the matter is heard initially by a three-member panel of the Board, there is no further right of appeal to the full Board. As appropriate, the impartial hearing officer or Board panel shall inform the parents and school of the specific procedures for any hearing and/or appeal.

**Out-of-School Suspension** At the time of the suspension, administrators or teachers will notify the student and parents and explain the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and the conditions of the student's return. Parents will also be notified in writing. The desired outcome of all suspensions is that students will be able to make better choices and take responsibility for their actions. • During an out-of-school suspension, a student may not be on campus for any reason or attend an off-campus Summit event. This includes activities on our campus that are sponsored by other organizations, such as sports clubs. • Students may make up work during or following a suspension at the teacher's discretion, but it is the student's responsibility to get assignments and schedule make-up quizzes or tests. • Students participating in extracurricular activities may be removed from the activity temporarily or permanently at the discretion of the staff member in charge of the activity. • Local boards of education may refuse to admit any student who has been expelled or suspended from Summit under G.S. 115C-391 until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired. • Before a suspended student can be readmitted, the student's parents may be required to meet with the Principal and/or Head of School to establish a behavioral plan for the student's return to school..

**Provisions Specific to Students with Special Needs:** 1. The Individual Education Plan of every student with special needs will indicate if the student is not expected to meet the regular discipline code, and if not, what modifications of the code are required. The appropriate EC staff will be consulted for discipline procedures on a case-by-case basis. 2. Summit will follow the North Carolina Discipline Procedures (NC 1504-2) "Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities" and state and federal law as required for short-term suspensions (or multiple short-term suspensions), long-term suspensions (lasting more than 10 days or any series of suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days that results in a change of placement), expulsion or special circumstances.

The Code of Conduct prohibits discrimination based on an individual's protected classification under federal law, including antisemitism as defined in G.S. 12-3.2.

## **Disciplinary Records**

Federal law requires that we forward disciplinary records with respect to suspensions or expulsions when students transfer to other schools

## **Concussion Policy**

Guidelines for removal of a student from physical or mental activity:

Recognizing a concussion

- A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body and
- Any of the concussion signs or symptoms listed below
- Signs- seems confused, answers questions slowly, repeats questions, can't remember events before and after the hit, bump or fall, loss of consciousness, has behavior or personality changes.
- Symptoms- trouble thinking clearly, trouble concentrating, feeling groggy/foggy, problems with short term memory, irritable, sad, nervous, more emotional, headache, nausea/vomiting, dizziness or balance problems, feeling tired, vision problems, bothered by noise/light, numbness or tingling, doesn't feel right, sleeps less/more than usual, trouble falling asleep.
- Signs of a more serious brain injury
- A headache that gets worse
- Pupils unequal
- Significant nausea or repeated vomiting
- Increased confusion, restlessness or agitation
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, decreased coordination
- Convulsions or seizures
- Loss of consciousness
- Observe students for signs and symptoms for a minimum of 30 minutes. If a student experiences one or more symptoms of a concussion, parents should be notified and the student should be referred to a healthcare professional. If a student loses consciousness, 911 should be called.

**Notification to concussion management team:** Athletic director, PE teachers, counselor, student's teachers, administrators, school nurse, and parents/guardian

\* The Concussion Management Team is formed and meets or communicates on a regular basis to discuss a recovery plan.

### **Return to Learn Protocol After Concussion**

Total Rest- NO SCHOOL. 24-48 hrs of complete rest at home. No mental exertion

(computer, texting, video games, television, physical exertion, homework, reading)

**Part-time School with adjustments-** Students may return to school with a healthcare provider's written clearance after a concussion. There may need to be a shortened day/schedule with built in breaks, no significant classroom work or any kind of testing, provide extra time, may need extra help, modified assignments. Concussion management team discusses concussion management plan.

**Full-time School with adjustments-** May progress to full-time school once able to handle mental exertion without worsening of symptoms and has medical clearance with a healthcare provider's written clearance. Adjustments still in place. Concussion management team meets daily and revises concussion management plans.

**Full-time School without adjustments-** Students may participate in all classes without learning adjustments once a student has been symptom free for 24 hours. Written medical clearance from a healthcare provider must be provided to the school for the student to return to athletics/sports/PE.

Progression is individual. Every concussion is different and students' symptoms may vary. Avoiding re-injury and over exertion until fully recovered is essential to proper concussion management. Current research demonstrates that most symptoms subside in 1-3 weeks post-concussion in approximately 80% of individuals. Concussion recovery time may be prolonged if appropriate rest and proper management is not adhered in the recovery process.

### **Back to Class After a Concussion**

- Support in the classroom- Teachers and school staff can provide symptom-based classroom adjustments while the student's brain continues to heal. Academic adjustments can be lifted as the brain heals.
- Physical- (headache, "pressure in head", dizziness, sensitivity to light/noise, blurred vision, neck pain)
- Remove from physical activity (recess or gym)
- Sit out of music class
- Allow rest breaks during class (may need to rest in nurse's office)
- Allow wearing sunglasses outdoors and indoors
- Reduce exposure to screen and or reduce brightness on computer screen
- Reduce overhead or fluorescent lighting
- Emotional- (emotional, irritable, sadness, anxious, depressed)
- Develop an emotional support plan (e.g., identify an adult with whom they can talk with if needed)
- Understand that mental fatigue can manifest "emotional meltdowns"
- Locate a quiet place student can go if necessary
- Watch for secondary symptoms of depression
- Cognitive- (feeling more slowed down/foggy, difficulty concentrating, difficulty remembering)
- Provide extra time with assignments/test
- Reduce cognitive load
- Remove "busy" work that is not essential for comprehension

- What is most important concept for student to learn

Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Heads Up for Schools:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/index.html>

The Center on Brain Injury Research and Training Center- <https://cbirt.org/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25601958/>

<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/132/5/948/31692/Returning-to-Learning-Following-a-Concussion?autologincheck=redirected>

## Drop-off/Pick-up

Students should not be on campus prior to 8:10 AM unless they are being tutored

**Morning Drop-off-** Drop-off is between 8:10 and 8:30 AM.

- Cars are to enter Cashiers School Rd at Cornucopia restaurant
- Maintain 10mph speed and take caution around narrow areas in the road and limited visibility points along Zeb Alley and Mitten Lane
- Cars will line up the Summit drive in a single car line
- Students will be dropped off at one of the four stations on the main porch
- Cars are to remain on the right side of the drive and should take caution exiting Mitten Lane and Zeb Alley
- During times of high traffic, we encourage drivers to exit to the right on Cashiers School Rd towards the Methodist Church to reduce road congestion

## Afternoon Pick-up

- Cars are to enter Cashiers School Rd at Cornucopia restaurant
- Maintain 10mph speed and take caution around narrow areas in the road and limited visibility points along Zeb Alley and Mitten Lane
- Cars will line up the Summit drive in the two right-hand lanes leading to the cul-de-sac and exercise an alternate merge for a single pick-up line
- Students will line up by grade in designated spots on the front porch/in classrooms
- A caller will announce approaching car numbers and delegate students to one of four pick-up stations (i.e. “carpool 56 report to station B)
- Cars are to remain on the right side of the drive and please **STOP** at the end of the drive and **LOOK** before turning onto Mitten Lane
- During times of high traffic, we encourage drivers to exit to the right on Cashiers School Rd towards the Methodist Church to reduce road congestion

## Additional Carline Notes

- Students dropped off after 8:30am must be accompanied by an adult to the office to sign in and receive a tardy slip. Excessive tardies or early dismissals will mandate a meeting with the Head of School to discuss consequences.
- If your child is to ride home with an individual other than yourself, a note is required.
- For the safety of the children, we ask you *not* to be on your cell phone during carline.
- Do Not pull out of the car lane and pass a car or bus that is loading or unloading children
- **All students must use the car line area.**

## **EPA- Asbestos Emergency Response Act**

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires all schools to inspect building materials for the presence of asbestos. AHERA excludes schools from the inspection requirement if the school was constructed after October 12, 1988, and has a signed statement from the architect of project engineer responsible for constructing the school stating that no asbestos-containing building materials were specified for use in the construction of the school. Our school has been provided with such a statement, and is, therefore, exempt from the requirement to conduct an asbestos inspection.

The EPA requires us to annually notify you that we are aware of the AHERA regulation, and that we are in compliance. The Management Plan is available for your review at any time during normal school hours (M-F, 9:30am – 3:30pm). The Asbestos Program Manager, Marie Starkings, is available to answer any questions you may have about asbestos in our building (828-743-5755).

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

*The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*, a Federal law, requires that Summit Charter School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's records. However, Summit Charter School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with Board procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Summit Charter School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for baseball, soccer and other school sports
- School calendar and directory

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that publish yearbooks and local news agencies.

If you do not want Summit Charter School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Summit Charter School in writing by the tenth

day of each new school year. Summit Charter School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Photograph
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Degrees, honors, and awards received

Summit Charter School, by making this information available to parents on a yearly basis, is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A complete copy of this law may be viewed online at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

## Family Partnership Agreement

Summit Charter School is founded upon **trust and responsibility shared among parents, teachers, students and the community**. Parents in particular, are viewed as their child's primary teachers, and the home as the foundation for learning. Parents and students sign a Family Partnership Agreement to actively support their child's education and the school.

## Student Field Trip Policy

There are many places in the western North Carolina region that are excellent areas to extend learning. Classrooms may choose to go on field trips periodically throughout the year. In some cases, parents may be asked to assist as field trip chaperones. Chaperones must promptly return the necessary paperwork provided by the school including a current background check, adhere to schedules and trip expectations. Field trips are an educational experience that allows students to visit new and interesting places. Please note that chaperoning a field trip is a significant responsibility. Parents should follow the teacher's directions explicitly and ***should not bring siblings***.

Parents who are willing to drive their car and transport children on a school trip must have a complete background check with the school and file their current license, registration, and insurance card with the business office.

All students participating in field excursions must have a "Blanket Field Trip Permission" form signed by a parent/guardian on file in the front office.

Violations of the school's Code of Conduct, Academic, and Attendance policies are subject to review by the Administration and may impact student eligibility to participate in a field trip. Student eligibility to participate in field trips may be revoked for students who have been suspended (in school or out of school) during the school year or for other conduct, academic, or attendance concerns as determined by the Head of School or Principal.

## Overnight Trip Expectations

Beginning in sixth grade, overnight student trips are an integral part of Summit's educational experience. During such trips, students are expected to represent their school, community and family in an appropriate manner and uphold the Seven Virtues. All students and their parents/guardians must review the rules and expectations listed. No student will be allowed to participate on an overnight school trip without a signed copy (signed by student and parent/guardian) of the following expectations, which must be on file prior to each yearly trip. Summit Charter School's expectations and policies, as detailed in the Code of Conduct, shall apply at all times for the duration of the trip, including, but not limited to, the following:

- There shall be no drinking of alcoholic beverages or use of nicotine/tobacco products, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia.
- Any student who uses prescription and over counter medication MUST submit a medical authorization form to the school nurse at least one week prior to the trip.
- There shall be no inappropriate public display of affection (PDA) or inappropriate relations.
- Students will be required to change clothes if the teacher/chaperone deems the attire inappropriate.
- Students (and their parents/guardians) shall be held liable for any damage or loss of property at all times while on the trip.
- Students shall remain in their assigned rooms and groupings.
- Summit Charter School staff retain the right to enter and inspect hotel rooms/tents used by students during the trip. Summit Charter School staff retain the right to inspect student's belongings at any time the chaperones feel such inspection may reveal a violation of school policies.
- At the end of all trips, students must be picked up at the school at the designated time.

### Consequences

Any student who fails to comply with the Code of Conduct and/or any of the preceding rules and regulations or who fails to cooperate with the teachers/chaperones may be subject to one or more of the following consequences at the discretion of the administration:

1. Sent home. Parents will be notified and will be responsible for making travel arrangements at the parent's cost. No trip refunds will be issued.
2. Suspended from any or all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year and/or following school years.
3. Subject to disciplinary action, including suspension from school and/or expulsion. In the event of an illegal act, the proper authorities may be notified.

### Grievance Policy

This policy is in place to respond to parent/guardian/student grievances. Grievances may only come from current students or parents/guardians of current students. It is expected that any guardian/parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher/staff member.

This means that if they disagree with any policy or procedure within the classroom or school, the first level of grievance is their student's teacher or the relevant staff member. If they are not satisfied with the teacher's/staff member's response, they should then set a meeting with the grade-level Principal. At that meeting, the teacher, grade-level Principal and parent/guardian must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed. If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Head of School. Similarly, if a guardian/parent/student disagrees or has an issue with a policy or procedure at the School, the guardian/parent/student should set a meeting with the Head of School. If the guardian/parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Head of School and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the guardian/parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a guardian/parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or School will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher, staff member, and/or grade-level Principal.

### **Definition of a grievance**

A grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a current parent of a student stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, law, or regulation. Complaints that do not raise an alleged violation of a School policy, board policy, law or regulation do not raise grievance issue and are not subject to these procedures. In addition, a grievance does not include disagreements on day-to-day operations issues, personnel matters, schedules, or student discipline unless they violate a specific policy, law, or regulation. Additionally, a grievance does not include a complaint covered by certain other policies or procedures, including but not limited to complaints under Title VI, Title IX, the ADA/ADAA, the Parents' Bill of Rights, and the School's non-Title IX harassment and bullying policy which shall be handled in accordance with those policies. Any parent or student who has a complaint covered by those policies must follow the specific policy that addresses their complaints. Only current parents/guardians or students may bring a grievance under this Policy.

### **Time Limits**

A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen calendar days of the meeting with the Head of School. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Head of School.

### **The grievance process is as follows:**

**Step 1:** If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Head of School, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the guardian/parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The guardian/parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision-making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Head of School of the School and to the Chair of the Board of Head of Schools. If the Head of School of the School is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board of Head of Schools.

**Step 2:** Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided

such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Head of Schools may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with the School's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting, the Board of Head of Schools will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email is accepted) if further action is necessary. If the board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance, gather information, and/or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the meeting where the board makes a decision on the grievance, the board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal notice and the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the board reaches a decision on the grievance, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five school days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final and there is no appeal rights to the Board. Notwithstanding any other provision, the Board may conduct an investigation and/or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, at any time.

## **Immunization Requirements**

The North Carolina Immunization Law was amended effective July 1, 1987. The law, .0401 NCAC 7A(a) describes the immunizations required. Immunizations must be placed in the student's cumulative file within the first 30 days of the school year (or the enrollment date for student transfers). For additional information, please contact the front office/school nurse.

## **Illness and Injury**

The following policies on illness and injury have been written in conjunction with the North Carolina School Health Program Manual, which includes the latest research and recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses.

Students should remain at home from school when they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Sore throat with a fever
- Rash accompanied with a fever

Students are not permitted to return to school until they are free of any of the above symptoms (**without the** use of fever reducers such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen) for a **minimum of 24 hours**. Students with Strep throat or other bacterial illnesses must remain home until 24 hours after treatment has started and any fevers have abated unless otherwise stated in a note from a doctor or physician. Students who have diarrhea or vomiting may return to school when they are free from diarrhea/vomiting for **24 hours**

Parents will also be notified of their child's condition in the situations listed below:

- Injury where there is swelling, severe pain, or a question of a sprain or broken bone
- Injury where there is significant bleeding or if bleeding does not stop in a short amount of time. etc.
- Eye injury
- Burns
- Head injury
- Dog or other animal bite
- Chipped or avulsed tooth
- Poisoning
- Pediculosis (lice)
- Any problem about which there is a concern.

Any other concerns or medical situations not listed will be handled at the collaboration and discretion of the school nurse, respective student parents/guardians, and the school administration.

### Pediculosis (Lice)

In the event that a student has been properly assessed and confirmed to have live head lice by the school nurse, the student should remain in class but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others. The school nurse will contact the student's parents to discuss treating the child at the conclusion of the school day. Students with nits only should not be excluded from school, and students found with an active lice infestation are permitted to return to school after treatment has been started at home. In cases that involve head lice, as in all school health issues, the school nurse will make every effort to prevent stigmatizing and to maintain the student's privacy as well as the family's right to confidentiality.

### **Inclement Weather/Early Dismissal**

In the event of inclement weather, the Head of School will make a decision whether to cancel school, remain on a regular schedule, or call for a late start. At the time of the decision, the Head of School will initiate the All Call System and contact local news stations:

WYFF-Channel 4-Greenville  
 WLOS-Channel 13-Asheville  
 School Message-743-5755

We also encourage parents to enroll in WLOS News 13 Text Alerts for immediate notification to your cell phone about school closings and delays.

In the event of a late start or early dismissal, families will be notified by the All Call System. Regardless of the decision, parents should not bring their child(ren) to school if they feel that their safety is at risk.

**\*Please note that for the purpose of inclement weather, Summit is not listed as a Jackson County school. Watch or listen for information specific to Summit Charter School.**

### **Internet Safety Policy**

## Introduction

It is the policy of the board to: (a) prevent user access via its technological resources to, or transmission of, inappropriate material on the Internet or through electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access to the Internet and devices or programs connected to or accessible through the Internet; (c) prevent other unlawful online activity; (d) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (e) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act.

## Definitions

### Technology Protection Measure

The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.

### Harmful to Minors

The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- a. taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- b. depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- c. taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

### Child Pornography

The term "child pornography" means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:

- a. the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- b. such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
- c. such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

### Sexual Act; Sexual Contact

The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

### Minor

For purposes of this policy, the term "minor" means any individual who has not attained the age of 17.

## Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) will be used to limit access to age-appropriate subject matter and materials. The school shall block or filter access to inappropriate information on the Internet and World Wide Web. Specifically, blocking will be applied to audio and visual depictions deemed obscene or to be child pornography or harmful to minors. Student access to other materials that are inappropriate for minors will also be restricted. The board has determined that audio or visual materials that depict violence, nudity, or graphic language that do not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose are inappropriate for minors. The Head of School, in conjunction with a school technology and media advisory committee shall make a determination regarding what other matter or materials are inappropriate for minors. School system personnel may not restrict Internet access to ideas, perspectives, or viewpoints if the restriction is motivated solely by disapproval of the views involved.

In accordance with state law, students shall not access social media platforms on school devices or networks except when expressly directed to do so by a teacher for educational purposes.

A student or employee must immediately notify the appropriate school official if the student or employee believes that a website or web content that is available to students through the school system’s Internet access is obscene, constitutes child pornography, is “harmful to minors” as defined by CIPA, or is otherwise inappropriate for students. Students must notify a teacher or the school principal; employees must notify the superintendent or designee.

Due to the dynamic nature of the Internet, sometimes Internet websites and web material that should not be restricted are blocked by the Internet filter. A student or employee who believes that a website or web content has been improperly blocked by the school system’s filter should bring the website to the attention of the principal. The principal shall confer with the technology director to determine whether the site or content should be unblocked. The principal shall notify the student or teacher promptly of the decision. The decision may be appealed through the school system’s grievance procedure.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled during use by an adult for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

All users of the school system's technological resources are expected to comply with the requirements established in the student technology acceptable use policy. Users are prohibited from: (a) attempting to gain unauthorized access, including “hacking” and engaging in other similar unlawful activities; and (b) engaging in the unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identifying information regarding minors.

## Education, Supervision, and Monitoring

To the extent practical, steps will be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the school system’s online computer network, especially when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. The school will also take all reasonable measures to prevent access to websites, web applications, and/or software that do not protect the disclosure, use, or dissemination of a student’s personal information.

It is the responsibility of all school personnel to educate, supervise, and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children’s Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures are the responsibility of the technology director or designated representatives.

The Technology Director or designated representatives shall provide age-appropriate training for students who use the school system's Internet services. The training provided will be designed to promote the school system's commitment to educating students in digital literacy and citizenship, including:

1. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the student technology acceptable use policy.
2. Student safety with regard to safety on the Internet, appropriate behavior while online, including behavior on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response; and
3. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Following this training, the student must acknowledge that he or she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of Technology Responsible Use.

#### Instruction on Social Media Effects

Additionally, the school's standard course of study shall include instruction on social media and its effects on health, including social, emotional, and physical health. Instruction shall be provided at least once during elementary and middle school and at least twice during high school. The topics must include, but not be limited to, all of the following topics:

1. Negative effects of social media on mental health, including addiction.
2. The distribution of misinformation on social media.
3. Methods of manipulating behavior using social media.
4. The permanency of information shared online.
5. How to maintain personal security.
6. How to identify cyberbullying, predatory behavior, and human trafficking on the Internet.
7. How to report suspicious behavior on the internet.
8. Personal and interpersonal skills or character education that enhances individual level protective factors and mitigates or reduces risk-taking or harmful behavior.

School administration shall develop any regulations needed to implement this policy and shall submit any certifications necessary to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

## **Lunch**

Students should bring lunch and a full water bottle from home each day. The school does not provide heating or refrigeration services for students, and students should be encouraged to carry ice packs for cold items and not bring items that require warming or cooking. If a child forgets lunch, substitutions may be provided by the school.

Parents are welcome to join their student/s for lunch. Please make sure that you are aware of lunch times and recommended guidelines.

**Lunch Times:** K-3: 12:00-12:45; 4th-5th grades: 11:45-12:15; 6-8th grades: 12:00-12:35; HS: 11:35-12:10

### **Parent Lunch Guidelines:**

- Parents should send lunch *with their child* to school every day. We discourage dropping off lunch for a child during the school day.
- When joining their child for lunch, parents should plan to eat with their child at the *beginning* of the lunch period.
- Parents should model our promotion of healthy meals and consumption of water or nutritious beverages.
- Parents are encouraged to *eat* lunch with their child, not to drop it off at the front desk for delivery.
- A parent's invitation to eat lunch at Summit is intended to promote quality family time during the school day without disruption to the schedule and student policies.

### **Food Allergy Plan**

Summit is committed to establishing a healthy and safe environment for students with food allergies. Please communicate any food allergies your child may have to the front office and classroom so that necessary precautions can be put in place as needed.

### **Mascot/School Colors**

The mascot for Summit Charter School is the Summit Bear. School spirit colors are hunter green, navy, and white.

### **Medication Policy**

Teachers are not allowed to keep or distribute medicine in the classroom. To minimize disruptions in the school day, medicines should be taken at home rather than at school whenever feasible. If it is necessary for a student to take medication during the school day, including over-the-counter medications, there must be a completed "Medication Authorization Form" along with the medication on file with the school. All medications will be kept in the office to be distributed at the appropriate time. In accordance with North Carolina statutes, all medication must be in its original container and prescription medications must be accompanied by a doctor's note. Parents are responsible for notifying the front office of all medication needs and for personally delivering the medication to the front office. Students will be allowed to leave class and walk to the front office to receive medication.

### **Medication Administration Guidelines**

- All medications to be given by Summit Charter School personnel while at school (over-the-counter and prescription) require a completed Medication Authorization Form.
- Physician authorization is required for all prescription medications to be given by Summit Charter School personnel. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain the physician's signature on the form (may be emailed).
- Over-the-counter medication must be provided in the original container, dose schedule, and student's name affixed to the container. (Medication Authorization form top portion only must be filled out and signed by parent/guardian)

- Prescription medications must be brought to school in the original pharmacy labeled container with the child's name, prescription number, drug, dosage, and directions for administration.
- A new authorization form is required each school year and if the medication or dosage is changed.
- Expired medications will not be administered. Emergency medications that will not expire during the school year should be provided whenever possible.
- Medication not picked up at the end of each school year or the end of treatment regimen will be disposed of according to state regulation and district protocol after a reminder.

### **Student Self-Administering Medications Policy**

Parents may request authorization for a student to carry and self administer asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector by submitting a completed self administration form with a physician's signature.

## **Name, Image, Likeness Policy**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### **Name, Image or Likeness ("NIL"):**

The use of a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes and in exchange for compensation to the student or an immediate family member of the student.

#### **Name, Image and Likeness Agreement ("NIL agreement"):**

Any formal agreement or contract to use a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes, in exchange for compensation to a student or an immediate family member. Immediate Family Member is defined as: parents/guardians or siblings. A student may enter into an NIL agreement that conforms with this policy or otherwise use the student's name, image, or likeness in any of the following ways: public appearances or commercials; autograph signings; athletic camps and clinics; sale of non-fungible tokens ("NFTS"); product or service endorsements; promotional activities, including in-person events and social media advertisements; any other commercial activities that are intended to promote a product or service offered by, increase the profits of, or otherwise generate financial benefits for a party to the NIL agreement from the use of the student's NIL.

#### **Compensation:**

Anything of value to the student or an Immediate Family Member of the student, including cash, in-kind gifts, discounts, and/or other tangible benefits.

#### **School Administrators:**

For purposes of this policy, the term “school administrator” includes the Head of School (or their designee), principal and athletic director of Summit Charter School, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, and the head coach of any sport in which the student participates during the term of the NIL agreement.

**Administering Organization:**

Any organization in which the School is a member or in which its sports teams are members, such as the North Carolina Athletic Association and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

## PROCESS

1. **Course completion.** The student must complete the NIL education course offered by the NFHS no later than 10 business days prior to the student’s entry into an NIL agreement. If the student is under 18 years of age, the student’s parent or legal guardian must also complete the course. Certificates of completion from the NFHS course for both the student and parent or legal guardian must be submitted to all School Administrators no later than 10 business days prior to the execution of entry into an NIL agreement.
2. **Disclosure.** The student must provide a complete and unredacted copy of any proposed NIL agreement or any proposed amendment to an existing NIL agreement to school administrators no later than 10 business days prior to execution of the proposed agreement or amendment.
3. **Submission to Administering Organization.** The school Athletic Director shall submit a copy of any NIL agreement involving a student at Summit Charter School to any Administering Organization of which the School is a member no later than 30 days of the disclosure of the NIL agreement or amendment to an NIL agreement by the student. It is the responsibility of the administering organization to maintain accurate records of all NIL agreements received.

## APPLICATION

This policy applies to any NIL agreement executed during the time a student is enrolled at the School, even if the benefits of the agreement would not accrue to the student or an immediate family member until after the student has graduated.

## RESTRICTIONS

Students participating in interscholastic athletics may enter into Name, Image, and Likeness (“NIL”) agreements, but are subject to the following restrictions:

1. The NIL agreement cannot condition the receipt, type, or extent of any compensation on the extent or quality of a student’s performance.

2. If the student is younger than 18 years old, the student's parent or legal guardian shall be a party to the NIL agreement.
3. No student engaged in an NIL agreement-related activity can make any reference to Summit Charter School or any PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS.
4. No student engaged in an NIL agreement-related activity can receive compensation for the use of intellectual property—which includes the name, uniform, mascot, mark, or logo of the entity that owns the intellectual property—of the School or any PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS.
5. No student shall endorse or promote the goods or services of any third-party with which the student has entered into an NIL agreement during interscholastic athletic competition or other school-based activities or events. This includes wearing apparel displaying the mark, logo, brand, or other identifying insignia of the third-party entity, unless it is part of the standard uniform for the school or sport.
6. No student shall enter into an NIL agreement or otherwise use the student's name, image, and likeness to promote any of the following: adult establishment (as defined in G.S. 14-202.10 (2)) or adult entertainment services; alcohol or alcoholic products; tobacco, vaping, or other electronic smoking devices, or other nicotine products; cannabis or cannabis products; controlled substances (as defined in G.S. 90-87(5)); opioids or prescription pharmaceuticals; weapons, firearms, or ammunition; casinos or gambling, including sports betting; activities that would disrupt the operations of a school or PSU as determined by the School or an Administering Organization.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The NIL agreement shall hold the following harmless from any liability related to or arising from the NIL agreement: the governing body of Summit Charter School and their officers and employees; the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction, along with their officers and employees; and any administering organization with which Summit Charter School is associated, along with their officers and employees.
2. Any NIL agreement shall otherwise comply with state and federal law.
3. To the extent any law, regulation, or rule requires Summit Charter School or a PSU to sign the NIL Agreement, such signature solely represents acknowledgment of receipt. It expressly does not represent consent, compliance, legal review, or assent to such NIL Agreement. Summit Charter School shall not be liable for any NIL Agreement.

## **Nepotism Policy**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this nepotism policy is to protect the interests of Summit Charter School when it is contemplating entering into an arrangement with an immediate family member of a member of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) or an employee of Summit Charter School. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state laws governing nepotism applicable to nonprofit and charitable corporations.

### **Policy:**

The Policy shall be as follows:

1. Before any immediate family, as defined in G.S. §115C-12.2, of any member of the Board or a charter school employee with supervisory authority shall be employed or engaged as an employee, independent contractor, or otherwise by the Board in any capacity, such proposed employment or engagement shall be: (i) disclosed to the Board and (ii) approved by the Board in a duly called open-session meeting.

The burden of disclosure of such a conflict of interest shall be on the applicable Board member or employee with supervisory authority. If the requirements of this subsection are complied with, Summit Charter School may employ the immediate family of any member of the Board or a Summit Charter School employee with supervisory authority.

2. No teacher or staff member that is immediate family of the chief administrator shall be hired without the Board evaluating their credentials, establishing a structure to prevent conflicts of interest, and notifying the Department, with evidence, that this process has occurred.

The term “immediate family member” means a spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild. The term includes the step, half, and in-law relationships.

References North Carolina G.S. 115C-12.2, G.S. 115C-218.15; Section 4.3 Charter Agreement

## **Nondiscrimination**

We celebrate the many forms of diversity among our families, student body, faculty, staff, and community. We are committed to helping our students and staff appreciate differences in others while valuing themselves and to recognize the biases that exist in our society as we create an environment that challenges stereotypes and prejudices and is inclusive for all.

Summit Charter School does not discriminate against any employee, volunteer, or student on the basis of race, color, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status or any other status protected under local, state, or federal law. This policy extends to all personnel decisions, terms and conditions of employment, vendor contracts and provision of services. Summit Charter School does not tolerate

harassment for any reason. Respect for the dignity of others shall be the guiding principle for our relations with each other.

## **School Sponsored Activities**

Parents should support all school-sponsored activities and are encouraged to attend as many events as possible. Parents are needed to volunteer for activities in their child's classroom, or they can sign up as volunteers to assist in family activities sponsored by the SFA. Parents will be notified of upcoming events.

## **Technology: Cell Phone and Wireless Technology Policy**

- For safety reasons, parents should refrain from using their cell phones while in car line.
- To ensure the school environment is focused on learning, cell phones, Apple Watches, iPads, and other related wireless technology belonging to students (K-8) must be turned off and stored out of sight during the school day from 8:30 - 3:15. Students are prohibited from using technology devices without explicit permission from a teacher or staff member. Students in grades 9-12 may not use cell phones during classes, between classes, during campus-wide transitions (outside of HS building), or during Round Up or any school assembly; cell phones are permitted only during the lunch period, although students are still encouraged to limit their use of cell phones during this time. Students may come to the office to use the telephone for emergency calls.
- Failure to adhere to the above expectations will result in the student's technology being confiscated and will require a parent to pick up the technology from the office, and shall subject the student to discipline in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.
- All staff members shall receive training annually on this policy and its enforcement.
- This policy shall be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and staff members through appropriate channels, including but not limited to student handbooks, parent newsletters, and staff meetings. The policy shall also be submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) as required by law; DPI shall also receive the revised version of this policy any time it is modified.
- This policy aligns with North Carolina General Statute § 115C-76.100.

## **Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Summit Charter School is a tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free campus. Any possession, use, or sale of these substances is strictly prohibited. Possession of these substances with the intent to distribute or sell will result in possible expulsion. Drug paraphernalia, whether possessed for use or with the intent to sell or distribute, will be seen as an attempt to promote the distribution and use of illegal drugs and will result in suspension or expulsion.

A student's involvement with alcohol or other drugs can interfere not only with his or her academic and co-curricular activities, but also with the student's emotional, physical, mental, and social development. It is the board's goal to create a supportive, drug-free school environment. Unauthorized or illegal drugs and

alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. Students and their families are encouraged to voluntarily seek help with any type of substance abuse problem.

This policy applies to students while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity (whether on or off school property) and at any other time or place where the conduct is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly and efficient operation of the schools or the safety of individuals in the school environment. The Head of School or designee may develop and oversee procedures to implement this policy.

**Prohibited Behavior:**

1. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, sharing, providing, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any of the following substances:
  - narcotic drugs;
  - hallucinogenic drugs;
  - amphetamines;
  - barbiturates;
  - marijuana, CBD, Delta 8 or any related product; or
  - anabolic steroids;
  - synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., “bath salts”), and synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., “Spice,” “K2”);
  - any other controlled substance;
  - any substance containing any amount of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), Delta 8, CBD, regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law;
  - any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified or unfortified wine or other intoxicating liquor; or
  - any chemicals, substances, or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or of otherwise altering the student’s mood or behavior.
2. Students are prohibited from being at school with the odor of alcohol or illicit drugs about their person.
3. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, sharing, delivering, or manufacturing counterfeit (fake) drugs.
4. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, sharing, selling, delivering, or manufacturing drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to rolling papers, roach clips, lighters, matches, vaping devices, vape liquid containers, pipes, syringes, and other delivery devices for prohibited substances.
5. Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, or sharing prescription or over-the-counter drugs. A student who possesses or uses a prescription or over-the-counter drug in accordance with the School’s medication policy does not violate this policy.
6. A student is not in violation of this policy for being under the influence of a prohibited substance following its proper use as a medication lawfully prescribed for the student by a licensed health care practitioner.

7. Students may not conspire to sell or deliver prohibited substances or participate in any way in the selling or delivering of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or delivery ultimately occurs on school property.
8. The Head of School may authorize lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.

### **Reporting and Consequences:**

All employees are required to immediately report the above Prohibited Conduct to their supervisor and/or the Head of School. Failure to do so, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. As required by law, the Head of School must report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who has used or possessed a controlled substance in violation of law while on school property. The disciplinary consequences for drug and alcohol violations are described in the School's Code of Student Conduct. Where the disciplinary action does not result in withdrawal, exclusion or expulsion from the School, after completing substance abuse treatment a student will be provided the opportunity to be included in the school-based student support group upon re-entry to school as part of the recovery process.

## **K-8 Uniform Dress Code**

### **Upper Body**

**Shirt Style: Standard Colors- solid white, yellow, hunter green, navy, gray, red, light blue**

- Mesh or Knit Polo (short/long sleeve)
- Turtleneck (full or mock)
- Henley Shirt (low collar, with buttons, can be thermal)
- Knit Polo Dress

**Dress Shirt/Blouse: Standard Colors- Solid white, chambray blue, oxford blue**

### **Undershirts- White Only**

Undershirts are optional. Long-sleeve undershirts may not be worn with short sleeve shirts.

### **Overwear (worn inside school):**

**Standard Colors- solid white, yellow, hunter green, navy, gray, red, light blue**

- Sweaters (V-neck, crew neck, cardigans, sweater vest)
- Sweatshirts- (crew or zip front)
- Fleece Jackets/Vests- (zip-up, crew, or V-neck)
- (Official Summit Spirit /athletic outerwear is also approved)

### **Outerwear (worn outdoors):**

Any outerwear (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) may be selected for outdoor wear.

### **Hoodies:**

Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grades may only wear Summit hoodies in the classroom  
6-8th grades may also wear dress code colored Hoodies with pocket logo

### **Lower Body:**

#### **Standard Colors- solid navy blue, khaki, gray**

- Dress Pants (full or Capri length)
- Dress Shorts (fingertip length)
- Skirts/Skorts (fingertip length)
  - Shorts or the equivalent will be required under all skirts/dresses.
- Jumpers (fingertip length)

\*No jeans, leggings or sweatpants.

\*Pants and shorts should be worn at the waist.

### **Footwear**

Socks – Parents' discretion

Leggings/Tights - (May only be worn under uniform) solid navy, black, white, gray, or hunter green

Shoes - Parents' discretion; shoes must be closed-toe & closed-heel. No Crocs. (applies to free dress day as well).

### **Additional Uniform Dress Code Notes**

1. Appropriate jewelry may be worn (Head of School's discretion).
2. Shirts should be long enough that the belly and back are not exposed when arms are raised or students bend over.
3. No hairstyles that distract from the learning environment will be permitted (Head of School's discretion).
- 4.. “Free Dress” Guidelines: Teachers and the Head of School reserve the right to limit free dress clothing options if it is inappropriate.

(UPDATED 7/30/24)

## **High School Dress Code Guidelines**

Our goal for a dress policy is to create an optimum climate for learning while still allowing for individual expression. Students have the freedom to select clothing that is comfortable while learning to make choices that are appropriate to the situation. Summit students are often outside and/or engaged in active physical activity. Students must select clothing that is suitable for all scheduled classroom activities, including outdoor education, public speaking, and formal presentations.

**Standard Dress:** Students must observe the following guidelines:

- Shorts and skirts or other outer garments must be worn at an appropriate length. When students stand with their hands by their sides, shorts or skirts must be at or below their fingertips. Rips/tears must be below fingertips.

- Straps should be two inches wide. Spaghetti strap tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, see-through shirts, mesh shirts, and clothing that expose the midriff or chest are not appropriate. The bottom of one's shirt must cover the top of one's pants, shorts, or skirt when sitting and standing.
- Undergarments are to be worn and are not to be visible outside other clothing, e.g., bra straps, boxer shorts, tights. Leggings are permitted.
- T-shirts or other clothing or jewelry that make references to controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco, gang affiliations, sex, profanity, or that are insensitive to the culture of students/staff members are prohibited. No clothing will be permitted that may be offensive to any race, gender, or religion.
- Pants must be fastened properly around the waist.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- No sun/shade glasses are to be worn in the building unless it is medically prescribed to be worn indoors.
- No pajamas

If a teacher deems a student's clothing questionable enough to refer the student to the administration, the presumption is that the clothing has caused an academic disruption and will be restricted. IN QUESTIONABLE CASES, THE ADMINISTRATION IS THE FINAL ARBITER OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF CLOTHING.

**High School Uniform Days:** There will be several days during the year, such as school ceremonies or community presentations. Students will be expected to wear a Summit uniform. HS students should have at least one outfit that meets the following uniform guidelines:

- High School
  - All students will be in uniform on Fridays.
  - Two or more dress code violations in a quarter will require wearing a uniform for two weeks. This is to ensure that all students adhere to our dress code policy.

### **Upper Body**

**Shirt Style: any color and/or print is permitted**

- Mesh or Knit Polo (short/long sleeve)
- Turtleneck (full or mock)
- Henley Shirt (low collar, with buttons, can be thermal)
- Knit Polo Dress

Dress Shirt/Blouse: **any color and/or print is appropriate**

### **Undershirts- White Only**

Undershirts are optional. Long-sleeve undershirts may not be worn with short sleeve shirts.

### **Overwear (worn inside school):**

**Any color and/or print is permitted**

- Sweaters (V-neck, crew neck, cardigans, sweater vest)
- Sweatshirts- (crew or zip front)

- Fleece Jackets/Vests- (zip-up, crew, or V-neck)
- (Official Summit Spirit /athletic outerwear is also approved)

### **Outerwear (worn outdoors):**

Any outerwear (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) may be selected for outdoor wear.

### **Lower Body:**

- Dress Pants (full or Capri length)
- Dress Shorts (fingertip length)
- Skirts/Skorts (fingertip length)
  - Shorts or the equivalent will be required under all skirts/dresses.
- Jumpers (fingertip length)

\*No jeans, leggings or sweatpants.

\*Pants and shorts should be worn at the waist.

### **Footwear**

Socks – Parents’ discretion

Leggings/Tights - (May only be worn under uniform) solid navy, black, white, gray, or hunter green

Shoes - Parents' discretion; shoes must be closed-toe & closed-heel. No Crocs. (applies to free dress day as well).

### **Additional Uniform Dress Code Notes**

1. Appropriate jewelry may be worn (Head of School's discretion).
2. Shirts should be long enough that the belly and back are not exposed when arms are raised or students bend over.
3. No hairstyles that distract from the learning environment will be permitted (Head of School's discretion).
- 4.. “Free Dress” Guidelines: Teachers and the Head of School reserve the right to limit free dress clothing options if it is inappropriate.

(UPDATED 08/2026)

## **Visitors**

***All*** visitors must check in at the front office and obtain a Visitors Badge. The badge must be worn in a visible place while on campus. Please return the badge to the office when you leave campus. Parents are asked to check into the office as well. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

## **Volunteerism**

Volunteerism plays an integral part of Summit and continues to be the backbone for its success. Families are asked to volunteer a minimum of 36 hours per family over the course of the year to help support Summit. A full explanation can be found in the Family Partnership Agreement. Volunteer log sheets can be

found in the main office and are printed on the reverse side of your child's Green Folder. The SFA will appoint a volunteer coordinator to assist families with engaging in volunteer opportunities and recording their hours.

Volunteers working directly with students are required to complete authorization papers for background checks.

## **Water Bottles**

Keeping hydrated is important for overall health. Children should bring a bottle of water with them to school each day.

## **Ways You Can Support Summit**

- Sign up for *Tools for Schools* at Ingles. Summit receives credit from your purchases and can choose school equipment from a catalog provided by Ingles. This must be **renewed** on an annual basis.
- Link your Target credit card to Summit Charter School. The school will receive a % of your purchase. This must be **renewed** on an annual basis.
- Sign up for Amazon Smile, and register Summit Charter School as the charitable recipient.
- Box Tops for Kids- sign up and scan your Box Top coupons on various food products
- Participate in Summit Charter School Foundation, Inc. activities and drives.
- SFA
- Booster Club
- Summit Fest

Thank you for encouraging family, friends, and other groups to contribute and participate in Summit's efforts. Little things add up quickly.

# High School Addendum to the Family Handbook

## Program Overview

We continue to grow the unique LEAD program, positioning our students to develop their sense of purpose as leaders in their school and community through service learning, field studies, and personalized learning. Additionally, we will focus on developing our academic program to ensure all Summit graduates are prepared for success in college. It is our goal and expectation that 100% of our graduates leave Summit with high-quality college and career options--including the opportunity to attend and succeed in a college that matches their unique profile.

## LEAD Program Overview

The Summit high school experience combines rigorous college preparatory academics with the dynamic LEAD (**L**earn, **E**ngage, **A**nalyze, and **D**iscover) program designed to foster students that are inspired, empowered, and equipped to lead. Our LEAD program includes learning experiences throughout our community integrating the following pillars (attendance is required):

### Community Engagement

Students are connected to local organizations through service learning projects and personalized fieldwork opportunities in order to:

- Develop Empathy
- Encourage Curiosity
- Broaden Perspectives

### Outdoor Leadership

Outdoor expeditions that cultivate the following leadership skills and traits:

- Critical thinking
- Effective communication
- Confidence
- Interpersonal skills

### Mentor 360

Summit's Mentor 360 course partners students with teacher-mentors that coach them through an individualized leadership plan. Furthermore, students are connected with younger students in order to gain relevant opportunities to apply lessons, thereby completing the circle of mentorship.

### Life Academy

Life Academy teaches students essential skills needed to thrive in college, future work, and daily life. Life Skills include:

- Time Management and Organization
- Financial Literacy
- Public Speaking
- Personal Safety

At Summit, student success is not only measured by academic achievement, but also by strength of character and capacity to lead.

## Goals of Summit High School

- 100% of graduating seniors will have college “match” options
- 100% of graduating seniors successfully complete a personalized “Capstone” project

## College and Career Planning

Our program is designed to ensure that a high-quality college option is a choice for all students. In partnership with their parents and the support of Summit teachers and a college counselor, all Summit high school students will develop a post-secondary plan starting in 10th grade. The post-secondary plan will reflect career interests and exploration, college exploration, and a two-year college match process with the goal of students developing a list of colleges to apply to as seniors that reflect their goals, career interests, personal interests, and academic profile. It is our goal that each of our students graduates with the option to attend a college or university that reflects a match of these key components.

## Graduation Requirements & Course Sequence

Graduation requirements at Summit Charter School meet the State requirements for the Future Ready Core. These include the following minimum requirements:

| Subject Area   | 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                     | 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade                         | 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade               | 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                                    | Total Credits                       |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| English        | English I or English I Honors                             | English II or English II Honors                | English III or English III Honors    | English IV or English IV Honors<br>AP Literature & Composition            | 4                                   |
| Social Studies | World History or World History Honors<br>AP World History | Civic Literacy or AP U.S Government & Politics | American History or AP U.S. History  | Economics & Personal Finance<br>or<br>Economics & Personal Finance Honors | 4                                   |
| Math           | Math I or Math II Honors                                  | Math II or Math III Honors                     | Math III or AP Pre-Calculus          | Math IV or AP Calculus                                                    | 4                                   |
| Science        | Earth/ Environmental Science or                           | Biology or Biology Honors                      | Physical Science or Chemistry Honors | Advanced Science (based on offerings)                                     | 4<br><br><i>3 required by NCDPI</i> |

|                          |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              |                                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>World Language</b>    | AP Earth/Environmental Science                               |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              |                                                |
|                          | Spanish I                                                    | Spanish II                                                   | Spanish III*                                                 |                                                              | 2<br><i>required for UNC schools admission</i> |
| <b>Capstone</b>          |                                                              |                                                              | AP Seminar or Humanities 103                                 | AP Research or Humanities 104                                | 2                                              |
| <b>Humanities</b>        | Humanities 101                                               | Humanities 102                                               |                                                              |                                                              | 2                                              |
| <b>LEAD Immersion</b>    | LEAD I                                                       | LEAD II                                                      | LEAD III                                                     | LEAD IV                                                      |                                                |
| <b>Electives**</b>       | Visual Arts I-IV<br>Performing Arts I-IV<br>Personal Fitness | Visual Arts I-IV<br>Performing Arts I-IV<br>Personal Fitness | Visual Arts I-IV<br>Performing Arts I-IV<br>Personal Fitness | Visual Arts I-IV<br>Performing Arts I-IV<br>Personal Fitness | 5                                              |
| <b>PE/ Health</b>        | Health & PE                                                  |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              | 1                                              |
| <b>Community Service</b> | 20 hours                                                     | 20 hours                                                     | 20 hours                                                     | 20 hours                                                     | 80 hours                                       |
|                          |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              | Total Credits: 28                              |
|                          |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              |                                                              | 22<br><i>required by NCDPI</i>                 |

**\*Offered but not required:** AP Seminar (AP Seminar is a prerequisite to AP Research), Spanish III

**\*\*Electives**

- A variety of Elective courses will be offered each semester based on student interest and available faculty. Electives include introductory and advanced courses in visual arts, chorus, theater, computer science, and various physical fitness activities and sports. Summit also partners with North Carolina Virtual Public School and Southwestern Community College to offer a variety of online elective courses.
- Students are able to fulfill Future Ready Course of Study Elective Requirements as follows:
  - o 2 Elective credits minimum for World Language
  - o 2 Humanities credits
  - o 2 Art pathway credits (visual, performing arts, music, theatre)
- Art Requirement: Beginning in fall 2022, students entering Grade 6 and subsequently entering Grade 9 for the first time in 2025-26 shall have at least one arts education course in grades 6-12.
  - o starting with the Class of 2029, students must complete 1 credit of Art
  - o Students must complete the standard course of study (no local electives) for a given arts education course in its entirety to satisfy this requirement. After-school activities or partial courses do not fulfill this graduation requirement.
  - o Students who transfer in beginning in the ninth grade or later may be exempt, if such a requirement would prevent a student from graduating with the graduation cohort to which the student was assigned when transferring.

- Computer Science Requirement: Students entering Grade 9 in 2026-27 will have an additional requirement to take a credit in Computer Science. Electives will be reduced from 6 to 5.
  - Classes of 2030, 2031, 2032 must complete 1 credit of Computer Science in high school.
- Health & Physical Education:
  - As part of the Health & Physical Education credit requirement, students are required to successfully complete CPR instruction to meet Healthful Living Essential Standards as a requirement for high school graduation.
  - Accommodations/alternative assessments for students identified by ADA or IDEA will be provided.

## Endorsements

Students have the opportunity to earn Endorsements to their High School Diploma (GCS-L-007). Students must meet all requirements set forth in State Board Policy GCS-N-004 “State Graduation Requirements” related to earning a high school diploma. Endorsements identify a particular area of focused study for students. Summit offers students the opportunity to earn an Endorsement in the following areas:

- College Endorsement
- College/UNC Endorsement
- North Carolina Academic Scholars Endorsement
- Global Languages

In addition, Summit offers a school-specific Leadership/Service Endorsement. Students may earn more than one Endorsement, but are not required to earn any Endorsements.

Criteria for the Endorsements are as follows:

| Endorsement          | Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| College              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete Math 1, 2, 3 and a 4th credit that meets UNC Minimum Admission Requirements or be acceptable for earning placement in a credit bearing college math class under NC Community College System’s Multiple Measures Placement policy</li> <li>● Unweighted GPA of at least 2.6</li> </ul>                                                                                                                       |
| College/UNC          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete Math 1, 2, 3 and a 4th credit that meets UNC Minimum Admission Requirements</li> <li>● Complete 3 credits in science including at least 1 physical science with a lab, 1 life science, and 1 additional science course</li> <li>● 2 credits in one world language (other than English)</li> <li>● Weighted GPA of at least 2.5</li> </ul>                                                                   |
| NC Academic Scholars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete Math 1, 2, 3 and a 4th credit that meets UNC Minimum Admission Requirements</li> <li>● Complete 3 credits of science including Earth/Environmental, Biology, and either physics or chemistry</li> <li>● 4 credits of social studies including World History, American History I, American History II, and Civics &amp; Economics</li> <li>● 2 credits in one world language (other than English)</li> </ul> |

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 elective credits in any one subject area, such as Arts, World Languages, or other content area</li> <li>• Complete at least 3 higher-level courses during junior and/or senior years which carry quality points (AP, Dual Enrollment, honors)</li> <li>• Unweighted GPA of at least 3.5</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Global Languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined unweighted GPA of at least 2.5 for all 4 ELA courses required for graduation</li> <li>• Establish proficiency in 1 or more languages in addition to English, through one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Pass external exam approved by NCDPI establishing “Intermediate Low” proficiency or higher</li> <li>o Complete 4-course sequence of the same language, earning an overall unweighted GPA of 2.5 or above</li> <li>o Establish “Intermediate Low” proficiency or higher by using Credit by Demonstrated Mastery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Limited English Proficiency students shall complete all the requirements above and reach “Developing” proficiency per WIDA</li> </ul> |
| Service          | <i>Under development</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

### University of North Carolina Minimum Admission Requirements

|                  | <b>Minimum Admission Requirements - UNC Schools</b>                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| English          | 4 credits                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Math             | 4 credits. Fourth credit must be one of the following:<br>AP Calculus, AP Statistics, Pre Calculus, Discrete Math, IB Math Level II, Integrated Math IV, Advanced Functions & Modeling, Essentials for College Math |
| Science          | 3 credits, including 1 life science, 1 physical, and 1 lab course                                                                                                                                                   |
| Social Studies   | 2 credits, including US history                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Foreign Language | 2 credits in the same language                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| GPA              | 2.5 cumulative weighted GPA                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Test Scores      | SAT: 880 on the new SAT or 800 on old SAT<br>ACT: 17 Composite Score                                                                                                                                                |

While these are minimum requirements in the UNC system, some campuses require a more competitive transcript for final admission.

## **Honors Level Courses**

All core courses are offered at the Honors level for high school students. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves with the appropriate course level. Honors enrollment is based on student interest, academic performance, and teacher recommendation.

Taking courses at the Honors level is designed to provide greater depth and challenge for students who are seeking greater rigor and aspire to a more competitive four-year college experience. Homework is a reinforcement and extension of classroom instruction. Students are expected to demonstrate above-grade level work ethic, independence, and motivation.

## **Summit Charter School Online Course Enrollment Policy**

This policy establishes the guidelines for students who wish to enroll in online courses for academic credit, ensuring that such opportunities align with Summit's academic standards. Summit values the in-person learning experience as core to our mission and Portrait of a Graduate. Online courses may be approved as a supplement to the in-person curriculum at Summit Charter School. They are intended to enhance, not replace, the educational experience provided through our on-campus offerings.

Summit will evaluate this policy on an annual basis and make adjustments as may be necessary.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Online courses may only be taken during an elective period. Core graduation requirements (e.g., English, math, science, social studies, humanities and world language) must be completed through in-person instruction at Summit Charter School unless an exception is granted by the Principal due to extenuating circumstances. To be considered for enrollment in an online course, a student must meet **all** of the following requirements (unless approved otherwise by administration for other circumstances):

#### **1. Non-Redundancy with On-Campus Offerings**

- The course must **not** be offered in-person at Summit Charter School during the academic year in question.
- Exceptions may be considered in cases of scheduling conflicts, credit recovery, or accelerated academic paths, with prior approval from the Principal.

#### **2. Academic Performance**

- The student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5.
- The student must have earned a grade of A or B in the previous semester's online course(s) if applicable

## **Approved Providers**

All online courses must be completed through accredited and Summit-approved providers. Current approved partners are Southwestern Community College and North Carolina Virtual Public School. Students who choose to enroll in online courses are financially responsible for any associated costs, including textbooks and course materials.

## **Academic Expectations**

- Online courses will be recorded on the student's official Summit Charter School transcript and will factor into GPA calculations.
- Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines and academic requirements independently.
- To be eligible to take the online class off-campus, students must maintain A's and B's in all classes, maintain good attendance (any attendance recovery is completed), and maintain good conduct (no suspensions or repeat detentions).
- The school reserves the right to revoke online course privileges if a student fails to meet expectations

## **Course Requirements**

### **Course Load Expectations**

In high school, students shall generally carry a course load equal to the number of instructional periods in the school day, unless special permission is given to the student by the principal.

### **Course Withdrawal Penalty**

Students are not allowed to drop a course after the first ten days of school. If a student withdraws after the ten-day period, the withdrawal will generally be recorded as a failure (WF) noted as the grade, and the course is counted as a course attempted with no quality points earned. This action will result in a lower grade point average for the student.

## **Transfer Credit**

Students transferring into Summit Charter School from another school, private or public, a home school, or an alternative school may receive credit toward graduation for courses successfully completed in the sending school.

**Students transferring from a public school or an accredited private school** into Summit will receive:

- Credit for all courses approved by the sending school
- Weighted credit for all courses designated by the sending school system as Honors or AP

**Students transferring from a home school or a non-accredited private school** may receive credit toward graduation for courses, based on the following guidelines:

- Nationally standardized test results: If a homeschool student scored at or above the national norms on the language arts, math, science, and social studies sections of a properly administered

standardized test, one unit of credit will be assigned for each of the four subject areas. Note that the standardized test cannot be administered or scored by a parent, guardian, or relative of the student.

- If standardized test scores are not available, the Executive Director or designee will review documentation to determine acceptance of credit. Documentation may include transcript/report card from an online course, detailed lesson plans, originals of student work, tests/quizzes administered, and evidence of attendance. Grades will be recorded as "Pass" (P) or "Fail" (F).
- Grades and credits will not be included in the calculation of GPA or class rank.

## Credit Recovery

- Credit recovery courses may be offered to students on a limited basis based on a student's individual academic and post-secondary plans.
- Credit recovery will only be offered through consultation with and approval of the Principal and College Counselor. In some cases, based on an individual's academic and post-secondary plan, it may be necessary and appropriate for the student to retake a failed course and credit recovery will not be offered. When credit recovery is offered, courses will be scheduled during the summer and on dates at the discretion of the Principal and College Counselor.
- Credit recovery only serves to recover the credit toward graduation and does not affect a student's grade point average (GPA). Therefore, the credit recovery course will appear on the transcript with either a "P" for pass or "F" for fail. Neither of these marks will affect the student's GPA. If the credit recovery course is passed, then the transcript will show a unit of credit for the course which will count toward graduation. The record of the student originally failing the course will remain on the transcript with the failing grade associated with it and will continue to impact the student's GPA.

## Grading Scale & Quality Points

### Quality Points

|                                                                                                                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Honors Courses                                                                                                                                       | .5 |
| Community College Course included on most recent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Transfer List or course taught at 4-year university or college | 1  |
| AP Course                                                                                                                                            | 1  |

### Grading Scale

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70- 79

D = 60 - 69

F = less than 60

I = Incomplete

WP = withdrawal, no penalty

WF = withdrawal with an F

FF = failed for violation of attendance policy

## **End of Course Exams and ACT Tests**

Summit administers all state required End of Course exams. Currently these include:

Grades 9-12 End of Course (EOC) Tests:

- Math: Math I, Math III
- English: English II
- Science: Biology

The End of Course exams will count as 20% of the final grade. Please refer to individual syllabi for course expectations and grading policies.

Grades 9-12 College Readiness Tests:

- Grade 10: Pre-ACT
- Grade 11: ACT

ACT Benchmark Assessments

- Students in grades 9-11 will also take internally administered released ACT tests in the fall, winter, and spring for internal benchmarking purposes toward the ACT college readiness benchmark. This data will inform instructional decisions and support staff, students, and families in post-secondary and college planning.

## **Summit Charter School's Valedictorian Selection Policy**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and fair criteria for the selection of the Summit Charter School's Valedictorian.

### **Eligibility Criteria for Valedictorian:**

#### **1. Weighted Grade Point Average (GPA):**

- The Valedictorian will be selected based on the highest weighted GPA at the time of graduation.
- The weighted GPA will be calculated at the end of the 7th semester and will be used to determine eligibility.

#### **2. Attendance:**

- To be eligible for Valedictorian, a student must have completed their final four consecutive semesters (i.e., junior and senior years) as a full-time student at Summit Charter School.
- The student must have a minimum of 95% attendance for the duration of their high school career (grades 9-12), as documented by the school's attendance records.
- Absences due to excused reasons (e.g., illness, family emergencies) will be taken into consideration and may not disqualify a student from Valedictorian status.
- Students with a pattern of unexcused absences or tardiness will be considered ineligible.

### 3. **Disciplinary Record:**

- The student must have a clean disciplinary record throughout their high school career. A student may be disqualified from Valedictorian consideration if they have:
  - Any suspension (in-school or out-of-school) during their high school years.
  - A pattern of repeated violations of school policies or behaviors that do not uphold the Seven Virtues and are a violation of Summit's Code of Conduct.
- Students with minor disciplinary infractions may still be considered for the honor, depending on the nature of the offenses

### **Additional Considerations:**

- In the event of a tie in GPA, the following tiebreakers will be applied:
  1. Overall leadership in extracurricular activities.
  2. Positive contributions to the school community (e.g., service projects, peer mentoring).
  3. Input from faculty or administration about the student's character and impact on the school environment.

**Selection Committee:** The Valedictorian selection will be determined by a committee composed of the school principal, college counselor, and Head of School. The committee will review each student's academic, attendance, and discipline records before making a final decision.

**Final Approval:** The final decision will be made no later than four weeks before graduation, and the chosen student will be notified in advance to begin preparing their speech for the commencement ceremony.

## **Summit High School Dress Code**

Our goal for a dress policy is to create an optimum climate for learning while still allowing for individual expression. Students have the freedom to select clothing that is comfortable while learning to make choices that are appropriate to the situation. Summit students are often outside and/or engaged in active physical activity. Students must select clothing that is suitable for all scheduled classroom activities, including outdoor education, public speaking, and formal presentations.

**Standard Dress:** Students must observe the following guidelines:

- Shorts and skirts or other outer garments must be worn at an appropriate length. When students stand with their hands by their sides, shorts or skirts must be at or below their fingertips. Rips/tears must be below fingertips.
- Straps should be two inches wide. Spaghetti strap tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, see-through shirts, mesh shirts, and clothing that expose the midriff or chest are not appropriate. The bottom of one's shirt must cover the top of one's pants, shorts, or skirt when sitting and standing.
- Undergarments are to be worn and are not to be visible outside other clothing, e.g., bra straps, boxer shorts, tights. Leggings are permitted.
- T-shirts or other clothing or jewelry that make references to controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco, gang affiliations, sex, profanity, or that are insensitive to the culture of students/staff members are prohibited. No clothing will be permitted that may be offensive to any race, gender, or religion.
- Pants must be fastened properly around the waist.

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- No sun/shade glasses are to be worn in the building unless it is medically prescribed to be worn indoors.
- No pajamas

If a teacher deems a student's clothing questionable enough to refer the student to the administration, the presumption is that the clothing has caused an academic disruption and will be restricted. IN QUESTIONABLE CASES, THE ADMINISTRATION IS THE FINAL ARBITER OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF CLOTHING.

**High School Uniform Days:** There will be several days during the year, such as school ceremonies or community presentations. Students will be expected to wear a Summit uniform. HS students should have at least one outfit that meets the following uniform guidelines:

- High School
  - All students will be in uniform on Fridays.
  - Two or more dress code violations in a quarter will require wearing a uniform for two weeks. This is to ensure that all students adhere to our dress code policy.

### **Upper Body**

#### **Shirt Style: any color and/or print is permitted**

- Mesh or Knit Polo (short/long sleeve)
- Turtleneck (full or mock)
- Henley Shirt (low collar, with buttons, can be thermal)
- Knit Polo Dress

Dress Shirt/Blouse: **any color and/or print is appropriate**

### **Undershirts- White Only**

Undershirts are optional. Long-sleeve undershirts may not be worn with short sleeve shirts.

### **Overwear (worn inside school):**

#### **Any color and/or print is permitted**

- Sweaters (V-neck, crew neck, cardigans, sweater vest)
- Sweatshirts- (crew or zip front)
- Fleece Jackets/Vests- (zip-up, crew, or V-neck)
- (Official Summit Spirit /athletic outerwear is also approved)

### **Outerwear (worn outdoors):**

Any outerwear (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) may be selected for outdoor wear.

### **Lower Body:**

- Dress Pants (full or Capri length)
- Dress Shorts (fingertip length)
- Skirts/Skorts (fingertip length)
  - Shorts or the equivalent will be required under all skirts/dresses.
- Jumpers (fingertip length)

\*No jeans, leggings or sweatpants.

\*Pants and shorts should be worn at the waist.

### **Footwear**

Socks – Parents' discretion

Leggings/Tights - (May only be worn under uniform) solid navy, black, white, gray, or hunter green

Shoes - Parents' discretion; shoes must be closed-toe & closed-heel. No Crocs. (applies to free dress day as well).

### **Additional Uniform Dress Code Notes**

1. Appropriate jewelry may be worn (Head of School's discretion).
2. Shirts should be long enough that the belly and back are not exposed when arms are raised or students bend over.
3. No hairstyles that distract from the learning environment will be permitted (Head of School's discretion).
- 4.. "Free Dress" Guidelines: Teachers and the Head of School reserve the right to limit free dress clothing options if it is inappropriate.

(UPDATED 08/2026)

## **Attendance**

High School Two types of attendance records are kept at the high school level for each student:

- Class attendance- defined as a student's presence in a class for at least two thirds of the class period.
- Daily attendance- defined as the student being present for at least one half of the school day.

To receive credit for a course, a student must not have more than five (5) unexcused class absences per course.

Absences are considered for each class and students must be present 2/3 of the class to be counted as present. In

addition, a High School student must not miss more than 18 days of school, excused or unexcused, to be promoted.

Only class attendance is counted in order to determine credit for each course. Please note that five (5) tardies to class or school equals one (1) unexcused absence AND five (5) early releases from class or school equals one (1) unexcused absence.

## **Attendance Recovery**

9-12 students who miss more than 5 subject classes (i.e. 4th period Algebra) throughout the semester are subject to attendance recovery or may not receive credit for the course. Students must be present for 50% of the class to receive credit for the class period. Attendance recovery is offered after school, Monday through Thursday from 3:15-4:00pm.

## **Language Expectations**

Student and staff language is expected to reflect respect for all members of our learning community. Language that demeans, insults, harries, or humiliates another member of our school community will not be tolerated. The following guidelines should be used in choosing respectful communication: • No swearing or use of profane language. • Do not refer to someone's race, gender, sexual orientation or religious beliefs, physical appearance, or abilities with contempt or judgment.

## **Student Driving and Parking Privileges**

General Driving and Parking Requirements

- Permit Requirement: Students must apply for a parking permit, pay a fee (\$25), and display the permit (e.g., on the rearview mirror).

- Eligibility: Students will need to show proof of a valid driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance.
- Safety Regulations: Speed limits are strictly enforced and reckless driving, such as peeling tires or riding on tailgates, is prohibited.

#### Consequences for Violations

- Loss of Privilege: Students may lose their parking permit for excessive absences, tardiness, skipping class, or improper driving behaviour.
- Other Penalties: Misbehavior, such as leaving campus without authorization, can lead to on-campus penalties like suspensions.

#### Academic and Legal Requirements

- Driving Eligibility Certificate: In North Carolina, students under 18 must have a valid Driving Eligibility Certificate to obtain a license.
- Academic Standing: Students may lose their driving permit if they do not meet minimum academic and attendance requirements.

#### Common School Rules

- Prohibited Items: Weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vapes are prohibited in vehicles on school property.
- Leaving Campus: Students may not return to their cars or leave during school hours unless given explicit permission by a staff member.

## High School Off Campus Privileges

If the following requirements are maintained, High School Juniors and Seniors may be eligible for off-campus privileges during the scheduled lunch period and, as applicable, during a class period in which the student is enrolled in an online class:

- The student must maintain good academic standing (A's and B's in all current classes).
- The student must maintain good attendance standing (any attendance recovery is completed)
- The student must maintain good conduct standing. Code of Conduct infractions resulting in a suspension (in-school or out of school suspension) or repeated detentions (more than one) may result in a student losing off-campus privileges.

## Addendum

### Parent's Bill of Rights

### Compliance Policies

## **THESE POLICIES WILL BE POSTED AND AVAILABLE ON THE SCHOOL'S WEBSITE.**

The School believes that parent and family involvement must be pursued and supported by our communities, in homes, schools/colleges/universities, neighborhoods, businesses, faith congregations, organizations, and government entities by working together in a mutually collaborative effort. As such, the Board is committed to developing policies to involve parents in schools and their child's education effectively. N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.20(b)(3).

All parents/families and educators must prioritize family involvement in education; thus, the Board commits to providing support and coordination for school staff and parents to implement and sustain appropriate parent involvement.

Improved student achievement must be the equally shared responsibility and the goal of parents, teachers, the school system, and the community. Thus, the Board commits to seeing that each school has effective volunteer programs to address student needs and commits to utilizing schools to assist students and families in connecting with community resources.

The Board commits that it will impact student achievement significantly by improving the quality and quantity of parent/family involvement. Consequently, the Board will provide guidance, support, cooperation, and the necessary funding to enable parents to become active partners in education.

### **A. Parent Rights**

A parent has the right to the following:

- (1) To direct the education and care of their child as defined in these policies.
- (2) To direct the child's upbringing and moral or religious training.
- (3) To enroll their child in a public or nonpublic school and in any school choice options available to the parent for which the child is otherwise eligible by law to comply with compulsory attendance laws, as provided in Part 1 of Article 26 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.
- (4) To access and review all education records, as authorized by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, relating to their child.
- (5) To make health care decisions for their child, unless otherwise provided by law, including Article 1A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (6) To access and review all medical records of their child, as authorized by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), P.L. 104-191, as amended, except as follows:
  - a. If an authorized investigator requests that information not be released to a parent because the parent is the subject of an investigation of either of the following:
    - A crime committed against the child under Chapter 14 of the General Statutes.
    - An abuse and neglect complaint under Chapter 7B of the General Statutes.
  - b. When otherwise prohibited by law.
- (7) To prohibit the creation, sharing, or storage of a biometric scan of their child without the parent's prior written consent, except as authorized pursuant to a court order or otherwise required by law, including G.S. 7B-2102 and G.S. 7B-2201.
- (8) To prohibit the creation, sharing, or storage of their child's blood or deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) without the parent's prior written consent, except as authorized pursuant to a court order or otherwise required by law, including G.S. 7B-2201.
- (9) To prohibit the creation by the State of a video or voice recording of their child without the parent's prior written consent, except a recording made in the following circumstances:
  - a. During or as part of a court proceeding.

- b. As part of an investigation under Chapter 7B or Chapter 14 of the General Statutes.
- c. When the recording will be used solely for any of the following purposes:
  - A safety demonstration, including one related to security and discipline on educational property.
  - An academic or extracurricular activity.
  - Classroom instruction.
  - Photo identification cards.
  - Security or surveillance of buildings, grounds, or school transportation.

(10) To be promptly notified if an employee of the State suspects that a criminal offense has been committed against their child, unless the incident has first been reported to law enforcement or the county child welfare agency, and notification of the parent would impede the investigation.

B. Limitations on the right to parent:

- (1) The requirements of this Article do not authorize a parent to do any of the following:
  - a. Engage in unlawful conduct.
  - b. Abuse or neglect of the child, as defined in Chapter 7B of the General Statutes.
- (2) The requirements of this Article do not prohibit the following:
  - a. A State official or employee from acting in their official capacity within the reasonable and prudent scope of their authority.
  - b. A court of competent jurisdiction from acting in its official capacity within the reasonable and prudent scope of its authority or issuing an order otherwise permitted by law.
- C. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.25, the School shall display on its website the following parental legal rights regarding their child's education:
  - (1) The right to consent or withhold consent for participation in reproductive health and safety education programs, consistent with the requirements of G.S. 115C-81.30. The School will provide parents with a consent form prior to such programming.
  - (2) The right to seek a medical or religious exemption from immunization requirements, consistent with the requirements of G.S. 130A-156 and G.S. 130A-157. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information.
  - (3) The right to review statewide standardized assessment results as part of the State report card. The School will provide such information following such assessments.
  - (4) The right to request an evaluation of their child for an academically or intellectually gifted program or for identification as a child with a disability, as provided in Article 9 of this Chapter. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information.
  - (5) The right to inspect and purchase public school unit textbooks and other supplementary instructional materials, as provided in Part 3 of Article 8 of this Chapter. Please refer to the School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials and Library Materials.
  - (6) The right to access information relating to the unit's policies for promotion or retention, including high school graduation requirements. Please consult the Student Handbook for this information.
  - (7) The right to receive student report cards on a regular basis that clearly depict and grade the student's academic performance in each class or course, the student's conduct, and the student's attendance. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information.
  - (8) The right to access information relating to the State public education system, State standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements, and textbook requirements. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information as well as the Department of Public Instruction.
  - (9) The right to participate in parent-teacher organizations. This information will be provided directly from the parent-teacher organization.

- (10) The right to opt into certain data collection for their child, as provided in Part 5 of this Article and Article 29 of this Chapter. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information
- (11) The right for students to participate in protected student information surveys only with parental consent, as provided in Part 5 of this Article. Please consult the Family Handbook for this information.
- (12) The right to review all available records of materials their child has borrowed from a school library. Please refer to the School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials, and Library Materials.

D. Parent Guide for Student Achievement Pursuant to 115C-76.30.

The Parent Guide to Student Achievement is an effort by the State Board of Education (“SBE”). The SBE’s Guide will be posted on the School’s website once it has been provided by the State Board of Education and going forward at the beginning of each school year. The SBE’s Guide will be in writing, understandable to students and parents, and discussed at the beginning of the school year during Open House, Back to School events, or in any forum designated by the School. The SBE Guide shall meet the requirements set forth in N.C.G.S. 115C-76.30.

E. The School’s Guide for Student Achievement Pursuant to 115C-76.30.

(1) The School has chosen to comply with these provisions by ensuring the following information is in the Family Handbook available on this School’s website:

- a. Requirements for students to be promoted to the next grade.
- b. School entry requirements, including required immunizations and the recommended immunization schedule.
- c. Ways for parents to do the following:
  - Strengthen their child's academic progress, especially in reading, as provided in Part 1A of Article 8 of this Chapter.
  - Strengthen their child's citizenship, especially social skills, and respect for others.
  - Strengthen their child's realization of high expectations and setting lifelong learning goals.
  - Enhance communication between the school and the home.

(2) The School has chosen to comply with 115C-76.30, making the following information available through its website; the Family Handbook found on the School’s website; School and classroom communications (hard copy or via email); communications from the Summit Family Association; as well as through any other medium appropriate to communicate in an understandable way with parents and students:

- a. Services available for parents and their children, such as family literacy services; mentoring, tutoring, and other academic reinforcement programs; college planning, academic advisement, and student counseling services; and after-school programs.
- b. Opportunities for parental participation, such as parenting classes, adult education, school advisory councils, and school volunteer programs.
- c. Opportunities for parents to learn about rigorous academic programs that may be available for their child, such as honors programs, Career and College Promise and other dual enrollment opportunities, advanced placement, Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses, International Baccalaureate, North Carolina Virtual High School courses, and accelerated access to postsecondary education.
- d. Educational choices available to parents, including each type of public-school unit available to residents of the county in which the child lives and nonpublic school options, educational choice options offered within the public school unit, and scholarship grant programs under Part 2A of Article 39 and Article 41 of this Chapter.

e. Rights of students who have been identified as students with disabilities, as provided in Article 9 of this Chapter.

f. Contact information for school and unit offices.

g. Resources for information on the importance of student health and other available resources for parents, including the following information on available immunizations and vaccinations:

A recommended immunization schedule in accordance with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations.

Information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza, as required by G.S. 115C-375.4.

F. Efforts to Increase Parent Involvement Pursuant to § 115C-76.35.

The School shall, in consultation with parents, teachers, administrators, and community partners, develop and adopt policies to promote parental involvement and empowerment. The School will use existing committees, communication mediums, and structures to engage in the consultation requirement set forth in § 115C-76.35 and/or may create new avenues to comply with this provision. Opportunities and information will be available on the School's website and/or in community and/or school communications. The School will ensure policies provide for parental choices as set forth in SB49, establish parental responsibilities, and provide for parental involvement, which shall include the following:

(1) Providing links to parents for community services.

(2) Establishing opportunities for parental involvement in developing, implementing, and evaluating family involvement programs.

(3) Establish opportunities for parents to participate in school advisory councils, volunteer programs, and other activities.

G. The School has established policies to do all the following:

(1) Provide for parental participation in their child's education to improve parent and teacher cooperation in areas such as homework, school attendance, and discipline that aligns with the parent guide for student achievement required by G.S. 115C-76.30. Please consult the School's website and Family Handbook on the School's website.

(2) Effectively communicate to parents the way textbooks are used to implement the school's curricular objectives. Please refer to the School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Material, and Library Materials; the School's website; and the Student Handbook on the School's website.

(3) Establish a procedure for parents to learn about their child's course of study and the source of any supplementary instructional materials. This procedure shall include the process for parents to inspect and review all textbooks and supplementary instructional materials that will be used in their child's classroom. The policy shall be available for in-person review by parents at the school site and publicly available on the school's website. For this section, a textbook is defined in G.S. 115C-85, and supplementary instructional materials include supplementary textbooks, periodicals, audiovisual materials, and other supplementary materials used for instructional purposes. Please refer to the School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials, and Library Materials.

(4) Establish a means for parents to object to textbooks and supplementary instructional materials. Please refer to the School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials, and Library Materials.

(5) Establish a process for parents to review materials for and to consent or withhold consent for participation in reproductive health and safety education programs consistent with the requirements of G.S. 115C-81.30. The School already provides such review, notice, and consent requirements and will continue to follow our current procedures. Please consult the Family Handbook available on the School's website for further information.

(6) Establish a process for parents to learn about the nature and purpose of clubs and activities offered at their child's school, including both curricular and extracurricular activities. Such information will be provided through School and/or classroom communications. Please also consult the Student Handbook available on the School's website.

#### H. Further Compliance

(1) The qualifications of teachers, including licensure status, will be made available to parents at the beginning of each school year and updated from time to time as needed. This information will include teacher degrees, licensure status, and any other information necessary to comply with §115C-76.30(1)(d).

(2) Our School is a school of choice. Parents have other educational choices available to them, including traditional district schools, non-public schools (religious and secular), other charter schools, and home schools. Information on scholarship programs is available at Opportunity Scholarship - NCSEAA (<https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/opportunity/>)

#### I. Student Health Notifications Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.45

(1) The School does not prohibit school employees from notifying a parent about their child's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring.

(2) The School does not encourage or have the effect of encouraging a child to withhold from that child's parent information about their mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being or a change in related services or monitoring.

(3) School personnel shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being except where a reasonably prudent person would believe that notification would result in the child becoming an abused juvenile or neglected juvenile, as those terms are defined in G.S. 7B-101 or jeopardize the student's safety.

(4) Notifications:

a. At the beginning of each school year, the School Nurse will notify parents about each healthcare service offered at the school and provide information on how parents can consent to such service. The School Counselor and/or School Nurse will notify parents of changes, prior to or contemporaneous with changes, in service or monitoring related to their child's mental, emotional, or physical health or wellbeing and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for that child. (§115C-78.45)

b. The School Nurse will notify parents of kindergarten through grade three students of any student well-being questionnaire or health screening form prior to administration and shall provide information on how parents can consent to such questionnaire or health screening.

c. The Principal shall provide notice of a change prior to any changes in the name of a pronoun used for a student in school records or by school personnel except where a reasonably prudent person would believe that notification would result in the child becoming an abused juvenile or neglected juvenile, as those terms are defined in G.S. 7B-101 or jeopardize the student's safety.

d. The School's policy and procedure for parents to exercise the parental remedies provided by G.S. § 115C-76.60 is set forth in this policy, Entitled Parental Remedies.

#### J. Timelines for parental requests for information under § 115C-76.40.

(1) This information parents have a right to access under this SB49 has been made accessible to parents as set forth in this policy. Parents are encouraged to review this policy and the policies referenced herein before making a request for information under § 115C-76.40.

(2) A parent of a child enrolled at our School may request in writing from the Principal any of the information the parent has the right to access, as provided in this Part. The request must be made via email sent to the Principal. Within 10 business days, the Principal shall either (i) provide the requested information to the parent or (ii) provide an extension notice to the parent that, due to the volume or

complexity of the request, the information will be provided no later than 20 business days from the date of the parental request.

(3) If the Principal: (i) denies or fails to respond to the request for information within 10 business days or (ii) fails to provide information within 20 business days following an extension notice as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the parent may request in writing any of the information the parent has the right to access, as provided in this Part, from the Head of School, along with a statement specifying the time frame of the denial or failure to provide information by the principal.

(4) If the Head of School denies or does not respond to the request for information within 10 business days, the parent may appeal the denial or lack of response to the governing body of the public school unit no later than 20 business days from the date of the request to the Head of School, as provided in subsection (2) of this section. The Board shall place the parents' appeal on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled board meeting occurring more than three business days after submission of the appeal. During that meeting, the Board shall make a decision regarding the appeal. The Board's decision under this section is final and is not subject to judicial review.

#### K. Student support services training § 115C-76.50.

Student support services training developed or provided by the School to the school personnel shall adhere to student services guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Public Instruction.

#### L. Parental rights to opt-in to protected information surveys § 115C-76.65

##### (1) Definitions:

a. Adult student – An enrolled student who is 18 or older or an emancipated minor.

b. Protected information survey – A survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning any of the following:

Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.

Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.

Sex behavior or attitudes.

Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.

Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.

Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.

Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent.

Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

(2) The School shall make the following available to parents and adult students at least 10 days prior to administration of a protected information survey. The public school unit shall provide opportunities for review of the following both electronically and in person:

a. The process for providing consent to participation in the protected information survey.

b. The full text of the protected information survey.

(3) No student shall be permitted to participate in a protected information survey without the parent or the adult student's prior written or electronic consent.

(4) The requirements of this provision are in addition to the rights provided to parents and students under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, which are set forth in the Student Handbook available on the School's website.

#### M. Procedures and Remedies for Parent Concerns

This provision sets forth procedures and remedies required by § 115C-76.60. A parent has the right to notify the principal about concerns under this policy pursuant to § 115C-76.60. The School's procedures and remedies for parental concerns are as follows:

- (1) The parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their concern via email to the Principal. Such description shall clearly state the SB49 procedure or practice of concern. For a concern to be covered by this Section, it must be a concern about the School's procedure or practice under SB49.
- (2) Within seven business days of receiving the concern, the Principal shall either:
  - a. Resolve the concern and notify the parent of the resolution, or
  - b. Develop a plan for resolution and notify the parent of the plan to resolve the concern within 30 days of receiving written notification of the concern from the parent, or
  - c. Notify the parent of why the concern cannot be resolved.
- (3) If the concern is not resolved within 30 days, a parent may do one of the following:
  - a. Notify the State Board of Education and request a Parental Concern hearing, or
  - b. Bring an action against the school as provided in Article 26 of Chapter 1 of the North Carolina General Statutes for a declaratory judgment that the unit's procedure or practice violates N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.45, § 115C-76.50, or § 115C-76.55.
- (4) The court may award injunctive relief to a parent and shall award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs to a parent awarded injunctive relief.

N. Reporting requirements under § 115C-76.70

- (1) The School shall report annually by September 15 the following information to the State Board of Education in a format designated by the State Board:
  - a. The most current version of the policies and procedures adopted as required by this Article, with any modifications of the policy or procedure from the prior year's submission clearly delineated.
  - b. The following information from the prior school year:
    - The number of appeals to the governing body under G.S. 115C-76.40 and the percentage of appeals decided in favor of the parent and in favor of the administration in the prior school year.
    - The number of statements provided to parents as required by G.S. 115C-76.60(a).
    - The number of parental concern hearings involving the public school unit as provided in G.S. 115C-76.60(b)(1).
    - The number of actions brought against the public school unit as provided in G.S. 115C-76.60(b)(2) and the number of declaratory judgments entered against the public school unit.

O. School's Policy on Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Material, and Library Materials.

- (1) Compliance with SB49. In compliance with SB49, this policy serves to communicate understandably and effectively the manner in which textbooks are used to implement the school's curricular objectives. In addition, this policy establishes a procedure for parents to learn about their child's course of study and the source of any supplementary instructional materials. Our procedure includes the process for parents to inspect and review all textbooks and supplementary instructional materials that will be used in their child's classroom. Finally, this policy also establishes a means for parents to object to textbooks and supplementary instructional materials consistent with the requirements of N.C.G.S. 115C-9
- (2) Parent Participation. Parent participation in their child's education is important and encouraged. We strongly encourage parents and teachers to cooperate regarding homework, school attendance, and discipline. Information and ways parents can help their children and encourage cooperation with their child's teacher are included in our Family Handbook as well as communicated during open houses, curriculum nights, and parent/teacher conferences.
- (3) Charter School exemptions. A charter school is exempt from statutes and rules applicable to a local board of education or local school administrative unit. As such, the School determines its own curriculum and textbooks and is not bound by the laws governing local boards of education and local school administrative units. The School has the sole authority to select and procure curriculum, textbooks,

supplementary instructional materials, and library materials. Further, the School has the sole authority to determine if the materials are related to and within the curriculum's limits and when the materials may be presented to students during the school day. In general, supplementary books and other instructional materials shall neither displace nor be used to the exclusion of basic textbooks where the School has selected textbooks.

(4) **Textbook Definition.** For the purposes of this section, a textbook is defined as a systematically organized material comprehensive enough to cover the primary objectives outlined in the standard course of study for a grade or course. Formats for textbooks may be print or nonprint, including hardbound books, softbound books, activity-oriented programs, classroom kits, and technology-based programs that require the use of electronic equipment to be used in the learning process. Textbooks do not include supplementary instructional materials, including supplementary textbooks, periodicals, audiovisual materials, and other supplementary materials used for instructional purposes.

(5) **Requirements of § 115C-76.55.** Instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality shall not be included in the curriculum provided in grades kindergarten through fourth grade, regardless of whether the information is provided by school personnel or third parties. For the purposes of this section, the curriculum follows the North Carolina standard course of study and includes support materials, locally developed curriculum, supplemental instruction, textbooks, and other supplementary materials but does not include responses to student-initiated questions. In grades five through twelve, where the North Carolina standard course of study may address any of these topics, parents have the right to consent or withhold consent for participation as defined by the parental legal rights pursuant to 115C-76.25. This provision does not include responses to student-initiated questions with the school counselor and/or social worker, or any adult a student feels comfortable with. This provision shall be implemented consistent with Title IX, and where a conflict arises between the two laws, federal law will control. Nothing in this provision prevents school staff and teachers from appropriate classroom displays not inconsistent with any school policy on such displays.

(6) **Use and Purpose of Textbooks.** The School selects and uses textbooks as part of its curriculum and course of study. The textbooks selected are intended to advance the school's curricular objectives.

(7) **Process For Selecting Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Books And Instructional Materials.** The School's process for selecting curriculum, textbooks, supplementary books, and instructional material is by faculty committee and subject to Board committee and Board review.

(8) **Procedures for Learning about the Course of Study.** Parents are provided their child's course of study, including textbooks and the source of any supplementary instructional materials in a variety of ways: in our Family Handbook, at open house, at curriculum nights, and through teacher communications.

(9) Parents may inspect and review all textbooks and supplementary instructional materials that will be used in their child's classroom at Open House, Back to School Night, and by making an appointment with their child's teacher.

(10) **Process for Library Check Out and Notification**

During designated times, students may check out materials from the school library through the school librarian. Parents may access the record of their student's library check out by contacting the Principal.

P. **Process for Parent Challenges to Textbooks and Supplementary Instructional Materials.**

(1) The School reserves the right to create an advisory committee to investigate and evaluate challenges from parents, teachers, and members of the public to textbooks and supplementary instructional materials on the grounds that they are educationally unsuitable, pervasively vulgar, or inappropriate to the age, maturity, or grade level of the students. To the extent the School establishes such an advisory committee, information about that advisory committee will be communicated to parents, teachers, and the community.

(2) In the event the School has not established such an advisory committee, parents may submit challenges to textbooks and supplementary instructional materials for the following reasons only: the textbook and/or supplementary materials are educationally unsuitable, pervasively vulgar, or inappropriate

to the age, maturity, or grade level of the students. There are no other grounds for challenges to textbooks or supplementary materials under this provision.

(3) To submit a challenge to a particular textbook and/or supplementary material, the parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their challenge to the School. Such challenge must clearly identify the textbook and/or supplementary material they are challenging, and what precise material they contend is educationally unsuitable, pervasively vulgar, or inappropriate to the student's age, maturity, or grade level. The parent should also provide suggestions for alternatives to such textbooks and/or supplementary materials that they are challenging. Challenges must be sent to the Principal via email, via mail, or hand delivered to the School's address and designate on the outside of the letter: Textbook and/or Supplementary Material Challenge.

(4) The Head of School or their designee, which could be a school committee, shall review such challenge and respond to the challenge within ten (10) business days.

(5) If the decision does not resolve the matter, the parent may file a written appeal to the Head of School if they were not involved in the initial review of the challenge. The Head of School review and respond to the challenge within five (5) business days.

(6) If the Head of School is not able to resolve the matter, the parent may file a written appeal on the record with the School's Board of Directors within five (5) business days. There are no hearings on appeal, and decisions will be based solely on the written challenge provided by the parent and information provided by the School. The appeal must comply with section (1) above. The Board will designate a Board Panel to review the challenge and communicate its decision to remove or retain the challenged material within twenty (20) business days. The Board Panel's decision is final.

(7) The Board always has sole authority and discretion to determine whether a challenge has merit and whether challenged material should be retained or removed. There is no appeal from a decision of the Board Panel.

(8) Timelines set forth herein may be extended for good cause.

## **Parents' Guide to Student Achievement**

Summit Charter School welcomes and encourages the involvement of parents, guardians, and caregivers in their students' education. Information regarding student achievement is available through our Parents' Guide to Student Achievement, which is available here: [Parent's Guide to Student Achievement](#).

## **The Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act, and The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act**

School fully complies with The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and provides reasonable accommodations to employees with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Examples of potential reasonable accommodations include: the ability to sit, stand, or drink water; additional break time to use the bathroom, eat, and rest; unpaid leave or time off to recover from childbirth; and limitations on strenuous activity.

Employees covered by this policy should follow the process set forth in the School's Americans with Disabilities Act policy to request reasonable accommodations. It is prohibited for adverse action to be taken against a covered employee on account of requesting or using a reasonable accommodation.

If the need for a particular accommodation is not obvious, an employee may be asked to include reasonable documentation which: confirms the physical or mental condition; confirms that the physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions (the "limitation"); and states that the reasonable accommodation is needed due to the limitation.

The School will not require an employee to accept any accommodation without engaging in the interactive process to accurately understand the employee's limitations and explore potential accommodations. The School is not required to provide any accommodation that would constitute an undue hardship on the School, meaning significant difficulty or expense for the School.

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), School also provides reasonable breaktime to any covered employee to express breast milk for their nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express the milk.

In addition, School fully complies with The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act ("The PUMP Act") which provides that nursing employees are entitled to a place to pump at work, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. Please reach out to the business officer for more information.

## **Equal Opportunity Employment Policy**

The School is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any applicant, contractor, or employee on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, disability, natural hair style, genetic information or other legally protected status, except where it is an occupational qualification.

This policy extends to all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment as well as the use of the school's facilities and participation in all activities sponsored by the school. It is also School's policy to ensure that all employees are treated equally on the basis of merit and performance competence with regard to any and all terms of conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotions, demotions, assignments, trainings, layoffs, and terminations.

## **Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy**

The School is committed to having a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect, and in which each student and teacher has an equal opportunity to work, learn, and develop to his or her full potential in an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. To that end, the School prohibits any form of harassment or discrimination (including sexual harassment) on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), or other protected characteristic, whether by a supervisor, administrator, co-worker, volunteer, contractor, student, or non-employee. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality. It is to assure that in the workplace, each employee is able to accomplish his or her job without being subjected to harassment.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment or discrimination is, it certainly includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that denigrates, belittles, or puts down an individual or shows hostility, distaste, or a version toward that individual based on that individual's race, color, national origin, religion, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class, or participation in a protected activity.

Discrimination involves intentionally treating anyone in an unequal or disparate manner because of that person's inherent or natural personal characteristics, including race, color, national origin, religion, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class, or participation in a protected activity, when such treatment causes the victim to suffer adverse educational, employment, or other school-related consequences.

Harassment is any unwelcome offensive verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to significantly affect the conditions of one's employment or a student's learning. Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome or abusive jokes, insults, name calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct such as uninvited touching or sexually related comments or the exchange of benefits for performance of sexual or other favors.

Other conduct that can be unlawful harassment includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that shows aversion, denigration, or hostility because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender (including actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy/conditions

related to pregnancy or childbirth), age, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected classification and that: Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work; or Adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Of the various types of harassment, sexual harassment is worthy of special considerations beyond those

applicable under the School's general Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy. No employee, student, volunteer, or contractor shall engage in sexual harassment against any other student, employee, or another person in the School community. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination involving unwelcome sexual, or sex-based conduct that interferes with the employment of others. Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcomed verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements, requests for sexual favors, or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone in the workplace which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient or which causes the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or which interferes with the recipient's job performance. Harassing behaviors can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical, range from subtle innuendo of a sexual nature to coerced sexual activity, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that usually takes place under the following circumstances:

When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of instruction, participation in school activities, or employment. When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions or benefits; or When such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic, extracurricular, or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment or working environment.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment

Workplace behavior that is sexually harassing includes but is not limited to: Unwanted sexual remarks or inferences. Offensive comments about sex or gender-specific traits. Unwelcome sexual propositions, threats, bribes, written notes, or phone calls. Unwelcome gestures or sounds or the display of sexually suggestive objects, signals, or pictures. Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature (e.g., touching, pinching, kissing, holding). Promise of promotion, favorable performance evaluations, etc. in return for sexual favors, known as "quid pro quo" or "this for that"; or Threatening or insinuating, whether explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts or any other condition of employment. Pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions. Continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body. Sexually degrading words used toward, or in the presence of, an individual or to describe an individual.

A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment.

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school employees and students are always prohibited in all circumstances. School employees are prohibited from engaging in romantic or other inappropriate relationships with students and are required to report such relationships or reasonable suspicions thereof, to the Executive Director or other administrator. Procedures established by the School for reporting suspected sexual harassment shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct.

### Application

Individuals of any gender identity can be sexually harassed by someone of the same or a different gender, and the law protects all individuals equally from this discrimination. This policy applies to sexual

harassment by staff, students, volunteers, vendors, and service providers of any gender against someone of the same or a different gender.

### **Retaliation is Prohibited**

The School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation as a witness or in any other capacity. Employees should report any such retaliation to the Executive Director. This policy, however, shall not be used to bring frivolous or malicious complaints.

### **Procedure for Complaints of Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation**

Any person who believes they been the victim of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation should immediately discuss and report to their direct supervisor, the Executive Director, or any other supervisor with whom the person feels comfortable. While the person should report sexual harassment to a supervisor or the Executive Director, there is no requirement that the person report sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation to a particular supervisor.

Any supervisor receiving a complaint of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is required to report such complaint to the Executive Director at [828-743-5755]. If the Executive Director is the subject of such complaint, then the supervisor shall report to the Chair of the Board of Directors at 828-743-5755] or to any other Board member that the supervisor believes is appropriate. Any complaint of made under this policy will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. To the maximum extent possible, the School will protect the privacy of the parties involved.

Any attempt to interfere with or influence the investigation of a harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation complaint is strictly prohibited, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. There will be no adverse action against an employee who acts in good faith and reports an incident, or who participates in or cooperates with an investigation of an alleged incident.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Any individual found to have engaged in harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. In addition, some forms of sexual harassment, such as sexual relations between an adult and minor, may violate criminal laws. The School will cooperate with local authorities in the investigation of any alleged criminal activity.

### **Confidentiality of Records**

School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of the parties involved in the investigation of a sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation complaint. All written materials related to the investigation of allegations of harassment will be placed in confidential files, which are separate from student and personnel records. Reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that access to these records is limited to those persons with a need to know.

### **Sexual and Other Types of Unlawful Harassment/Discrimination on School Grounds by**

## **Contractors, Volunteers or Individuals Who Are Not School Employees**

The policies contained in this section, including the reporting procedures and no retaliation policy, regarding harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination, shall also apply to contractors, volunteers or individuals who are not employees of the School when such individuals are on School property or during School events.

### **Implementation: Information and Education/Training**

This policy will be distributed to all employees and will be discussed as part of the staff orientation at the beginning of each school year. The Executive Director is authorized and expected to establish training and administrative procedures to help eliminate discrimination and harassment, and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.

This policy will be included in the School's Operation and Board Policy Manual and a summary policy included in the Parent/Student, which is sent to parents and students at the beginning of each school year.

## **Non-Discrimination Policies**

### **Equal Education Opportunities**

Summit Charter School provides equal education opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, gender, gender identity, natural hair style, cultural or economic background, or disability. Furthermore, no student, on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood, will be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity conducted by the school. The school will treat its students without discrimination with regard to course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance, and extracurricular activities. The School adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education. Please Title IX Policies and Grievance Process and Attachment E for Non-Title IX Bullying and Harassment Policies and Grievance Process.

*Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or, preferably, in writing to any of the following individuals:*

- The principal or head of school;
- For Title IX harassment and discrimination, contact the Title IX Coordinator and review the Title IX policy;
- For non-Title IX harassment and discrimination, including bullying, Title VI, and disability discrimination, contact Andrea Chalker and review the non-Title IX policy found here as well as the Title VI policy found below.

## **Title VI**

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the School in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. This means that the School does not advantage any one racial or ethnic group over another or use racial/ethnic stereotypes. Further, the School recognizes that Title VI protection covers students who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or other groups that are or are perceived to: 1) share ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or 2) have citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin against students of any religion when the discrimination:

- involves racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes;
- is based on a student's skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; or
- is based on the country or region where a student is from or is perceived to have come from, including, for example, discrimination based on a student's accent or name, a student's limited English proficiency, or a student speaking a language other than English.

Please see the above Non-Discrimination section for information regarding complaints alleging Title VI violations. General inquiries regarding Title VI should be directed to the individual identified above.

## **Compliance with Other Laws**

Summit Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, or local health and safety laws and regulations. Neither the State Board of Education nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of the School except as may otherwise be required to monitor the charter School for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## **Religious Accommodations**

Summit Charter School respects the religious beliefs and practices of all staff and students, and will make, on request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on the School's operations.

## **Released Time for Religious Instruction**

### **I. Purpose and Authority**

This policy is adopted pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.75(p) and G.S. 115C-407.45, which require the board of directors of every North Carolina charter school to adopt a policy authorizing a principal to excuse a student's absence to attend released time religious instruction. This policy also implements the related excused-absence and make-up-work provisions of G.S. 115C-379.

Nothing in this policy is intended to endorse, sponsor, or affiliate the School with any religious organization or curriculum. The School's role is limited to administering excused absences in accordance with State law.

### **II. Definitions**

1. "Released time religious instruction" means religious instruction offered by a private entity (the "sponsoring entity") during the school day, off School property, that a student attends in lieu of regularly scheduled instruction.
2. "Sponsoring entity" means the private organization that develops and conducts the released time religious instruction.

### **III. Weekly Time Allotment**

The School shall excuse students for released time religious instruction of at least one hour per week. Consistent with G.S. 115C-407.45(b)(6), the Principal shall not authorize excused absences totaling more than four hours of released time religious instruction in any single calendar week.

The School has elected to make available up to 2 hour(s) of released time religious instruction per week, offered at *a time that is least disruptive to the student's core academic courses*. No student shall be excused from a scheduled core academic course to attend released time religious instruction unless the School's daily schedule makes this unavoidable, in which case the School shall work with the family to identify an alternative time slot where practicable.

### **IV. Conditions of Participation**

Participation in released time religious instruction is voluntary. A student's absence to attend released time religious instruction shall be excused only if all of the following conditions are met:

A. Parental Consent

The student's parent or legal guardian has completed and signed the School's standard Released Time Consent Form (Attachment A) prior to the student's first absence for this purpose. The consent form shall provide notice that the parent or guardian — not the School — is responsible for arranging transportation to and from the location where released time religious instruction occurs.

B. Attendance Documentation

For each day the student is absent to attend released time religious instruction, the student's parent or guardian shall provide the School with written documentation affirming that the student attended. The School shall not treat the absence as excused for any day for which this documentation is not received.

C. Make-Up Work

A student attending released time religious instruction is responsible for making up all schoolwork missed during the absence, consistent with G.S. 115C-407.45(b)(3).

In turn, and consistent with G.S. 115C-379(b1), the student's teacher(s) shall give the student a reasonable opportunity to make up any tests, assignments, or other work missed. "Reasonable opportunity" means the following, unless a longer period is necessary to accommodate a documented disability or an extended absence:

- The teacher shall identify the missed work and communicate it to the student (or, for elementary students, to the parent/guardian) no later than the school day following the absence.
- The student shall have no fewer than two (2) school days from the date the work was missed to complete and submit make-up work, absent an agreement between the teacher and student/parent for additional time.
- A student who submits make-up work within this period shall not be penalized solely for the lateness of the submission caused by the released time absence.

D. No Use of Public Funds

No State or local funds shall be expended to facilitate a student's attendance at released time religious instruction, other than de minimis administrative costs associated with implementing this policy (for example, staff time spent processing consent forms and attendance documentation).

E. Location; Use of School Facilities

Released time religious instruction shall not be conducted on School property, except to the extent the School has adopted a separate, religion-neutral facility use policy that makes School facilities available to community groups generally, and the sponsoring entity is permitted to use School facilities on the same terms as any other community group under that policy.

F. Transportation and Supervision

Transportation to and from the location of released time religious instruction is the sole responsibility of the sponsoring entity, the parent or legal guardian, or the student, as applicable. The School assumes no responsibility for the student's transportation, supervision, or safety once the student has been signed out to attend released time religious instruction, and resumes responsibility only upon the student's return to School property or a School-sponsored activity.

#### G. Sponsoring Entity Obligations

Before a sponsoring entity's course may be included in the School's released time program, the sponsoring entity shall agree in writing to do all of the following:

- Maintain accurate attendance records for participating students and make those records available to the School upon request to verify a student's attendance;
- Provide the School, upon request, with a copy of the course syllabus;
- Assume supervisory responsibility for, and liability arising from, students while they are in the sponsoring entity's care, and provide the School with reasonably satisfactory evidence of liability insurance or an indemnification agreement covering that responsibility.

#### V. Neutrality

School administrators and staff shall not, in their official capacities, encourage or discourage a student's participation in released time religious instruction, and shall administer this policy in a manner neutral to the religious content or denominational affiliation of any sponsoring entity's course.

#### VI. Administration

The Principal (or designee) is responsible for day-to-day administration of this policy, including maintaining consent forms and attendance documentation, coordinating scheduling with sponsoring entities, and ensuring teachers are aware of students' participation for purposes of the make-up work provisions of Section IV.C.

#### VII. Non-Endorsement

Adoption of this policy, and the School's administration of excused absences under it, does not constitute the School's endorsement of, agreement with, or sponsorship of any religious organization, sponsoring entity, or curriculum.

## **Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members**

Title IX provides that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

It is the policy of THE SCHOOL that students should not be subjected to forms of unlawful discrimination or harassment, while at school or school-sponsored activities. Furthermore, the policy's intent is to address the issue in a proactive manner through the establishment of a system for educating students and staff at the School regarding the identification, prevention, intervention, and reporting of such anti-social acts. The School acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The School strives to model an inclusive environment and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or sex, including sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ identification. The School will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment in any of its educational or employment activities or programs based on such protected classifications.

## **A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES**

### **1. Discrimination or Harassment**

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, the School expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment based on sex or gender and prohibits sexual harassment (including sexual violence) and gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, requests for sexual favors in exchange for benefits (quid pro quo), and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. In accordance with Title IX, the School also prohibits gender-based harassment, which is unwelcome conduct based on a student's sex, harassing conduct based on a student's failure to conform to sex stereotypes.

Sex-based harassment can be carried out by school employees, other students, and third parties. All students can experience sex-based harassment, including male and female students, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, and students of different races, national origins, and ages. Title IX protects all students from sex-based harassment, regardless of the sex of the parties, including when they are members of the same sex.

### **2. Retaliation**

The School prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation. As such, the School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy. After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations, the Head of School or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under Title IX does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## **B. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

This policy prohibits unlawful discrimination or harassment by students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy is intended to apply to students vis a vis other students, faculty, staff, volunteers/visitors, or contractors. This policy also applies to employees, volunteers/visitors, and contractors. This policy applies to behavior that takes place within the School's "education program or activity," which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, behavior:

1. in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;

2. on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. at any bus stop;
4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity;
5. at any time or place when the individual is subject to the oversight and authority of school personnel;
6. at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools; and
7. while using school or personal electronic communications, including employee and student emails, text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, blogging, websites and social networking websites (i.e., Snapchat or Instagram).

## C. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy ONLY, the following definitions apply:

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any act or failure to act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on the basis of gender or sex (including transgender and LGBTQ+ identification). Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.

### 2. Harassment

Prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, under this policy means conduct on the basis of sex/gender that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo)
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to an education program, employment, or activity (i.e., hostile environment)
3. Sexual assault (as defined by Clery Act), or "dating violence," "domestic violence" and "stalking" (as defined by Violence Against Women Act).

For purposes of this policy, "hostile environment" means that the harassment is objectively severe and pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment and must be based on sex or gender. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior if sufficiently severe.

Examples of behavior that may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate

age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment. Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

Examples of sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, sexual violence, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

### 3. Conduct Not Covered by This Policy

Conduct that does not meet the definitions set forth above in this Title IX Policy are not subject to the School's Title IX Policy or any reporting/grievance procedures that govern Title IX matters. However, such conduct may still constitute a violation of other School policy, including the School's Code of Conduct, non-discrimination policy, and bullying policy. Please refer to and follow those policies for such conduct.

### **TO REPORT A VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY: PLEASE REFER TO THE SCHOOLS TITLE IX REPORTING AND GRIEVANCE POLICY.**

This Policy as it pertains to Title IX shall remain in effect to the extent required by law.

### **Title IX Coordinator's Duties, Notice, Reporting And Grievance Policy**

This Policy sets forth the School's Notice, Reporting and Grievance policy for Title IX matters and should be read in conjunction with the School's Title IX policy. This Policy only pertains to Title IX and alleged violations of Title IX. It does not apply to any other type of discrimination, harassment or bullying. Please refer to the School's other policies, including Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and student conduct policies when Title IX does not apply.

The School's Title IX Coordinator is: Andrea Chalker ([achalker@summitschool.org](mailto:achalker@summitschool.org))

### **1. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS**

The designated Title IX Coordinator shall establish training and other programs that are designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination or harassment and foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of the school community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan. The training or programs should:

- (1) provide examples of behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment;
- (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of unlawful discrimination, or harassment; and

(3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, at school bus stops, on cell phones and on the Internet.

In addition, training of Title IX personnel, including the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s) and Decision-maker(s), must include training:

1. On the definition of the definitions of prohibited conduct, including sexual harassment;
2. The scope of the school's education program or activity;
3. How to conduct an investigation;
4. The grievance process including appeals, and informal resolution processes;
5. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias;
6. Relevance, including how to apply the rape shield protections provided only for complainants.

Moreover, training for Title IX personnel, including the Coordinator, Investigator(s), Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of sexual harassment. The School will post materials used to train Title IX personnel on their websites for a minimum of seven (7) years after posted, if any, or make materials available for members of the public to inspect.

## **2. NOTICE**

The designated Title IX Coordinator is responsible for providing effective notice to job applicants, student applicants, students, parents, and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment. This policy will be posted on the School's website, and copies of the policy are available at the front office. Notice of this policy will appear in all job applicant information, admissions information, student and employee handbooks, and in any School publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

## **3. TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for the SCHOOL and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination. Other major monitoring duties include, but are not limited to, the following recruitment and admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring and employment. Other areas of consideration include:

- Participating in the development and implementation of the SCHOOL's sexual harassment policy.
- Assisting faculty, counselors and administrators in complying with Title IX, and when a need arises, planning remedial actions.
- Making your presence known in the community by disseminating civil rights information or by speaking at parent-teacher group meetings, social or professional organization meetings, and other community functions.
- Serving as a resource on Title IX/gender issues.

- Monitoring and evaluating the SCHOOL's Title IX compliance efforts and making recommendations for any appropriate changes.
- Providing updated information to schools on Title IX implementation and issues.
- Identifying and disseminating information about Title IX educational resources (organizations, individuals, print, internet, and audio-visual)

#### **4. EVALUATION**

The Head of School or designee shall evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment and shall share these evaluations periodically with the School's Board.

#### **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The recipient, whether a School employee, staff member, contractor, or the Title IX Coordinator, must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the FERPA or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of Title IX, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Title IX grievance procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The records will identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The Title IX Coordinator also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the School to provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The Head of School shall report to the Board all verified cases of unlawful discrimination or harassment under the School's Title IX Policy.

#### **6. REPORTING TITLE IX VIOLATIONS**

##### **1. For Students:**

- To report discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex/gender, students or their parents should contact a trusted teacher or advisor, grade-level Principal, Head of School and/or Title IX coordinator immediately and file a complaint.
- Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. When anyone reports harassment and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the Title IX Coordinator, grade-level Principal, or Head of School, as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- If the Head of School is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.

**2. For Employees:** for discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment complaints based on sex/gender, employees should contact the Title IX coordinator immediately and follow the School's harassment and discrimination policy as well as its Title IX Reporting and Grievance policy.

3. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination or harassment based on sex/gender under this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.
4. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.
5. Reporting may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

## **G. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this and all other Title IX related policies, the following definitions shall apply.

1. "Complainant" is as an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. This means that any third party as well as the complainant may report sexual harassment. While parents and guardians do not become complainants (or respondents), parents and guardians have a right to act on behalf of parties (including by filing formal complaints) in Title IX matters.
2. "Respondent" is as an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
3. "Formal complaint" is as a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment and state that at the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant was participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the formal complaint is filed. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information required to be listed for the Title IX Coordinator, and by any additional method designated by the school.
4. "Document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by e-mail or through an online portal provided for this purpose by the school) that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during a grievance process, and must comply with requirements for Title IX personnel to be free from conflicts and bias.
5. "Supportive measures" are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment. The School's selection of supportive measures and remedies shall be based on what is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

## **H. MANDATORY RESPONSE AND PROCEDURAL OBLIGATIONS**

The School is required to respond whenever any employee has notice of sexual harassment, including allegations of sexual harassment or allegations relevant to mandatory reporting laws in North Carolina. Notice to the Title IX Coordinator or to any School employee, board member, or official with authority to institute corrective measures on the School's behalf, charges the School with actual knowledge and triggers the School's response obligations under Title IX.

The School will respond promptly to Title IX sexual harassment or discrimination in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent, which means a response that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The School shall also comply with the following mandates:

1. The School will offer supportive measures to the person alleged to be the victim (referred to as the "complainant").
2. The Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant confidentially to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.
3. The School will follow the grievance process set forth herein before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures, against a respondent.
4. The School will not restrict rights protected under the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment, Fifth Amendment, and Fourteenth Amendment, when complying with Title IX.
5. The School will investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint, which can be filed by a complainant, or signed by a Title IX Coordinator.
6. A complainant's wishes with respect to whether the school investigates should be respected unless the school determines that not pursuing an investigation would be deliberately indifferent (or that pursuing an investigation is necessary for community safety or similar reasons), in which case the Title IX Coordinator may sign complaint even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint (doing so will not be viewed as adversarial toward the respondent).
7. If the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in the School's Title IX policy, or the alleged conduct did not occur in the School's education program or activity, against a person in the United States, the School must dismiss such allegations for purposes of Title IX. However, the School may still address the allegations in any manner the School deems appropriate under the School's code of conduct or other policies.
8. Treat complainants equitably by providing remedies any time a respondent is found responsible, and treat respondents equitably by not imposing disciplinary sanctions without following the grievance process set forth herein.
9. Remedies, which are required to be provided to a complainant when a respondent is found responsible, must be designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.
10. All Title IX personnel (Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process) shall be free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.
11. There is a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
12. The School's grievance process shall not use, rely on, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.
13. Any provisions, rules, or practices that a school adopts as part of its grievance process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment must apply equally to both parties (complainant and respondent).

14. The standard of evidence to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard for all formal complaints of sexual harassment, whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including faculty member).

## **I. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES, REMEDIES AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

Supportive measures include: services, accommodations, and/or other assistance that the School puts in place for a complainant after receiving notice of alleged sexual misconduct but before any final outcomes – investigatory, disciplinary, or remedial – have been determined. The School wants students and employees to be safe, to receive appropriate medical attention, and to get the help they need to heal and to continue to access their educational opportunities. We also want students and employees to understand their reporting options and how to access available interim measures.

Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, the School will provide the complainant, or their advocate, with a written explanation of the interim measures available at School and through local community resources [insert name of local resources] and shall ask complainants, or their advocates, what measures are sought. Some possible interim measures are listed below, and the School determines which measures are appropriate for a particular complainant on a case-by-case basis. Not all of the measures listed below will be necessary in every case to keep victims safe and ensure their equal access to educational programs and activities. If the complainant or advocate identifies an interim measure that is not already provided by the School, the School will consider whether the request can be granted. In those instances where interim measures affect both a complainant and the respondent, the School will minimize the burden on the complainant wherever appropriate while ensuring that the measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

A complainant or their advocate may request the interim measures listed below. The School – after consulting with the complainant and/or their advocate – will determine which measures are appropriate to ensure the complainant’s safety and equal access to educational programs and activities:

- Academic accommodations, including change in classes, testing, or assignments;
- Medical and mental health services, including counseling;
- Modifications to extracurricular activities, field trips or on or off-campus activities;
- A “no contact” directive pending the outcome of an investigation. Such a directive serves as notice to both parties that they must not have verbal, electronic, written, or third party communication with one another;
- Providing an escort to ensure that the student can move safely between school programs and activities;
- Transportation accommodations; and
- Assistance identifying an advocate to help secure additional resources or assistance including off-campus and community advocacy, support, and services.

### Remedies Include:

Depending on the specific nature of the problem, remedies for the complainant may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing an effective escort to ensure that the complainant can move safely between classes and activities;
- Ensuring the complainant and perpetrator do not share classes or extracurricular activities;
- Moving the perpetrator or complainant (if the complainant requests to be moved) to a different residence hall or, in the case of an elementary or secondary school student, to another school within the district;
- Providing comprehensive, holistic victim services including medical, counseling and academic support services, such as tutoring;
- Arranging for the complainant to have extra time to complete or re-take a class or withdraw from a class without an academic or financial penalty; and

- Reviewing any disciplinary actions taken against the complainant to see if there is a causal connection between the sexual violence and the misconduct that may have resulted in the complainant being disciplined.

When a respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment, the School will offer all remedies needed to eliminate the harm to the complainant and the school community and prevent the recurrence of sexual harassment. Simply sanctioning a respondent found responsible, in some cases, may be insufficient to eliminate a hostile environment. Rather, in addition to sanctions, the School may consider offering appropriate remedies for the broader student/staff population after the final outcome, including the following:

- Training or retraining school employees on the school's responsibilities to address allegations of sexual violence and how to conduct Title IX investigations;
- Developing materials on sexual harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students;
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual harassment prevention programs with students and/or staff;
- Issuing policy statements or taking other steps that clearly communicate that the school does not tolerate sexual harassment and will respond to any incidents and to any student who reports such incidents;
- Conducting, in conjunction with student leaders, a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the school is free from sexual violence, and using that information to inform future proactive steps that the school will take;
- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team);
- When a school is unable to conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

Disciplinary sanctions include:

- For Students found responsible: verbal warning, written warning, interim suspension, restitution, suspension, required participation in appropriate training, counseling, required completion of a probationary period without additional infractions, or requiring the respondent to stay away from the complainant for a period of time.
- For Employees found responsible: sanctions for violations of Title IX vary depending on severity from formal written warning to dismissal.

## **J. INVESTIGATIONS**

The School shall investigate the allegations in any formal complaint and send written notice to both parties (complainants and respondents) of the allegations upon receipt of a formal complaint.

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate an impartial individual to serve as the Investigator and conduct an investigation. The Investigator may be the Title IX Coordinator. However, the Investigator shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The School may choose an outside investigator, School employee or contractor to conduct the investigation. During the grievance process and when investigating, the Investigator shall comply with the following:

1. The burden of gathering evidence and burden of proof must remain on the School, not on the parties.
2. The School must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. The School must not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no "gag orders").

4. Parties must have the same opportunity to select an advisor of the party's choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney.
5. The School shall send a written notice to the parties (complainant and respondent) of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings.
6. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 calendar days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
7. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 calendar days for the parties to respond.
8. The School shall dismiss allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment set forth in the School's Title IX policy or did not occur in a school's education program or activity against a person in the U.S. Such dismissal is only for Title IX purposes and does not preclude the School from addressing the conduct in any manner the school deems appropriate.
9. The School may, in its discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.
10. The School shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.
11. The School may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
12. The School shall protect the privacy of a party's medical, psychological, and similar treatment records and shall not access or use such records unless the School obtains the party's voluntary, written consent to do so.

## **K. DECISION-MAKER**

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate a Decision-maker with regard to a Title IX complaint. The Decision-maker shall not be the Title IX Coordinator or Investigator, and shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The Decision-maker shall comply with the following rules:

1. Start with the presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
2. All Complainants are afforded rape shield protections, deeming questions and evidence about a complainant's prior sexual behavior irrelevant, unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove consent.
3. Use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision.
4. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
5. After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

6. Issue a written determination regarding responsibility with findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.
7. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

## **L. GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

**Prompt Filing.** The Complainant must file a formal complaint within a reasonable time, ideally within 10 school days of the alleged incident. A complaint will not be disallowed solely because of the passage of time. The Title IX coordinator is charged with ensuring that all such complaints are timely, impartially, and appropriately investigated in accordance with applicable law.

**Confidentiality.** Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the complainant. There may be times where confidentiality may not be possible for the School to conduct a thorough investigation. There may also be instances where the School has a legal obligation to report certain information it receives to state or local authorities or to protect the School community.

**Timeline.** While the timeframe for completing an investigation into individual complaints may vary depending on the circumstances, the Title IX coordinator will ensure that timeframes are reasonable and endeavor to complete any investigation, including any decision, within sixty (60) school days of the filing of a complaint. The timeline may be extended where appropriate at the discretion of the School. Include reasonably prompt time frames for conclusion of the grievance process, including appeals and informal resolutions, with allowance for short-term, good cause delays or extensions of the time frames.

**Investigation.** The Title IX coordinator or other School official shall designate an impartial Investigator to conduct the investigation. The Investigator shall have full authority to investigate, including the authority to interview witnesses. The Investigator shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy in conducting the investigation.

**Decision-Maker.** The Decision-maker shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy and shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision. The Decision-maker shall timely provide written notice of the outcome of the complaint to the relevant parties.

**Appeal.** Either party may appeal the Decision-maker's decision to the Board of Directors within 14 calendar days after a decision is made or the School dismisses a formal complaint in a Title IX proceeding, on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter,
2. Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter, and/or
3. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias, that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Board of Directors will appoint a panel of three board members to serve as the impartial review panel. The review will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and the panel may, but is not required to, request information directly from the parties. The three-member review panel will make a decision and will provide written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within fourteen (14) school days, unless circumstances require more time.

## **M. INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS**

After a formal Complaint is filed, the School may, in its discretion, offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice, so long as both parties give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt informal resolution. The School will not require participation in an informal process. And, at any time prior to agreeing to a

resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.

The School does not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to a formal investigation and adjudication of formal complaints of sexual harassment. Any person who facilitates an informal resolution must be well-trained. The School will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student. Finally, the School may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

## **N. POLICY APPLICATION**

This policy shall remain in effect as long as required by law.

## **McKinney-Vento**

The McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is the primary legislation dealing with the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Act is also known as Title X, Part C of the Every Students Succeeds Act.

The term "homeless children and youths" is defined by the McKinney-Vento Act as

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

(B) includes--

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Enroll in the local attendance area school or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is the parent's, guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's preference. If the school district believes the school selected is not in the student's best interest, then the district must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its position and inform him/her of the right to appeal its decision.

- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested by the parent, guardian, or local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.

These rights are established under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. To qualify for these rights, children and youth must be considered homeless according to the McKinney-Vento definition (see above).

Parent Resources regarding the NC Homeless Education Program (NCHPEP) can be found [here](#).

Student Resources regarding the rights of Children experiencing homelessness can be found [here](#).

NCHPEP is dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth experiencing homelessness have access to the public education to which they are entitled under the federal McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act. NCHPEP works towards this goal by ensuring that North Carolina's state policies are in compliance with federal law, by providing technical assistance to North Carolina's local homeless education liaisons, and by providing informational and awareness materials to educators and other interested community members throughout North Carolina.

The McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Policy is available below.

**School McKinney-Vento Liaison:** Andrea Chalker, [achalker@summitschool.org](mailto:achalker@summitschool.org)

## McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Policy

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (also referred to as the McKinney-Vento Act) acknowledges that disputes may arise between Public School Units (PSUs) students and their parents, or unaccompanied youth, regarding eligibility, school selection or enrollment decisions. Dispute resolution is among the required duties of the PSU homeless liaison and must be conducted consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act. Initiation of a dispute must come from the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth, and not for the convenience of the PSU. Consistent with federal law, students must be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought while a dispute is pending

PSUs should bear in mind that disputes related to eligibility, school selection or enrollment should be initiated at the request of the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth and not at the request or convenience of the PSU. Additionally, issues related to the definition of homelessness, the responsibilities of the PSU to serve homeless children and youth, and/or the explicit rights of homeless children and youth are addressed in the McKinney-Vento Act. Disputes related to eligibility, school selection, or enrollment shall be resolved within the parameters of the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

The following procedures are specified in the McKinney-Vento Act:

**Immediate Enrollment:** If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, the child shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

**Written Explanation:** The PSU must provide a written explanation of the eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision to the parent, legal guardian, or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to the

unaccompanied youth. (The written explanation must include a description of the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's right to appeal the decision.)

**Homeless Liaison:** The designated PSU homeless liaison is assigned to carry out the dispute resolution process in an expeditious manner, such that the local process is completed in **no more than 15 school business days or 30 calendar days, whichever is less.**

**Responsibility:** The PSU homeless liaison is responsible for informing the parent, legal guardian, or the unaccompanied youth of the dispute resolution process.

## OVERVIEW

When a dispute occurs regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, the following process must be used:

**Level I:** The PSU's homeless liaison makes the initial dispute request.

**Level II:** If unresolved, the dispute moves to the PSU head administrator (Level II).

**Level III:** If unresolved, the dispute moves to the local governing Board (Level III) for review and final decision on behalf of the charter school.

**Level IV:** If the dispute remains unresolved, the final appeal (Level IV) is to the NC State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY). Every effort must be made to resolve the dispute at the local level before it is brought to the NC State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

## INITIATION OF THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

When a dispute occurs regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be informed in writing of the PSU's decision including reasons for the decision within one (1) school business day in a language and format understandable to the parent, legal guardian or unaccompanied youth of their right to appeal the decision made by the charter school and be provided the following:

1. Written contact information for the PSU homeless liaison and State Coordinator, with a brief description of their roles.
2. A simple form that parents, legal guardians, or unaccompanied youth can complete and turn in to the school to initiate the dispute process (the school should copy the form and return the copy to the parent, legal guardian, or youth for their records when it is submitted.)
3. A written step-by-step description of how to dispute the PSU's decision.
4. Written notice of the right to enroll immediately in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute.
5. Written notice of the right to appeal to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth if the resolution is not satisfactory.
6. Written timelines for resolving appeals.

7. A copy of the NC Dispute Resolution Policy (hard copy or online link).

## **Level I: PSU Homeless Liaison Communication**

If a parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the PSU's decision related to eligibility, school selection, or enrollment:

1. The parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth must file a request for dispute resolution with the PSU's homeless liaison (or to his/her office) either verbally or by submitting a form that initiates the dispute resolution process. The request for dispute resolution must be submitted by the parent, legal guardian, or the unaccompanied youth to the homeless liaison **within two (2) school business days** of receiving the initial homeless liaison decision on enrollment, school selection, or enrollment. The parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth may initiate the request directly with the homeless liaison, or they may initiate the request to the school where the dispute occurs. If the request is submitted to the school where the dispute occurs, the school shall immediately forward the request to the PSU's homeless liaison. If the PSU's homeless liaison is unavailable, a PSU designee may receive the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's request to initiate the dispute resolution process.
2. The homeless liaison must log their receipt of the dispute, including the date and time, with a written description of the situation and the reason for the dispute, and a copy of the dispute must be forwarded to the homeless liaison's immediate supervisor and the charter school's head administrator.
3. **Within one (1) school business day** of receipt of the complaint, the homeless liaison must decide on the dispute and inform the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth in writing of the result. The PSU is responsible for verifying the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the homeless liaison's Level I decision.
4. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level I and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level II, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall notify the PSU's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level II **within one (1) school business day** of receipt of notification of the Level I decision.
5. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the homeless liaison's Level I decision, the PSU's homeless liaison shall provide the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth with an appeals package containing:
  - a. A copy of the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's dispute, which was filed with the PSU's homeless liaison at Level I;
  - b. The decision rendered at Level I by the PSU homeless liaison; and
  - c. Any additional information from the parent, legal guardian, unaccompanied youth, and/or the homeless liaison.

## **Level II: PSU Superintendent Communication**

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level I appeal)

1. If there is a disagreement with the decision rendered by the LEA's/PSU's homeless liaison at Level I, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the charter school's

head administrator, or the head administrator designee, (the designee shall be someone other than the PSU's homeless liaison) using the appeals package provided at Level I.

2. The charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee, shall meet (verbally, virtually or face-to-face) with the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The meeting shall be held within two (2) school business days of the parent's, legal guardian's, or unaccompanied youth's notification to the PSU of their intent to proceed to Level II of the dispute resolution process.
3. The charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee, shall provide a decision in writing to the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons, within two (2) school business days of the charter school's head administrator, or his/her designee's, meeting with the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The PSU is responsible for verifying the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the charter school's head administrator, Level II decision.
4. A copy of the dispute package and the written decision made at Level II is to be shared with the PSU's homeless liaison.
5. If the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level II and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level III, the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall notify the PSU's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level III within two (2) school business days of receipt of notification of the Level II decision.
6. If the dispute remains unresolved, the process moves to Level III.

### **Level III: Local Governing Board Review**

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level II appeal)

1. The charter school's head administrator, with assistance from the homeless liaison, shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the local governing Board for review within two (2) school business days of notifying the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth of the decision rendered at Level II.
2. The entire dispute package, including all documentation and related paperwork, is to be submitted to the governing Board in one consolidated and complete package. It is the responsibility of the PSU to ensure that the dispute package is complete and ready for review at the time of submission to the governing Board.
3. The local governing Board, or a panel of at least two Board members, shall schedule a conference with the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth to render a final decision on behalf of the Board. The Board or Board panel shall provide a written decision within two (2) school business days. The Board's or Board panel's decision shall be considered the final decision of the charter school to appeal to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. The written notification shall be provided to the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth, the head administrator, and the homeless liaison. Also, the notification shall contain the name and contact information for the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, along with details on appeal rights of the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth.

## **Level IV: Final Appeal**

1. The parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth has the option of filing an oral or written dispute with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth within three (3) school business days of receiving the Board's or Board panel's decision. The local homeless liaison shall provide the complete dispute record within three school business days following the request of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. The State Coordinator shall issue a final written decision to the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth and the PSU within ten school business days following receipt of a complete dispute package. Additional details on the NC Dispute Resolution policy and the process used by the State Coordinator for the [Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#) are located here.

## **Dispute Resolution Terms**

1. The terms "homeless," "homeless child," and "homeless student" shall mean the same as the term "homeless children and youth" as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2). These terms shall also be deemed to include the term "unaccompanied youth."
2. The term "unaccompanied youth" shall mean the same as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(6).
3. The term "public school unit (PSU)" includes local school administrative units, charter schools, lab schools, regional schools, Innovative School District schools, and Innovations Zone schools, and was formerly known as local educational agency (LEA).
4. The term "PSU dispute resolution process" shall refer to the PSU's policy on resolving complaints from parents, legal guardians, or unaccompanied youth regarding students experiencing homelessness. The term shall refer to appeals processes within the PSU, prior to any appeal by the parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth to the State Coordinator.
5. The term "local homeless liaison" shall refer to the official at each PSU, who ensures the PSU dispute resolution process for homeless children and youth is mediated in accordance with local, state, and federal policy as required by 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(vii).
6. The term "school business day" means days on which students are scheduled to be in attendance at school, according to the academic calendar adopted by the PSU.
7. The term "State Coordinator" shall refer to the staff person who carries out federally mandated duties regarding students experiencing homelessness as required by 42 U.S.C. § 11432(d)(3).
8. The term "State appeal process" shall refer to the policies the State Coordinator, PSUs, parents, legal guardians, and unaccompanied youth must follow when a parent, legal guardian, or unaccompanied youth seeks to appeal a dispute to the State Coordinator.

## **Service Animal Policy**

## PURPOSE

The School will make reasonable accommodations in its services, programs, or activities for qualified individuals with a disability in accordance with requirements set forth under federal law Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (ADA), American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (amended 2010) and North Carolina state law.

This policy addresses the use of Service Animals on School Property by qualified individuals with disabilities.

Pets and therapy animals are not considered Service Animals and, therefore, are not covered by this regulation.

## DEFINITIONS

### Service Animal

A "service animal" for purposes of this policy, is any dog or miniature horse that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, conditions from a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Service animals do not include any other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, except that a miniature horse will be permitted for use as a service animal if reasonable modifications can be made after assessing the specific factors listed in 28 C.F.R. 35.136(i).

Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent, are not considered service animals for the purposes of this policy.

### Work or Task

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability or necessary to mitigate a disability. Federal regulation 28 C.F.R. 35.104 provides examples of types of work or tasks that would qualify.

Examples include assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks; alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds; assisting an individual during a seizure; retrieving items such as medicine; helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by resending or interrupting impulse or destructive behaviors.

### Disability

In accordance with federal and state laws, an individual with a disability may (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment.

### Handler

A "handler" is an individual with a disability who uses a service animal, or, if the individual is unable to care for and supervise the animal, the handler is the person who cares for and supervises

the animal on behalf of the individual who needs the service animal. School personnel are not responsible for the care, supervision, and/or handling responsibilities of a service animal.

## **INQUIRIES RELATED TO SERVICE ANIMALS**

When it is not obvious what work/task an animal provides, a School representative may only make two inquiries to the Student/Employee/Visitor or service animal's handler to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal (definition above):

1. If the animal is required because of a disability, and
2. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

No School representative shall ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability in relation to the Service Animal unless provisions are needed for safety.

No School representative shall require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

## **USE OF A SERVICE ANIMAL ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES**

### **Introduction of a Service Animal**

School administrators shall facilitate the introduction of an eligible service animal into the school environment.

To promote a successful integration of the service animal at school and to minimize unnecessary disruption, an employee or student with a disability who intends to bring a service animal to school during the school day is encouraged to follow these guidelines:

1. The employee, student, or student's parent/guardian should notify the principal/administrator of the School in writing at least 10 work days prior to the date proposed to bring the service animal onto school property and complete a Request for Service Animal form. This will allow School staff to review the request and, if approved, develop a plan to introduce the service animal to the school environment. This plan will also provide any necessary guidance to staff and students regarding interactions with the service animal, as well as other activities or conditions deemed necessary by the School.
2. The employee, student, or student's parent/guardian should work with School personnel to create a plan addressing the presence of the service animal during the school day. A plan to integrate the service animal into the school environment should include the following: 1) appropriate training for school personnel and students regarding interaction with the service animal; 2) arrangements for meeting the service animal's basic needs during the school day; and 3) any necessary modifications to the educational program so that the service animal may accompany the employee or student with a disability.
3. Service animals should wear identification to provide adequate notice to students, staff, and others that the dog is a service animal. Any questions regarding the type of identification should be directed to the Head of School. If the service animal does not wear identification, it may confuse students and result in behavioral and safety

challenges, potentially leading to the permanent removal of the service animal from campus.

4. The service animal should be free of parasites and otherwise in good health.

### **Presence of a Service Animal on School Property**

An employee or student with a disability accompanied by a service animal must meet the following requirements for a service animal to be present on school property:

1. A student or employee who elects to be accompanied by a service animal will be expected to be the handler for the animal and care for and supervise the animal. If a student is unable to provide adequate care and supervision, a handler will be responsible for providing such care and supervision.
2. If a student requires assistance from a handler to control and care for the service animal while on school property, that individual must submit to a background screening, which may include a criminal history check in accordance with state law and any procedures established by the School.
3. The service animal must be on a leash or other mechanical restraint at all times. If mechanical restraint is not feasible due to a student's disability, the animal must be under other sufficient means of control.
4. The service animal must be housebroken, under the control of its handler, healthy, and have received all necessary vaccinations as required by state law.

### **Responsibilities of the Handler**

The care and supervision of a Service Animal is the responsibility of the Handler.

School staff are not responsible for the care or supervision of a Service Animal, including walking the animal or responding to the animal's need to relieve itself. However, staff may provide support to a student using a service animal in limited and particular instances, such as helping a young student who has a service animal take the animal outside to urinate.

### **Vaccinations and Health**

The animal must be in good health and have been vaccinated against diseases common to that type of animal as recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The school retains the right to request proof of vaccinations required by law. Dogs should undergo routine maintenance, including flea and tick prevention, deworming, and annual examinations. In addition, the animal should be spayed or neutered.

The school reserves the right to have the service dog removed if the dog appears unwell or presents a health or safety hazard, such as worms, uncontrolled and untreated fleas, or ticks.

### **Tags**

In accordance with North Carolina law, all dogs must wear a rabies tag.

### **Control**

The handler must be in complete control of the animal at all times.

The handler must keep the Service Animal on a leash/lead when the animal is in a public area (i.e. classroom, library, common area, outdoors on campus, etc.), unless the Service Animal is required to perform a task that it could not accomplish while on a leash/lead or the handler is otherwise unable to maintain the animal on a leash/lead due to a disability; in such cases, the handler still must be able to maintain control over the animal.

The handler must maintain complete control of the animal at all times while on the school bus or any other form of school transportation. The handler is responsible for ensuring the animal does not interfere with the operation of the school bus. The handler must keep the animal immediately next to them and away from the bus driver at all times. The handler must ensure that students do not engage with the animal on the school bus. The handler shall work with the school and bus driver to determine the best location for the handler and animal to sit while on the school bus.

## **USE OF A SERVICE ANIMAL ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY SCHOOL VISITORS**

A service animal may accompany a school visitor who is an individual with a disability in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws. A service animal that is accompanying a school visitor may be properly excluded from school property for a reason(s) set forth in other sections of this policy.

## **LIABILITY**

The School shall hold the owner and/or the handler of a service animal or both liable for any property damage caused by the animal to the same extent required by other board policy or administrative rules that impose liability for property damage. In addition, either the owner or the handler, or both, shall be liable for personal injury caused by the animal or related to the presence of the animal on school property. The school requires the handler and owner to expressly accept liability in such circumstances.

## **REMOVAL, RESTRICTION, OR EXCLUSION OF A SERVICE ANIMAL**

While access to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting the principal, the School retains the discretion to exclude or remove a Service Animal from School Property if:

1. The animal is out of control, and/or the animal's handler does not effectively control the animal's behavior;
2. The animal is not housebroken, or the animal's presence or behavior fundamentally interferes with the functions of the School;

3. The animal's presence would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the service, program, or activity; or
4. The animal poses a threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications, including those set forth above related to health.

If a principal or their designee excludes a dog or service animal from school property, they must document the reasons for the exclusion and notify the Head of School, who will decide on whether a service animal will be allowed to return to the school and, if reasonably possible, notify the individual with the disability in writing of the decision within five school days of the initial exclusion.

If the Head of School or their designee determines that an animal does not meet the definition of a service animal or that a service animal should be excluded for one or more of the reasons described in this section, the student's Section 504 or IEP Team shall meet to consider and document whether the animal's presence is necessary for the child to receive an appropriate education or to have equal access to the educational program and, if not, whether the child needs other aids and services or accommodations.

If a service animal is excluded, an individual with a disability will be provided the opportunity to participate in educational services, programs, or activities as required by law without having the service animal on the premises.

## **CONFLICTING DISABILITIES**

If another person on School Property has a covered disability under the ADA and that person is in proximity of a Service Animal appropriate for presence on School Property, a request for assistance will be made to the principal or designee, who will consider all facts surrounding the contact and try to resolve this issue.

