

Charlotte Secondary School



Student and Parent Handbook

Mission Statement

Our mission is to develop students capacity to:

Think with discernment and ingenuity

Communicate with empathy and tolerance

Act with integrity and purpose

Board of Directors

Charlotte Secondary School is a non-profit organization. As a non-profit, Charlotte Secondary School is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has between five and eleven members and the primary responsibilities of the Board include ensuring that the school is achieving its mission, creating and following board policies, overseeing the strategic plan for the school, and approving the annual budget. The Board is also responsible for the hiring and termination of employees at the recommendation of the Head of School. The Board meets every month. All board meetings are open to the public and the agenda for each meeting is posted on the School website three days in advance of all regularly scheduled meetings. Public comments are allowed at board meetings. Anyone who would like to make a public comment must email board@charlottessecondary.org 24 hours before a board meeting to request a spot on the agenda.

Administration

Head of School

The Head of School functions primarily in the role of providing leadership in all areas of Charlotte Secondary School, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and curriculum. The Head of School is the general manager of Charlotte Secondary School and leads the school in site-based decision making.

Assistant Head of School

The Assistant Head of School provides daily support and supervision of the Middle School and High School programs, teachers, staff, students, parents and curriculum for grades 6 through 12.

Finance/Human Resource Director

The Finance and Human Resource Director directs financial and human resources business. The person in this role provides critical, time-sensitive information to the Head of School and to the Board of Directors.

Director of Instruction and Culture

The Director of Instruction and Culture assists the Head of School and Assistant Head of School in daily support and supervision of the Middle School and High School programs, teachers, staff, students, parents and curriculum for grades 6 through 12.

Non-Discrimination

Equal Education Opportunities

Charlotte Secondary 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 hairstyle, 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. CSS will treat its students without discrimination with regard to course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance and extracurricular activities. CSS adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including

without limitation, 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.

Compliance with Other Laws

Charlotte Secondary 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. Charlotte Secondary School shall 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 Charlotte Secondary School except as may otherwise be required to monitor the school for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Charlotte Secondary School Campus Expectation Policy

Purpose: To establish shared expectations for the Charlotte Secondary School community and encourage frank and respectful engagement. At CSS, we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognize that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, classroom teachers and the school community. We understand and value the importance of sustaining a good working relationship between our parents and our educators to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. We greatly appreciate the commitment that our parents have made in choosing to entrust the education of their children to CSS, and thank them for their support of our unique school programming through which we engage our students daily. We welcome and encourage all parents, guardians, and visitors to be active in school life. This policy is a reminder of the respectful behavior expected from everyone to help our school thrive in a positive and supportive environment. Parents, guardians and visitors are expected to:

- Respect the caring spirit of our school.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and actions.
- Use effective communication with CSS staff, administration, and board members that cultivate open dialogue while seeking peaceful solutions to issues.
- Engage the school with an open mind to help resolve any issues of concern.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, Charlotte Secondary School cannot tolerate parents, guardians and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive actions which interfere or threaten to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, board meeting, school event, field trip, car line or parking lot, office area or any other area of the school grounds (including social media postings or discussions with community members regarding the school or a staff member).
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying a temper on or in the sight of campus.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to school staff, board member, visitor, fellow parent/guardian or student regardless of whether or not the action constitutes a criminal offense.

- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Abusive or threatening emails, texts, voicemails, phone messages or other written communication.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils, parents, staff, or board members on social media sites. Any concerns you may have about CSS must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, or the administration team, so the concern can be addressed fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Carrying weapons, smoking, and consuming alcohol or other drugs while on school property are not permitted.
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school grounds, including the noticeable smell of cannabis (weed) on clothing or belongings.
- Animals/pets brought onto School premises without permission. Service dogs are permitted at all times.

Parent and Family Engagement with Title I

Parent and family engagement is a priority at Charlotte Secondary School. Parents/guardians are important stakeholders in their child's education. At CSS, we provide a variety of ways for parents to be engaged and involved. As a public charter school, CSS receives Title 1 funds. The federal Title I program supports students with economic need in order to help create an equitable and high quality education for all students. Parent and family engagement is required as a part of the Title I program. The Title I program also supports the Every Students Succeeds Act(ESSA) by supporting students in their academics. Below are the details of how CSS supports parent and family engagement.

We hold parent conferences for all parents. At these conferences, parents learn detailed information about their child's progress. They also have the opportunity to learn about additional ways that they can support their child in and out of the classroom. The teachers provide the information in person as well as Google Classroom. The school regularly communicates with parents through multiple channels, including school apps, the communication board in the carpool line, and social media, to share important updates, upcoming dates, and event information.

Parents can become involved through the PTO, which is the parent organization that supports the school. The PTO provides a variety of parent committees which allow parents to volunteer and be involved in many ways. The PTO allows for parents to volunteer and provide feedback and ideas for additional events and programs at the school. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer at the school through school events, field trips, and fundraising initiatives. Parents and family members are also encouraged to attend our school events that are held throughout the school year.

Lastly, the staff at CSS play an important role in supporting parent involvement throughout the year. CSS staff are expected to follow the school communication policy which guides them through the

expectations for how they must communicate with parents. The teachers also participate in school wide events and are involved in the process of reaching out to parents about volunteering for field trips and other classroom events.

Media

The Board of Directors encourages parents and students to voice their concerns. It's important that any concerns you may have are made through appropriate channels as set forth in the student/parent handbook which includes speaking to the class teacher, the Head of School or the Board of Directors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. We consider the use of social media websites to fuel campaigns and complaints against the School, board, staff, students, and in some cases other parents not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

In the event that any staff member, pupil or parent/guardian of a child/ren being educated at CSS is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate "report abuse" section of the network site and may be disinvited or otherwise prohibited from the school's official social media pages, including Facebook.

All social network sites have clear rules about the content, which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity, which breaches this. CSS will also expect that any parent/guardian or pupil removes such comments immediately.

Creating fake social media accounts to post negative or harmful content about the school, its students, or staff is strictly unacceptable. Such actions violate our code of conduct and will result in disciplinary consequences.

In serious cases, CSS will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying in accordance with the student/parent employee handbook and any other school policies.

We may take any of the following steps if a parent/guardian, student, or family member does not follow the policy:

1. Request a parent meeting on campus
2. Ban the parent from campus for a period of time.
3. Contact the appropriate authorities.

Parents/guardians, students, or family members who receive consequences based on their behavior shall follow the school's grievance process as set out in the student/parent handbook or any other policy established by the school. Students engaged in such activity will be addressed in accordance with the CSS student handbook. We trust that parents/guardians, students, and family members will assist CSS with the implementation of this policy, and we thank you for your continuing support of our school.

Nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to interfere with or infringe upon any rights, obligations, or responsibility under state or federal law, including but not limited to free speech rights. Furthermore, nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to discourage or interfere with any individual's right or decision to participate in a proceeding with any appropriate federal, state or local government agency, or to prohibit any individual from cooperating with any such agency in its investigation.

Academics and Curriculum

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is required by Charlotte Secondary School, and any form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the school's Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating; working with another person(s) without permission; copying someone else's work; sharing your work with others; unauthorized use of notes or books on examinations, tests, or quizzes; giving or receiving information on assessments or assignments without instructor approval; forging a parent signature; and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as intentionally using another person's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without proper citation. This also includes the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools or platforms to complete or generate academic work without the teacher's explicit permission. **Any act of academic dishonesty may result in a loss of credit for the assignment and/or additional disciplinary action. (see below)**

School Honor Code

The purpose of the Honor Code at Charlotte Secondary School, is to build a community of honor and trust among administrators, teachers, students, parents, and staff.

CSS students are good citizens who value honor and demonstrate integrity in all that they do. They help members of the community by having a positive attitude and by respecting other people and school property.

Honor: Having high moral standards of behavior; Being judged by other people as possessing good qualities or character.

Integrity: Possessing the quality of being honest and fair.

Lying: Purposefully being dishonest or misleading to a fellow student, teacher, or administrator.

Cheating: Receiving unauthorized help on work; copying another person's work or answers on assessments. Asking other students to provide information such as questions posed or material covered on tests, quizzes or other assignments already taken or completed by the other student. Plagiarizing is a form of cheating:

Plagiarism: Passing off another's work or ideas as your own or intentionally failing to cite sources for information that is not widely known. Ignorance of proper citation procedures is not an acceptable excuse for failing to cite sources. Plagiarism includes:

- Excessive parental assistance on homework or projects.
- Forgery or falsification of documents
- Lying, outwardly and/or by omission
- Aiding others who are violating the School Honor Code
- Taking the ideas of others without permission

Artificial Intelligence (AI): The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools or platforms to complete, assist with, or generate academic work is not permitted without the teacher's explicit permission. Unauthorized use of AI in assignments, projects, or assessments will be considered a violation of the school's Honor Code and may result in disciplinary action.

Stealing: Taking another person's belongings or ideas (plagiarism) without permission or providing proper citations.

Disrespectful of People or Property: Being rude, defiant, or unkind to another person; vandalism or misuse of school property.

Inappropriate Use of Technology: Loading unauthorized programs or viewing non-approved websites on school devices.

Student Honor Pledge:

"As an honorable member of Charlotte Secondary School, I promise to uphold the Honor Code of my school to promote honor and integrity. I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, be disrespectful of people or property or use technology inappropriately."

Reporting of Honor Code Violations

Each CSS student is honor bound to report immediately all violations of the Honor Code of which the student has first-hand knowledge; failure to do so is itself a violation of the Honor Code. All students, staff, and other employees of Charlotte Secondary School are responsible for familiarity with and support of the Honor Code. Reports may be made to adults in the building in person or by email. Reports can also be made via Say Something, an anonymous reporting system by app, phone or website. Say something posters are located throughout the building.

Consequences for Violating the Honor Code

Violations of the Honor Code will be addressed by a member of the Administrative Team and may result in appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with school policies.

- **1st Offense:** Zero on the assignment, with the option to redo for up to half credit at the teacher's discretion. Parent notification
- **2nd Offense:** Zero on the assignment and 1-3 days In-school suspension. Not eligible for future enrollment in Honors/AP courses.
- **3rd Offense:** Zero on the assignment and 1-3 days Out-of-school suspension.

Note: Use of AI must follow teacher guidelines; unauthorized use is considered academic dishonesty.

Promotion and Retention Policy and Academic Standards

All students will be expected to master the grade level material each year. The teachers at Charlotte Secondary School will be responsible for assessing each student throughout the school year in order to track their progress towards mastery. All data, work samples and other pieces of academic evidence will be kept by all teachers who serve that student. If a teacher has a concern about a student's academic progress or behavior, they will bring the concern directly to the MTSS Team, which is the Multi-Tiered System Support Team. The MTSS Team includes the Head of School, the School Counselor, the MTSS Coordinator, the Exceptional Children's Coordinator. The MTSS Team will discuss the teacher's concern and if warranted, will create an intervention plan. The teacher/MTSS Coordinator will communicate the details of the plan with the parents. If a teacher has a concern about the promotion of a student, the teacher will communicate their concern to the MTSS Coordinator by following the required steps. If necessary, the teacher, parent, student and MTSS Coordinator will meet to discuss the details of the student's academic progress and an additional intervention plan will be put in place. Any student being considered for retention must have already been referred to the MTSS Team. At the end of the school year, the Head of School will review all of the data in the student's file and a final decision will be made about the promotion or retention of the student.

State Testing

All CSS students in grades 6th-8th will take the North Carolina required state tests.

These tests include the following:

- Reading EOG
- Math EOG
- Science **(8th grade only)**

All CSS students in grades 9th through 12th will take the North Carolina required EOC tests:

- Biology
- English II
- Math I (including students who take Math I during their 8th grade year)
- Math III

Withdrawal Procedures

If a parent would like to withdraw their child from Charlotte Secondary School, they should fill out the online Student Withdrawal Form or the Paper Student Withdrawal Form. Parents are required to list their student's next school on the form at the time of withdrawal. If the student will be homeschooled, the state issued homeschool identification number must be provided for the student to be withdrawn. If another school requests records for a current CSS student, CSS will consider this a request for withdrawal. The records will be sent and that student will be withdrawn from CSS.

Student Files

Charlotte Secondary School will adhere to all federal laws relating to maintaining student files. The following information regarding The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) comes from the US Department of Education.

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/parent-guide-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa>

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students".

Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by CSS. CSS is not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. CSS may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that CSS correct records, which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If Charlotte Secondary School decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if CSS still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows the school to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

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

Right to Know Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Parents of students have the right to know the professional qualifications of the Charlotte Secondary School classroom teachers. Parents can ask for certain information about their child's classroom teachers, and the CSS will give this information to parents in a timely manner if they ask for it. Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child's classroom teachers and CSS:

- Whether the State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- Whether the State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if they do, their qualifications
- The School Improvement Plan
- Qualifications of your child's teachers
- Professional development opportunities for teachers and assistants to ensure highly qualified personnel
- Opportunities for parent involvement and input
- The Title I Parent Involvement Plan and School Parent Involvement Plan
- School Report Card

The Protection of Student Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the students or student's parent
2. Mental or psychological problems of the students or the student's family
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes
4. Anti-social, demeaning, illegal, or self-incriminating behavior
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close familial relationships
6. Legally-recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, or doctors
7. Religious affiliations, beliefs, or practices of the students or parent
8. Income, other than as required by law, to determine program eligibility

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the School or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety

of the students (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law)

3. Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others

Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by a School to its students
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

Charlotte Secondary School (CSS) has established policies to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and in the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. These policies are designed to uphold the rights of students and their families.

CSS will directly notify parents of these policies at the beginning of each school year, as well as after any significant changes. Notifications will be provided through school communication methods such as school apps, the school website, and the Parent and Student Handbook.

If such activities are planned or scheduled, CSS will inform parents of the specific or approximate dates and provide the option to opt their student out of participation.

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

1. The parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their concern to the School via email to the Head of School. The description shall clearly state the procedure or practice of concern.
2. If the concern is not resolved within 30 days, the parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their concern to the CSS Board of Directors. The description shall clearly state the procedure or practice of concern.
3. If the concern is still not resolved the parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their concern to the State Board of Education.
4. If a resolution is not reached, the parent can contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Exceptional Children

The mission of Charlotte Secondary School's Department of Exceptional Children is to ensure that children and youth with disabilities develop educationally, socially, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of a free, appropriate education and related services in the least restrictive

environment. We will continue to educate, support and advocate for students with disabilities and assist them in achieving their true potential.

Through the Individual Education Program process, Charlotte Secondary School offers a free appropriate public education to each of its students with special needs. This includes the Occupational Course of Study courses to our high school students if determined to be appropriate by the student's IEP Team. Further information about Occupational Course of Study Courses can be found at the Occupational Course of Study website maintained by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Child Find

Charlotte Secondary School participates in Project Child Find, an effort coordinated with the Exceptional Children Division of the State Department of Public Instruction, to locate and identify children and youth ages birth through 21 with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services. CSS informs parents and/or guardians of the services available from CSS, as well other state and community agencies. The children who qualify for these services, have been diagnosed or are suspected to have intellectual, physical, or emotional disabilities and are unable to benefit from a regular school program without special assistance. CSS identifies these students through our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as well as from parent and teacher referrals and provides the following help:

- A complete evaluation, and if appropriate and within the guidelines of eligibility in NC, eligibility in one of the 14 disabling conditions
- An Individualized Education Program for children with a disability
- A referral to other agencies when needed.

Grading at Charlotte Secondary School

The long-term success of our students at CSS, is of the utmost importance to us as a school. In keeping with our mission to develop productive citizens that take responsibility for their future, our grading policy requires student accountability. We believe that our students should be expected to put forth their very best effort in the classroom every day. For consistency and fairness within the school, we believe it is essential to have a clear set of grading expectations clearly understood by students, teachers, administrators and parents. Grading policies will be communicated to the students and parents at the beginning of the year.

Grading Scale for Grades 9-12:

A 90-100% = 4.00

B 80-89% = 3.00

C 70-79% = 2.00

D 60-69% = 1.0

F 0-59% = 0.00

All Honors level courses will be awarded .5 Quality Points when calculating each student's GPA.

Day to Day School Operations and Procedures

Attendance

At Charlotte Secondary School, every day is essential to the learning process. Therefore, we encourage every student to be at school every day. Students are responsible for collecting and making up any work that they missed while they were out of school. Students or parents may arrange to pick up work missed during an absence after they return. This can be done by request at the school or via Google Classroom from home.

Absences are considered Excused Absences in accordance with State law and will be excused for the following reasons:

1. Illness/Injury
2. Quarantine
3. Death of an immediate family member
4. Medical or dental appointments (a note from doctor/dentist office is required to verify appointment)
5. Court proceedings
6. Religious observance
7. Inclement weather
8. College visits for 11th and 12th graders. (With confirmation from the institution).

Absences must be documented in order to be considered excused. Please do your best to inform the school of your child's absence by emailing Ms. Tammy Williams at tammy.williams@charlottesecsecondary.org by 9:00 am. To have an absence excused, appropriate documentation must be submitted within 6 school days. If a student's excused absences are due to illness or injury at any point during the school year, the Head of School may require a statement from the student's physician in order to excuse any future absences. This action will automatically be recorded in Infinite Campus.

Any student with 20 or more absences in any year long class in a school year and with 10 or more absences in any semester long class, is subject to failure of that course or grade level. If the Head of School determines that retention or failure of a course is necessary based on attendance, the parent/guardian and student will be notified in writing.

Students will be considered present for the day according to the following times depending upon their grade level:

Grades 6-12: Attendance is recorded per class. Students who miss more than half of any class will be marked absent for that class. This includes missing more than the first half of the class or the last half of the class.

Instructional Time

Every minute of instructional time is valuable at Charlotte Secondary School. Therefore, we do not allow class time to be interrupted for any reason. If you need to speak to your child's teacher you must make an appointment ahead of time. No visitors will be given access to any classroom unless the visitor has made prior arrangements for their visit.

Late Arrivals to School

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classroom by the start of class (7:30AM). Tardiness is only excused for medical and dental appointments, or to comply with court ordered attendance at a legal proceeding. For any tardy to be excused, proper documentation is required within 48 hours. Student tardy due to illness, will only be excused with parent communication in writing or via email to Tammy.williams@charlottesecsecondary.org

Early Dismissal from School

Early dismissals are only excused for medical or dental appointments, or to comply with court-ordered attendance at a legal proceeding. Early dismissals for athletics are also considered excused. In all cases, proper documentation from the doctor, dentist, or court must be submitted within 48 hours for the dismissal to be marked excused.

Please note that teachers continue instructing until the end of the school day, and early dismissals disrupt classroom learning and instruction.

In Infinite Campus, early dismissals are classified as tardies, similar to late arrivals. Early dismissals due to illness will only be excused with written communication from a parent or an email sent to Tammy.Williams@charlottesecsecondary.org. Tammy.williams@charlottesecsecondary.org

We encourage parents to make appointments for their child outside of school hours and on Friday. However, if you must pick your child up from school early, please notify the registrar in advance. Parents must sign students out in the main office. Students will only be released from school to authorized drivers for the student. Those NOT listed as an authorized adult on the list, can only pick up a student if the school has received a written and signed note from the parent/guardian giving permission for that person to pick up the student. **Proof of identity is required in order to pick up a student.**

High School students who drive themselves to school must bring a note signed by the parent, including a contact number for the parent, to the office before school begins to be released for appointments during the school day. A dismissal slip will be issued to the student after the parent has been contacted and the early dismissal has been verified.

The latest time a child may be picked up for early dismissal is 2:45 PM. Please schedule appointments accordingly and be mindful that students will not be dismissed after these times, unless in an extreme emergency and with Head of School or Administration approval.

Partial Attendance for Extracurricular, Athletics, and Special Events Participation

Students must be counted as present for the day in order to participate in any school sponsored activity/event including extracurricular, music performance, athletic or special event activities.

Grades 6-12 Arrive before 11:30 AM or leave for early dismissal after 11:30 AM.

Makeup Work Policy for Student Absences

Students are responsible for completing all missed assignments, tests, and classwork due to absences—whether excused or unexcused.

- **Time Frame:** Students will be given **the number of days missed plus one** to complete and submit makeup work (e.g., if a student is absent for 2 days, they have 3 school days to make up the work), unless the teacher or an administrator determines that extenuating circumstances might support an extension of time
- **Student Responsibility:** It is the **student's responsibility** to check with teachers for any missed assignments or materials and to schedule makeup tests or quizzes, if applicable
- **Long-Term Assignments:** Long-term projects or assignments assigned before the absence are still **due upon return**, unless prior arrangements are made with the teacher
- **Unexcused Absences:** Students with unexcused absences may NOT be granted full credit for makeup work, at the discretion of the teacher and administration
- **Suspension:** Students who are absent due to a suspension from school, will be provided an opportunity to complete work and take any examinations missed

School Hours

Grades 6-12

Drop off 7:10

School Hours 7:30 AM-3:30 PM

Pick-up 3:30 PM to 3:50 PM

Arrival & Dismissal

For the safety of our students and staff, all drivers must follow safe driving practices while on campus. This includes driving slowly and cautiously, avoiding reckless behavior, and never cutting through parking spaces.

Violations of these expectations may result in a verbal or written warning. Continued or serious offenses may lead to restricted access or a ban from campus. The school reserves the right to escalate consequences depending on the severity of the incident.

Arrival Procedures

All students must be dropped off at the main entrance of the school. To ensure a smooth and safe flow of traffic, all vehicles are required to follow designated traffic patterns and enter the campus using the second entrance.

- **Car Riders**

Students may not be dropped off before their designated drop-off time.

There is no staff available for supervision before this time, and the school is not responsible for students who arrive early or for any incidents that may occur before supervision begins. Please make sure that your child enters the school safely and that he or she is supervised as he/she is crossing streets, parking lots etc. **All car riders must be dropped off in the carpool line. Students may not be dropped off at the street.**

- **Walkers**

Students may only be considered “walkers” if they live in nearby neighborhoods or students who ride the city bus. Parents of students that walk from nearby neighborhoods are responsible for the safety of their child until they arrive on campus.

Dismissal Procedures

At dismissal time, students must be picked up by an authorized adult. If a student is being picked up by someone who is not on the student’s authorized for pick-up list, the parent must authorize the pickup in writing by sending an email to Tammy.williams@charlottesecsecondary.org

- **Car Riders**

Middle school parents should line up in the parking lot closest to the school building. High school parents should line up in the parking lot closest to the fields. If a parent has a high school and middle school student the parent should come through the high school line.

- **Walkers**

Students may only be considered “walkers” if they live in a nearby neighborhood or ride public transportation. Walkers will be dismissed at 3:20 PM.

- **Third Party Transportation**

CSS students receiving transportation via third parties will require prior written permission from the student’s parent/legal guardian.

Charlotte Secondary Communication

Charlotte Secondary is committed to communicating with its school community on a regular basis. Parents can expect the following communication plan to be followed throughout the school year.

- All parent communication will come through email, school newsletter, Google Classroom, Talking Points (or other platforms the school chooses) and Infinite Campus (student schedules, grades and attendance)
- All emails sent to staff that require a response will be returned within 48 business hours. Phone calls will be returned within 48 business hours. If a parent has an urgent or time sensitive matter to discuss with a teacher or administrator, it is recommended that they call the front office and leave a message. Our teachers and administrators are not consistently on their email during the instructional day as teachers are expected to be teaching, not on their email while students are in class

- CSS does not communicate through Facebook, or any other social media sites, regarding personal matters, questions or concerns. All school related questions must be asked in person, over the phone or in an email
- Charlotte Secondary School encourages students to take personal responsibility for their learning by addressing questions or concerns directly with their teacher—either in person or via email. Parents are encouraged to support this approach by guiding their child to seek solutions independently before stepping in. This helps students build confidence, communication skills, and accountability
- Parents should communicate with members of the CSS staff through their school email address, via the app, over the phone or in person. It is not recommended that school staff communicate directly with parents through direct text messaging. We ask that all parents please respect the staff by not communicating late in the evenings or on the weekends. A healthy work/life balance is as important for the CSS staff as it is for our CSS families
- **It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that all emails and contact information is updated as needed**

Dress Code

The purpose of the dress code is to clearly identify appropriate attire for all of our students when attending **any CSS related event**. In keeping with our school mission, the board and administration of the school believe attire should be modest, not offensive to others and not disruptive to the learning environment while on school property or out at a CSS event or field trip. We believe it is important for all of our students to learn the importance of presenting themselves well and that they should begin learning those habits while at school. Students must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to a school.

Some examples of attire that cannot be worn:

- Mesh shirts
- Attire with a slogan or symbol that disrupts the educational process
- Hats, beanies, toboggans, bandanas, and headbands with items that protrude from the head are not permitted during the school day. Exceptions will be made for **traditional** religious headwear **only** with prior administrative approval.
- Clothing that exposes bare midriffs or backs, or plunging necklines
- Clothing that displays any suggestive or objectionable material
- Clothing advocating drug, alcohol or tobacco use
- Clothing or other articles with inappropriate or suggestive language and/or pictures
- Clothing that defames, degrades or is offensive to a gender, race, color, religious group, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, a physical or mental impairment or culture
- Leggings or yoga pants unless they are or worn with a shirt that covers the student's mid-bottom
- Tank tops with straps that are less than 3" wide or that don't cover all under garments
- Clothing that exposes bare midriffs or bare backs
- Pants worn that are excessively sagging
- Pajamas and slippers
- Sheer or see-through clothing
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be visible
- Halter tops and strapless tops

- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be an appropriate length—no shorter than mid-thigh or fingertip length when arms are resting at the sides

This list is not all-inclusive and is subject to change at the Administration's discretion. Failure to comply with CSS dress code are violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Dress code violations will have consequences outlined in the discipline policy.

Charlotte Secondary School Events and Field Trip Fees/Payments

Throughout the year, Charlotte Secondary School hosts various sponsored events and field trips. Parents must RSVP by the designated deadline for their child to attend. Additionally, any required payments must be submitted by the specified due date.

Please note that once a parent RSVPs that their child will attend a trip, they are responsible for the full cost. **There are no refunds**, as the school is required to purchase tickets and make arrangements in advance, which are non-refundable.

For both day and overnight trips, students will only be permitted to attend if payment is received in full **by the deadline** and a signed permission slip is submitted.

Charlotte Secondary School Event Eligibility

Students may not participate in any CSS-sponsored events—including clubs, field trips, overnight trips, dances, athletic games, and similar activities—if they have any outstanding fees. This includes, but is not limited to, fees for technology, device repairs, prom, dances, and athletics.

Seniors must have all outstanding balances paid in full to participate in the graduation ceremony. Diplomas and transcripts will be held until all financial obligations are met.

Field Trips and Overnight Trips

Field trips are an important part of enhancing a student's learning experience. Charlotte Secondary School provides field trip opportunities that provide academic value or community building time for our students. Field trips and overnight trips are a privilege at CSS. Please review eligibility requirements below prior to paying for a field trip or signing a permission slip.

No CSS student will be permitted to leave a field trip early except in the case of an emergency or unless requested by a member of the CSS staff for disciplinary reasons. All students must remain with the group for the duration of the field trip. Due to the responsibilities of a chaperone to supervise the students in their care, we are not able to accommodate bringing additional children that are not in the designated class or course.

Students and families should be aware that any student who chooses to participate in a school-sponsored field trip is subject to search of their room or belongings if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student may be in violation of school policy or law. Local law enforcement may also be called to investigate if there is a belief that the student's behavior violated the law. Students who have been involved in serious disciplinary action may lose the opportunity to participate in future field trips scheduled in the same school year. Students who are not in good academic standing and

excessive unexcused absences, may not be allowed to participate in field trips, which involve missing instruction time.

The use of personal devices—including cell phones and other electronics—is limited on overnight trips, unless otherwise approved by the Head of School. This policy is in place to help ensure the safety and well-being of all CSS students.

Any personal devices brought on overnight trips will be collected and securely held by designated staff during the night. Parents will have direct contact with staff members on duty if needed.

Any violations of the CSS Technology Policy while off campus—such as during field trips or overnight events—will result in the device being collected and securely retained by staff until it is picked up by a parent or guardian.

Eligibility for Overnight Trips

1. Student must be in good academic standing
Students may not be failing any classes (F1 grade – cumulative grade for the year) - grades will be checked two weeks prior to field trips/overnight trips. If a student is failing any classes at that time, he or she may not be able to attend the trip or school event
2. Students must meet the following behavior requirements:
 - a. Student may not have accrued more than 4 referrals that results in in-school or out-of-school suspension or a combination of both
 - b. Student **MUST** not be serving a current suspension
 - c. The Head of School reserves the right to request parent/guardian to chaperone their child
3. Student must meet the following attendance requirements:
 - a. A student may not have more than **10 total absences** (excused or unexcused) during the school year. Exceptions may be made only in cases of **physician-documented extreme medical circumstances**, subject to administrative review
 - b. Student may not have more than 10 unexcused tardies (30 minutes or more) or early dismissals or a combination
4. Permission slip must be received by the due date
5. Payment must be paid on time per due dates scheduled in field trip and overnight trip information
6. The Student may not have any outstanding fees due – including but not limited to: technology, repairs, athletic fees, etc.

No refunds will be issued for students who become ineligible to attend a trip due to any of the reasons outlined above, as trip payments are used to secure reservations and are non-refundable.

All final decisions regarding student participation in overnight trips are made at the discretion of the administrative team.

Overnight Trip Parent and Student Expectations

Overnight trips are optional (“a privilege”) for all students. Students who are not in good academic and behavior standing, will not be able to attend trips as they are offered. Deposits and payments made towards trips are nonrefundable as vendors are paid well in advance of trips and will not refund the money to the school. Accommodations required by a student’s IEP or 504 Plan will be provided during school trips. However, special requests related to dietary preferences, rooming arrangements, or personal preferences from students or parents that are not documented in an IEP or 504 Plan can not be guaranteed.

Personal Items

CSS will not accept responsibility for the valuable personal items of students. We expect students to leave belongings that are not necessary for their education at home.

Any personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe, inappropriate for the school, or interfering with students’ educational focus, will be collected and remain in the possession of a staff member until the parents retrieve them. Such items may be subject to search.

Charlotte Secondary School shall not be responsible for any items lost or damaged while in the students’ possession.

Destruction of School Property

Students must not intentionally cause, or attempt to cause, substantial damage to school property or another person's property, as determined by school officials. Likewise, students may not steal or attempt to steal property belonging to the school or others, whether on school grounds or during any school-sponsored activity, event, or function off campus.

Incidents involving damage or theft of school property will result in disciplinary action, up to and including exclusion from school. Parents or guardians will be held financially responsible for the repair or replacement of any damaged or destroyed property.

Students with outstanding fines may be prohibited from participating in non-required school activities, including but not limited to athletics, dances, parking privileges, and field trips.

School Deliveries

To protect the integrity of the classroom environment, flowers, food, gifts, and other items will not be delivered to students during class time. Food deliveries are only permitted during the student’s designated lunch period.

Parents who bring items such as lunches or athletic equipment should note that these will not be delivered to classrooms. Students may retrieve these items during lunch or after school.

We encourage families to help foster student responsibility and minimize interruptions to instructional time.

Inclement Weather Procedures

Charlotte Secondary School makes independent decisions regarding delays, closures, or early dismissals due to inclement weather. The **Head of School reserves the right to determine what is**

in the best interest of student and staff safety, regardless of surrounding local school decisions (e.g., CMS).

In the event of a school cancellation, delay, or early dismissal, families and staff will be notified via text alerts through the designated school communication platform (e.g., Talking Points) and through the school's official social media accounts.

Parents reserve the right to make the best decision for their family regarding attendance and safety during inclement weather.

Parents are responsible for keeping their emergency contact information up to date to ensure timely communication during weather-related events.

Emergency Contact

Every family must provide Emergency Contact Information to CSS. Please communicate any changes to the contact information throughout the year by emailing:

daphne.pauldin@charlottesecsecondary.org

Visitors

All visitors at Charlotte Secondary School must sign in at the front office. All visitors are required to wear a visitor tag while on campus. Once a visitor has checked in, they will then be escorted to their destination. All visitors must abide by the policies set forth in this handbook at all times.

Volunteers

The staff at Charlotte Secondary School welcomes volunteers! Parent volunteers are a huge piece to the success of our school. All volunteers must adhere to the volunteer requirements outlined below. Volunteers must sign in at the front office and a volunteer visitor badge must be worn at all times if volunteering during school hours. All volunteers are expected to abide by all of the school policies set forth in this handbook.

A volunteer is anyone who provides services, without compensation or benefits of any kind of amount, on an occasional or regular basis at the CSS or CSS activities. CSS strongly encourages parent, grandparent, guardian, and community involvement in our school. The following will assist our volunteers in being effective, satisfied, and successful school volunteers, while maintaining the integrity of CSS and the health and safety of our students and teachers. Volunteers in large group functions may not be subject to all the same requirements to serve.

1. All volunteers at Charlotte Secondary School are required to:
 - a. Have a background check including a Sex Offender Registry Check performed through a CSS third-party vendor on file dated within the last two calendar years.
 - b. Complete, sign, and date the Confidentiality Agreement Acknowledgement.
 - c. Confirm in writing that they have been provided with a copy of, read, understand, and agree to comply with this policy.
2. The Head of School or his/her designee will formally approve every volunteer application, and volunteers must be placed on the Authorized Volunteer list before volunteering their services at CSS. All administrative staff will have a copy of the Authorized Volunteer list and will prohibit any person not on this list from volunteering at the school.
3. Information collected during the screening process for volunteers will be treated as confidential to the extent allowed by the law.
4. The Head of School or Finance/Human Resource Officer will review all criminal background

checks. No person who has been convicted of crimes against children, sex crimes, or serious crimes of violence will be allowed to volunteer at Charlotte Secondary School. The Finance/Human Resources director and an administrator will evaluate other criminal records on an individual basis. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, the Head of School shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the volunteer

- (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or
- (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a volunteer. The Head of School or Finance/Human Resource Officer shall document the decision.

5. All volunteers must report directly to the school office when they arrive and should sign in as visitors. The school office will provide ID badges that must be worn throughout the entire visit.
6. All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age unless they are supervised by another responsible adult as approved by the Administrator or his/her designee.
7. Volunteers work in partnership with, under the supervision of, and at the request of CSS administration and staff. Volunteers are expected to abide by all Board policies, procedures, and school rules when performing their assigned responsibilities.
8. Volunteers will not have access to confidential information in student records except as allowed by federal and state laws and regulations. Volunteers will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen and heard while working as a volunteer. If there is a safety concern or an emergency, it must immediately be communicated to someone in authority at CSS.
9. Volunteers shall not use information learned or acquired during volunteering for any reason other than in furtherance of their volunteer efforts at CSS. For example, if a volunteer is a class parent and receives parent email information to communicate with parents, the volunteer shall not share parent email addresses with others and shall not use such email addresses to communicate with parents about anything other than serving as class parent.
10. Volunteers are to serve as positive role models. CSS volunteers must always:
 - Use appropriate language
 - Dress appropriately
 - Discuss age-appropriate topics
 - Refrain from inappropriately touching students
11. Volunteers are prohibited from disciplining students. Behaviors requiring discipline should be reported immediately to the appropriate teacher or staff member.
12. Volunteers are prohibited from administering medications of any kind to students.
13. Volunteers should refrain from giving students gifts, rewards, or food items of any kind without the permission of CSS personnel.
 - a. Volunteers are expected to be prompt and dependable. Volunteers should notify the school office if an illness or emergency prohibits them from attending a volunteer assignment.
 - b. Volunteers may not take students off CSS property without the written permission of parents and CSS personnel.

CSS does not tolerate any kind of racial, ethnic, disability, gender discrimination or sexual harassment by volunteers of the school and it is expected that all volunteers will comply with the Charlotte Secondary School's policies related to such matters.

Parent Grievance Policy

I. Introduction

Charlotte Secondary School is committed to a positive learning environment and has established the following grievance protocol to solve disputes or complaints in a fair and prompt manner. Notably, the formal procedures described below may be implemented only after the parties have engaged in an earnest attempt to resolve matter(s) informally.

II. Complaints

Complaints are taken seriously by Charlotte Secondary School and should proceed as follows:

1. Complainant(s) should first schedule a conference with the teacher, coach, or administrator immediately to discuss the issue. CSS reserves the right to redirect complaint(s) to the appropriate personnel if this step has not been followed.
2. If complainant(s) conclude that the initial response/course of action was insufficient, a meeting may then be scheduled with the Head of School. Prior to scheduling any such meeting, complainant(s) must first provide to the Head of School a grievance letter that identifies:
 - a. the issue/concern/complaint
 - b. what steps have been taken to resolve this situation
 - c. proposed solutions. The Head of School will acknowledge the receipt of a grievance letter within four business days and attempt to respond to all grievance letters within 10 business days of their receipt
3. If a resolution cannot be reached through a discussion with the Head of School, complainant(s) may submit a formal grievance packet to the Charlotte Secondary School Board of Directors. This packet must include the information and materials as followed:
 - a. If the concern is not resolved with the Head of School, the parent shall submit in writing a detailed description of their concern to the CSS Board of Directors. The description shall clearly state the procedure or practice of concern.
4. Anonymous complaints may be acknowledged; however, a resolution may not be provided, as a thorough investigation cannot be conducted without sufficient information.
5. If a complainant is not comfortable addressing their concern directly with the Head of School, they may choose to speak with another member of the Administrative Team to seek a resolution.
6. If the issue remains unresolved after this step, the parent or guardian may submit their concern to the **CSS Board of Directors**. However, if any step in the process is skipped, the Board reserves the right to redirect the complainant to the appropriate school personnel, at the discretion of the Grievance Committee.
7. All complaints submitted to the Board must be in **writing** as outlined below:

III. Grievance Committee and Board Resolution

The Charlotte Secondary School Board of Directors shall annually appoint a Grievance Committee composed of at least three (3) directors. The committee shall call on or shall consult the Head of School/Administrative Staff, staff, and/or parents as necessary in the resolution of each individual grievance. A Grievance Package should be submitted in writing to the Charlotte Secondary School Board of Directors within 30 days of the conduct that triggered the grievance and must specify:

- The nature and date of the grievance and any related or supporting documents.
- The results of previous discussions to resolve the conflict, including any correspondence.
- The reason for the complainant's dissatisfaction with the decisions previously rendered.
- A description of the relief sought.

Within 30 days of the submission of a complete Grievance Packet, the Charlotte Secondary School Grievance Committee shall:

- Research the nature of the complaint.
- Interview the concerned parties as necessary.
- Recommend a course of action to the full Charlotte Secondary School Board of Directors through communications by the board member serving as Grievance Committee Chair to the Board Chair.

The Board of Directors shall render a final ruling on the grievance at its next regularly scheduled meeting following its receipt of the recommendation of the Grievance Committee.

Technology Use at Charlotte Secondary School

While at Charlotte Secondary School, students will have access to a variety of technology. It is the expectation of CSS that all school owned technology remains at the school. While we do not ask our families to provide or pay for their devices, we do ask that all students and parents sign and adhere to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy. A fee will be charged for damaged devices.

Video Monitoring

Charlotte Secondary School recognizes that the use of video monitoring/surveillance systems is warranted to maintain campus security, to increase student and employee safety and to assist with the enforcement of the school's policies and rules concerning student and employee conduct, safety and security.

CSS buildings and grounds may be equipped with video monitoring devices, but such devices shall not be placed where there are reasonable expectations of personal privacy such as in rooms, changing rooms, nursing and health room areas or bathrooms.

Use of Video Recordings

- Video recordings will only be utilized for official CSS business

- A video recording of actions by students may be used by administrators or the Board of Directors as evidence in any disciplinary action brought against students arising out of the student's conduct on or about school property
- The video surveillance recordings may not be used in connection with instructional observations of professional staff. This policy does not prohibit the administration from establishing other methods of videotaping lessons for the purpose of instructional observation
- Video surveillance recordings of students, staff and/or others may be reviewed for the purpose of determining adherence to CSS policy and rules
- Such recordings may be used to detect or deter criminal offenses that occur in view of the camera(s) and may be shared with law enforcement officials
- Video surveillance recordings will be released to others only in accordance with applicable state and/or federal law or regulation
- Parents will not be permitted to view video recordings due to privacy concerns

Cell Phone and Headphone Usage

Parents should NOT text or call their child cell phone during instructional time. In the event of an emergency, please call the front office.

- **High School (Grades 9–12):**
 - **During Instructional Time:**
Cell phones, headphones/earbuds, smart watches, smart glasses and other electronic devices must remain **turned off and stored in backpacks** during class time.
 - At the **teacher's discretion**, students may be allowed to use cell phones for instructional purposes or listen to music with headphones/earbuds **during independent work time only**. Phones must be put away in backpacks immediately afterward.
 - Students are **permitted to use their cell phones** during hallway transitions and designated lunch periods.
 - **For safety purposes, headphones/earbuds may not be used** in the **hallway** or the **Multi-Purpose Room** at any time.
 - **Headphones/earbuds are allowed** in the designated quiet room during lunch.
- **Middle School (Grades 6-8):**
 - Cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses and other electronic devices are prohibited during instructional time and must remain **turned off and stored in backpacks** (not visible) EXCEPT morning, lunch and/or recess.
 - **For safety purposes, headphones/earbuds may not be used** in the **hallway** or the **Multi-Purpose Room** at any time.
- **Responsibility Notice:**
Charlotte Secondary School is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.
Instructional time **will not be used** to search for lost items.

The possession of such electronic devices at CSS or during school events constitutes consent to the search (either in the presence of the students possessing the device(s) or outside that students' presence) and collected of the device(s) by CSS Administration.

Students who disregard the cell phone/head phone policy during the school day are subject to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to the following:

1st offense: The phone/headphones will be held in the office for the student to retrieve at the end of the school day.

2nd offense: The student will get a write-up and the parent will receive communication regarding the infraction and the phone/headphones can be picked up in the front office by a parent.

3rd offense and subsequent: students will receive consequences as stated in the Student Code of Conduct.

Additional consequences for violations of this policy may be administered at the discretion of the Administration.

Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Students are offered access to Charlotte Secondary School network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the academic program. All use of computers, iPads, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by CSS, are the property of CSS, and are intended for school business and educational use. Students are to use the computer network responsibly. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and using the CSS computer network and technological resources.

1. Privacy: Charlotte Secondary School reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using its network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any technology or transmissions originating within or around CSS property. Furthermore, students should have no expectation of privacy in any location or on any network while utilizing CSS issued technology.

2. Cyber Bullying: Charlotte Secondary School prohibits cyber-bullying, an act involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to email, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal websites, on-line social directories and communities (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, YouTube), video-posting sites, and online personal polling websites, to support deliberate or repeated hostile behavior, by an individual or group, that is intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass students, staff members, or the CSS community during or outside school hours and on or off school premises.

3. Materials and Language: Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web-filtering is prohibited including but not limited to VPN sites, browser extensions, etc.

4. Installing/Copying: Students are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media, devices or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed and disciplinary action will follow. Downloading of non-work related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission. Students may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. Please refer to the Honor Code for the consequences for copying the work of another student. All copyright laws must be respected. Use of any other organization's network or technology resources via the network requires the instructor's permission and must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

5. Access: Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Attempting to access the network without proper authorization and hacking is expressly prohibited. Users are to use their own username and password when using a school issued device or student account. Users must log off shared devices when they are finished with their work and are not to log on to a device for someone else or tell others their password. Students are to notify the instructor if someone else is thought to know his/her password.

6. Data Protection: Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files. Though efforts are made by CSS to ensure the safety and integrity of data, CSS makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it provides. CSS will not be responsible for any damage to data.

7. Storage: Users are to delete their files and materials they no longer need. Students are not to store personal documents, images, videos or other digital material on school devices or school maintained accounts (google drive, one drive, O365, Canvas, etc.).

8. Passwords: Students are reminded not to share their password with anyone except a parent or guardian. Students should not use login ID's and passwords belonging to other students or faculty and staff members.

9. Email: All email correspondence on the CSS system, the laptop/iPad, or in the student's assigned email account is the property of CSS. Documents and other files created by the students and located on the laptops or the CSS computer system are also property of CSS.

10. Data Sharing: Students may not transfer, email or airdrop photographs or videos. Doing so will be addressed according to the CSS's discipline policy.

11. Daily Student Expectations: Students who are assigned a CSS electronic device are responsible for making sure of the following:

- a. Students are only permitted to use school issued technology when authorized by a faculty member and only for the purpose stated by the faculty member.
- b. Students should not remove school issued technology from campus.
- c. Students may be allowed to use their personal laptop/iPad with prior Admin approval (cell phones may not be used in place of a laptop/iPad in this instance).

CSS Technology

Students are expected to take excellent care of the equipment. Physical damages to the device will be charged back to the student and parent with the exception of normal wear and tear which is covered by the technology fee. The charges below will be billed to the parent for damage to the device that is above and beyond minor issues. Students may also face disciplinary consequences if the damage was caused by their negligence. Regardless of whether the student believes they are responsible for the breakage, the parent will be responsible for the cost to return the device to its original state.

Cost per Repair or Lost/Stolen Items (includes parts, labor and tax):

Chromebook: \$300

Charging Cords: \$25

All outstanding fees must be paid prior to students attending any school events, field trips and overnight trips including graduation.

Internet Safety Policy

It is the policy of Charlotte Secondary School to:

- (a) Prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- (b) Prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;
- (c) Prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors;
- (d) Comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes:

- (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities;
- (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of all members of Charlotte Secondary School to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate 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 the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Charlotte Secondary School

The Technology Specialist will provide age appropriate training for students who use the Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote the commitment to:

- (a) The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Internet Safety Policy;
- (b) Student safety with regard to:
 - Safety on the Internet
 - Appropriate behavior while online, on social networking websites, and in chat rooms
 - Cyberbullying awareness and response
- (c) Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the School's acceptable use policies.

Student Health and Wellness

Prevention and Control of State Reportable Communicable Diseases

Students are excluded from school in cases of certain **reportable** communicable diseases. While the list of diseases reportable to the state Division of Public Health is lengthy, the number of such diseases common to the school age child is not. This list is available upon request.

When a student is suspected of having one of those **reportable** communicable diseases, it is the responsibility of the parent to take the child to the local health department or primary health care provider for verification and treatment before that student can return to school. Students should be temporarily excluded from school if presenting symptoms of a reportable disease is present. In each case, readmission to school should also take into account whether the student is able to participate in school. In some cases, a student with a disabling disease, who is no longer contagious but may require ongoing care, may be eligible for additional services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

A list of students who have not been vaccinated for bona fide religious or medical reasons or who have illnesses that cause immunosuppression will be maintained in the school health office so that appropriate action can be taken to protect these individuals when serious communicable disease outbreaks do occur.

Charlotte Secondary School staff makes every effort to reduce the prevalence of disease-causing organisms through ensuring cleanliness of the environment, emphasizing frequent handwashing of students and staff, and following proper decontamination procedures of items used in mealtime and other activities. Despite those actions, the school age child is often the source and conduit for communicable diseases ranging from the "common cold" to ringworm among many. The majority of such illnesses are not among the diseases for which the state Division of Public Health, following guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has issued mandatory isolation rules.

- **Chickenpox (Varicella):** Student is excluded until all blisters have formed scabs.
- **Fever:** The parent/guardian of any student with an oral temperature >100.4 degrees will be notified and asked to pick up their child. The student should remain at home until fever-free for 36 hours without medication.
- **Head Lice (Pediculosis):** The parents/guardians of any student found with lice will be notified and asked to pick up their student. If the student is unable to be picked up and must remain at school, he/she will remain in the nurse's office until a parent can pick them up. The parent/guardian may consult their medical provider or treat with an over-the-counter product. The student may return to school after receiving treatment for lice and removing nits.
- **Impetigo:** A student is excluded from school if he/she has more than three to four sores until seen by a medical provider and treated with a prescription antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours.

- **Measles (Rubeola/Rubella):** Student is excluded until physician's approval is given and student is no longer contagious.
- **MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus):** All suspected cases should be referred to their healthcare provider and if possible, lesions should be kept covered while at school. Exclusion from school and sports activities should be reserved for those with wound drainage that cannot be covered and contained with a clean, dry bandage and for those who cannot maintain good personal hygiene.
- **Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea:** The parent/guardian of any student experiencing nausea, vomiting, diarrhea will be notified and asked to pick up their child. The student may return to school 36 hours after the symptoms have abated.
- **Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis):** A student who is exhibiting symptoms of pink eye should be evaluated by their medical provider. The student is allowed to return to school on approval of a physician. May return when treatment has begun, has minimal drainage & student is able to keep hands away from eyes.
- **Scabies:** Student is excluded until one (1) treatment with prescription medication has been completed for at least 24 hours.
- **Strep Throat (Streptococcal and Staphylococcal Infections):** Student is excluded from school until treated with a prescription antibiotic for 24 hours and has been fever free for 36 hours.

If a student has a communicable disease, including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, tuberculosis, etc.; the parents are encouraged to notify the school. This information will be kept confidential in accordance with the law.

If notified that a student suffers from such immunodeficiency, the school will request that the notifying party provide information about what types of exposures might put the student at risk and what reasonable practices can be taken in the school setting to minimize the risk to the student. Whenever possible, the school will notify the parents or guardians (or the student himself where appropriate) of an infected or immunodeficient student of the existence of chicken pox, influenza, meningococcus, measles, tuberculosis, or other contagious diseases occurring in the school that may represent a serious threat to the student's health. Students who are removed from school as a result of such conditions will be provided instruction in an appropriate alternative educational setting.

Immunizations

North Carolina law requires immunizations for every child residing in the state. It is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis to ensure that each child receives the required immunizations.

An up-to-date immunization record must be provided to the school **within 30 calendar days** of the child's first day of attendance. Failure to submit a valid immunization record by this deadline will result in **suspension from school** until proper documentation is received.

Exemptions:

Religious exemptions are permitted under North Carolina law. Parents requesting a religious exemption must complete and submit a **signed opt-out form** to the school in place of the immunization record. No medical documentation is required for religious exemptions, but the form must be submitted within the same 30-day window.

7th Grade Required Vaccines

Adolescents should be up to date on all the vaccines required for kindergarten entry.

In addition:

- Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) – 2 doses
 - One dose for individuals is required entering the 7th grade or by 12 years of age whichever comes first.
 - Booster dose for individuals is required entering the 12th grade or 17 years of age beginning August 1, 2020.
 - If the first dose is administered on or after the 16th birthday the booster dose is not required
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) – Tdap
 - A booster dose of Tdap is required for individuals who have not previously received Tdap and who are entering 7th grade or by 12 years of age, whichever comes first.
 - School Entry from 6th to 7th Grade

If you have specific questions regarding your child, please contact the school nurse, your child's health care provider, or your local health department.

Garrett's Law

North Carolina law mandates that at the beginning of every academic year, local boards of education shall provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis, influenza, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and their vaccines. This important information is available online for parents/guardians on our website.

Medication Administration

The needs of students who require medication during school hours to maintain and support their health and well-being during the educational day should be met in a safe and prudent manner.

- Implementation of the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act), and amendments since enactment, has led to an increased number of children whose health problems require medication to be given while at school.
- Students with chronic illness may be dependent on routine medications, which enable them to participate more fully in all aspects of school activities and to minimize their absences.
- Students may require the administration of controlled substances during the school day in order to maximize their classroom performance.
- Some students with infections and communicable diseases are able to resume school attendance based on continuation of their medication regimen.

North Carolina State Recommendations

- All medications administered by school personnel during school hours must be prescribed by a licensed healthcare provider
- All medications administered at school must have a written request/permission signed by the parent or legal guardian

- Students with asthma and/or at risk for anaphylactic allergic reaction, may possess and self-administer medication on school property within certain parameters.

CSS personnel **will not administer any medication** to any student unless they have received the “**School Request for Medication Administration in School**” form properly completed and signed by the doctor. The medication must be received in an appropriately labeled container. To protect your student’s well-being, there will be no exception to this policy. If you have any questions about this policy, or other issues related to the administration of medication in school or during school-sponsored activities, please contact School Administration. Thank you for your cooperation.

Self-administration of Medications in School

In accordance with North Carolina state law, there are a limited **number** of health conditions which may require the student to carry medications at all times. These include asthma (inhalers), diabetes (insulin or source of glucose), and severe anaphylactic allergies (EpiPen). In addition, learning to care for one’s health and well-being is an important developmental milestone for all students. Parents should be informed that students who are approved to self-carry medications while at school and during school sponsored activities are independent in the management of their medication with no oversight from school staff.

In order for a student to self-carry a medication, the following **requirements must be met annually**:

- A. The student’s parent/guardian must submit a written treatment plan prepared by a healthcare provider for managing asthma, anaphylaxis, or diabetes. Examples include: asthma action plan, diabetic treatment plan, etc. The plan must state:
 - a. The student has a diagnosis of asthma, anaphylaxis, or diabetes
 - b. Self-administration of required medications is part of the student’s treatment plan
 - c. The student has been instructed in, and has demonstrated to the healthcare provider, the skills necessary to self-administer the medication
 - d. The name or type of medication that the student may self-administer while in school or during school sponsored activities
- B. The student’s parent/guardian must submit a completed “**School Request for Medication Administration in School**” form
- C. The parent/guardian must provide Charlotte Secondary School backup medication that will be kept in the health office to which the student has immediate access in the event the student does not have the required medication.
- D. When medication such as asthma inhalers, diabetes medications, and emergency medications will be self-administered, an appropriate “Individualized Health Care Plan” (IHCP) will be completed by the school staff in partnership with the parent/guardian and student.
- E. The student must demonstrate to the Charlotte Secondary Staff the knowledge, competence, and skills necessary to self-administer medication.
- F. Students will be required to sign a “**Student Agreement for Self-Carried Medication**” form acknowledging their role in self-carrying as well as a commitment to communicate to CSS staff when he/she is experiencing difficulty or adverse reactions. The student will agree to keep their medication secure.
- G. Students must dispose of contaminated sharps in accordance with OSHA guidelines.

Student Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policies

Charlotte Secondary School takes all complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying seriously. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against unlawfully, bullied, or harassed in violation of the CSS's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying also should report such violations in the manner provided in this policy. Reports may be made anonymously. This policy does not apply where an individual seeks to assert allegations regarding or related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a student under Section 504 or the IDEA, such allegations may be raised through the procedures governing such matter. This policy also does not apply to Title IX complaints, behavior falling within Title IX or Title VII complaints. Please refer to CSS's policies for Title IX and VII matters.

A. Reporting by Employees or Other Third Parties

1. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of School Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection B.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Reporting by Other Third Parties

All members of Charlotte Secondary School community including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

3. Anonymous Reporting

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

4. Investigation of Reports

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying under this policy will be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and CSS officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

B. Complaints Brought by Alleged Victims of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

1. Filing a Complaint

Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to the following individuals as applicable:

- a. Charlotte Secondary School's counselor, Head of School or Assistant Head of School, or Human Resources Manager for any claim of discrimination, harassment or bullying, including Title VI complaints;
- d. The Title IX Coordinator for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
- c. The Section 504 Coordinator or Exceptional Children's Coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability; or
- d. Any member of the Board if the alleged perpetrator is the Head of School.

2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint

A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated at the discretion of CSS officials and outside the formal process described in Section C of this policy; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of CSS officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

3. Informal Resolution

Charlotte Secondary School acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation. CSS encourages the use of informal procedures such as mediation to the extent possible; however, mediation or other informal procedures will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual assault or sexual violence or complaints by a student of sexual harassment perpetrated by an employee. Informal procedures may be used only if the parties involved voluntarily agree. Any informal process should be completed within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days unless special circumstances necessitate more time.

C. Process for Addressing Complaints of Alleged Incidents of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

1. Initiating the Investigation

- a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying pursuant to subsection B.1. shall immediately notify the Head of School who shall designate an individual to conduct an investigation and respond to the complaint. Such an individual may be a school employee or outside consultant.
- b. As applicable, the individual receiving the complaint shall immediately notify the Title IX Coordinator of the complaint, and, as appropriate, may designate the Coordinator to conduct the investigation.
- c. The Title IX Coordinator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and the alleged perpetrator.
- d. Written documentation of all formal reports and complaints, as well as the school system's response, must be maintained in accordance with the school's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.
- e. Failure to report, investigate, and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action.

d. Written documentation of all formal reports and complaints, as well as the school system's response, must be maintained in accordance with the school's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.

e. Failure to report, investigate, and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action.

2. Conducting the Investigation

a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of the Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly, and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant; (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); (3) individuals identified as witnesses by the complainant or alleged perpetrator(s); and (4) any other individuals, including other possible victims, deemed likely to have relevant information. The alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the general nature of the allegations. The investigation will include a review of all evidence presented by the complainant or alleged perpetrator.

If the investigator, after receipt of the complaint, an interview with the complainant, and consultation with the board attorney, determines that the allegations submitted, even if factual, do not constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying as defined in School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, the matter will be treated outside the scope of this policy. Information regarding the investigator's determination and the process for addressing the complaint will be provided to the complainant.

b. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information. Any requests by the complainant for further confidentiality will be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the school system.

c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, giving consideration to all factual information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age, and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances.

3. Notice to Complainant and Alleged Perpetrator

a. The investigator shall provide written notification to the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:

1) reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and prevent it from recurring;

2) as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the complainant; and

3) as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint.

- b. Information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be given to the complainant unless the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant).
- c. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as set forth in CSS policy. If the corrective steps involve actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the Head of School or designee will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.
- d. The alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or Charlotte Secondary School policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences may be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with CSS policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with CSS policy and law. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude school officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

4. Appeal

- a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he or she may appeal the decision to the Head of School. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten days of receiving the notice of the results of the investigation. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the school's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the district. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes should have been taken by the district. The Head of School or designee may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the Head of School or designee determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The Head of School or designee shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed. The Head of School's decision is final.
- b. If the alleged perpetrator is the Head of School or the Head of School declines to hear the appeal and refers it to the Board of Directors, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing within ten days of receipt directly to the Board of Directors. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing the Head of School's decision with regard to (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of school's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the School's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by CSSI. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes CSS should have taken. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board Chair shall appoint a panel of not less than two members of the Board to hear and decide the appeal. The panel shall make reasonable efforts to meet and consider the appeal within twenty days after the chairperson refers the grievance to the panel. The panel shall review the complaint on the record unless it determines that additional information may be

presented. No new evidence, written or verbal, may be presented without the prior knowledge and consent of both parties. At the Board Panel's discretion, they may hold a hearing and ask each party to make a brief oral presentation of no more than twenty minutes to summarize his or her position. The panel has the authority to ask questions, extend time limits, exclude extraneous or duplicative information, and otherwise maintain an efficient and fair appeal hearing. If a hearing is held, it will be recorded and shall be held in closed session. The Board panel may affirm, reverse or modify the decision. The Board panel shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching its decision. The Board panel will provide a final written decision within twenty days after the Board hearing unless the panel determines that additional time is needed for further review. The decision of the Board panel shall be final.

D. Timeliness of Process

If any CSS official charged with investigating the complaint or reviewing the investigation fails at any step in the process to communicate a decision within the specified time limit, the complainant will be entitled to appeal the complaint to the next step unless the official has notified the complainant of the delay and the reason for the delay. The CSS official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the complainant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of any legal rights are not permitted.

Failure by the complainant at any step in the process to appeal to the next step within the specified time or to attend a scheduled meeting or hearing under this policy will be considered acceptance of the results of the investigation and CSS's response to the complaint, unless the complainant provided notice of the delay and the reason for the delay and the district consented in writing to the delay.

E. General Requirements

1. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the Board or by any CSS employee against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy. Disciplinary or other action may be taken against the complainant or other individual if the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with the school under this policy. Should the complainant choose to be represented by an attorney, an attorney for CSS may also be present.
4. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Head of School or Board of Directors from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation or taking any other action deemed appropriate.

F. Records

Records will be maintained as required by School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.

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 Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS regarding the identification, prevention, intervention, and reporting of such antisocial acts. CSS 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. CSS strives to model an inclusive environment and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or sex, including sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ identification. Charlotte Secondary 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

CSS students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS 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 CSSI 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

Charlotte Secondary 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, CSS 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

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 via 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 Charlotte Secondary School's "education program or activity," which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, behavior:

1. In any CSS building or on CSS 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 school; 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 CSS Title IX Policy or any reporting/grievance procedures that govern Title IX matters. However, such conduct may still constitute a violation of other CSS 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 Charlotte Secondary School's Notice, Reporting and Grievance policy for Title IX matters and should be read in conjunction with the CSS 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 CSS's other policies, including Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and student conduct policies when Title IX does not apply.

Charlotte Secondary School's Title IX Coordinator is:

Ms. Cleverone Phelps

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 Charlotte Secondary School's 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:

On the definition of the definitions of prohibited conduct, including sexual harassment;

1. The scope of the school's education program or activity;
2. How to conduct an investigation;
3. The grievance process including appeals, and informal resolution processes;
4. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias;
5. 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. Charlotte Secondary School will post materials used to train Title IX personnel on their websites for a minimum of seven (7) years after posting 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 Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for Charlotte Secondary 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 Charlotte Secondary 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 Charlotte Secondary 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)

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 Charlotte Secondary School's Board.

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.

REPORTING TITLE IX VIOLATIONS

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, 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, 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.

For Employees:

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

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.

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.

Reporting may be made at any time, including during and non-business hours, by calling 704-295-0137 or by mail to the office at 8601 McAlpine Park Drive Charlotte, NC 28211 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

Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS 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.

CSS 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. CSS shall also comply with the following mandates:

1. CSS 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. Charlotte Secondary 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. CSS 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. Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS’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 CSS 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. Charlotte Secondary 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, but not limited to: services, accommodations, and/or other assistance that the CSS 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. CSS 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, Charlotte Secondary School will provide the complainant, or their advocate, with a written explanation of the interim measures available at school and through local community 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 CSS, 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. Charlotte Secondary 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 retake 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, Charlotte Secondary 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 CSS 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 CSS climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that CSS 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:

- 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

Charlotte Secondary 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. CSS, 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. CSS may choose an outside investigator, CSS 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 the burden of proof must remain on the Charlotte Secondary School, not on the parties.
2. CSS must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. CSS 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. CSS shall send a written notice to the parties (complainant and respondent) of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings.
6. CSS shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
7. CSS 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 days for the parties to respond.
8. CSS 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. CSS 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 CSS, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.
10. CSS shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.
11. CSS may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
12. CSS 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

Charlotte Secondary School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized CSS 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 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 CSS to conduct a thorough investigation. There may also be instances where the CSS 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) 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 CSS 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 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, Charlotte Secondary 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. CSS 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.

Charlotte Secondary 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. CSS 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 piece of 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 need.

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 of homeless \(see above\)](#).

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

School McKinney-Vento Liaison: Ms. Clevonne Phelps

General School Policies

Posting or Publishing Student Pictures and Information

Charlotte Secondary School reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page or for any other school purpose. Parents who do not wish to allow CSS to use their child's picture or image must send a letter to The Head of School.

Gender Equity Policy

Charlotte Secondary School certifies compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C 1681 et seq. (Title IX), and its implementing regulation, at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. CSS, as a recipient of federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education, is subject to Title IX and does not discriminate based on gender in employment or any educational program or activity it operates.

Smoking and Vaping on Campus

Charlotte Secondary School is a smoke free campus. In keeping with CSS's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking is prohibited on school property at all times. This policy applies equally to all employees, parents, students, volunteers and visitors. This policy also includes the use of e-cigarettes.

Weapons

Weapons of any kind are expressly prohibited on school grounds or during school events. Weapons are defined to include firearm, knife, destructive device, and/or any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm.

Drugs and Alcohol Use

Charlotte Secondary School is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment. Thus, CSS has implemented a drug and alcohol-free school policy, which prohibits anyone from being under the influence of alcohol or illegal/misused drugs on school grounds or attending a school related event. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed on school grounds, or during field trips. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed in vehicles of transportation owned or operated on behalf of the school, or by their drivers while they are responsible for the operation of such vehicles. The use, sale, transfer or possession of alcohol, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on school property, at school events or on field trips is prohibited. This includes the misuse of prescription drugs, including medical marijuana, or any mood-altering substances while on CSS property, at a CSS event, on field trips or in circumstances CSS believes will adversely affect school's operation or safety.

Threats and Violence

Charlotte Secondary School's policy is to strive to maintain a school environment that is free from intimidation, threats or violent acts. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening or hostile behaviors, physical abuse, vandalism, arson, sabotage, use of weapons, carrying weapons of any kind onto school property, or any other act, which, in the school's opinion, is inappropriate to school. In addition, jokes or offensive comments regarding violent events will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures.

School Safety

Charlotte Secondary School has a Crisis Management Team that will create and manage the following procedures by outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

- Evacuation Fire
- Evacuation Non-Fire
- Hazardous Materials
- Lockdown-Perimeter
- Lockdown-Full
- Serious Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather (tornado; hurricane; etc.)
- Public Health Emergency
- Student in Crisis

The Head of School oversees the Crisis Management Team and it is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that the procedures are current and applicable and that all applicable parties are aware of the procedures.

The Head of School is also responsible for ensuring drills occur on a regular basis. These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Crisis Management Team and any changes or revisions will be made by the Head of School. The Head of School is responsible for communicating these procedures to the Board of Directors.

Unsafe School Option

Title IX, Section 9532 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provides that a student attending a “persistently dangerous School” or a student who is a “victim of a violent criminal offense” on school property, as defined by law, has the right to transfer to another safe school in the district, if his/her parent requests a transfer. If there is not another safe school in the district providing instruction at the student’s grade level, the school shall contact neighboring districts to request that the students be permitted to transfer to a school in one of those districts.

Pesticide Notification

Charlotte Secondary School aims to control pest populations and to reduce the use of active pesticides throughout the school by implementing an integrated pest management program. The health and safety of all persons within the school’s facilities are of primary concern. CSS will notify parents in advance of pesticide applications. Notice will be posted on the front door of the school and in the school newsletter. A parent can also request to be notified by letter 48 hours before the application is to take place. Please contact the CSS front office if you wish to be notified by letter or wish to review the school’s integrated pest management program or records.

Hazardous Chemicals

Charlotte Secondary School will take all necessary steps to protect its students and staff from hazardous chemicals or other potentially dangerous materials, and it will comply fully with all required inspections, laws, ordinances, and regulations regarding hazardous chemicals.

Fire and Safety Regulations

Charlotte Secondary School will submit to all fire and safety inspections by state, county, and municipal authorities as required by law. CSS will also obtain all necessary certificates and licenses prior to opening for each school year.

The right to seek a medical or religious exemption from immunization

An immunization exemption is a legal exception that allows individuals to avoid vaccinations that are typically required by schools, workplaces, or other institutions.

Only two types of exemptions are valid to waive immunizations:

- Religious belief: A written statement with the child's name, the date and signed by the parent with a statement of a bona fide religious belief is required.
- Medical: North Carolina requires the physician to complete a Medical Exemption Statement Form (DHHS 3987) for an immunization exemption to vaccinations. This form is accepted by schools for special conditions. If only a temporary waiver for an immunization is needed, the physician must provide a signed medical note that includes the reason for the waiver and the length of time/duration required.

Parental Request for Information Policy

A parent of a child enrolled at Charlotte Secondary School may request in writing from the Head of School, Assistant Head of School 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 JoHannah.miller@charlottesecundaryschool.org Within 10 business days, the Head of School 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. If the Head of School or Assistant Head of School: (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 Board of Directors, along with a statement specifying the time frame of the denial or failure to provide information by the principal. If the Board of Directors 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 Board created committee, 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.

Process for Selecting Curriculum, Textbooks, Supplementary Books and Instructional Material.

Charlotte Secondary School understands that textbooks may become necessary. Charlotte Secondary would select a textbook which supports the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The selected textbook would be intended to advance the schools and states curricular objectives. The selected material would be based on building conceptual understanding of the required North Carolina State Standards.

CSS's process for selecting curriculum, textbooks, supplementary books, and instructional material is as follows:

- a. Form a Curriculum Committee that includes teachers from various grade levels and subject areas of the school, Administration, Board Representative, and parent (adopting textbooks).
- b. The committee will review the latest state standards for the grade level and subject area (adopting textbooks).
- c. The committee will identify key competencies, learning objectives and content requirements (adopting textbooks).
- d. The committee will ensure the material is aligned with the state standards and grade level expectations (adopting textbooks).
- e. Review a list of options and consult with other professional networks for reviews and recommendations (adopting textbooks).
- f. The committee will review all data and make a final decision (adopting textbooks).
- g. For books and instructional material other than a textbook, the teacher will submit a form requesting permission to read a particular novel. The form should state the standards that the book or material is aligned with, objectives to address, and competencies to obtain. Approval should be granted by the Administration team prior to beginning the novel. Other material will be selected and presented in a teachers lesson plan and approved by the Administration team.

Process for Library Checkout and Notification

Any request should be submitted in writing or via email to the Head of School or Assistant Head of School. The request should include the name of the novel, the date of request, and the signature of the requester. An administrator has 3 school days to respond. The lended length of time will be determined at checkout.

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 a 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 School via email at JoHannah.miller@charlottesecsecondary.org or sent via mail or hand delivered 8601 McAlpine Park Drive Charlotte, NC 28211 and designate on the outside of the letter: *Textbook and/or Supplementary Material Challenge*.
4. The Head of School and Administration Team shall review such a 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 Board of Directors if they were not involved in the initial review of the challenge. The Board of Directors shall review and respond to the challenge within five (5) business days.
6. If the Board of Directors 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.

Student and Parent Handbook

Signature Page

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the information in this Student/Parent Handbook and that I agree to abide by the policies and procedures within it. An online copy of this handbook is available on the official Charlotte Secondary School website. A printed copy is available per request.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Full Student and Parent Handbook can be viewed:

- On our website: Charlottesecsecondary.org
- At the following link:
- A printed copy is available upon request

Revised June 24, 2025

Board Approved August 5, 2025