



Family Handbook
2021-2022

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Mission, Beliefs, & Values

Catalyst Academy Charter School's mission is to create a world-class K-8 school that prepares all scholars effectively for college, career, and life. This holistic approach to our scholars' development will equip them with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to be a catalyst for positive change for themselves, and in their families and communities.

Catalyst Academy Charter School's core values are driven by our motto: "Belong. Grow. Achieve." These three words convey what research has demonstrated about the necessary ingredients for success, especially among disadvantaged scholars. Research by Camille Farrington at the University of Chicago, which was featured in Paul Tough's 2016 book *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why*, has identified the component beliefs that constitute a positive academic mindset:

- I belong in this academic community.
- My ability and competence grow with my effort.
- I can succeed at this.
- This work has value for me.

At Catalyst Academy Charter School, we synthesize this message into three impactful words.

- **Belong:** We are building a powerful school community where everyone is embraced, respected, and supported in service of our common mission of enabling all our scholars to be successful.
- **Grow:** All Catalyst scholars, teachers, and staff are committed to growing every day to help us fulfill this mission.
- **Achieve:** A great education is a catalyst enabling each scholar to define and achieve his or her dreams.

Catalyst Academy Charter School's educational approach contains six primary components:

1. High Expectations: a school culture where everyone pursues excellence every day;
2. Strong Relationships: parents, teachers, and scholars working from a strong foundation of communication and understanding;
3. Academic Rigor: a college-preparatory curriculum that is rigorous and standards-aligned in classrooms that build scholars' knowledge and critical thinking.
4. Quality Teaching: extensive teacher development resources to ensure highly effective teaching;
5. Innovation and Personalization: application of tools (e.g., personalized learning), approaches (e.g., project-based learning) and structures (e.g., scholar "flex time") to create an innovative, unique path for each scholar;
6. Holistic Scholar Development: explicit focus on social-emotional development and cultivation of scholars' sense of belonging, agency, and identity development

School Policies & Procedures

Dress Code

Monday - Thursday Dress Code	
Tops	<p>Catalyst Academy polo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Short or long-sleeved must have Catalyst Academy logo <p>Female scholars may wear khaki jumpers over polo in grades K-2.</p>
Bottoms	<p>Khaki pants or shorts (non-tight fitting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Shorts can be worn until Oct. 1● Shorts can be worn starting May 1 <p>Female scholars may wear khaki skorts or skirts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Skorts worn Grades K-5● Skirts worn Grades 6-8
Shoes	<p>Any closed-toed flat heel shoe.</p> <p>Socks must be black, white, or grey. Female scholars are permitted to wear stockings in black, white, or grey. Leggings are not permitted.</p>
Outerwear	<p>Catalyst cardigan A crewneck sweater or sweatshirt in black or navy worn over the Catalyst Academy polo</p>
Accessories	<p>No belt required for K-2.</p> <p>Earrings worn in the lower lobe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● No earrings larger than a dime Grade K-5● No earrings larger than a quarter Grade 6-8 <p>Modest neck jewelry for Grades 3-5. Modest jewelry of all kinds may be worn for Grades 6-8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● No additional jewelry for Grades K-2 <p>No hats unless for religious purposes.</p>

Friday Dress Code	
Tops	Catalyst Academy t-shirt or sweatshirt College t-shirt or sweatshirt
Bottoms	Jeans are permitted on Fridays Khaki pants or shorts (non-tight fitting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shorts can be worn until Oct. 1 ● Shorts can be worn starting May 1 Female scholars may also wear khaki skorts or skirts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skorts worn Grades K-5 ● Skirts worn Grades 6-8
Shoes	Any closed-toed flat heel shoe. Socks must be black, white, or grey. Female scholars are permitted to wear stockings in black, white, or grey. Leggings are not permitted.
Outerwear	Catalyst cardigan A crewneck sweater or sweatshirt in black or navy worn over the Catalyst Academy polo
Accessories	No belt required for K-2. Earrings worn in the lower lobe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No earrings larger than a dime Grade K-5 ● No earrings larger than a quarter Grade 6-8 Modest neck jewelry for Grades 3-5. Modest jewelry of all kinds may be worn for Grades 6-8. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No additional jewelry for Grades K-2 No hats unless for religious purposes.

Attendance

The Front Office Manager will be the Attendance Designee, responsible for coordinating and ensuring compliance with attendance policies and truancy responses. The CEO will support and oversee the Front Office Manager in this role, and the Director of Scholars and School Culture Associate may assist as needed. The Catalyst Academy Charter Scholar Truancy Elimination Plan can be found on the school website. Catalyst Academy is obligated to adopt and implement compulsory attendance measures for all scholars as per the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Scholars are expected to **arrive for breakfast between 7:45 a.m. and 8 a.m.** Scholars who **arrive between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m. will be marked tardy**, but will proceed to the designated Community Time meeting space (either the schoolwide meeting space or their classroom, depending on the day and their grade). Exceptions will be made in cases where external factors were an issue (e.g. severe weather, no-show bus).

Attendance will be taken by classroom teachers and **submitted between 8:15 and 8:20**. At 9:15 a.m., the Front Office Manager will check the submitted roll against any late arrivals (who sign in at the office in a Late Arrival Log) and will then call the home of any absent scholars, continuing to call until he or she has spoken with a parent or guardian and confirmed the reason for the child's absence.

Scholars must be present a minimum of 4 hours to be considered present for a half-day. If a scholar is not present for a minimum of 4 hours, they will be considered absent. In all cases, a half-day or full day absence, scholars are required to bring a note. An absence can be excused only with valid documentation. A child with a prearranged early dismissal must be signed out in the Early Dismissal Log in the main office by the child's legal guardian or a caregiver who has been previously authorized in writing to pick up the child.

The Front Office Manager will record daily attendance (tardies, excused/unexcused absence, and early dismissals) in the school's information system. CACS will be proactive about attendance. Scholars absent more than once in a marking period will receive a call or home visit from a teacher, Director of Scholars, counselor, family engagement coordinator, or other designee; the Front Office Manager will flag the second absence for the Principal, Director of Scholars or other leadership team member for appropriate follow-up occurs including, phone calls or home visits as needed.

Absences are a big deal, big enough for a member of the administration to potentially come to the scholar's house. Additional interventions may include calling the child's home before school each day for an extended period of time; working with the parent/guardian to develop a transportation plan; providing an alarm clock; or contacting the Allegheny County Department of Human Services if school staff are persistently unable to get in touch with the child and/or guardian.

Inclusive Learning at Catalyst Academy

The main components of the special education program at Catalyst Academy Charter School (“Catalyst”) are also the same components of IDEA, the federal law related to special education. The special education program (“Inclusive Learning”) at Catalyst is built on the following:

- The identification of scholars with disabilities (“exceptionalities”);
- The development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- The inclusion of all scholars in the least restrictive environment (LRE);
- The engagement of families in decision-making processes for the exceptional scholar;
- The provision of related services;
- And transition services for scholars 14 years or older

Reporting Requirements of Catalyst Academy under IDEA

Child Find is the legal requirement of schools to identify all school age children who have disabilities and may be entitled to special education services. Catalyst is required to evaluate any scholar who presents as an individual who may benefit from specially designed instruction.

Child Count is another legal requirement of schools to report the number of scholars who receive special education services by grade level, by disability category, and by age of the scholar.

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs, in compliance with state and federal regulations, any educational entity that receives federal or state funding is required to issue an annual public notice to community families communicating Catalyst’s Child Find and Child Count procedures and findings in both print media and on the Catalyst website.

Identification of scholars with Exceptionalities

Catalyst Academy closely monitors the performance of scholars with and without IEPs through the Catalyst Academy Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model. To qualify for special education services, a scholar must meet a three-part test:

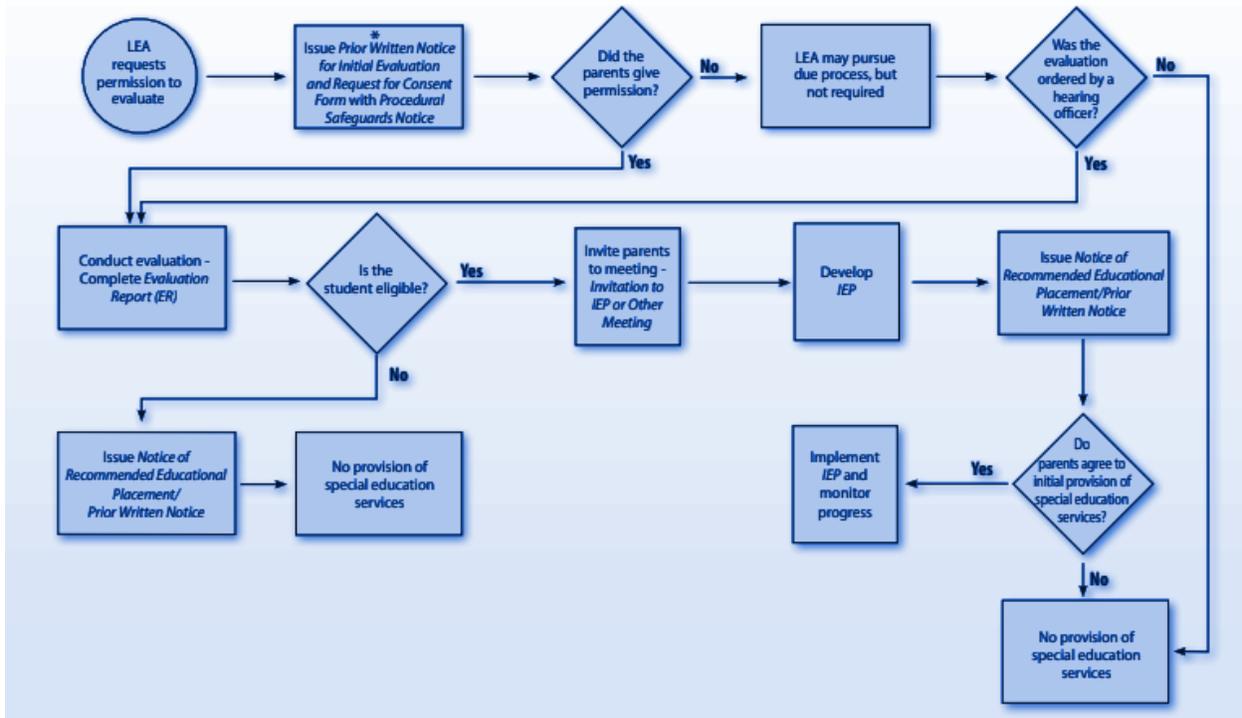
1. They must be school age (i.e. 5-21 years old);
2. They must have a disability recognized under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (see below);
3. They must require specially designed instruction to meet their needs in the school setting (see below).

There are thirteen disability categories under IDEA:

- Autism
- Deaf/Blindness
- Deafness/Hearing Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Physical Disability
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Speech & Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

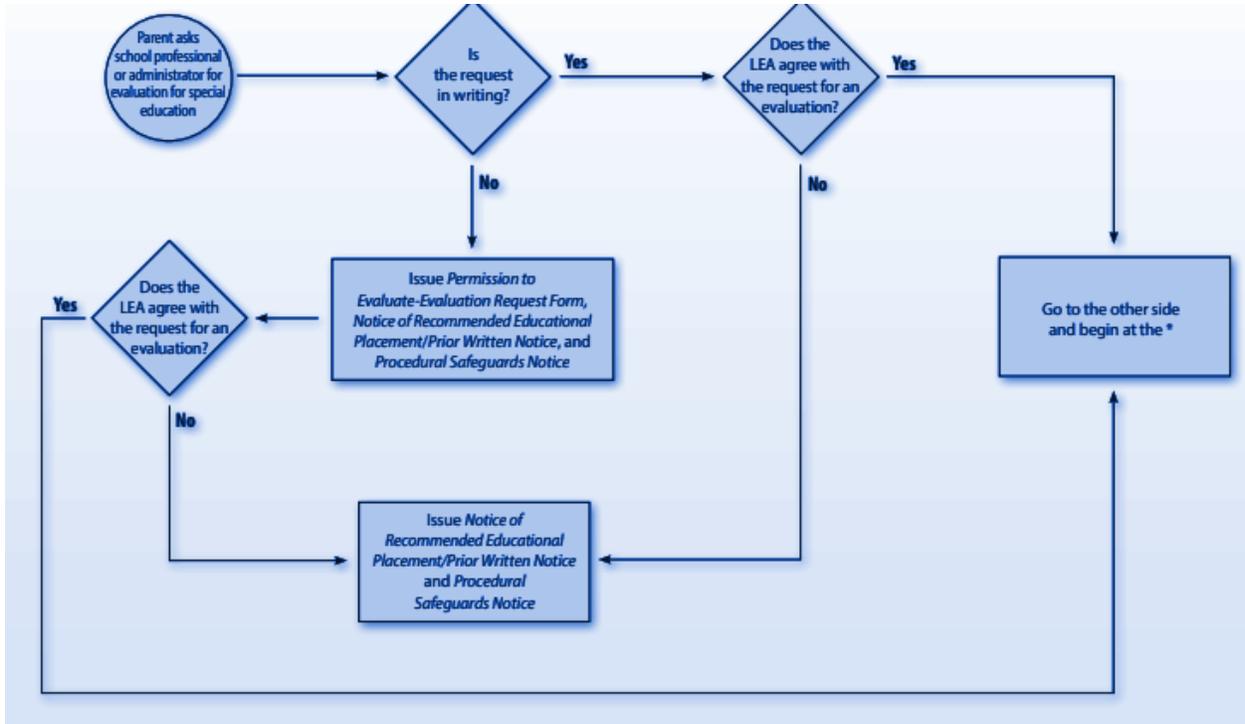
- Orthopedic Impairment

Should a scholar progress through each MTSS tier without significant growth in one or more skill sets, Catalyst staff and the scholar’s family should discuss an evaluation for special education services. The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) provides the following flowchart to explain a **school-requested evaluation** for special education services:



(PaTTAN, January 2019)

A **parent or legal guardian** may also request an evaluation for special education services for their child. PaTTAN describes this process through the following flowchart:



(PaTTAN, January 2019)

It's important to note that there are scholars who have disabilities who do not need a special education (i.e. they do not require an IEP). These scholars are often eligible for Section 504 plans, which differs from an IEP in three major ways:

1. Section 504 plans fall under a civil rights statute while an IEP falls under an educational benefits law;
2. Section 504 plans can follow a scholar following graduation from high school, while an IEP does not;
3. An IEP includes specific plans regarding related services, accommodations, modifications, measurable annual goals, and the degree to which the scholar will not be educated with nondisabled scholars among other specificities

Scholars who qualify for an IEP are provided with educational services that align with their disability category. These educational services are designed to meet their individual needs and strengths. In addition to the educational services a scholar with an IEP may receive, there are other services called related services the scholar might require to benefit from special education. These related services include transportation, speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, social work services, and nursing.

The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the IEP team (including parents and staff) at an annual IEP team meeting and are reevaluated every three years for all disability categories except for scholars with an Intellectual Disability, who are eligible for reevaluation every two years.

Procedural Safeguards are distributed to families of students who receive special education services annually. They describe a parent or guardian's rights under federal and state law as well as the process families may follow should they wish to formally seek dispute resolution.

Scholars with exceptionalities and their families can expect to engage in a continuum of support and be embraced by a culture of dignity at Catalyst. Our leadership and instructional staff believes that scholars with exceptionalities at Catalyst belong in a community that not only supports them, but challenges them to achieve and grow commensurate with their abilities.

Screening and Evaluation for Special Education

As reviewed above, Catalyst closely monitors scholar performance throughout the academic year. Evaluations for special education services can be requested by the school or by the parent or legal guardian of the scholar in question.

Should a parent or legal guardian wish to request an evaluation for special education services, they should submit a written request to the attention of:

Dr. Carrie Potter-Murray

Founding Director of Inclusive Learning, Catalyst Academy Charter School
7061 Lemington Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-684-2400
carrie.potter-murray@catalystacademy.org

All information collected as part of an individual scholar referral or evaluation is treated in a confidential manner and does not become part of the scholar's permanent record file. A written policy regarding the confidentiality of scholar records is available for review by contacting:

Dr. Carrie Potter-Murray

Founding Director of Inclusive Learning, Catalyst Academy Charter School
7061 Lemington Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-684-2400
carrie.potter-murray@catalystacademy.org

An evaluation of a scholar for special education can be an overwhelming process for families. That is why Catalyst staff consider our core beliefs--Below. Grow. Achieve.--in our continuum of support. Our staff believes:

- Your child belongs in a thriving, engaging community;
- Your child is entitled to an exceptional education that meets their needs and strengths;
- Your child can experience success at school (and may even love school!);
- Your child and their future matter to Catalyst

School Lunch and Breakfast

Catalyst participates in the National Free Lunch Program, families will need to complete an Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals to qualify for free or reduced priced breakfast and lunch. The menus will be distributed monthly.

Catalyst Academy Charter school promotes healthy nutrition. Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the school daily. Scholars may bring outside food items however there will not be refrigeration provided unless medically needed. We also advise parents of children with food allergies to communicate any/all needs with faculty and staff proactively. Catalyst Academy will take reasonable precautions to ensure scholar safety.

Listed below are a few examples of healthy choice items as well as items that are not allowed in school.

Examples of Healthy Choices	Examples of Items Not Allowed
✓ Water and Natural Fruit Juices	✗ Juices with added sugar or high fructose corn syrup
✓ Fresh Fruits	✗ Chocolate and Strawberry Milk
✓ Fresh Vegetables	✗ Candy
✓ Sandwiches on Whole Wheat Bread	✗ Soda
✓ Graham Crackers	✗ Cookies
✓ Sugar Free Jell-O	✗ Doughnuts
✓ Yogurt	✗ Cake
✓ Raisins	
✓ Applesauce	
✓ Cups of Fruit	
✓ Cottage Cheese	
✓ Dried Fruit	
✓ Granola Bar	
✓ Pretzels	
✓ Crackers	
✓ Cheese	
✓ Whole Grain Cereal/Cereal Bars	
✓ Veggie Chips	

Homework Guidelines

Catalyst believes there is inherent value in work at home. Homework allows for scholars to build important habits, reinforces necessary content, and allows for added adult support in a scholar's learning. However, homework should not be overly burdensome. We recommend the following in supporting scholars in homework completion:

- Support scholar in completing Math and Literacy work (when assigned by teacher)
- Read nightly with your scholar for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Promotion³

³ National Association of School Psychologists. (2011). Grade retention and social promotion (Position Statement). Bethesda, MD: Author.

Adhering to guidance from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Position Statement on Grade Retention and School Promotion, Catalyst Academy employs a holistic approach when considering the retention and/or promotion of a scholar. According to NASP, *“over the past four decades the effectiveness of grade retention fails to support its efficacy in remediating academic deficits.”*

Therefore, the approach of Catalyst Academy will be to collaborate with all necessary stakeholders to create a service model that ensures:

- Multi-tiered problem-solving models to provide early and intensive evidence-based instruction and intervention to meet the needs of all students across academic, behavioral, and social–emotional domains
- Equitable opportunities to learn for students from diverse backgrounds
- Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and social–emotional difficulties
- Frequent progress monitoring and evaluation of interventions

These factors will support our team, in collaboration with the scholar and their family, when determining promotion or retention.

Scholar Belongings

Scholars should only bring items to class that are requested by teachers and/or support learning. Items such as but not limited to toys, portable gaming devices, or cell phones are not allowed in classrooms and must be kept in lockers or other designated storage areas. Scholars who violate this rule will have their item(s) confiscated for a period of time in the Front Office. Repeated violations of this policy may result in indefinite confiscation irrespective of any costs or fees scholars and/or their families may incur as a result. Skateboards, roller blades, skates, or scooters are not permitted on school property. If so, they will be confiscated and held in the Front Office.

Emergency Contact Information

In the event of an emergency, Catalyst Academy will contact all parents and families via email and phone call. It is vitally important that parents and families keep their emergency contact information up-to-date. If there is ever a change to your contact information, alert the Front Office Manager as soon as possible.

School Closings

Catalyst Academy Charter School follows Pittsburgh Public Schools inclement weather announcements. Families should check the Catalyst Academy Facebook and Instagram pages for general updates and can expect communication directly from school leadership confirming announcements.

Scholar Code of Conduct

The motto of Catalyst Academy Charter School is *Belong. Grow. Achieve.* These three important words are reflective of our underlying values that greatly inform our approach to discipline.

Belong. We are building a strong, inclusive, supportive community for all of our scholars. Therefore, we are committed to avoiding suspension and expulsion unless required by state law. We do not find clear research support for exclusionary disciplinary practices, are cognizant of the historically disproportionate use of these practices on scholars of color, and believe it sends the wrong message to our scholars, and school community. In the event of an infraction that does or could mandate suspension, the involved scholar(s) due process rights will be protected. Whenever possible, we will use restorative practices. This is well-aligned with our focus on developing healthy relationships, social-emotional development, and a strong sense of community.

Grow. A growth mindset applies to all facets of personal development. In addition to academics, behavioral choices can be improved with effort and skill development. Indeed, it is our belief that in many cases, children don't want to misbehave, but they often lack the skill set to cope with specific situations. These challenges are often more acute for low-income children whose brain development has been impacted by exposure to several adverse childhood experiences (ACE), e.g. abuse, neglect, poverty, divorce, and exhibit behavioral challenges as a result. Our overall approach is to not only focus on consequences, but as importantly to build our scholars skill base through research-backed general approaches, e.g. social-emotional learning and school-wide positive behavioral intervention strategies (PBIS). This positive, skill development approach is aligned with our focus on our scholar's holistic growth.

Achieve. Our scholars' future achievement in college, career, and life, will require that they consistently make healthy behavioral decisions. Consequently, we must hold all members of the school community to high behavioral standards, and provide the modeling, culture, and the explicit support necessary for scholars to meet these standards.

Behavior Support Policy

Catalyst Academy Charter School must ensure that all Catalyst students are educated in settings free from restrictions or injuries caused by the challenging behaviors of other students. Catalyst also recognizes that every special education student in Catalyst is entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Any student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and exhibits significant behaviors that interfere with his/her learning or the learning of others must have a plan for behavior support included in his/her IEP. A behavior support team, including the Director of Inclusive Learning, Director of Scholars, School Culture Associate, School Counselor, Inclusive Learning Teachers, and General Education Teachers along with parents and families, will work in tandem to create a plan that best supports the needs of the scholar.

Positive rather than negative measures shall form the basis of behavior support programs. Behavior support programs include a variety of techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning including the use of restorative practices to support a

classroom culture rooted in growth and reflection. The types of interventions chosen for a particular student shall be the least intrusive necessary. Catalyst will employ the procedures and measures set forth below as necessary under the specific circumstance. In the event Catalyst determines in its reasonable discretion that a student is not positively responding to the procedures set forth in the tertiary model below and the student poses a risk to other students, Catalyst will work with the student's parent(s) to evaluate whether referral to an outside specialist is appropriate.

The policy is designed in compliance with the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and state law.

Procedures

The Behavior Support Policy includes a three-tiered sequential model for students whose behavior challenges interfere with learning. The following is aligned with the Catalyst Academy MTSS model:

Level 1 (Tier I)

Level 1 is preventive, involves effective classroom management strategies, and does not require a Behavior Support Plan as part of a student's IEP.

Successful classroom management is a prerequisite for instruction and learning. It involves not only responding effectively when problems arise but also working to prevent their occurrence by creating environments that encourage learning and appropriate student behaviors. The approaches generally applied include:

1. Effective teacher practices
2. An explicit structure/schedule to the school day
3. Explicitly communicated rules and procedures
4. Management programs with systematic reinforcement
5. Variable seating arrangements
6. Oral praise clearly linked to desired behaviors
7. Frequent monitoring via teacher movement in the classroom
8. Clear expectations for what constitutes acceptable behavior
9. Family involvement and cooperation

Level II (Tier II)

Level II interventions involve specific, individualized interventions for a student and require a Behavior Support Plan be attached to the student's IEP.

Some students do not behave appropriately because of deficits in social skills, lack of motivation, lack of communication skills, or lack of ability. Understanding behavior and developing a repertoire of management strategies is typically the focus of intervention. An individual behavior support plan will follow the following guidelines:

1. Defining the behavior in objective and measurable terms
2. Analyzing the problem carefully in terms of environmental factors, which may be influencing the inappropriate behavior.
3. Using information derived from a Functional Behavioral Assessment determines what happens immediately before the problem behavior, the behavior, and what need the behavior serves.

4. Develop a plan involving the least intrusive interventions that are likely to be effective. The plan may include teaching replacement behaviors for problematic behaviors, managing effective rewards and consequences, creating safe places within the educational setting, and/or instructing directly in needed areas including social skills, problem solving, and emotional regulation.

Data collection at regular intervals will be used to evaluate the plan's effectiveness.

Positive techniques for the development, change, and maintenance of selected behaviors shall be attempted prior to the use of more intrusive techniques.

Level III (Tier III)

Level III interventions are for crisis management. This level of intervention is very restrictive in nature and may modify the scholar's free movement. **Level III interventions may be used only after Level II interventions have proved ineffective and the scholar's *physical* actions are a danger to the safety of themselves or peers/staff.**

Interventions used at this level focus specifically on restraining strategies and are considered more intrusive to personal freedom than either Level I or Level II. Catalyst must obtain parental consent prior to the use of restraints. The use of restraints to control behavior shall cause a meeting of the IEP team to review the student's IEP and behavior plan for appropriateness and effectiveness. For scholars without the support of an IEP whose behaviors require such restrictions to their physical movement, the Director of Scholars will secure verbal permission from the child's parent/guardian with another member of the Leadership Team bearing witness. The Director of Scholars will meet with the scholar's team--their parents/guardians, teacher, school counselor, and an LEA representative--within two (2) school days of the restraint to determine the effectiveness of the scholar's educational programming.

Only those staff persons who have received proper training and have demonstrated proficiency may apply these strategies. Catalyst and the commonwealth of Pennsylvania prohibits the use of prone restraints. Restraints to control acute or episodic aggressive behavior may be used only when the student is acting in a manner as to be a clear and present danger to him/herself or to other students or to employees, and only when less restrictive measures and techniques have proven to be less effective. The use of restraints may not be included in a student's IEP for the convenience of staff, employed as punishment, or used as a substitute for an educational program.

All restraints must be documented in Schoolrunner the same school day the restraint was performed.

The following aversive techniques of handling behavior are considered inappropriate and may not be used at Catalyst:

1. Corporal punishment;
2. Punishment for a manifestation of a student's disability;
3. Locked rooms, locked boxes, or other locked structures or spaces from which the student cannot readily exit;
4. Noxious substances;
5. Deprivation of basic human rights, such as withholding meals, water or fresh air;
6. Suspensions constituting a pattern relating to disciplinary placement;
7. Demeaning treatment;

8. Electric shock;
9. Methods implemented by untrained personnel;
10. Methods which have not been outlined in Catalyst's plan

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures for behavior that presents a clear and present danger to the student or others may be delineated in the IEP. These emergency procedures may include such activities as:

1. Notifying parents/guardians to immediately remove the student from school.
2. Notice to the police
3. Notice to mental health services
4. Calling emergency services and ambulance
5. Instituting mental health commitment procedures

General School Information

Title I

Title I is a 100% Federally funded supplemental education program that provides financial assistance to local educational agencies to improve educational opportunities for educationally deprived children. Title I programs are designed to help children meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

Catalyst Academy receives Title I funding. As a Title I school, Catalyst must ensure that information related to scholar and parent/family programs, meetings, and other activities are sent to the families of Title I children in a format and in a language that family can understand.

Catalyst Academy will engage with scholars' families through a flexible number of meetings in the morning and/or evening. Catalyst will provide parents of participating children with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards. If requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

A School-Parent Compact is developed with parents and family members during the current academy year. The compact outlines how parents, school staff, and scholars will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and the parents will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the state's high standards. The compact:

- describes the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the challenging state academic standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time;
- addresses the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum;
- mandates parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
- frequent reports to parents on their children's progress;
- provides materials and resources to families to promote the child's education at home;
- reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities; and ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand either in print or through a translator

Parent Right-to-Know Letter

Parent Right to Know Information as Required by The Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance (ESEA) [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)] and the Every Student Succeeds Act [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)]

Dear Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s):

Your child attends Catalyst Academy Charter School, which receives Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards. Throughout the school year, we will be providing you with important information about this law and your child's education. This letter lets you know about your right to request information about the qualifications of the classroom staff working with your child.

At Catalyst Academy Charter School, we are very proud of our teachers and feel they are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. As a Title I school, we must meet federal regulations related to teacher qualifications as defined in ESEA. These regulations allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, you may ask:

- Whether the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching,
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals meet applicable Pennsylvania state requirements.

If you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact Darren Gray at 412-684-2400 or darren.gray@catalystacademy.org.

Sincerely,

Darren T. Gray

TITLE I

SCHOOL – PARENT – STUDENT COMPACT

The School Parent Compact will describe school-parent compact will be jointly developed with parents and family members and the compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and the parents will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the State's high standards (*ESSA, Section 1116(d)*).

School

The school understands the importance of the school experience to every student and their role as educators and models. Therefore, the school agrees to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of their ability:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the challenging State academic standards (required);
- Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum through;
 - parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement
 - frequent reports to parents on their children's progress;
 - reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities; and
- Ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand;
- Treat each child with dignity and respect;
- Strive to address the individual needs of the student;
- Acknowledge that parents are vital to the success of child and school;
- Provide a safe, positive and healthy learning environment;
- Assure every student access to quality learning experiences;
- Assure that the school staff communicates clear expectations for performance to both students and parents

Parent

The parent understands that participation in his/her student's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, the parent will continue to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of his/her ability:

- Volunteering in their child's classroom;
- Supporting their child's learning;
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time;
- Create a home atmosphere that supports learning;
- Send the student to school on time and well-rested on a regular basis;

- Attend school functions and conference;
- Encourage their child to show respect for all members of the school community and school property;
- Review all school communications and respond promptly

Student (all school discretion to include items below)

The student realizes education is important. He/she is the one responsible for his/her own success. Therefore, he/she agrees to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of his/her ability:

- Get to school on time every day;
- Develop a positive attitude toward school;
- Be responsible for completing homework on time;
- Be cooperative by carrying out the teacher's instructions and ask for help when needed;
- Do daily work that is neat and reflects the student's best effort;
- Be respectful to all school members and to school property

Visitors

Visitors are welcomed to come and see the work of our scholars and experience the work of our school community. All visitors are required to show appropriate identification and sign-in in the front office. During the duration of their visit, visitors are required to wear a visitor's badge.

Grievance Policy

The Board of Trustees of Catalyst Academy Charter School recognizes that it has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The Board encourages the early, informal resolution of parental complaints and incidents whenever possible and appropriate. To resolve complaints that cannot be resolved through such an informal process, the Board shall adopt a uniform system of complaint processes specified below.

This process will be prompt, impartial, and equitable and shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. For purposes of this policy and the accompanying regulation, "Complaint" means a written and signed statement alleging one or more violations of paragraphs #1-4 below. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to conditions such as a disability or illiteracy, the charter school shall assist the complainant in filing the complaint.

The charter school shall investigate and resolve the following complaints:

1. Any complaint alleging charter school violation of applicable state or federal law or regulations including but not limited to Free and Reduced Lunch and special education programs;
2. Any complaint alleging unlawful discrimination in programs and activities against any person based on his/her actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information or based on his/her association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Unlawful discrimination includes, but is not limited to, discriminatory bullying, discriminatory intimidation, and sexual harassment;
3. Any complaint alleging that the charter school has not complied with legal requirements related to the implementation of its charter;
4. Any complaint alleging retaliation against a complainant or other participant in the complaint process or anyone who has acted to uncover or report a violation subject to this policy;
5. Any complaint alleging non-discriminatory bullying shall follow the procedures in the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Board recognizes that informal dispute resolution can, depending on the nature of the allegations, offer a process to reach a resolution to the complaint that is agreeable to all parties.

Due to the implicit power imbalance between adults and scholars, such a process may only be offered to resolve complaints that involve both scholars and adults on a voluntary basis. Such a process shall not be offered or used to resolve any complaint involving sexual assault or sexual battery, even on a voluntary

basis. In filing and investigating complaints, the confidentiality of the parties involved shall be protected as required by law.

As appropriate for any complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, the Principal shall maintain the integrity of the complaint process and shall keep confidential the identity of the complainant and/or the subject of the complaint, if he/she is different from the complainant.

The following complaint shall not be subject to the Board's Complaint Policy but shall be referred to the specified agency: Any complaint alleging child abuse or neglect shall be referred to Childline and the appropriate law enforcement agency. Complaint Process:

- **Step 1:** Parent contacts school/teacher/staff regarding a complaint
- **Step 2:** If unresolved, School offers a meeting or conference
- **Step 3:** If unresolved, parent files a formal written Complaint with Principal
- **Step 4:** Investigation of the complaint (within 5 business days when feasible; no more than 10 business days)
- **Step 5:** If unresolved, Parent presents a formal written Complaint to the Board of Directors.
- **Step 6:** Response to the complaint and final written decision (within 30 calendar days, but may be extended to 60 with Board approval)

Title IA Complaint Resolution Procedures

Introduction

On December 10, 2015 a new Federal education law was signed by President Obama. This law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires schools that receive federal Title IA funding adopt written procedures for resolving complaints filed.

Definition

A "complaint" is a written, signed statement filed by an individual or an organization. It must include:

- A. A statement that a school has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulation that applies to Title IA.
- B. The facts on which the statement is based.
- C. Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with a school regarding the complaint.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

1. Referral – Complaints against schools should be referred to Catalyst's Federal Programs Office:

Federal Programs Director
Catalyst Academy Charter School
7061 Lemington Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-684-2400

2. Notice to School:

- a. The Federal Programs Office will notify the school Principal and CEO that a complaint has been received. A copy of the complaint will be given to the CEO and Principal with directions given for the Principal to respond;
3. Investigation:
 - a. After receiving the Principal's response, the Federal Programs Office, along with the CEO, will determine whether further investigation is necessary. If necessary, the Federal Programs Office and the CEO may do an onsite investigation at the school;
4. Opportunity to Present Evidence:
 - a. The Federal Programs Director may provide for the complainant and the Principal to present evidence;
5. Report and Recommended Resolution:
 - a. Once the Federal Programs Director has completed the investigation and the taking of evidence, a report will be prepared with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution and the reasons for the recommendation. Copies of the report will be issued to all parties involved. The recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the report;
6. Follow up:
 - a. The Federal Programs Director and the CEO will ensure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.
7. Time Limit:
 - a. The period between the Federal Programs Director receiving the complaint and resolution of the complaint shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.
8. Right to Appeal:
 - a. Either party may appeal the final resolution to the Department of Education.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board of Directors ("Board") of Catalyst Academy Charter School ("Charter School") recognizes the importance of providing all scholars and employees with a safe school and learning environment in order to promote the educational process. The Board has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for scholars to learn and achieve high academic standards.

Bullying and cyberbullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a scholar's ability to learn and Charter School's ability to safely educate its scholars in a safe environment. Therefore, in order to ensure and promote a safe learning environment, it shall be the policy of Charter School to maintain an educational environment that is intolerant of bullying and cyberbullying in any form.

Since scholars learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers are directed to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect and to refuse to tolerate bullying and cyberbullying. This policy pertains to all scholars and staff, regardless of their status. This policy also applies to all scholars and staff whose conduct out of school materially and substantially interferes with the educational process at Charter School.

Definitions

Bullying and **Cyberbullying** are defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

1. directed at another scholar or scholars;
 2. which occurs in a “school setting”, or occurs outside of school and Charter School reasonably forecasted that the outside-of-school conduct would materially interfere with or substantially disrupt the educational process or program in the school, and the outside-of-school conduct does in fact materially interfere with or substantially disrupt the educational process or program in the school;
 3. that is severe, persistent or pervasive;
 4. that has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - a. substantially interfering with a scholar’s education;
 - b. creating a threatening environment; or
 - c. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school
- Bullying and cyberbullying shall encompass acts that occur outside a school setting if those acts meet the requirements found in (1), (3) and (4) listed above.

School Setting shall mean in Charter School, on Charter School grounds, on Charter School property, using Charter School equipment and technology, on Charter School’s server or Charter School’s electronic, web---based, Internet or online programs, in Charter School vehicles(or vehicles of Charter School transportation providers), at designated bus stops or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by Charter School and any time spent necessarily traveling to and from these locations.

Additionally, any scholar whose out of school conduct materially interferes with or substantially disrupts the educational process in the school is also subject to this policy. Cyberbullying is often seen by sending harmful or cruel material, text messages and/or images or engaging in other forms of social aggression and bullying using the Internet, cell phones, personal digital assistants (“PDAs”) or other technology resources.

All scholars, staff, volunteers and contractors shall comply with Charter School’s Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy, which is required under the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”), and review Charter School’s Social Media and Networking Guidelines Policy when using any technology resources. Cyberbullying via the Internet is seen through the use of any one or more of a number of methods, including, but not limited to:

- Email sent to the intended victim;
- Blog entries regarding the intended victim;
- Posts on social networking websites, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram;
- Posting victim’s pictures on the Internet or networking websites with derogatory phrases or questions attached to them;
- Using instant messaging tools to harass victims;
- Creating an Internet parody of the intended victim;
- Creating fake Internet profiles for the victim on a public website;

- Creating or accessing an unauthorized website which harasses or bullies the victim;
- Using camera phones and/or digital cameras to take embarrassing photographs of scholars and/or staff and posting them online;
- Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

Cell phones are also often used for cyberbullying for things such as calling or text messaging the victim and/or using a victims' cell phone to text or call another victim using harassing language. The use of the Internet or Charter School email does not necessarily have to involve the creation of the offensive materials. Rather, the person creating the offensive material may do it on a home computer and then use Charter School's computers to take such actions as accessing it, viewing it, displaying it for others to see, disseminating copies of it to others or otherwise publicizing the contents. Charter School strictly prohibits the above conduct and any conduct by any scholar or staff that creates or intends to create an intimidating, threatening, offensive or hostile learning environment.

Guidelines

Scholars shall conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other scholars, school staff, volunteers, and contractors. The Board believes that standards for scholar behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the scholars, parents and guardians, staff, and community members of Charter School, producing an atmosphere that encourages scholars to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of scholars, staff, and community members. Since bystander support of bullying and cyberbullying can bolster these types of behaviors, Charter School prohibits both active and passive support for acts of bullying and cyberbullying. The staff should encourage all scholars to refuse to engage in these acts and to report them immediately to the Director of Scholars of Catalyst Academy Charter School.

Reporting Procedures

Any scholar who feels he or she has been bullied or cyberbullied shall have the right to file a complaint of such bullying. Complaints should be reported to the Director of Scholars. Complaints may also be reported directly to a teacher, guidance counselor, or other administrator who shall immediately report the incident to the Director of Scholars in order to protect the alleged victim and for prompt investigation. Any staff who sees any incidents of bullying or cyberbullying must immediately report the incident(s) to the Director of Scholars. All other members of the school community, including scholars, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Scholars to investigate promptly and thoroughly any and all bullying and cyberbullying complaints received or referred by other individuals and to make recommendations based upon the investigation. The investigation is to be commenced within three (3) school days after a report of any bullying is received. The Board of Trustees requires the Director of Scholars to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes bullying or cyberbullying, the totality of circumstances, nature of the conduct, and context in which the alleged conduct occurred shall be investigated. If the

investigation results in a substantiated charge of the bullying, Charter School shall take prompt corrective action to ensure the bullying and/or cyberbullying ceases and will not reoccur.

Reports to the Director of Scholars may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The Director of Scholars shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator of the bullying and the parent or guardian of the victim of the bullying of the alleged incident.

Consequences for Violations

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a scholar or staff member who commits one or more acts of bullying or cyberbullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including in school or out of school suspension from Charter School or expulsion or other disciplinary removal from Charter School, in the case of a scholar, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee, as set forth in Charter School's scholar Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook. In some cases, bullying and/or cyberbullying may constitute criminal activity and the Police Department will be notified. This may lead to a criminal investigation and criminal charges against the scholar or staff. Consequences for a scholar who commits an act of bullying and/or cyberbullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the scholar, and the scholar's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with Charter School's scholar code of conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the victim of the act.

The following intervention strategies for protecting victims may be followed as needed:

- Supervise and discipline offending scholars fairly and consistently;
- Provide adult supervision at Charter School sites or other sites used by Charter School, at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by Charter School during any breaks, lunch times, bathroom breaks and in the hallways during times of transition;
- Maintain contact with parents and guardians of all involved parties;
- Provide counseling for the victim if assessed that it is needed;
- Inform school personnel of the incident and instruct them to monitor the victim and the offending party for indications of harassing, intimidating and bullying and/or cyberbullying behavior. Personnel are to intervene when prohibited behaviors are witnessed; and
- Check with the victim daily to ensure that there have been no incidents of retaliation from the offender or other parties.

Retaliation Prohibited

The Board of Trustees strictly prohibits retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports bullying and/or cyberbullying incidents. Retaliation includes, but it is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment used against a person who reports, in good faith, incident(s) of bullying and/or cyberbullying. Disciplinary action against any person who retaliates or engages in reprisals for reporting such behavior(s) may include sanctions up to and including expulsion or suspension for scholars and termination for staff engaging in such prohibited conduct. The consequences

and appropriate remedial action shall be determined after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

False Accusations

The Board of Trustees prohibits any person from falsely accusing another of bullying and/or cyberbullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a scholar found to have falsely accused another of bullying and/or cyberbullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for an employee found to have falsely accused another of bullying and/or cyberbullying shall be disciplined in accordance with Charter School policies, procedures, and agreements. Annual Distribution of Information The Board of Trustees requires Charter School officials to annually disseminate the policy to all school staff, scholars, volunteers, independent contractors and parents along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of bullying and cyberbullying that occur in Charter School, on Charter School grounds, on Charter School property, using Charter School equipment and/or technology, on Charter School's server or Charter School's electronic, web--- based, Internet or online programs, in Charter School vehicles, at designated bus stops or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by Charter School and any time spent necessarily traveling to and from these locations. Additionally, any scholar or staff out of school conduct that materially and substantially interferes with the educational process in Charter School is also subject to this policy.

Charter School is required to post this policy on its website and make the policy available in every classroom. This policy shall also be posted at a prominent location within every Charter School building where such notices are usually posted. Charter School shall ensure this policy and its procedures for reporting bullying and cyberbullying incidents are reviewed with scholars and staff within ninety (90) days after its adoption and, thereafter, a minimum of one (1) time per school year.

Compliance

As required by the Federal Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2008, Charter School shall educate elementary and secondary school aged scholars with computer access to the Internet about appropriate online behavior, including online interaction with other individuals on social networking websites, such as Facebook, and in chat rooms and educate them regarding cyberbullying awareness and response.

The Board of Trustees directs the Administration to develop any procedures necessary to implement this policy and to develop appropriate prevention, intervention and education strategies related to bullying and cyberbullying. Acts of bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited by and a violation of Charter School's Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy and its Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) Policy. Charter School will comply with all applicable federal and state laws relating to bullying and cyberbullying, including, but not limited to, the requirements delineated in the Pennsylvania Charter School Law, 24 P.S. § 1701- 13 A, et seq., the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), 47 U.S.C. § 254(h) and (l), and the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (N-CIPA) and any applicable implementing regulations. Charter School will also comply with Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, the Public School Code, the applicable House Bill 1067 Public School Code amendments relating to safe schools and bullying, and applicable provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and its applicable implementing regulations regarding the discipline of special education scholars and thought-to-be eligible scholars who engage in an act of bullying.

Medication Administration Policy

Catalyst Academy Charter School (“Catalyst”) understands that taking medication can be a serious health matter for scholars and their families. Catalyst requires parents/guardians to administer scholar medications at home rather than at school whenever possible, as there are safety concerns about scholars forgetting to take the medication, having a reaction to the medication or other scholars taking the medication. Catalyst acknowledges that some scholars may require prescription or non-prescription medication for chronic or short-term illnesses during the school day to enable them to remain in school and participate in their education. When a licensed health care provider deems it medically necessary that a medication be administered during the school day, the following policy shall apply.

Catalyst Academy Charter School (“Catalyst”) understands that taking medication can be a serious health matter for students and their families. Catalyst requires parents/guardians to administer student medications at home rather than at school whenever possible, as there are safety concerns about students forgetting to take the medication, having a reaction to the medication or other students taking the medication. Catalyst acknowledges that some students may require prescription or non-prescription medication for chronic or short-term illnesses during the school day to enable them to remain in school and participate in their education. When a licensed health care provider deems it medically necessary that a medication be administered during the school day, the following policy shall apply.

Objective

It is the objective of this policy to specify the conditions and circumstances under which medication shall be administered during the school day.

Definitions

“Medication” is an F.D.A. (United States Food & Drug Administration) approved drug or preparation used for the treatment or prevention of disease that is (a) prescribed by a health care provider, who is licensed to write a prescription in any state in the United States of America (a “prescription medication”), or (b) an over-the-counter medication (a “non-prescription medication”). “Licensed health care provider” is a medical doctor (M.D.); doctor of osteopathy (D.O.); dentist (D.M.D. or D.D.S.); nurse practitioner (C.R.N.P.); physician assistant (P.A.C.); or doctor of optometry (O.D.);

“F.D.A. approved label” is the official description of a drug product which includes: indications; who should take the drug; adverse effects; instructions for uses in pregnancy, children and other populations; and safety information for the patient;

“Self-administration” means medication administered directly by the student to herself/himself not in the presence of a school nurse.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board that:

1. Catalyst shall not be responsible for the diagnosis of a student’s illness;

2. The administration or self-administration of prescription and non-prescription medications during the school day will be permitted when:
 - a. a licensed health care provider deems it medically necessary for the student to take medication, either prescription or non-prescription, during the school day;
 - b. the Authorization for Medication Administration Form is completed and signed by the licensed health care provider;
 - c. the Authorization for Medication Administration Form is signed by the parent/guardian;
 - d. the medication is delivered to the health office in a container with an FDA approved label;
 - e. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for assuring that the medication delivered to the Health Office is up to date and that the supply of medication is renewed as needed.
3. Non-compliance with these procedures may result in the student not receiving his/her medication;
4. The CEO or designee shall formulate administrative procedures that a parent/guardian must follow before any medication (prescription and/or non-prescription) will be administered or self-administered to his/her child during the school day. The procedures shall include a written request from the parent/guardian to administer the medication with a written order from the licensed health care provider;
5. Self-administration will be permitted where a licensed health care provider and parent confirm that there is a medical need for, and the student is responsible for and capable of, self-administering the medication. Such confirmation shall acknowledge that Catalyst assumes no liability for such self-administration. Prior Health Office approval is required. Catalyst may require that these written confirmations be updated from time to time;
6. Where a student demonstrates the capability for self-administration and for responsible behavior in the use of an asthma inhaler and/or EpiPen, the student may possess and use the inhaler and/or EpiPen at school. Students are prohibited from providing any medication or inhaler to another student, and violations of this policy will result in the immediate confiscation of the inhaler and the medication, loss of privileges of possessing same, and discipline under other Catalyst policies concerning controlled substances. Prior to receiving permission for self-administration with an inhaler or EpiPen, the student and parent shall provide a written statement from a licensed health care provider describing the drug, the dosage, the time the medication is to be taken and the diagnosis and the reason the medicine is needed. The licensed health care provider's statement shall also indicate the potential of any serious reaction that might occur, as well as any necessary emergency response, and shall also indicate whether the student is qualified and able to self-administer the medication. The student must notify a staff member immediately following each use of an EpiPen. The provisions of paragraph 4, above, shall apply to self-administration by inhaler;
7. Except as specifically provided for in this Policy and any accompanying administrative procedures, all medications (prescription and/or non-prescription) must be delivered to the health office for storing and administering and students are not permitted to carry medications on their persons during the school day, unless all requirements for permission for self-administration are met. Violations of any provision of this Policy or any related procedures may result in disciplinary action;
8. For life-threatening situations indicating incipient anaphylactic shock, trained staff shall be authorized to administer the prescribed Epi-pen. The CEO or designee shall designate the

- procedures to be followed, including training of staff, forms to be completed in advance by the parent/guardian and procedures for emergency administration of the medication;
9. Nothing in this policy is designed to prevent the administration of first-aid including the administration of Glucagon and/or EpiPen to a student without the express written permission of a parent where deemed necessary by a nurse pursuant to her/his professional judgment;
 10. Catalyst will not administer or allow self-administration of homeopathic or herbal remedies;
 11. The CEO or designee shall periodically review state standards and direct the responsible personnel accordingly;
 12. Field Trips: Medications cannot be sent with the teacher if the school nurse is unable to attend the field trip. Situations involving children with life threatening medical conditions and students taking daily medications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For other situations, parents of children who receive routine medication during school hours may choose to have their children not receive their medication on the day of the field trip if the nurse cannot attend. Any questions should be directed to the school nurse;
 13. All medications must be retrieved by parents or an adult designee at the end of the school year. Medications will not be returned to students. Any medication not picked up at the end of the school year will be properly disposed of. No medication will remain at school over the summer;
 14. Exceptions to this Policy must be approved by the CEO.

Administration Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to develop and enforce any administrative procedures deemed necessary to implement this Policy.

Communication

This Policy shall be communicated to:

1. Catalyst Staff
2. scholars and Parents through Parent/scholar Handbooks

Health and Illness

The school requests that children do not come to school if they are ill. If school staff believes that a child needs to see a doctor, is contagious, increases the risk of illness to other children, or requires prolonged individual staff attention that interferes with the safety and regular functioning of the classroom, the school will contact families and ask them to pick up and take their child home. Parents will be contacted if a child has a moderate-to-high-fever; is experiencing vomiting or diarrhea; shows signs of any contagious disease; and/or has an illness that prevents the child from participating in activities.

Campus Safety and Supervision of Scholars

Scholars are not to be in the building or on the school grounds after the regular school day unless under the direct supervision of a Catalyst Academy staff member or Catalyst partner.

Posted in every room is a map detailing the relevant evacuation and emergency protocol. Scholars are to follow their teacher according to that map and to stay with their class. In the event of a fire drill or fire, scholars must not stop at bathrooms or lockers. They must go directly to their designated outside location until given further instructions. Any scholar violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of the school and will face consequences including possible suspension. There is no talking during a drill or

emergency procedure. Talking during a drill or emergency procedure will result in a scholar receiving an appropriate consequence.

FERPA and Scholar Records

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Catalyst Academy Charter School ("School") receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School CEO a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write to the School CEO, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service of function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the School to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain School publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws and state law require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. If you do not want the School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing on the FERPA Opt-Out form.

The School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
 - Address
 - Telephone listing
 - Electronic mail address
 - Photograph
 - Date and place of birth
 - Major field of study
 - Dates of attendance
 - Grade level
 - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
 - Weight and height of members of athletic teams
 - Degrees, honors, and awards received
 - The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

FERPA also permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other School officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)) The School may designate after-school providers with whom it has written agreements with to provide after-school programming to School students as other School officials who may have access to education records.
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed
- to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system
- and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose
- records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency who has the right to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student. 20 USC §1232g(b)(L).
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the School, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the School has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98) applies to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). PPRA is intended to protect the rights of parents and students in two ways:

It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with an ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and

It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors obtain written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political affiliations;
- Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
- Sex behavior and attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Parents or students who believe their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint with ED by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA occurred.

For additional information or technical assistance, you may call 202-260-3887 (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Additionally, you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Mandated Reporter Policy

The PA Child Protective Services Act was signed into law in 1975. It was enacted to protect children from abuse, allow the opportunity for healthy growth and development and, whenever possible, preserve and stabilize the family. What is child abuse? Child abuse, according to the CPSL, includes any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental serious physical injury or non-accidental serious mental injury to a child under 18 years of age, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation to a child under 18 years of age, and serious neglect. The law says that mandated reporters must immediately make a report or notify the person in charge. The person in charge or the designee must make a report of suspected child abuse immediately to ChildLine at **1-800-932-0313**.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Internet is a global network linking computers around the world. Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. Catalyst Academy Charter School offers Internet access to its scholars and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of Catalyst Academy Charter School. Catalyst Academy Charter School expects that scholars and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose. While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. Catalyst Academy Charter School makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the Catalyst Academy Charter School Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet. Catalyst Academy Charter School has installed special filtering software in an effort to block access to material that is not appropriate for children.

The following is a list of prohibited behaviors. The list is not exhaustive, but illustrates unacceptable uses of the Catalyst Academy Charter School's Internet service.

- disclosing, using or disseminating personal identification information about self or others;
- accessing, sending or forwarding materials or communications that are defamatory, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, or illegal;
- using the Internet service for any illegal activities such as gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above;
- using the Internet service to receive or send information relating to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry;
- vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means;
- copying or downloading of copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the principal;
- plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet (Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited as to sources.);
- using the Internet service for commercial purposes;
- downloading or installing any commercial software, shareware, freeware or similar types of material onto network drives or disks with

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

The School provides equal employment opportunities without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, veteran status or other legally-protected class or characteristic. The School prohibits any such discrimination. This policy applies to all employees and applicants and it applies to

recruiting, hiring, compensation, training, placement, transfer, promotion, demotion, discipline, and termination. The School seeks to fill all positions with qualified candidates without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, or veteran status or other legally-protected class or characteristic.

Non Discriminatory Policy

Catalyst Academy Charter School as a matter of policy provides educational opportunities without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, disability, or age. In addition, RePublic Schools does not permit or condone discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical disability, or age in employment matters or assignment in programs or services provided.

Parent Involvement Policy

Catalyst Academy Charter School is dedicated to providing quality education for every scholar. To accomplish this objective, we will develop and maintain strong partnerships with parents. Parents and teachers working as partners increase scholar achievement and develop positive attitudes about self and school. Teachers will keep parents informed of grade level learning objectives. All scholars will be expected to work toward mastering these objectives.

Our school recognizes the fact that some scholars will need extra assistance to achieve their full potential. The extra assistance is available to scholars through the Title I program. Catalyst Academy Charter School intends to include parents in all aspects of the Title I program. scholars will be given every opportunity for success through the development and enhancement of the home/school partnership. To the extent practicable, Catalyst Academy Charter School will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing required information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

Catalyst Academy Charter School will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects to carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition: *Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving scholar academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring - that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; the carrying out of other activities.*

Parent Involvement Policy Development

Parents, members of the community, and school staff will meet to discuss the design and implementation of the Parent Involvement Policy. Catalyst Academy Charter School will recruit participation through various avenues of publicity. Parents will be informed of Title I guidelines. Copies of the Parent Involvement Policy will be distributed. Parents will be encouraged to become involved in revising and updating the policy as necessary. The meetings will be held at a convenient time and

location. Childcare will be provided to ensure parent participation and attendance. Written notices will be directed at attracting as many parents as possible.

Catalyst Academy Charter School will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation (via a survey) of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of the School. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). Catalyst Academy Charter School will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies. The evaluation will be qualitative in nature through ongoing discussions with parents about the ongoing growth and development of the school in a way that best suits the needs of each enrolled child. Each member of the School's administrative team will gather information in conversations with parents and include input, feedback and recommendations upon review of the policy.

School/Parent/scholar Compacts

In accordance with Title I regulations, the school must develop a parent/scholar compact with the parents of scholars participating in the program. This compact will enable the school and parents to share responsibility for scholar performance and success. The compact must explain how scholars, parents, and staff will share responsibility for promoting scholar performance and success. All parents will be given a copy of the compact detailing the responsibilities that teachers, parents, and scholars have in helping scholars accomplish their goals. Parents are asked to discuss the contents of the compact with their child.

Types of Parent Involvement - There are many ways in which parents can be involved with their children's education. Catalyst Academy Charter School values both the at home contributions and those which take place at school. Many types of parental involvement are needed in a home/school partnership that will help all our children to succeed. Parent involvement opportunities include:

- Supporting their child/children's learning at home;
- Volunteering in the classroom (must possess appropriate clearances);
- Volunteering to help with field trips and other activities;
- Parent/Teacher conferences throughout the year

Parent Training

Parents, guardians, foster parents and surrogate parents are surveyed annually to determine trainings that are desired. To the best of the organization's ability, meetings will be scheduled to accommodate increased parent support and participation (e.g., varying times, conference calls). Parents, guardians, foster parents and surrogate parents will be notified of the date, time, and purpose of the meeting via hard copy, parent portal, website and social media posts. Catalyst Academy Charter School will provide materials and training to help parents support their children's academic achievement, and to foster parental involvement, by hosting speakers and engagement activities, discussing topics during Parent-Teacher Conferences and/or talking with parents during meetings conducted between the school and parents related to a child's individualized education plan.

Catalyst Academy Charter School will ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand by understanding the first language of our parents through the school's Home Language Survey and engaging parents of children whose first language is not English in order to understand how we can support their transition and ongoing success at the School.

Visitation

Upon entering the building, please stop by the office and sign the visitor log book. The administration and faculty at Catalyst Academy Charter School wish to support/home school cooperation. To make your visit to school more profitable to you and us, and safe for all scholars, we ask that parents, guardians, foster parents and surrogate parents schedule visits in advance, which can be done via phone call or email to the Front Office Manager or a Catalyst Community Advisor. All visitors must sign in to the office and have a valid ID. Visitors will refrain from disrupting the classroom and will be asked to leave if a disruption occurs.