Our Mission

Independence Charter School West (ICS-West) is a community-based K-8 public charter school of academic excellence, located in Southwest Philadelphia and serving a diverse community of learners. ICS West provides an intellectually-stimulating curriculum with a global focus designed to develop independent, thoughtful global citizens. We emphasize second language acquisition and integrate arts, ideas, and histories from around the world.

Our Beliefs

We believe that all children can be successful in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment.
We believe that all members of our school community bring unique and valuable perspectives.
We believe that students must be provided with a diverse set of learning tools to reach their fullest potential.
We believe that by learning languages and studying cultures, children gain the skills needed to be active global citizens.
We believe that we are responsible to a larger community and to one another. We strive to be active stewards of the local and global community.
We believe that to reach excellence we must continue to nurture a reflective school community whose members contribute their talents, insights, and hard work in service to our students and to the larger community.

Global Citizenship

I am a global citizen when...
*Soy un ciudadano del mundo cuando...

I respect multiple points of view.
*Respeto diferentes puntos de vista.

I challenge stereotypes and misinformation.
*Desafío los estereotipos y la desinformación.

I make responsible decisions.
*Tomo decisiones responsables.

School Norms

Be responsible | Sé responsable
Follow instructions | Sigue instrucciones
Focus on respect | Sé respetuoso
**Student Rights & Responsibilities** Adapted from the Lake Washington School District Student Rights & Responsibilities

**Rights**

Students have the right to a clean, safe, and positive school environment free from discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and assault.

Students have the right to high quality, academically- and culturally-appropriate curriculum and instruction.

Students have the right to school rules that are enforced in a consistent, fair, and reasonable manner.

Students have the right to be treated with respect.

Students have the right to school staff who model appropriate behavior.

Students have the right to expect staff to provide guidance and support in solving their problems.

Students have the right to participate as partners in the problem-solving process to facilitate successful solutions and closure.

Students have the right to engage in respectful speech that expresses their thoughts and opinions as long as it is not disruptive to the educational environment and does not interfere with the rights of others.

**Responsibilities**

Students are responsible for making a determined effort to learn.

Students are responsible for following school rules.

Students are responsible for attending school and all classes daily and on time.

Students are responsible for completing assignments and being prepared for class.

Students are responsible for following the ICS West dress code.

Students are responsible for respecting the property of other people and of the school.

Students are responsible for treating all members of the school community with courtesy, kindness, and respect and to demonstrate a regard for the safety and welfare of others.

Students are responsible for informing school staff of behavior which may be harmful to an individual or themselves.

**Community Code of Civility** Adapted from the University of Maryland University College Code of Civility

- **Respect**: Treat all students, staff, families, and community members with respect and in a professional and courteous manner at all times, whether in person or in written communication (including email and texts).
- **Kindness**: Refrain from using profanities, insults, or other disparaging remarks.
- **Truth**: Tell only the truth and do not knowingly misrepresent, mischaracterize, or misquote information received from others.
- **Responsibility**: Take responsibility for your own actions. Do not blame others.
- **Cooperation**: Work together with other students, community members, and staff in a spirit of cooperation toward our shared goal of providing a quality education and creating global citizens.
- **Privacy**: Strive to uphold the right to privacy and do not talk about others.
- **Nondiscrimination**: Respect differences in people and their ideas and reject injustice and intolerance.
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**Nondiscrimination in Services**

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of students shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

School services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to: Equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independence Charter School West</th>
<th>PA Human Relations Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5600 Chester Avenue</td>
<td>Philadelphia Regional Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, PA 19143</td>
<td>Room 711, Philadelphia SOB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Public Welfare</td>
<td>1400 Spring Garden Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureau of Equal Opportunity</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA 19130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room 223, Health and Welfare Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 2675</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrisburg, PA 17105</td>
<td>Office for Civil Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suite 372, Public Ledger Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150 South Independence Mall West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pennsylvania Certification of School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Child Abuse and Neglect**

It is policy that Independence Charter School West complies with the Child Protective Services Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This law makes it mandatory for ICS West employees to report suspected cases of physical abuse, neglect, mental injury, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation to the school counselor or administrator, who must file a report with the Department of Human Services. Compliance with the laws of Pennsylvania and the policies of ICS West serves to protect all parties involved.

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**Title I Notification**

As a public charter school, ICS West receives local, state and federal funding. As a school-wide Title I funded site, ICS West must remind you that you have the right, as a parent or guardian, to request and receive timely information regarding the professional qualifications of your child/ren’s classroom/subject teachers. If you would like to know this information, please notify ICS West by emailing tishc@icscharter.com or delivering a written request to the front office.

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**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

Student records maintained by Independence Charter School are subject to the protections, restrictions, and potential penalties mandated by FERPA: [http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa)
2017-2018 Board of Trustees

The Independence Charter School West Board of Trustees is the school’s governing body and has the authority to make decisions regarding the operation of ICS West, including budgeting, curriculum planning, facilities management, and employment, all in the service of fulfilling the ICS West mission.

Members

Rachel M. Keene
Tyesha Miley
Jere Paolini
Dyana Reid
Pedro Rodriguez     Treasurer
Gloria Shabazz      President
Tarae Terry         Vice President
CEO Julio C. Nuñez  Ex-Officio

Meetings

Families, ICS West staff, community members, and the general public are welcome to attend any board meeting. There is a public comment period scheduled at each meeting. Meetings begin promptly at 6pm. Please arrive by 5:55.

2017-2018 Schedule
August 3, 2017
September 7, 2017
October 5, 2017
November 2, 2017
December 7, 2017
February 1, 2018
March 1, 2018
April 5, 2018
May 3, 2018
June 7, 2018

Minutes

Board meeting minutes are posted to our website after they are approved. Find them under About Us: Board of Trustees.
**Parent-Teacher Association**

**Volunteer**

ICS West welcomes and encourages family, community, and alumni volunteers. Volunteers who work directly with children must obtain background checks before beginning volunteer work. Please visit our website’s volunteer page under **Support ICS-West: Volunteer** for complete information on background check requirements and guidelines.

We encourage parents to get involved with PTA. Interested families should contact the PTA at PTA@icswest.org

**Requirements**

According to state charter school law, all volunteers must submit to the school the clearances listed below prior to beginning volunteer work. This includes volunteers for one-time events, such as chaperoning field trips. You will only need to complete this process ONE TIME during your child’s tenure at ICS-West, every five years.

**FBI Background Check:** Visit [http://www.pa.cogentid.com](http://www.pa.cogentid.com) and click *Pennsylvania Department of Education PDE* for complete registration & fingerprinting information. **You must register through the Department of Education.** We cannot accept background checks obtained through any other department. (The cost is $28.75.) **When you have completed the fingerprinting process, send your PAE# to Tr. Tracey.**

We can then download your information from the system.

**PA Criminal History Check:** Visit [http://epatch.state.pa.us](http://epatch.state.pa.us) and click *Submit a new record check.* (The cost is $10; application may also be submitted on paper.) If you submit electronically, you will be able to view and print your results sometimes instantly and at most within 2-3 weeks.

**PA Child Abuse Clearance:** Visit [www.dpw.state.pa.us](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us) and click *Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form* on the right hand side of the screen. (The cost is $10; money order only; **volunteers must include copy of PA criminal record check results with application.**) If you bring a completed form and $10 (cash only) to Tr. Tracey, ICS West can supply the money order and mail the application for you. **An original copy of your clearance will be mailed to you within 3-6 weeks. Bring the original to ICS West and we will make a copy for our files.**

**A TB skin test or chest X-ray with a “negative” result:** You can obtain this through your primary care physician or, if your insurance does not cover it, you can obtain it at low or no cost at one of Philadelphia’s health clinics. Visit [http://www.phila.gov/health/AmbulatoryHealth/](http://www.phila.gov/health/AmbulatoryHealth/) to find a clinic near you.

**Expectations**

1. Report to the front office to sign in and out.
2. Wear a “Volunteer” identification badge while participating in volunteer activities.
3. Turn off or silence cell phones and remove Bluetooth headsets while in the building.
4. Avoid bringing younger siblings without notifying and receiving permission from the project manager.
5. Arrive on time and leave as scheduled to avoid confusion or disruption. Notify school staff when a scheduled commitment cannot be kept.
6. Remember that supervising and disciplining students are the responsibility of school staff.
7. Avoid interrupting ongoing instruction. Wait for an appropriate break if you have a question or need more guidance.
8. Understand that volunteer hours cannot be used to discuss spontaneously an individual student’s progress or other personal matters with teachers and staff. Feel free to schedule an appointment that coincides with your volunteer schedule, however.
9. When working in your child’s classroom, treat your child as you would any other child in the class. Too much interaction can be disruptive to your child as well as to his/her classmates.
10. Keep confidential all matters or information concerning students, teachers, or the school.

Volunteers MAY NOT sign children out for early dismissal when exiting unless it has been previously scheduled at the front desk and is for an approved reason (see “Dismissal” in Handbook).
### 2017-2018 School Calendar

This calendar is subject to change. Please refer to our web calendar for cancellations and additions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 14-25</td>
<td>Professional Development for Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>1st Day of School for Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>1st Day of School for Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1-4</td>
<td>Labor Day – School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>All students report to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Early Dismissal Wednesdays Begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>No school for students – All Day Staff professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22-24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving observance – School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>2nd School Trimester Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 21</td>
<td>No school for students – Report card conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 22- Jan 2</td>
<td>Winter break—School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Day observance – School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>All Day Staff professional development – School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Presidents’ Day observance – School Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>In the event of excessive weather-related closures, this day will be a school day.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>3rd School Trimester Begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>No school for students – All Day Staff professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>No school for students – Report card conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26-30</td>
<td>Spring break—School closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>In the event of excessive weather-related closures, 3/21 will be a school day.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Half-Day 12:00 Noon Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Memorial Day observance – School closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>Last day of school for students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Dress Code**

Dress down days and/or spirit days may be announced during the school year. School administrators will use their discretion to determine whether or not the clothing is appropriate for school. If the clothing is inappropriate or does not conform to the expectations below, the student will call home for a change of clothing and may lose future dress down privileges.

| Bottoms: Navy          | - Loose-fitting navy trousers, slacks, or capris - worn at the waist  
|                       | - Solid navy jumpers, dresses, skorts, skirts and shorts – no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.  
|                       | - No jeans or jeggings, no exercise or legging-like pants.  
|                       | - No ripped or intentionally-distressed pants  

| Tops: Red or Gray ICSV Logo Optional | - Red or Gray solid polo shirt, long- or short-sleeve. (Polo shirt means collared, three-button shirt, knit-type material - cotton or polyester/cotton blend.)  
|                                       | - Shirt-tails may not extend below fingertips  
|                                       | - Solid-colored shirt may be worn underneath polo shirt for warmth.  
|                                       | - ICS-West logo optional.  

| No Other Logos | - No non-ICS West logos permitted on any clothing.  

| Outerwear | - Solid navy sweater, pullover, sweatshirt, or vest may be worn inside the building. No hoods.  

| Socks | - Socks, tights or leggings *underneath skirts or shorts* may be worn and may be any color or design  
|       | - No intentionally-distressed tights and leggings.  

| Shoes | - Closed-toe shoes, sneakers or boots -- toes and heels must be covered.  
|       | - No sandals and no high heels of any kind.  

| Dance/Mvmt Fitness | - Solid navy sweatpants or yoga pants may be worn all day.  
|                   | - Shorts or pants must be worn under skirt/jumper.  
|                   | - Dress code polos still required.  
|                   | - Athletic shoes/sneakers only.  

| Accessories | - Stud earrings, not extending below or wrapping around ear lobe  
|            | - 1 watch or bracelet, 1 simple ring, 1 simple necklace tucked under shirt/blouse  
|            | - No hats  

| Field Trips | - Students must remain in dress code for all trips unless otherwise indicated by the teacher due to nature of field trip.  

| Recess | - Students will go outside in all weather, between 15° and 95°, including light rain and snow  
|        | - Rain coats and ponchos, no umbrellas  
|        | - Under 40°: winter coat, hat, gloves and neck warmers required.  

Family-Staff Communication Guidelines

The teachers and staff at Independence Charter School West strive to maintain open and positive lines of communication with families. We expect all members of the community to be courteous and respectful of each other at all times and to assume best intentions. Often, it is helpful to wait an hour or a day before hitting “send” on an email.

**Informal communication** is suitable for everyday situations such as:

- Your child forgets his/her lunch or book bag.
- Confirming the date of an upcoming classroom event.
- Confirming that a teacher received materials you sent in with your child.

Appropriate forms of informal communication include:

- Email message
- Written note
- Phone message
- *Brief conversation in passing*

**Formal communication** is necessary when a parent or teacher needs to communicate about a more serious issue or concern. Some examples include:

- Your child is struggling in a subject area.
- Your child is not feeling challenged in class.
- You have questions or concerns about your child’s curriculum.
- Your child does not feel safe at school.
- Your child needs extra emotional support due to changing circumstances at home.

Appropriate forms of formal communication include:

- Email message
- Written letter
- A *prearranged* phone conversation or meeting

**Responding to inquiries**: Our staff will make every effort to respond to you promptly. Due to time constraints, however, school staff are not able to read and respond to every message during the school day. Follow the guidelines below for communication expectations.

- Teachers cannot take phone calls during the school day because they are teaching. Email is the generally preferred form of communication.
- Teachers will check email messages once daily on school days between 3:30 and 4:00pm and confirm receipt of your message by the end of the next full school day.
- If you do not receive a confirmation of receipt, try one alternate form of communication in case there is a technical problem. Your email could have gone to spam or your phone message could have been directed to an incorrect mailbox.
- If you still do not receive a confirmation of receipt, contact the Principal. Due to the volume of emails the Principal receives, any time you contact the Principal by email it could take up to one week to receive a response. If you have an urgent matter, please contact the Principal by phone in addition to sending an email.
# Helpful School Contacts

## Leadership Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julio C. Nuñez</td>
<td>Principal/CEO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:julion@icswest.org">julion@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Dinkins</td>
<td>Math Specialist/Supervisor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jonathandi@icswest.org">jonathandi@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tameka Wilkins</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tamekaw@icswest.org">tamekaw@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Thompson</td>
<td>Instructional Coach</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kathrynt@icswest.org">kathrynt@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatimah Johnson</td>
<td>Special Education Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fatimahj@icswest.org">fatimahj@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keisha Robinson</td>
<td>School Counselor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:keishar@icswest.org">keishar@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Office Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracey Hill</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td><a href="mailto:traceyh@icswest.org">traceyh@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Transportation</td>
<td><a href="mailto:transportation@icswest.org">transportation@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Student Records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody Smith</td>
<td>Registrations</td>
<td><a href="mailto:codys@icswest.org">codys@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Fox</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td><a href="mailto:samanthaf@icswest.org">samanthaf@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o <a href="mailto:attendance@icswest.org">attendance@icswest.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Main Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>215-274-5600</td>
<td>Always use this number for urgent matters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Additional Student Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiia Reinald</td>
<td>ESL Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tiiar@icswest.org">tiiar@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sybria Jordan</td>
<td>School Nurse</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nurse@icswest.org">nurse@icswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Staff Directory

This directory is subject to change. Please refer to our web directory for edits and additions.

Email addresses end with @icswest.org

School phone number is 215-724-5600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>RM#</th>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrawos Ramzy</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>Director of Operations</td>
<td>Ramzya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Christina</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>English 2nd Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Christinab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisneros Andrés</td>
<td>MR</td>
<td>CA/Music Teacher</td>
<td>Andresc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke Shannon</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>3rd Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Shannonc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis Tyanna</td>
<td>310B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Tr. Wynter</td>
<td>Tyannad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delgado Jonathan</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>FLES/Spanish Teacher</td>
<td>Jonathanande</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeVauhn Camille</td>
<td>209B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Tr. Jess</td>
<td>Camilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrell Kai</td>
<td>312B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Mstr. Natalia</td>
<td>Kaif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferver Dolly</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Reading Specialist</td>
<td>Dollyf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Samantha</td>
<td></td>
<td>Office Assistant/Instructional Support</td>
<td>SamanthaF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graulau Roxana</td>
<td>211B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Tr. Lugene</td>
<td>Roxanag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huger Janice</td>
<td></td>
<td>NTA</td>
<td>Janiceh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyacinthe Jessie</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>4th Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Jessieh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibars Cedo Natalia</td>
<td>312B</td>
<td>Spanish 1st Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Nataliai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson Kelly</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>Special Education Teacher</td>
<td>Kellyj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennebrew Lugene</td>
<td>211B</td>
<td>Spanish K Teacher</td>
<td>Lugenek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knorr Alexis</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>3rd Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Alexisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Whitney</td>
<td>210B</td>
<td>English K Teacher</td>
<td>Whitneyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaTorre-Ovaska</td>
<td>310B</td>
<td>English K Teacher</td>
<td>Wynterl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez Elena</td>
<td>212B</td>
<td>Spanish 1st Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Elenal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez Silvia</td>
<td>311B</td>
<td>Spanish K Teacher</td>
<td>Silvial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malik Dietra</td>
<td>210B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Tr. Whitney</td>
<td>Dietram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAllister Sue</td>
<td>210B</td>
<td>SPED Classroom Assistant</td>
<td>Susamn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milic-Strkalj Ivana</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Spanish 2nd Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Ivanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moran Ashley</td>
<td>309B</td>
<td>English 1st Grade Teacher</td>
<td>Ashleym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Sindhikara Rana</td>
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<td>Waller Aquila</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>4th Grade Teacher</td>
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<td>Wood Jameica</td>
<td>309B</td>
<td>Classroom Assistant – Tr. Ashley</td>
<td>Jameicaw</td>
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**Attendance**

**Absences**

When your child is absent from school, you must submit a written note or email from the parent/guardian or doctor in order for the attendance to be marked as "excused". Notes can be enclosed in an envelope marked “Attendance” or emailed to the Attendance Coordinator, Samantha Fox, at attendance@icswest.org. Email is preferred.

**Notes must be submitted (preferably by email) within 3 days of the absence or the absence becomes unexcused.**

All notes must contain:
- Your child’s full name
- Your child's teacher/room #
- Date(s) of the absence(s)
- Reason for the absence(s)
- Doctor's or parent/guardian’s signature
- Absences will be listed as "unexcused" until an excuse note is received. If no excuse is received after 3 days, the “unexcused” status for that day becomes permanent
- More than 8 “excused” absences could result in the requirement of a doctor’s note to excuse future absences

Acceptable reasons for excused absences:
- Illness – A doctor’s note is required upon return for illnesses resulting in 3 or more days absent from school
- Religious holiday
- Pre-approved travel – Send request to attendance@icswest.org in advance of the trip
- Death in the family
- Family emergency or other rare and unavoidable circumstances
- Professional health care or therapy services rendered by a licensed practitioner
- Out-of-school suspension

It is your responsibility to look at your child’s report card each trimester to ensure that the attendance record is correct. We also recommend that you track your child’s attendance record regularly in the ALMA portal.

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**Truancy (3+ Unexcused Absences)**

After 3 unexcused absences, families will receive an illegal absence letter notifying them of the situation and possible consequences if unexcused absences continue.

After 6 unexcused absences, families will be required to attend a meeting with the Counselor to create a Truancy Elimination Contract. Student will be deemed habitually truant. ICS West either will refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance program or will refer the student to the county children and youth agency (DHS) for services or for possible disposition as a dependent child. ICS West may additionally refer the parent or guardian to truancy court.

After 10 consecutive unexcused absences, ICS West will remove the student from its active membership roll.
Late Arrivals

To be considered on time, ICS West students must arrive to the school no later than 8:20am. There are no "excused" late arrivals to school. If a child arrives on time, he/she is marked "present". If a child walks into the building after 8:20am, the child is marked "late". Parents must sign student in at the Main Office if child is arriving after 8:20am.

If a child has a doctor's appointment and is brought to school after 8:20am, the child will be marked "present" as long as a doctor's note is submitted.

If a child arrives to school late due to school bus delays, the child will not be marked late.

A child must be in the school building for a minimum of 2 hours to be marked present for the day.

Excessive late arrivals (5+), students will serve an after-school detention for every five occurrences, and parents may have to come before the ICS West Board of Trustees.

Early Dismissals

Early Dismissals are allowed for the following reasons:

- Documentable visit to a doctor’s office
- Regular religious lessons - Submit a letter from your place of worship indicating times/dates of sessions.
- Family emergency or other rare and unavoidable circumstances

If you must schedule an early dismissal, please email the Attendance Coordinator at attendance@icswest.org or call 215-724-5600 by 12:00 noon on the day you are requesting the dismissal. We will call your child to the office to be dismissed when you arrive at ICS West.

If no prior arrangement for early dismissals were made, students cannot be dismissed after 2:45pm on regular school days, or after 12:45pm on Early Dismissal Wednesdays, except in case of medical or family emergencies.

A child must be in the school building for a minimum of 2 hours to be marked present for the day.

Transferring

If you are transferring out of ICS West, you can request your child’s records by having attending school contact the Main Office.
Food Services

ICS West offers free breakfast and lunch to all students through the National School Lunch Program. Lintons Managed Services is our meal vendor.

**Breakfast** - served daily between *7:45 – 8:15am*

**Lunch** - served daily between *10:15am – 1:30pm*

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**Vetri Eatiquette Lunch Program**

Starting in 2017-18 school year, ICS West will partner up with Vetri Community Partnership to provide healthy school lunches prepared on premises. This program focuses on using lunch time as a learning experience, and increasing the time students and adults have to make eating a social and educational event. Eatiquette lunch is designated to build community and cooperation, increase ownership of the lunch room and strengthen relationships between children, teachers and support staff.

One of the cornerstones of the Eatiquette Program is adult participation in the meal. We encourage adults to eat with the students as much as possible. Ideally there is an adult at every table. This encourages food consumption, better behavior, and many of our participating adults report positive changes in their relationships with the students which carries over beyond the lunch room.

If you are interested in volunteering during Vetri Lunch Program, contact Counselor Keisha at *keishar@icswest.org*

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**Payment**

We are pleased to inform you that Independence Charter School West will be implementing a new provision known as the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) in the 2017-2018 school year. This program is available to schools/districts who are participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

All enrolled students of Independence Charter School West are eligible to receive a nutritional breakfast and lunch every day at the school at no charge to your household. No further action is required of you. Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without paying a fee or submitting an application.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact us at 215-724-5600.

There is no longer a need to deposit any funds into LunchTime Portal. If you are still receiving a negative meal account balance, please contact Odamis Fernandez-Sheinbaum (Food Services Coordinator) at *odamisf@icscharter.com*. 
Dietary Restrictions

If your child is participating in our meal program, it is important that you provide information regarding any special dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions per the Pennsylvania school nutrition regulations.

You must submit an updated note each year to our Nurse’s office from your pediatrician indicating the specific allergy or intolerance. Please let our Food Services Coordinator know that you are submitting this information.

Lunch Food Policy

- Candy, seeds, and gum will not be allowed at any time during school hours—including in the cafeteria.
- Drinks other than water, milk, and juice are not permitted during lunch.
- Soda is not permitted at school at any time, including both the cafeteria and yard.
- Glass bottles and containers are not permitted at school at any time, including both the cafeteria and yard.

Snack Food Policy

In order to maximize learning potential, we recommend that parents support students with providing a healthy snack. Attention and concentration will wane on an empty stomach.

Healthy snacks such as fresh fruit, granola bars, yogurt, dried fruit and nuts, and water provide extended hours of energy for learning, whereas sugary snacks provide only short-term energy with a "crash".

- Candy, seeds, and gum will not be allowed at any time during school hours.
- Students are permitted to bring a water bottle to drink and refill throughout the day. Drinks other than water will not be permitted in the classroom, even during snack.
- Soda is not permitted at school at any time, including both the cafeteria and yard.
- Glass bottles and containers are not permitted at school at any time, including both the cafeteria and yard.

Birthday Celebrations

Check with your child’s teacher each year to find out how she/he celebrates birthdays in your child’s classroom. Many teachers have special birthday routines in place. **Never send food without communicating directly with and receiving permission and clear instructions from your child’s teacher.** If you make a plan with a teacher to send in food, consider sending more nutritious alternatives to cake/cupcakes, and remember that each student only needs one small, pre-portioned serving.
Health Services

To contact the school nurse’s office, call 215-724-5600 or send an email to nurse@icswest.org. Do not leave voicemail messages or send emails regarding an urgent situation; instead, if you do not get an answer the first time you call, call the Main Office again.

Health Room Guidelines

- All students should eat breakfast every morning and come to school well rested.
- Students should not be sent to school if they are feeling sick or have a fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. In addition, students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vision, height, weight, and immunizations will be monitored throughout the school year. Parents will be notified if further follow-up is needed.
- Every year, all families must complete a basic health information form that is included annually in our summer mailing. The form can also be found on our website.

Medication Administration/Allergies

- If your child needs to have medication administered during school hours, you must complete the In-School Medication Administration form that is included annually in our summer mailing. The form can also be found on our website. No medication will be administered without a completed form on file.
- If your child has allergies or dietary restrictions, you must submit an updated note from your pediatrician each year.

Physical & Dental Assessments

- Before the first day of school, all newly admitted students must submit an updated physical health assessment that is less than one-year-old.
- Before the first day of school, all newly admitted students and all students entering 3rd grade must submit an updated dental assessment that is less than one-year-old.

Head Lice Policy

Due to time constraints, the Nurse will not check students for lice*/nits** unless it is indicated. It is imperative that families routinely check their children’s heads for possible lice/nit infestation and alert the school immediately if lice/nits are found. If the Nurse becomes aware of a possible lice/nit infestation, the Nurse will check that student’s head and any siblings’ heads for lice/nits on that same school day. If lice/nits are found, the nurse will notify the family. If active lice are found, the family will need to arrange to have the student(s) picked up from school as soon as possible to start treatment and to limit further transmission in school. In order for the student to return to school, the family must submit documentation indicating how the lice/nits were treated.

On the day that lice/nits are found on the head of an ICS West student, ICS West will alert all families in that grade by email. An automated phone call and hard copy of the alert will be sent to the families in that particular classroom, asking them to check their child(ren) for possible lice/nits. The identity of any students found to have lice/nits will be kept confidential.

*Lice are a human parasite.

**Nits are head lice eggs.
**Arrival**

The safety of 400+ students is our priority. Families and students must help ensure community safety by following our arrival procedures. Please direct all questions regarding arrival or dismissal procedures to the Principal.

**Schedule**

- Children should arrive to school between 7:45am-8:20am and enter through the Gym Entrance on 56th Street.
- **No children may arrive before 7:45am.**
- After 8:20am, students must enter through the Main Office. Parents must sign child in on the late arrival sheet. Students will be marked “late”.

**Arrival Guidelines for Families**

- Only ICS West students may enter the gymnasium during arrival. Family members must say goodbye at the doors.
- If you have school business in the morning, please drop your child in the gym first and then visit the Main Office. Main entrance is accessible on 56th Street, through the school gate.

**Arrival Procedures for Drivers**

- Drivers will pull up to the school-side curb on 56th Street to drop off children. We will assist students to exit vehicles when possible.
- **Children will use the curbside door on 56th St. to exit vehicles.**
- Do not leave your car unattended on 56th St. Traffic must continue moving forward at all times, and to avoid being ticketed.

**Dismissal**

The safety of 400+ students is our priority. Families and students must help ensure community safety by following our dismissal procedures. Please direct all questions regarding arrival or dismissal procedures to Principal Julio.

**Schedule**

- Buses are called beginning at 3:00 (1:15 on Wednesdays)
- Aftercare students (programs outside ICS West) are dismissed to Music/Community Rooms at 3:10pm
- Kindergarteners arrive to the cafeteria by 3:10 (1:25 on Wednesdays)
- 1st- 4th graders arrive to the schoolyard by 3:15 (1:30 on Wednesdays)

**Dismissal Guidelines for Families**

- To avoid congestion, families should exit the dismissal area immediately after picking up children.
- So that our staff can focus on the dismissal process, please do not visit the office to take care of business or to ask questions between 2:45-3:30pm (1:00-1:45pm on Wednesdays).
**Parent/Legal Guardian**

The Principal and/or School Counselor will be assigned to the case as necessary.

Any parent whose child is picked up after 3:40pm or after 1:45pm on Early Dismissal Wednesdays, will incur late pick up.

Late Pick Up Policy

- The official end of the school day is 3:15pm, please be patient as dismissal is between 3:15pm-3:30pm.
- Avoid double-parking on 56th Street. This creates congestion and slows down dismissal.
- If you have specific questions or concerns, and want to speak with your child’s teacher, please set up an appointment. During dismissal, teacher’s primary focus is on safely dismissing all of their students.
- All students dismiss on school yard. Please find your child’s Room number (painted on the pavement) and wait until the class comes out and lines up.
- Students who take the school bus dismiss to the gymnasium.
- There is extensive parking on Chester and Kingsessing Avenues.

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**Dismissal Procedures for Drivers**

To avoid traffic congestion, **we strongly recommend parking on a nearby block and walking to pick up your child** rather than driving to ICS West at dismissal. If you decide to use the pickup lane, you must follow all of our procedures at all times.

- The official end of the school day is 3:15pm, please be patient as dismissal is between 3:15pm-3:30pm.
- Avoid double-parking on 56th Street. This creates congestion and slows down dismissal.
- If you have specific questions or concerns, and want to speak with your child’s teacher, please set up an appointment. During dismissal, teacher’s primary focus is on safely dismissing all of their students.
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**Changes to Your Child’s Dismissal Plan**

- Every child must have a current dismissal plan on file. If you need to make a permanent dismissal change at any time, please email transportation@icswest.org.

- If your child normally rides the school bus and you do not want your child to get on the bus, you must be waiting at the Gym doors by 3:05pm in order to sign your child out of the bus line.

- If your child normally attends an aftercare or afterschool program and you want to pick up your child before they leave for their program, you must arrive by 3:05pm to sign in at the front office and then sign your child out in the Music/Community Rooms.

- **We do not accept daily changes to your child’s plan, except in the case of legitimate emergencies,** which we hope and expect to be rare. One-time, emergency changes to dismissal must be made through the front office by calling 215-724-5600.

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**Late Pick Up Policy**

Any parent whose child is picked up after 3:40pm or after 1:45pm on Early Dismissal Wednesdays, will incur late pick up fees. Parent/guardians must come to the Main Office and pay the late pick-up charge. If late pick-up becomes chronic, the Principal and/or School Counselor will be assigned to the case as necessary.

For each child picked up after 3:40pm or after 1:45pm on Wednesdays, there is a $1 per minute late fee (up to 10 mins/$10) and a $5 per 10-minute fee thereafter (up to 30 mins/$20). Please note that the fee will defray the cost of the additional staff person assigned to supervise students who are picked up late.

**Parent/Legal Guardian**

**Parent/Legal Guardian remain/s** solely responsible for late fees incurred due to late arrival of after care provider.
School Bus Service

Students in grades 1st – 4th grades who live more than 1.5 miles from ICS West are eligible to use the school bus service provided by the School District of Philadelphia.

The District contracts Total Transportation Corp. to provide transportation to all students who sign up for bus service. For real-time information on your child’s bus’s status or location, you must always contact the bus company directly.

**Total Transportation Bus Company:** 215-383-0470

**District Transportation Office:** 215-400-4350

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ICS West Bus Routes

GREEN – 7701
BLUE – 7702
RED – 7703
ORANGE – 7704
PURPLE – 7705

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**Transportation Desk**

You can contact the ICS West Transportation Team for non-urgent questions or changes regarding your child’s bus route or to report problems with a bus route. Emails will be checked once daily and responded to by the end of the next school day.

[transportation@icswest.org](mailto:transportation@icswest.org) or at 215-724-5600

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**School Bus Behavior**

School bus service from the School District is a privilege. In order to be allowed to ride the school bus, students must adhere to the following behavior policies or risk losing the privilege to ride the bus for the duration of the school year.

**Expected School Bus Conduct**

Each year, ICS West will provide orientation, modeling, and practice of the following rules for school bus students:

- Abide by the ICS West Code of Conduct.
- Respect bus property and the property of others.
- Sit quietly in your seat and use quiet voices to talk to your seat partner.
- Follow the bus driver’s directions the first time they are given.
Discipline Sanctions

- **Minor Incidents**: Warning letter or phone call to family. *Examples include but are not limited to: Not sitting in seat, kneeling or bouncing in seat, eating on bus, teasing, vulgarity, being loud.*

- **Moderate Incidents**: 1-2-week minimum suspension from the school bus and assigned seat upon reinstatement. *Examples include but are not limited to: Not following driver instructions, throwing objects, harassment, standing on seat, out of seat or assigned spot, moving around on the bus or in bus line, play-fighting*

- **Severe Incidents**: Loss of school bus privilege entirely for the rest of the school year. *Examples include but are not limited to: Destruction of property, fighting, endangering self or others, making threats to cause physical injury.*

- 2 minor incidents equal 1 moderate incident.
- 2 moderate incidents equal 1 severe incident.
- These expectations and disciplinary sanctions will apply to children on the school bus, at or around the school bus stop, and at or around the school bus line during dismissal.
- Parents could be liable for property damage or injury caused by your child on the school bus.

- Students involved in an incident will have a meeting with the Principal to mediate and discuss solutions and strategies to avoid a reoccurrence.
- If your child has his/her bus privileges revoked, you have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees.
- Your child also has the right to be reinstated to the school bus the following school year.
- Families remain responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day and on time, whether or not their child has school bus privileges.

Suggestions for a Positive School Bus Experience

- Discuss the rules with your children frequently and help them problem-solve where they or their peers are having trouble following the rules.
- Send your child with a supply of good books to read. Please write your child’s name in the cover.
- Remind your child that any snack or breakfast packed from home must be eaten at school, not on the bus.
- Electronic music devices and personal electronic devices may be used when traveling on the school bus in order to help your child avoid distraction. ICS West is not responsible for lost items.
- Stay in contact with transportation@icswest.org to address concerns early.
Special Education Services

Learning Support Mission Statement

The mission of the ICS West Learning Support Program is to motivate and educate all students. As educators, we are dedicated to satisfying the social, emotional, and academic needs of all of our students. We will provide students with the tools needed to help them develop into productive global citizens.

Special Education

A team of special education teachers works closely with grade-level teachers and specialists to provide identified students with specialized instruction in the classroom (push-in) or in a resource room setting (pull-out). ICS West practices full inclusion and provides support within that model to benefit the individual student. Independence Charter School West special education students participate in all classes and competitions.

Gifted Education

ICS West does not run or offer a separate, pull-out program for students identified as gifted. Students may be referred for gifted testing in the 4th and 5th grades. The administrative team at ICS West will determine if testing is warranted for the student and continue if necessary. ICS West does not test for gifted prior to 4th grade and will not test after 5th grade. If a student is identified as gifted, the identification remains with the student even after leaving ICS West for high school.

The ICS West curriculum is already an enriched one, providing arts education and second language acquisition for all students.

The most current research in education supports differentiation of instruction to meet all students’ individual needs, a skill which we are constantly developing in all of our teachers. While there is no specific program or teacher dedicated exclusively to students who are identified as gifted, all teachers will receive regular professional development on meeting the enrichment needs, as well as other individual learning needs, of each student.

Parents will be asked to seek outside resources at their own expense to have gifted testing conducted for a student prior to 4th grade and after 5th, or if school-based assessments and recommendations do not warrant testing.

Annual Notice of Special Education Services

Child Find Independence Charter School West

Each school district and public education agency in the state of Pennsylvania must establish and implement procedures for identifying, locating, and evaluating children suspected of having a disability. The purpose of this notice is to: 1) describe the types of disabilities that might qualify a child for programs and services under IDEA, 2) describe the special education programs and related services that are available, and 3) describe the process by which ICS West may screen or evaluate students to determine eligibility. According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School Districts (SDs), Intermediate Units (IUs) and Charter Schools (CSs) are required to conduct child find activities for children
who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15.

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**Children Served in Special Education Programs**

Special education services are available to children who have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- autism
- deaf/blindness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment including deafness
- intellectual disability
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment
- specific learning disability
- speech or language impairment
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairment, including blindness

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**Description of Special Education Programs**

Independence Charter School West provides appropriate special education programs and related services that are:

- provided at no cost to the parents;
- provided under the authority of a school entity, directly; by referral or by contract;
- individualized to meet the educational needs of the child;
- reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and progress and designed to conform to an Individual Education Program.

Related services available to students include transportation, speech pathology, physical and occupational therapy, school health services, hearing services, and vision and orientation and mobility services.

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**Referral of Children for Screening and Evaluation**

Independence Charter School West has procedures to identify children needing special education. Those procedures are “screening” and “evaluation”. If a student is demonstrating a need for additional supports, the teachers, other school staff, or parents may refer a child for SST (Student Success Team). Through the process of SST, a variety of interventions may be tried, including but not limited to a screening if deemed warranted. Attempted interventions and remediation may require time to determine progress or responsiveness. This process may take 30, 60 or 90 days depending on the level of remediation and other known factors. Parents who suspect that a child may have a disability and need special education can request a screening or evaluation at any time by contacting the school Principal.

ICS West screening procedure includes, but is not limited to: reviewing immediately available data sources such as health records, parent interview and history, functional visual and hearing, student’s response to attempted remediation and
interventions as part of SST process, diagnostic academic assessments, and/or speech, OT, or PT screenings as needed. If the screening indicates any suspected disability, an evaluation will be recommended and the parent must consent in writing in order for the evaluation to be conducted. No evaluations may be conducted without written parental permission. Consult the school Principal or Special Education Coordinator for more information.

Confidentiality

If a child is referred for SST and/or a screening is conducted, a written record, directly related to the child, is maintained by ICS West. These records are personally identifiable to your child. Identifiable information includes the child’s name, parents or other family members, the address, a list of characteristics, attendance records, and a record of the presented concerns. ICS West protects the confidentiality of a child’s identifiable information and is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of these records.

ICS West may gather information regarding the child’s physical, mental, emotional, and health functioning through testing and assessment, observation of the child, as well as through a review of records made available to ICS West through healthcare providers or service agencies. ICS West may request a release of records from the parent for additional information regarding the health, physical, and emotional health of a child in order to proceed with screening or evaluation. ICS West may require a physician to provide a consent for a child to be evaluated by ICS West or its contracted agents if a physical, mental, or other health requirement is so severe that ICS West deems it warranted to acquire such consent from a medical professional before conducting screening or evaluation.

Parents of the child have rights regarding the confidentiality of these records. The right to inspect and review the educational records related to his/her child that are collected, maintained, or used by ICS West. ICS West will comply with a request to review the records. Parental consent must be obtained before ICS West is able to disclose these records to anyone outside of ICS West, unless the records are requested via a court mandate. ICS West may disclose records without consent to another school district or school in which the child is seeking intent to enroll.

The records and documents that are part of the evaluation and screening process are confidential and protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). School districts, intermediate units, and charter schools maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under FERPA. The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees who have access to personally identifiable information. For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to FERPA. This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents.

More Information

For more information regarding a child’s disability, screening or evaluation procedure, related services, educational records, or general questions, please contact Fatimah Johnson, Special Education Coordinator, at 215-724-5600.
English as a Second Language Services

English as a Second Language (ESL) Services are provided to students who both speak a second language at home and require additional language support to be academically and socially successful in school. Services are determined based on specifically designed state testing, teacher input and ongoing assessments. Students who qualify for services receive pull-out (small group) or push-in (in-class) support based on grade level and individual needs. Independence Charter School works to ensure that parents have access to all school information, regardless of English language ability. Interpreters are provided for report card conferences and translations of important documents are sent to parents in a timely manner.

Parents who are concerned about their child's English language development or who would like to request that an interpreter be present at a teacher meeting or other school function should contact Tiia Reinvald, ESL Teacher, at tjiar@icswest.org

Guidance Counseling Services

Children’s mental health affects success in school. ICS West recognizes that when children are content and at ease, they are best able to concentrate and be active, effective learners. If children are feeling anxious, angry, or upset, their ability to focus on academics is compromised.

Here are some of the ways the counselor at ICS West can support and serve your child and family:

- Respond to requests from ICS West staff and parents for consultation regarding students’ emotional well-being as it relates to school success
- Intervene in situations of student conflict, potential bullying, etc.
- Identify community services and supports for students and families as situations arise
- Design and execute individual and small group intervention sessions in areas of need such as bullying, divorce, death and grief, trauma, etc.
- Design and execute in-classroom sessions on various topics such as bullying, health, crisis response, etc.

We encourage you to contact Keisha Robinson, school counselor at keishar@icswest.org if you have any questions, needs, or concerns about your child at Independence Charter School West. Your concerns might include changes in your family, stress in your home, a sudden shift in your child’s behavior, your child’s peer relationships, or parenting support.

Student Success Team

ICS West implements school wide interventions for academics and behavior using high quality differentiated classroom instruction and management across all students. If an individual student is still struggling to meet their grade level expectations, more targeted support might be required. In order to create additional interventions to assist a particular student, the school will hold a Student Success Team (SST) meeting.

The SST members work collaboratively with classroom teachers to identify and remove barriers that might be interfering with a child’s success in school. SST members include the child’s teacher(s), family, school counselor, nurse, and other support specialists and administrators. The team meets to review data about the student, then develops and implements a support plan that will better assist the student. Progress monitoring often reveals that students make adequate improvement over time and eventually reach their grade level expectations.
### Community Resources

Contact our ICS West counselor for additional resources in our community.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>After School Programs - Child Care - Family Resources</th>
<th>Phone Number - Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>After School Activities Partnership</strong>&lt;br&gt;Search by neighborhood to find after school programs</td>
<td>215-545-ASAP (2727)&lt;br&gt;www.phillyasap.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Care Information Services of Philadelphia</strong>&lt;br&gt;Information on child care in the greater Philadelphia area</td>
<td>1-888-461-KIDS (5437)&lt;br&gt;www.philadelphiachildcare.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philadelphia Department of Recreation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Information on city-run recreation and after school programs</td>
<td>215-683-3600&lt;br&gt;www.phila.gov/recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cap4Kids</strong>&lt;br&gt;Website that connects families with social service agencies and resources in Philadelphia</td>
<td>cap4kids.org/philadelphia/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police Athletic League of Philadelphia</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free youth program featuring sports, education and trips for children age 6 to 18</td>
<td>215-291-9000&lt;br&gt;www.phillypal.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turning Points for Children</strong>&lt;br&gt;Local social service agency that offers many support programs for families</td>
<td>215-875-8200&lt;br&gt;www.turningpointsforchildren.org</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Family and Mental Health - Human Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bureau of State Child Support Enforcement&lt;br&gt;For information about the child support process in Pennsylvania</th>
<th>1-800-932-0211</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ChildLine (State Child Abuse Registry)</strong></td>
<td>1-800-932-0313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Provides health insurance to uninsured children &amp; teens who are not eligible for Medical Assistance</td>
<td>1-800-986-KIDS&lt;br&gt;www.chipcoverspakids.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Behavioral Health</strong>&lt;br&gt;Services for behavioral health, counseling and other mental health services</td>
<td>1-800-545-2500&lt;br&gt;dbhids.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Legal Services</strong>&lt;br&gt;Free legal services to low-income Philadelphia residents</td>
<td>215-981-3700&lt;br&gt;www.clsphila.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Human Services</strong>&lt;br&gt;Works to protect children from abuse, neglect and delinquency; and to strengthen families by enhancing community-based prevention services</td>
<td>215-683-4DHS&lt;br&gt;www.phila.gov/dhs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Choices Hotline</strong>&lt;br&gt;For information about Medicaid managed care programs</td>
<td>1-800-440-3989&lt;br&gt;1-800-618-4225 (TTD/TTY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home &amp; Community Based Services</strong>&lt;br&gt;For information about programs to help persons with disabilities</td>
<td>1-800-757-5042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Mental Health / Mental Retardation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Information on MH/MR services in Philadelphia for families in crisis</td>
<td>215-685-6440&lt;br&gt;dbhids.org/divisions/omh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents Involvement Network of Pennsylvania (PIN)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Network for families of children with emotional or behavioral disorders, receiving mental health system devices, receiving special education services or are in the juvenile justice system</td>
<td>1-800-688-4226&lt;br&gt;215-751-1800&lt;br&gt;dbhids.us/parents-involved-network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statewide Adoption Network</strong></td>
<td>1-800-585-SWAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Public Welfare Helpline</strong>&lt;br&gt;For general information about Pennsylvania’s public assistance programs – cash assistance, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Liheap, etc.</td>
<td>1-800-692-7462&lt;br&gt;1-800-451-5996 (TDD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homework Guidelines

Our homework guidelines are designed to:
- Clarify homework expectations for teachers, parents, and students
- Promote continuity and consistency of homework practices throughout the school
- Foster positive attitudes about and experiences with homework

Purpose of Homework

ICS West teachers assign homework to promote strong study habits. The amount of homework given, as well as the responsibility placed on students to complete the homework, increases as students move up in grade level and begin preparing for high school.

Homework provides students with an opportunity to reinforce skills taught in school. Homework provides families with an opportunity to see what children are working on in class and whether their child has mastered grade-level skills.

Duration of Homework

Daily reading enrichment at home is a vital part of your child’s long-term success in school. ICS West expects that all students at all grade levels are reading at home independently or with a family member for at least twenty minutes every day. In general, families can expect that additional homework beyond these 20 minutes of reading should take about as long as the times below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These times align with recommendations by the National PTA and National Education Association. Please note that teachers are not required to assign homework every night. Rather, our teachers will strive to assign meaningful work that complements classroom learning. Sometimes a student might have more homework, for example when preparing for a test or completing a project.

Problems with Homework

Homework should be designed to meet the individual needs of students. Homework is not intended to be a burden on families, nor is it intended to be unduly difficult or stressful for students. If your child is struggling to complete homework, please contact your child’s teacher so that he or she can work with you to establish homework expectations that best meets your child’s needs.
Academic Integrity

As stated in our Code of Conduct, at ICS West we respect the rights, person and property of others. This framework applies to academic integrity as well as social integrity.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is claiming someone else’s words and/or ideas as one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include (but are not limited to):

- copying another student’s work (test answers, homework assignment, classwork, computer files, etc.) and submitting as your own
- working on an assignment with another student and then submitting the assignment as if the student completed it individually
- quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another person’s words (from a book, article, speech, other source) and not crediting that source
- copying words from an Internet source and not crediting that source
- using another’s wording or phrase, paraphrasing another’s argument and submitting in, in part or in its entirety, as one’s own
- falsifying documentation of a source (Bibliography/Works Cited sources falsely listed)

Our Responsibility

ICS West teachers are responsible for teaching the ethical foundation and skills necessary for appropriate documentation to maintain academic integrity. In turn, we are setting the expectation that all Middle School students, once taught this skill set, are responsible for appropriate documentation of the ideas and words of other people.

Consequences for Plagiarizing

5th Grade and Trimesters 1 & 2 of 6th Grade:

- Teacher contacts parent within one day of acknowledgement of plagiarism
- Teacher ensures student understanding of expected skills and behaviors and reteaches if necessary
- Student resubmits assignment with necessary changes within 5 calendar days of teacher acknowledgment of plagiarism for a grade not to exceed 70%. If student does not resubmit assignment within 5 calendar days, he or she receives a grade of “0” for the assignment
- Teacher notifies Principal

Trimester 3 of 6th Grade, and 7th and 8th Grades:

- Teacher contacts parent within one day of acknowledgement of plagiarism
- Teacher ensures student understanding of expected skills and behaviors
- Student resubmits assignment within 3 calendar days of teacher acknowledgment of plagiarism for a grade not to exceed 60%. If student does not resubmit assignment within 3 calendar days, he or she receives a grade of “0” for the assignment
- Teacher notifies Principal

If a student repeatedly plagiarizes, the student could be subject to more serious consequences as outlined in the ICS West Code of Conduct.
Assessment

Philosophy
Assessment at ICS West is intended to support learning. We assess in order to further educate, not simply to document strengths and weaknesses. Our approach to teaching and assessment must address learners’ diversity while also promoting a high level of excellence. In practice, assessment must be continuous, diverse, and transparent. Our approach to assessment must be designed to support emotional as well as academic development. Assessments provide information about ability and current level of understanding, monitor progress toward learning goals, guide future teaching and learning and address diverse learning needs.

- **Assessment** is the gathering and reviewing of data. Teachers assess student learning on an ongoing basis.
- **Evaluation** is the judging of that data.
- **Reporting** is communication of the final evaluation.

Lower School: Grades K-4 Report Cards

The purpose of ICS West K-4 report cards is to accurately describe to parents their child’s academic and social learning performance. Students in grades K-4 receive a standards-based report card. Standards describe what a student should know and be able to do at each grade level. Standards-based report cards communicate to parents and guardians the progress their child is making towards mastering ICS West standards.

Middle School: Grades 5-8 Evaluation and Reporting Guidelines

Students in grades 5-8 receive report cards which outline the letter grades assigned in every content area in which they have a class. The following guidelines explain the way these grades are determined. *Note: There could be extenuating circumstances which might require exceptions to the guidelines listed below. Those situations will be reviewed and decided on a case-by-case basis.*

Each middle school content area has its own uniform policy for the composition of grades with the following guidelines:

- Homework will not comprise more than 15% of the final grade and will be entered into MMS within one week of assignment deadline.
- Tests will not comprise more than 30% of the final grade and will be entered into MMS within one week of assessment.
- Participation will comprise exactly 10% of the final grade and will be entered into MMS within one week of assessment (at least four times per trimester).
- Parent signatures may not contribute to any points either added or subtracted from an assessment grade.

Major Assignments:

- A rubric will be distributed to parents and students when a major project is introduced that clearly outlines the project expectations and due dates.
- All major projects will include at least two check-ins and parents will be notified when a student misses two check-ins or after the first check-in if there are only two for the project.
• Project grading will use the following guidelines:
  o Timelines will account for 20% of the final grade. Late assignments can earn a maximum of 80%.
  o In grades 5 and 6, final assignments submitted more than 5 calendar days past the due date will receive a “0” for the final project grade. In grades 7 and 8, assignments submitted 2 calendar days past the due date will receive a “0” for the final project grade.
  o Check-ins will be accepted no more than one day late. Late check-in grades will be reduced by 20%.
  o Students with special needs (IEPs, 504 plans, ELL) might have a modified timeline. These modifications will be determined in advance of the deadline.
  o Students who are absent on the day a major assignment is due are expected to hand in the assignment the day they arrive back at school. They will not be penalized due to the absence.
  o Grade will be entered into MMS within **two weeks** of assignment deadline.

• Any students (excluding students who submitted a late project) who wish to improve their final grade will have a one-week grace period during which they can work with the teacher to improve the grade. Teacher office hours will take place during the students’ lunch period. This grade will not exceed 80%. A good faith effort to complete the project to his/her best ability is expected from any student who makes use of the available supports during this grace period.

**Homework Assignments:**

• Homework assignments will be accepted no more than one day late. Late homework assignments will be reduced by 20%.

• Students who are absent on the day a homework assignment is due are expected to hand in their work the day they arrive back at school. They will not be penalized due to the absence.

**Report Card Conferences**

The report card conference provides an opportunity for families and teachers to discuss the academic and social progress of students. It is, therefore, required that all parents attend parent-teacher conferences in order to fully participate as partners in their child’s academic and social success.
**Middle School Signature Practices**

**Arrival Procedures**

Entering the Room

- Students have three minutes to transition from one classroom to the next.
- Teachers greet each student individually and ensure that everyone is calm before entering the class.
- Teachers may use this time to take attendance, check for homework, or remind students about class procedures and expectations.

Homework Collection

- All teachers collect homework at the beginning of class.
- Students should take out work when they arrive to class and place it in the middle or front of the table.
- Teachers might check homework for completion and then return to students to use during the class period or teachers might collect the homework to grade and return later.

Warm-Up

- There will be a warm-up prompt displayed (in the same place every day).
- The prompt will be worded such that students can get started without explanation, directions or questions.
- Warm-ups can include (but are not limited to):
  - Independent Reading
  - Journaling / writing prompts
  - Writing about a topic about to be covered (accessing prior knowledge)
  - Writing about a topic recently covered (assessment)
  - Problem of the day
  - Collecting opinions from students
  - Addressing current events
  - Vocabulary work

**Student Planners**

Students receive planners each year and are taught how to enter items into their planners. This practice helps to build time-management and organization skills. Students will be provided time to write down any assignments, homework, or reminders in each class period. If there is no homework for a particular class, students should write “no HW” in the appropriate box in the planner.

Teachers will stamp, sign or initial each student’s planner after the student has copied the homework or written “no HW” in the appropriate box. This lets the parents know whether the student has appropriately copied the assigned work for that day. If there is no signature, then the student may not have properly listed the assignments. Parents should review the planner with their children and sign that they have seen the assignments, homework or reminders written in the planner. This system helps parents know if their children are completing all required work and informs teachers that parents are reviewing the work. Parents should encourage their children to use their planners regularly and review them frequently in order to stay organized and up-to-date.
Daily Agenda

The plan for each lesson or teaching period is posted in a consistent location. This practice allows students, visitors, support staff, and teachers to keep track of what has already happened and what is coming up next in a class period.

Study Skills

Prior to all major assessments, teachers will schedule review sessions. During these review sessions teachers will:

- Inform students about the content that will be covered on the assessment and the format of the assessment.
- Lead students through creating a study guide. Example: Use a “cover and quiz” strategy. Answers can be covered by the students (using flash cards or folder paper) so that they can quiz themselves or each other.
- Provide time in class for students to quiz themselves independently, in partners, or in groups.
- Teach a variety of study methods and encourage students to use them at home in order to continue preparing for the assessment.
- Have students write a study reminder in their planners. Students will have already written the test reminder on the appropriate date in their planner well ahead of time.

Book Lending

Reading is one of the most important aspects of a child’s education. It is a skill that is constantly reinforced in school and one that requires limitless practice at home as well. To that end, teachers are sending students home with books that belong to the school. Students should be reading these books as per their assignments both to foster their reading skills and to keep up with classwork.

In order to continue allowing children to take these books home, it is imperative that students return their borrowed books to school. We can only maintain the lending system as long as we have books to lend. Therefore, if a student loses or damages a book, he or she will be responsible to pay the school the face value of the book so that we may replace it in our lending library. When your child brings a book home, please help him or her keep track of it so that it can be returned to the school when it is due. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for helping us to foster a love of reading in all our students.
**Code of Conduct**

**Core Beliefs and Framework**

We know that a child’s educational experiences help to lay a foundation for future successes. We also understand that an effective instructional program requires an orderly environment in which students and faculty know and abide by reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior while respecting the rights, person and property of others. This framework also helps parents and guardians support their child’s success. Therefore, Independence Charter School will focus on building communities within each classroom, each grade level and schoolwide through the use of both Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs.

Responsive Classroom, used in grades K-4, is an educational approach that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. It consists of practical strategies and daily routines for helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies. Similarly, Developmental Designs, used in grades 5-8, supports high academic achievement for middle-level students through the integration of social and academic learning and an emphasis on good relationships, social skills, and engagement with learning. Independence Charter School West believes that students learn best in a positive social environment.

Independence Charter School West will heed best practices for addressing behavioral challenges and ensure a cordial and professional environment for all children and staff members. These include Restorative Practices and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Additionally, in lieu of suspensions, ICS West will favor a policy of *Parental Engagement and Support*, where the parent is required to remain with student throughout the course of an entire school day, to help encourage appropriate behavior.

**CARES**

ICS West aims to create an environment that will foster Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self-Control (*CARES*). Students begin each day with a Morning Meeting (grades K-4) or a Circle of Power and Respect (CPR, grades 5-8). Morning Meeting and CPR help to foster *CARES* through a greeting, activity, sharing and daily message. These community routines build and maintain community within each classroom.

Teachers focus on fostering classroom organization and creating clear expectations about daily routines. Teachers model and practice all expectations with students. The entire ICS West staff focuses on consistent follow-through. Teaching and enforcing clear and consistent daily routines makes students feel safe and prevents disciplinary problems.

Child development is taken into account when choosing effective and appropriate consequences for students. This means that because developmental levels vary greatly in the earlier grades, discretion is used when working with our early childhood students (K-2). Sometimes, students in this age group will receive modified or more gradual consequences as we work with them to build the skills needed for self-control and responsibility.

**Community Guidelines**

Students begin each year by brainstorming and creating their hopes & dreams (HDs, grades K-4) or goals & declarations (GDs, grades 5-8) for the year. Students then share their HDs/GDs with classmates and teachers. Students discuss the connection between these HDs/GDs and classroom guidelines. As a group, each class then creates classroom guidelines that help them achieve the HDs/GDs they have shared. Classes connect how their classroom guidelines align with ICS’s global citizenship statements and school rules.
Once every classroom has developed a list of 3-5 guidelines for a classroom social contract, all students are responsible for upholding these guidelines. If a student does not comply with guidelines he/she will be expected to discuss and solve the situation with the help of a supervising adult. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the student may also serve a logical consequence. Please see *Minor & Major Infractions* section of *Code of Conduct*. 
Family Involvement

The Independence Charter School West community consists of teachers, non-teaching staff, administrators, students and families. Families are an integral part of a child’s education. We welcome your participation in the classroom and the school community. Students take pride in a school when they see their families and teachers working side by side to create an optimal learning environment. We look forward to working with you at community service events, parent-teacher conferences, field trips and PTA meetings.

Because ICS West is a school of choice, we know that families have made the important decision to send their children to a school with the highest standards for student behavior and achievement. It is thus expected that families will attend all scheduled parent/teacher conferences and school-requested meetings (academic or behavioral).

Positive Recognition, Redirection, and Reinforcement

Independence Charter School West believes that students learn best in a positive and supportive environment. ICS West staff will use language that is clear, simple and direct in recognition, redirection and reinforcement. The language will be genuine and respectful to all members of the ICS West community, showing faith in an individual’s abilities and potential. At ICS West, students celebrate their academic and social achievements throughout the year. Celebrations occur frequently and in various settings. These celebrations may be as a school, grade, class, or individuals, or with a bus cohort. All students will have the privilege of participating in these celebrations by upholding their responsibilities as outlined in the ICS West Community Guidelines.

Acceptable Use of Technology for Students, Faculty, Staff and Subcontractors

The use of technology by students, employees, or subcontractors of Independence Charter School is a privilege, not a right. Technology users are expected and required to avoid actions that are dishonest, unkind (such as personal attacks and invasion of privacy), invasive, illegal (such as libel, slander, vandalism, sexual harassment, theft, unauthorized access) or in other ways inappropriate. The guidelines and prohibited actions described in this policy apply to any use of the Independence Charter network to interact with any other websites, including all social networking platforms. In addition, use of technology in negative or derogatory ways may be in violation of other school policies and rules of conduct including but not limited to harassment, off-campus behavior, and/or alcohol and other drug policies.

Rules for Technology Use

- The use of the school’s technology resources is for academic and school-related purposes only. Personal electronic devices may not be used while on school grounds. Students maintain the responsibility for properly securing their property. Electronic devices, including earbuds/earphones, which are used on school property will be confiscated. For the first offense, the student may retrieve items from the Assistant Principal at the end of the day. For the subsequent offenses, a parent or guardian must pick it up.

- Student cell phones may not be seen or heard in the building at any time. This includes texting in any form at any time. Cell phones which are seen or heard will be confiscated and may be retrieved at the end of the day for the first offense. For the second offense, a parent or guardian must pick it up. If the problem continues or if the student refuses to hand in the device, the situation will be handled by the Principal.
• Students in grades 5-8 are issued email accounts at the beginning of the school year. No student may reveal over the Internet, in any form, the personal information or picture/image of a current or former student, administrator, faculty or staff member, or parent. Network and email passwords may not be shared with classmates in school, nor outside of school in any form. If a parent/guardian does NOT wish for their child to have an email account, please sign in the designated area on the Parent and Student Handbook Signature Page.

• Students may not access network files other than their own unless given permission by either the teacher or administrator.

• Students may not create or share videos or images of other students or staff unless given permission by a supervising adult.

• Every message sent represents the individual and the school, and thus must follow our code of civility. Personal issues or interpersonal conflicts may not be handled via email. Assume that email is not confidential, since email you send can be sent to others. School staff has access to all student email accounts.

• Students must receive permission from a staff member or administrator before sending unsolicited email to a group of more than 20 people.

**Consequences for Improper Technology Use**

Minor technology offenses include:

- Visiting a website or using an application not related to the work assigned
- Carrying or moving computer equipment improperly or unsafely

Consequences for minor technology offenses include:

- First offense - Loss of computer equipment for remainder of class, possible impact on participation grade
- Subsequent offenses - Loss of computer equipment for that class, family contacted, and discussion with Principal about additional consequences

Major technology offenses include:

- Attempting to damage or intentionally damaging computer equipment
- Visiting an inappropriate website
- Inappropriate comments made electronically in the classroom
- Cyber-bullying conducted in the classroom

Consequences for major offenses include:

- Loss of computer equipment for that class, possible impact on participation grade, family contacted
- Student and Principal plan a presentation for class regarding proper use of electronic equipment
- Other consequences as outlined in **Major Incidents and Consequences** may apply.
**Disciplinary Guidelines and Consequences**

Independence Charter School West has developed the following guidelines to guide the conduct of students, school employees/volunteers, and families. These guidelines expand upon the ICS West School Rules and will apply at all times that school is in session, during any school program or function, either in the building or at any other location, as well as during arrival and dismissal, and traveling to and from school. This includes travel on school district vehicles, private transportation and public transit systems.

**Schoolwide Discipline Policy**

Independence Charter School may discipline students for:

- Conduct during school
- Conduct going to and from school
- Conduct outside of school that disrupts school programs

**Minor Incidents and Consequences**

The table below outlines the possible consequences for various student behaviors. Examples of minor inappropriate behavior include, but are not limited to, those listed in the left-hand column. The right-hand column lists the possible consequences, all of which may apply to any of the listed behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior*</th>
<th>Possible Consequences*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(More than one consequence may be assigned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusing to Follow Directions</td>
<td>The following may apply to all behaviors listed in the column to the left:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking Back</td>
<td>Student may <em>Take a Break</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption of Class</td>
<td>Student may go to Buddy Room or <em>Take A Break Out and Back (TAB out and back)</em> and complete a <em>Fix-it Plan</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profanity/Offensive Language</td>
<td>Student will practice expected behavior with teacher and/or peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress Code Violation</td>
<td>Mediation may occur between all participants. This will include a chance to “fix”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of Property (minor)</td>
<td>relationships or objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play-fighting/Roughhousing</td>
<td>Teacher may contact parent by phone (parent may be asked to speak with the student),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Arguments</td>
<td>note in take home folder or by email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunting/Instigating</td>
<td>Student may lose a privilege (such as loss of dress down day/free time, recess detention, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of Technology</td>
<td>Student may be given a behavior assignment to be completed at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing (minor)</td>
<td>Parent meeting may be requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tantrums (K-1)</td>
<td>Student may be given in-school community service to “fix” relationships or objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Display of Affection</td>
<td>Student may be assigned an After-School Detention or Delayed Dismissal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewing Gum</td>
<td>Repeated violations may result in a Discipline Referral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late to Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism/Cheating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*3rd - 8th grade students must arrive to class on time. After 3 late arrivals, a parent will be notified and a detention will be assigned. For every 3rd late arrival after that, a Wednesday School will be assigned. If late arrivals continue, a parent meeting will be scheduled.
If a minor behavior continues, it will be considered a **Major Incident** (see below) and one or more of the following may happen:

- A parent conference may be requested by the classroom teacher and the Principal may be present.
- A behavior chart/plan may be put into place. This is a temporary plan and will include frequent guardian meetings and daily teacher/guardian contact.
- Parent conference may be requested, and other ICS West team members (teachers, counselor, administration) may be present.

### Major Incidents and Consequences

The table below outlines the possible consequences for various major student behaviors. Examples of major inappropriate behavior include, but are not limited to, those listed in the left-hand column. The right-hand column lists the possible consequences, all of which may apply to any of the listed behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Possible Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated Minor Violations</td>
<td>The following may apply to all behaviors listed in the column to the left:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe/Intentional Disruption of Class</td>
<td>The student may be immediately removed from the classroom and sent to the Principal’s office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving Classroom/School Grounds without</td>
<td>Student may discuss and practice expected behavior with the Principal and/or teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission</td>
<td>Mediation may be held for all participants. This will include a chance to “fix” relationships or objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation</td>
<td>Parent may be called by the Principal. Parent may be asked to speak with the student at the time of the call to discuss the behavior and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Harassment</td>
<td>A letter, documenting the incident, may be given to the parent. Parent is expected to sign and return the letter on the next school day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>Student may lose a privilege.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Threats</td>
<td>Student may be given an assignment to be done at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangering Self or Others</td>
<td>Student may be given after-school community service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction or Theft of Property (major)</td>
<td>Student may be assigned an After-School Detention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent Exposure/</td>
<td>Student may be assigned a Wednesday School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Touching</td>
<td>Student may be assigned an In-School Suspension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profanity Directed at Adult</td>
<td>Student may be sent home. Parent will be asked to come to school and take the student home within one and-a-half hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault on Student</td>
<td>Student may be suspended out of school between 1 and 3 days, not including the day of the incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault on Staff</td>
<td>Student may be assigned Reverse Suspension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Parent meeting may be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of a Weapon</td>
<td>Student may be placed on Behavioral Probation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possession of Illegal Substance</td>
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If a major behavior continues, it will be considered an **Incident Qualifying for Expulsion** (see below) and the student may be brought to the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing.

ICS West will consider the facts of each case in determining whether expulsion should be an option.

**Incidents Qualifying for Expulsion**

Expulsion may be considered when a student displays an inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Any criminal conduct as defined by Pennsylvania Law.</td>
<td>Student will be escorted to the Principal’s office.</td>
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<td>Assulting any person, as an individual or as a group</td>
<td>Parent/Guardian will be notified immediately.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attempting to engage or engaging in any conduct that</td>
<td>Parent/Guardian will be asked to pick their child up immediately.</td>
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<td>threatens the health, welfare or safety of any member of the school</td>
<td>Student will be suspended from Independence Charter School West until a full</td>
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<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>evidentiary hearing on the expulsion of the student can be held before</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the Board of Trustees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol</td>
<td>Independence Charter School West may call the Department of Human Services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possession of tobacco or alcohol product</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possession of over the counter medication, look alike drugs and/or drug</td>
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<tr>
<td>paraphernalia</td>
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<td>Possession of any weapon, but not limited to, any knife, pocket knife,</td>
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<td>Swiss army knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm,</td>
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<tr>
<td>shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of</td>
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<td>inflicting serious bodily injury (as specified by Act 26 on following</td>
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<tr>
<td>pages)</td>
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<td>Repeated behaviors as defined under Major Incidents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any item brought or used with the intent to cause harm</td>
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<tr>
<td>(as specified by Act 26 on following page)</td>
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**Restraints**

The use of restraints is a last resort by professionally trained staff only and when all other protocol and interventions have been maximized.
Act 26 – Pennsylvania Law

24 P.S. § 13-1317.2. Possession of weapons prohibited (a.k.a. “Act 26”)

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a school district or area vocational-technical school shall expel, for a period of not less than one year, any student who is determined to have brought onto or is in possession of a weapon on any school property, any school-sponsored activity or any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity.

(b) Every school district and area vocational-technical school shall develop a written policy regarding expulsions for possession of a weapon as required under this section. Expulsions shall be conducted pursuant to all applicable regulations.

(c) The superintendent of a school district or an administrative director of an area vocational-technical school may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirements for a student on a case-by-case basis. The superintendent or other chief administrative officer of a school entity shall, in the case of an exceptional student, take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Public Law 91-230, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.).

(d) The provisions of this section shall not apply to the following:

- (1) a weapon being used as part of a program approved by a school by an individual who is participating in the program; or
- (2) a weapon that is unloaded and is possessed by an individual while traversing school property for the purpose of obtaining access to public or private lands used for lawful hunting, if the entry on school premises is authorized by school authorities.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the authority or duty of a school or area vocational-technical school to make an alternative assignment or provide alternative educational services during the period of expulsion.

- (e.1) A school district receiving a student who transfers from a public or private school during a period of expulsion for an act or offense involving a weapon may assign that student to an alternative assignment or provide alternative education services, provided that the assignment may not exceed the period of expulsion.

(f) All school districts and area vocational-technical schools shall report all incidents involving possession of a weapon prohibited by this section as follows:

- (1) The school superintendent or chief administrator shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this section to local law enforcement officials.
- (2) The school superintendent or chief administrator shall report to the Department of Education all incidents relating to expulsions for possession of a weapon on school grounds, school-sponsored activities or public conveyances providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity. Reports shall include all information as required under section 1303-A. [FN1]

(g) As used in this section, the term “weapon” shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.


Bullying and Cyberbullying

The Independence Charter School West Board of Trustees (the Board) is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying in any form by students.

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or member of the school community, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside the school that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of disrupting the educational process or creating a reasonable apprehension or such disruption by:

1. Interfering with a student’s education by creating an intimidating or hostile environment;
2. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
3. Damaging, extorting or taking a student’s personal property;
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
5. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, employee, or other member of the Independence Charter School community by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site posting (including blogs and other forms of social media).

Any reprisals or retaliations associated with a report of bullying or cyberbullying will be defined as bullying.

The terms “bullying” and “cyberbullying” shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student’s rights to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

School setting means in the school, or school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by school students.

The Board encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to a school employee.

The Board directs that the complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, to the extent possible and consistent with the district’s legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Principal or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of other students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying.

Students shall be encouraged to report bullying or cyber bullying complaints to Independence Charter School West employees.

The CEO or Principal or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.
The CEO or Principal or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.

The CEO shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:

1. Board’s Bullying Policy,
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

The content of the Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy should be outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook, which shall be disseminated annually to students and parents/guardians.

**Complaint Procedures**

1. A student shall report a complaint of bullying or cyberbullying, orally or in writing, to any School employee.
2. The School employee will investigate the alleged conduct that conduct that occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, written documentation must be submitted to the CEO.
3. The School employee may ask assistance from other School District employees in the investigation process.
4. After the investigation, the CEO shall be notified in writing of the complaint and the results of the investigation and shall take corrective action to ensure that the conduct ceases.
5. The CEO or designee will inform parents of the victim and person accused of the results of the investigation.

**Education**

The School may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Conduct.

**Recording and Reporting of Behaviors**

Independence Charter School West records behavioral incidents and the resulting outcomes. These records are then kept in a locked filing cabinet. At any time, a parent or guardian may request their child’s behavioral record. The request must be written and may be addressed to the Principal. The request will take between 24 and 48 hours to process. The parent or guardian must then come to the school to pick-up the records, as records will not be mailed or delivered via student backpacks.

The parent/guardian does have the right to appeal any information in the student behavioral record. To appeal the factual information (this is different from disagreeing with the decision), please write a letter addressed to: The Disciplinary Committee of the Board of Trustees. Mail or deliver the letter to the Principal. This letter will then be forwarded to the ICS West disciplinary committee. Parents will be contacted by the committee within 48 hours regarding their appeal.

All records will be altered to protect the privacy of other students involved.
### Definitions of Code of Conduct Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act 26</td>
<td>Pennsylvania State Code referring to a weapons violation. Please see a copy of Act 26 on the previous page and Act 30 (Safe Schools Act) in our ICS West Policies and Procedures Supplement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>(Simple) An unlawful attempt or threat to do physical harm to another. Assault is one sided. The victim does not or is not able to defend themselves with enough force to prevent harm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Aggravated) Assault with a weapon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Probation</td>
<td>When a student is placed on behavioral probation the following will take place immediately: The student will be placed on a behavior plan/contract which will require weekly check-in meetings with parents and student daily check ins with the Assistant Principal. The behavioral plan will be revisited monthly during the time a student is on Behavioral Probation. It is expected that student behavior will improve significantly and with consistency. If there are additional behavioral incidents during this period, the student may be brought to the Board of Trustees for expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During this time, students will not be able to attend class field trips without their parents or guardians present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student behavior will be tracked and monitored on a daily basis. Each student will be required to have a behavioral form completed and signed by each of his/her teachers daily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddy Room (K-4) or Take-A-Break Out and Back (5-8)</td>
<td>If a student continues to be disruptive or is agitated in a classroom Take a Break they will go to the Buddy Room (K-4) or Take A Break Out and Back (TAB-Out and Back, 5-8). This is a classroom where the student will Take a Break without the distraction of their classroom peers. This will be a silent Take a Break. The student will be expected to quietly sit in the Take a Break spot without disrupting the class. If the student continues to be disruptive, they will immediately come to the Principal’s office and may be sent home depending on the severity of the infraction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>To hurt or intimidate other people in a repeating and patterned manner. Bullying includes: physical or verbal aggression toward a person and/or their belongings causing social alienation and intimidation. Bullying usually includes an imbalance of power. This includes taking or playing “keep away” with another person’s belongings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>To violate rules dishonestly. The consequence may include one or more of the following: loss of grade for the academic activity, loss of grade for the semester (grades 5th- 8th), mandatory summer school, or suspension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention</td>
<td>Consequence that may be assigned by the Principal or a teacher for repeated minor incidents and/or a major incident. The Principal will contact parents 24 hours in advance to inform them about the detention. Parents must arrange transportation for the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline Referral Form</td>
<td>Form used by staff to record major or repeated minor behavioral incidents (see major incidents table). When a student is sent to the Principal’s office, they will be accompanied by a Discipline Referral Form. Parent or guardian will be contacted within 48 hours of the incident. A copy of the discipline referral form is available from the Principal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Dress Code Violation** | Any student in grades 3-8 who does not arrive to school in the approved ICS West Dress Code, and/or does not comply with the Dress Code throughout the length of the school day will receive a logical consequence, such as losing future dress down day privileges. If the student continues to dress out of code, a parent meeting will be required and the student may be sent home. **Please note that this consequence will not apply to students whose parents/guardians contact the school about special circumstances regarding the reason for the dress code violation.**

Certain clothing items worn in school in violation of the dress code will be confiscated. This item will be returned at a later time. These items include, but are not limited to: hoop earrings, hats, and jeans (worn under skirts). Sandals will also be confiscated (assuming alternate dress code compliant shoes are available). |
| **Expulsion** | Student is dismissed from the school permanently, unless otherwise stated, due to severe or repeated behaviors. **The student and parent have the right to be informed of the reasons for the movement toward expulsion and to respond to these reasons prior to the suspension taking effect.**

Parents and guardians of children who have been recommended for expulsion shall have the right to a full evidentiary hearing before the Board of Trustees of Independence Charter School West, at which time they may present their argument and evidence for not expelling the student. The expulsion hearing shall take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (BOT). If the next meeting of the BOT is more than three weeks from the date of the incident, the CEO or Principal shall call a special meeting of the BOT. The BOT shall take a roll call vote immediately at the close of the hearing. The decision of the BOT shall be final. The parent/guardian shall be notified of the hearing date in writing no less than ten (10) days before the date of the hearing.

**Please Note:** The LEA* shall decide expulsion for special education students as stated in IDEA laws and regulations, on a case-by-case basis.

*LEA=Local Education Agency. In Pennsylvania, charter schools are their own LEA. |
| **Extortion** | To obtain something by using threat or intimidation. |
| **Fight** | Taking part in a physical struggle. Both parties involved will receive consequences. Independence Charter School West does not allow “hitting back”. All students are taught that walking away and “telling a teacher” is the appropriate response to being hit. |
| **Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection** | An inappropriate public display of affection is defined as romantic physical contact such as, but not limited to hand holding, hugging, and kissing. Because inappropriate public displays of affection distract from the learning environment, students who engage in them may be subject to disciplinary measures. This policy will apply to students in grades 3-8. Age and circumstances will be taken into consideration when applying discipline measures for inappropriate public displays of affection. |
| **In-School Suspension** | Student will remain in the Counselor’s office for the duration of their suspension. During this time the student will complete all classroom work, work on additional behavioral assignments given by the Counselor and receive all homework. **Please Note:** The LEA shall decide suspension for Special Education students as stated in IDEA laws and regulations, on a case-by-case basis. |
| **Logical Consequence** | Defined (by Ruth Charney, Teaching Children to Care) as: reasonable and respectful, neither punishment nor permission. The consequence will help students assume responsibility through structured learning opportunities and the opportunity to try again. |
| **Out of Bounds** | To be away from the school, teacher or classroom without direct permission. All students must have a pass at all times to travel through the hallways during non-transitional periods. Consequences will be assigned on an individual basis and will depend on the reason for a student being out of bounds. |
| **Out-of-School Suspension** | Student will remain in the Counselor’s office on the day of the incident until the parent or guardian is able to pick them up. ICS West expects that the parent or guardian will arrive to the school within one and a half hours of the original phone call. The day of pick up does NOT count as a day of suspension. The student is responsible for completing all in class and all homework for the day(s) missed due to suspension. The student may also be responsible for completing any assignments given by the Principal.  

ALL PARENTS OR GUARDIANS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND REINSTATEMENT MEETING AS SCHEDULED, WITHOUT WHICH THE STUDENT WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO REENTER THE CLASSROOM. The student must arrive to school with the parent or guardian and will not be allowed into the classroom until the reinstatement meeting is finished.  

The student and parent have the right to be informed of the reasons for the suspension and to respond to them prior to the suspension taking effect. The parent has the right to immediate written notice of the suspension and when it exceeds three (3) school days, the school must offer to hold an informal hearing within the first five school days.  

**Please note:** The LEA shall decide suspension for Special Education students as stated in IDEA laws and regulations, on a case by case basis. |
| **Play Fighting / Rough-housing** | Taking part in aggressive physical play that simulates a fight. Play fighting is considered to be dangerous as students often become injured or the play fighting turns to a real fight. It is important to understand that for the safety of all students play fighting is not allowed under any circumstances.  

This would also include “Birthday Punches” and “Two-for-Flinching” type games. |
| **Reinstatement** | A meeting held to restore the student to active standing. If the reinstatement meeting is not held, the student may not return to school. Any student who returns to school without their parent or guardian will be sent to the Principal’s office and the parent or guardian will be contacted. |
| **Self Defense** | Self Defense applies only to those situations where a student could not walk away and/or get help from a teacher.  

*Self Defense is NOT reacting to being hit or kicked. ICS West does NOT condone “hitting back.” Students are taught to walk away and get help from a teacher.* |
| **Take a Break** | Every classroom has a designated Take a Break spot. All students are made aware of this spot at the beginning of the school year. Students know that they may ask to go to this spot in order to calm down or think about a situation. In some cases a teacher may instruct the student to go to the Take a Break spot. The student is expected to comply. |
| **Teasing** | To upset or annoy by taunting or making fun of another student. Teasing is a “one time” occurrence. Teasing that occurs on more than one occasion and/or becomes a patterned behavior is considered *bullying.* |
| **Under the Influence** | Having any detectible amount of alcohol or a controlled substance in your system and/or showing physical manifestations of being under the influence. |
Family Compact

Each family is required to return this sheet to classroom teacher. Teachers will return the signed sheets to the Principal.

**By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received the Independence Charter School West Family & Student Handbook and will read it thoroughly and keep it close at hand for future reference. By signing below, I am indicating that I agree to uphold the policies and codes listed within.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/Guardian’s Name PRINTED</th>
<th>Parent/Guardian’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Name PRINTED</td>
<td>Student’s Signature</td>
<td>Grade</td>
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</table>

If you have more than one child at ICS, please list the names of all children and have each child sign.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name PRINTED</th>
<th>Student’s Signature</th>
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