

FAMILY, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS LEADING
TO SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY

FACULTY HANDBOOK



Our responsibility is to teach students appropriate ways of behaving in order to have their needs met

(Revised May 2014)

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** is to integrate school, family and community in order to provide the highest quality academic and therapeutic programs. These programs are designed to enable students to become successful learners through a sense of belonging, mastery, generosity and independence.

OVERVIEW

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY (also referred to in this document as the "Company") was founded in 2006 to serve students in the Northwest suburbs who are in need of a supportive and therapeutic educational program. **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** utilizes educational, family and community connections to promote academic and emotional growth.

The staff at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** believes that all children can learn. Through the development of supportive, nurturing relationships and a structured environment, students are enabled to make academic progress and to learn the skills and behaviors necessary to succeed in public school or in less restrictive environments.

The students engage in an academically challenging curriculum emphasizing group instruction and hands-on activities. The problems that may arise during classroom activities are seen as opportunities to identify the issues that challenge the students, as well as opportunities for teaching and student growth. The staff uses a cognitively orientated, narrative, problem solving approach to help students stand up to and overcome the problem at hand. Students are engaged in practicing more successful behavioral alternatives. While students may experience the logical consequences to problem dominated behavior, the approach is always positive and non-punitive. **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** does not endorse the use of time out rooms, physical restraint or other aversive interventions. Rather than only using behavior modification techniques, such as points and level systems, the school also helps each student develop strategies to improve their educational achievement by being more successful at recognizing and conquering the problems that currently interfere with their performance.

The emphasis is on personal growth in the areas of belonging, mastery, generosity, independence and interest for learning.

OUR CORE BELIEFS

There are two basic areas of understanding that inform us and guide us in our interactions with our students and with each other as a staff. The first is THE CIRCLE OF COURAGE and the second is NARRATIVE PRACTICES. Both of these principles are described below.

CIRCLE OF COURAGE

The Circle of Courage represents four key principles of child-rearing that are consistent with emerging research in child development as well as in traditional Native American practices of shared responsibility for the raising of its young people. The circle is a symbol for creating an environment that maintains the essential needs of the students in our care. We understand these needs to be Belonging, Mastery, Generosity and Independence.

Why the Circle of Courage?

Belonging

- 1) *When students feel they belong to the community of the school they are motivated to act like they belong.*
- 2) *A felt sense of belonging to a positive, supportive community reduces the temptation to turn to a negative, exploitive group such as gangs, cults, etc.*
- 3) *Drawing young people into the circle as members motivates them to show respect and good will.*

Mastery

- 1) *A sense of mastery over one's environment is the foundation of self-esteem and helps motivate further desire for achievement.*
- 2) *Creating opportunities for success helps prevent frustration, anti-social behavior, passivity, and helplessness.*
- 3) *A belief in one's abilities in self-control, self-restraint, and social skills supports a self-image of competency and adequacy to face a challenging world.*

Generosity

- 1) *Generosity promotes that every member of the community bears some responsibility for the welfare of all others.*
- 2) *By promoting and giving opportunities for generosity, students become less callused by the daily violence of life on the street and the spoiled directionlessness of youth in prosperous suburbs.*
- 3) *Establishing a sense of generosity helps students expand outside their preoccupation with themselves and their present concerns to finding a place as a contributor to the larger community.*

Independence

- 1) *The promotion of responsible independence helps students gain confidence in their ability to make wise judgements and maintain adequate self-discipline.*
- 2) *Helping students explore the effects of their decisions on themselves, on others, and on the environment fosters a general responsibility and a bond that links individuals to their community.*
- 3) *By gradually granting increased independence in tandem with the exercise of self-control and good judgement students gain the freedom they desire without the need for reckless rebellion against authority.*

NARRATIVE PRACTICES

The second basic informing principle of our school is called Narrative Practices. Narrative is an explanation of how students' lives are influenced by the stories that demonstrate them. These stories guide how they act, think, feel, and make meaning out of their experiences. At **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**, we try to help students make visible the stories that have been negatively affecting their lives and their educational pursuits and, then, recreate those stories towards more preferred outcomes.

Why Narrative Practices?

- 1) *It is non-pathologizing. That is, it doesn't label people – it labels problems - and separates people from their problems so they can have a look at them and decide what to do about them.*
- 2) *It flattens the traditional therapeutic hierarchy. It honors the students' expert knowledge about their own lives and the problem, inviting a non-hierarchical team approach to problem management.*
- 3) *It is collaborative: It de-centers the therapist or treatment team and invites students to be continually a part of the problem description process as well as a participant in solution and intervention development.*
- 4) *It is very respectful: Both the student and treatment team are positioned to operate out of mutual respect and mutual cooperation. Respect is more likely inherent when people are not problems.*
- 5) *It is non-adversarial: Student and the treatment team are positioned to work together towards common goals. Conflicts of agenda and resistance positions are minimized.*
- 6) *This approach is natural and consistent with the human psychological structures of meaning making. Language, story and metaphor are easily understood and occur naturally in students' lives.*
- 7) *It is sensitive to cultural, social and gender differences in the student's world.*
- 8) *It is very practical. By keeping the focus on effective means to preferred outcomes, approaches are supported only when they produce results.*
- 9) *It is easy to use – simply put we:*
 - a) *separate the problem and name it;*
 - b) *point out its history of negative results;*
 - c) *examine the history of already occurring successes;*
 - d) *support the student's personal identifications in resistance to the problem.*

Students can learn to act in safe and appropriate ways through the positive guidance of nurturing adults

COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER AND FAMILIES

It is each faculty member's responsibility to keep communication between the team members open, honest and fluid. If at any time this process is not supporting our professionalism and the Circle of Courage in a productive manner, issues and/or concerns are to be brought up with the principal.

Each teacher and therapist is expected to have direct communication with each student's parent or guardian each week. The minimum is one direct phone contact per week for the teacher and therapist, as well as daily home notes. More frequent communication is advantageous....to report the good news ...as well as the concerns.

Family therapy is to take place, in person, at least one time per month. Phone contact does not substitute for family therapy minutes.

SPECIAL TREATMENT TECHNIQUES

The faculty of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** believes that development will progress as long as a child experiences love and affection, consistency of care, and a stimulating environment. If problem generated behavior or emotional disturbances become evident, a fourth element becomes necessary for normal development: a consistent cognitive/narrative restructuring to help the child learn the skills and behaviors (academic, social and emotional) necessary to succeed and thrive in the school environment.

During the school day, the staff identifies problem dominated situations for the student and explains, in non-confrontive ways, why the behavior is unsuccessful. They point out the negative effects of the problem on the student, suggest alternative behaviors and help the student practice them in nurturing and non-punitive interactions.

At times, the student's problems may persist in encouraging disruptive and disturbing behaviors. At such times, the student will be asked to leave the activity but remain in the proximity of the rest of the group while taking a "time out". If the behavior continues to disrupt the group, the student may be removed from the class, with a referral to the "Behavioral Intervention Services, or RIS" personnel. This behavior intervention specialist will be a person trained in crisis intervention, de-escalating conflict, and helping the student reconnect with more preferred behaviors.

Once calm, the child will discuss the problem with the staff member, identifying what the problem was as well as alternative ways it could have been handled. The child will then rejoin the class and follow through on any logical consequences to the problematic behavior.

If a student has been removed from class for 30 minutes without resolving the problem, the principal (or their designee) will be notified for consultation.

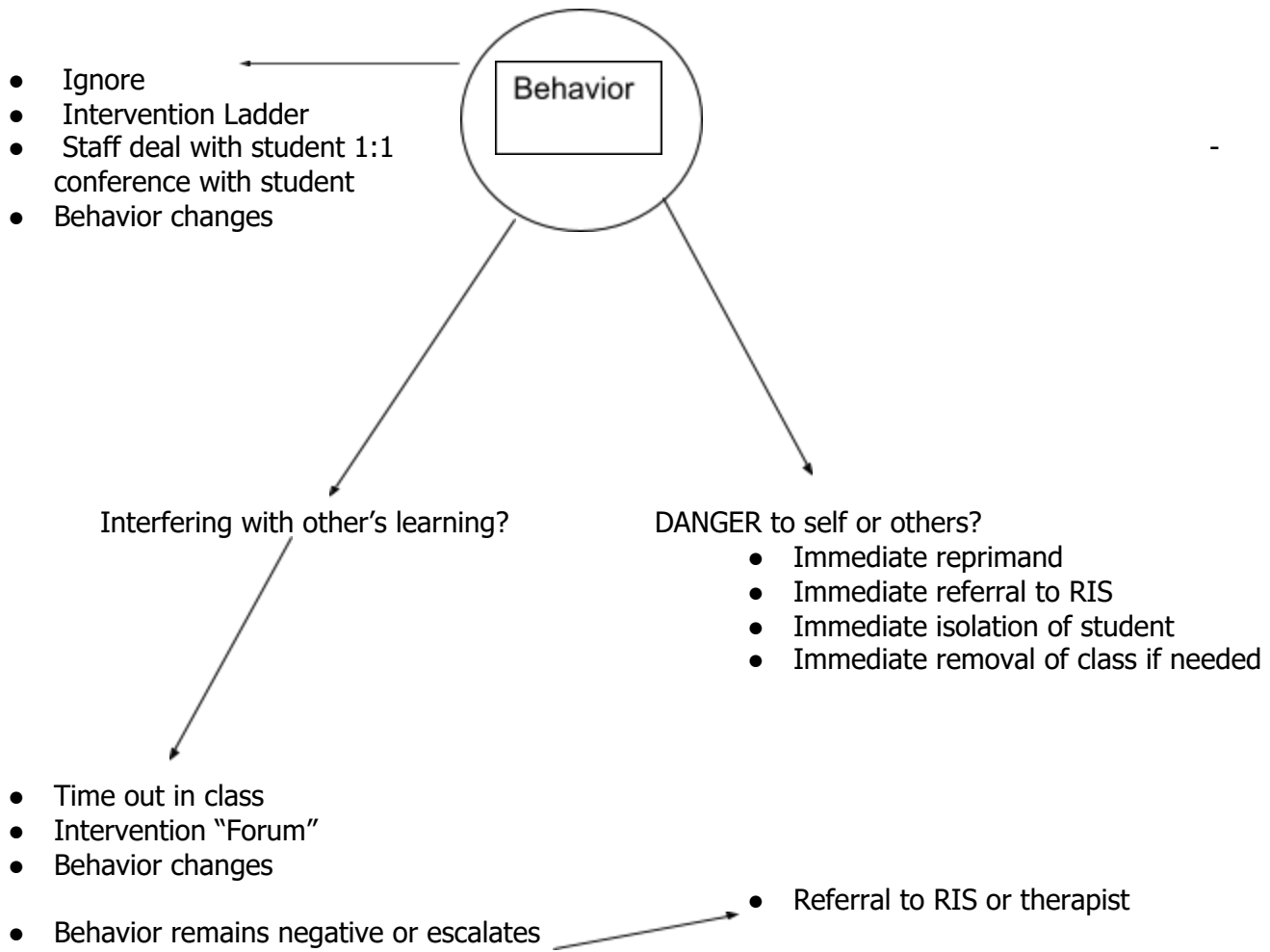
If a student is acting in a manner which indicates the possibility of physical confrontation, the staff will make every effort to remove the immediate stressor from the situation, telling the student he/she needs time to calm down. If there is a risk to other students, they will be taken to another area while the other staff attends to the potentially aggressive student.

With some students, it may be appropriate to engage in therapeutic "holding" to prevent injury to self or others. This involves physical holding of arms and/or legs, in a manner as unobtrusive as possible. The safety and dignity of the child, as well as the safety of peers and staff, is of paramount importance. Staff training in crisis prevention and non-violent intervention techniques is provided by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** and is required of all faculty members.

If a student is persisting in threatening harm to self or others the parents will be notified, a hospital assessment team may be asked to come in, and/or the police may be called to maintain safety for the student and the rest of the school. The involvement of the police will necessitate the careful assessment of whether this student is still appropriate for the open setting desired by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**. If it is determined that the student may resume attendance at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** a parent meeting will be held prior to the student rejoining school activities.

We do not endorse the use of time out rooms, physical or mechanical restraint or confrontive and punitive interventions. Students can learn to act in safe and appropriate ways through the positive guidance of nurturing adults.

EDUCATIONAL, THERAPEUTIC and BEHAVIORAL BALANCE and TEAMWORK



POINT SYSTEM

At **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** we use a point system which is designed to identify, label and motivate the use of positive behaviors. It is a system by which **positive behaviors are acknowledged**.

Every morning, during homeroom time, each student is required to work with the teacher in identifying two personal (IEP goals) goals that need to be the focus during the day. These goals are listed as Goal #1 and Goal #2.

The other areas on the point sheet relate to specific behaviors under THE CIRCLE OF COURAGE. These include:

- **Belonging:** Using respectful language, behaving on behalf of the group, remaining in the classroom, demonstrating comfort in sharing ideas, respecting property, positive talk
- **Generosity:** Helping others, being kind, complimenting others, requesting others to join, being polite, giving and sharing.
- **Mastery:** Completing assignments, finishing work on time, class participation, practicing and learning new skills, practicing, teaching others, applying yourself, accomplishing goals, mastering feelings and behaviors as you deal with others.
- **Independence:** Starting work on time, using class time productively, being prepared for class, resisting negative peer pressure, being in charge of yourself, making independent and wise decisions, demonstrating confidence and self-esteem, knowing yourself.

The student is also required to determine (along with their teacher) their own personal goal in terms of percentage of points they aim to earn during the day. The student may save the points in their "bankbook" in order to purchase a predetermined "Target Privilege", a classroom "Target Privilege" or the student may save points in order to "purchase" items from the school store.

At regular intervals during the school day acknowledgement is given for the positive behaviors observed. No points are ever taken away and there are no negative points. Problem dominated behavior will receive immediate feedback, processing, the lack of acknowledgement in terms of points, and /or consequences; but points will never be "taken away". Discussion with the student regarding "what is getting in the way of success" takes place and when the student is able to overcome this, points are immediately earned again.

Our expectations are:

- 1) Students will be in the classrooms, leaving only with a specific destination written on their pass.
- 2) Staff will "call first" to see if destination personnel are available.
- 3) Students/Staff will use "**Intervention Forum**" as a tool to prevent and de-escalate problems within the classroom. On a rare occasion a student may need to exit to complete the processing cycle.
- 4) No student will "run out" with bathroom or water pass in hand; permission must be granted. i.e., *rule:* One such exit per AM/PM.
- 5) Students will be under staff supervision at all times (safety precaution if head count is needed) as we are considered a closed campus.
- 6) Language is EXPECTED to be appropriate (Belonging/Mastery). No swearing, cut downs or vulgarities are permitted.
- 7) Students are EXPECTED to try their best (Mastery): staying on task in the classroom; asking for help; participating in lessons.
- 8) Students are EXPECTED to ignore negative behaviors exhibited by others (Independence).
- 9) Students are EXPECTED to be respectful and generous to others (Belonging/Generosity).
- 10) Students are EXPECTED to try "empathetic" eyes.
- 11) Students are EXPECTED to follow staff directions, ask for clarification if they are unclear and respond in a respectful manner.

They can earn points ONLY if they are behaving in appropriate ways (it is up to US to set the high standards, challenge their ability to “master” their behaviors and challenge their earning potential!!!!)

When we cannot acknowledge these behaviors in them, they are not earning points. Their “problem” is gaining points.....how can we align ourselves with them to conquer this problem (i.e. anxiety, frustration, fear)????

STAFFINGS

Staffings with the family and school district will be held periodically. A variety of reasons may bring about a need to have such a meeting; re-evaluation, data needing to be discussed, progress update, recent behavioral difficulties, etc. At each staffing the following items must be present:

- Progress report from therapist (related to I.E.P., therapy, behavior)
- Progress report from teacher (related to I.E.P. , behavior and classroom)
- Progress report from Intervention Specialists (related to I.E.P. and interventions needed/not needed)
- Knowledge and update from all therapeutic groups the student is assigned to
- Update in terms of psychiatrist and medication management
- Update in terms of probation (if applicable)
- Up to date knowledge regarding academic skill levels and abilities.
- Reports stapled together as one.

ADMINISTRATIVE SCHOOL SAFETY POLICY

All faculty and staff need to be aware of the Safe School Policy and understand the consequence to any and all “High Risk Behaviors” that may be displayed. All faculty and staff need to recognize and identify those persons exhibiting the outlined behaviors and take the appropriate steps to de-escalate the situation and regain order to ensure that students and staff are kept safe.

- **Fighting/Aggressive Behavior**
- **Smoking/Lighters/Cigarettes**
- **Drugs/Alcohol**
- **Sexual Misconduct/Harassment**
- **Cultural/Racial Slurs and Ridiculing**
- **Intimidation and Bullying**
- **Weapons**
- **Explosives**
- **Theft of Property**
- **Vandalism**
- **Arson**
- **Gang Behavior**
- **Hostage Situations**
- **Trespassing**

Fighting/Aggressive Behavior

Fighting is defined as any aggressive physical contact. Fighting and/or play fighting is not allowed in school. Aggressive Acts also include throwing of objects, spitting, etc. If fighting or other aggressive acts occur faculty will:

- Separation of those involved.
- Each student, individually, process with RIS; evaluation of events.
- Referral to the therapist for counseling.
- Contact with parents, probation, etc.

Consequences may include restrictive interventions such as exclusion from peer group, NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), police contact, suspension, re-entry meeting with parents and/or school district personnel.

Play fighting includes pushing, hitting, spitting on, throwing objects, etc. without aggression.

- Verbal warning regarding inappropriateness of actions and consequence(s) if actions continue.
- If the student continues the play fighting after being verbally warned, the student will be removed from the peer group and staff will "process" with the student 1:1, addressing their behavior.
- If the student continues the play fighting once he/she is back in the classroom – this will be treated as fighting.

Smoking/ Lighters/ Cigarettes

If school personnel suspect and/or see any smoking materials:

- Contraband items will be confiscated
- Backpack, coat, pockets may be searched.
- Faculty will state that these items will not be returned.
- Report will be filed with RIS
- Parent contact
- Consequences may include report writing, watching a smoking movie

Drugs/Alcohol

If school personnel suspect that a student is under the influence or in possession of an illegal substance:

- Report suspicion to RIS, principal, primary therapist.
- Removal of suspected student from peer group (i.e. to nurse)
- Separate all students involved so that they cannot converse
- File report with RIS
- Nurse will assess the student, taking vital signs.
- Backpack, coat, pockets, pants, socks may be searched.
- Parent will be notified regarding concerns and "ill health"
- The student's physical health may need assessment in the Emergency Room.
- Restrictive interventions such as police contact, NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), suspension exclusion from the peer group may be put into effect.
- Assessment by Drug and Alcohol Counselor.
- Re-entry meeting with parents and/or school district personnel.

It is to be noted that if a student needs to take an over-the-counter or Prescription medication at school:

- Parent must bring in the medication and give it to the school nurse.
- Signed physician forms must be on file with the nurse.
- No students are ever to have these medications on their person.

**When school personnel have reasonable cause to search a student, this will be conducted in a private setting, with two faculty members being present.

Anti-Bullying School Policy

Commitment to a Healthy School Environment:

New Connections Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment free from bullying and harassment, and is committed to promoting mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Our ongoing school wide commitment to a positive reclaiming environment for all students starts with heightened student supervision, early intervention and social skill training throughout a student's enrollment at our school. A system of positive behavioral interventions (PRIS) is in place for all students. Use of Circle of Courage is pervasive in all age groups.

Prohibition against Bullying:

New Connections Academy supports a positive and reclaiming environment and will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student or staff member. Students, staff and parents shall not intimidate or harass another person through words or actions in the school, on school grounds, in school or school vehicles, or off grounds at school activities or sanctioned events.

Bullying Defined:

New Connections Academy believes that bullying is a behavior that must be addressed because of the harmful impact that it can have on students. Bullying can lead to depression, low self-esteem, anxiety and feelings of isolation, as well as school absenteeism and low academic achievement. We have adapted the definition for bullying created by the Illinois Legislature.

DEFINITION

The Illinois legislature defines "Bullying" as meaning:

"Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school."

Conduct off School Grounds:

Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds - when such conduct creates, or reasonably can be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the school setting and/or at school sponsored activities and events - may be subject to the conditions set forth in this policy.

Curriculum and Training:

A curriculum segment specific to bullying prevention is available to all students on an as needed basis. Staff may also receive updated training on their responsibilities for responding to incidents of bullying as needed.

Response Procedures:

Through established behavioral and teaching strategies school employees are engaged in an ongoing effort to prevent incidents of bullying from occurring. We realize that there is a continuum of bullying behaviors which starts with interventions that might be considered mildly inappropriate. Utilizing the Circle of Courage and our PRIS steps, these minor behaviors are addressed immediately and consistently. Staff provides constant student supervision, close observation and in the moment responses to even minor inappropriate student interaction to prevent serious incidents of bullying from occurring. When violations of this policy do occur they are addressed through direct verbal, point sheet and RIS intervention or other formal disciplinary intervention.

Staff members are expected to intervene according to our internal procedures when they see a bullying incident occur. All of our staff is trained in providing ongoing social skills instruction and

appropriate responses to inappropriate behaviors. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to a member of our staff. All such reports will be taken seriously.

Timely and appropriate reports of bullying are encouraged and reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports a bullying incident is prohibited. Reporting an incident to staff in good faith will not reflect upon the individual's status, nor will it affect grades or employment status.

The following factors will be taken into consideration when determining appropriate consequences:

Age, developmental issues, disabilities, degree of harm, surrounding circumstances, nature and severity of the behavior, past or continuing patterns of behavior, relationship between involved parties, and the context in which the alleged incident has occurred.

Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support negative bullying behaviors, New Connections Academy prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff will provide encouragement and support for students to walk away and report acts of bullying.

Notification:

Students, parents and staff will be made aware of this policy. A summary of the policy will be incorporated into student and employee handbooks, and distributed to parents, students and staff as appropriate.

Model Policy Regarding Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students

Purpose:

This policy is designed to create a safe learning environment for all students and to ensure that every student has equal access to all school programs and activities. This policy sets out guidelines for New Connections Academy to address the needs for transgender and gender nonconforming students. This policy does not anticipate every situation that might occur with respect to a transgender or gender nonconforming student, and the needs of each transgender or gender nonconforming student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the goal is to ensure safety, comfort, and healthy development of the transgender or gender nonconforming student while maximizing the student's social integration and minimizing stigmatizing of the student.

Definitions:

The definitions provided here are not meant to label students but are intended to assist in understanding this policy and the obligations of New Connections Academy. Students may or may not use these terms to describe themselves.

- "Gender identity" refers to a person's psychological identification as male, female, both, or neither, regardless of the sex assigned at birth. This includes a student's gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior.
- "Transgender students" refers to students whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth.
- "Gender nonconforming students" refers to students whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as "feminine" boys, "masculine" girls, and students who are perceived as androgynous.
- "Preferred name" refers to the name with which a student identifies and prefers others to use.
- "Transition" refers to the personal process a transgender student undergoes to begin to live as their self-identified gender. This may include some or all of the following cultural, legal, and medical adjustments: telling one's family, friends, and/or classmates; changing one's style of dress, changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly some form of surgical procedure.

Guidance and Practices:

Student Transitions

When a student transitions during the school year, the student's academic and clinical team shall hold a meeting with the student and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to ascertain their desires and concerns prior to making any school related changes. The team will discuss a timeline for the transition in order to create the conditions supporting a safe and accepting environment at the school. Finally, the team shall train any school staff that interacts directly with the student on the transition plan, timelines for transition, and any relevant legal requirements. Should the student and/or their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) request changes to the original timeline or conditions that were created at the first meeting, the student's team must hold another meeting with the student and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) prior to making any changes.

Confidentiality

New Connections Academy's personnel shall not discuss a student's transgender status with anyone other than the student and the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s), unless the information is necessary in order to accommodate the student, ensure the student's safety, or the student has given written consent.

Names and Pronouns

Transgender and gender non-conforming students at New Connections Academy will be addressed by their preferred names, and by pronouns corresponding to their gender identity upon their request and parental or guardian approval to do so. A court ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change his or her official records. While staff or students may make inadvertent or honest mistakes in the use of preferred names or pronouns, the intentional or persistent refusal by staff to respect a student's gender identity is a violation of this policy.

Restroom Accessibility

Students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity, regardless of the student's sex assigned at birth, consistently asserted at school. This access shall be presented as an option and not a requirement.

Gender Segregated Activities

To the extent possible, New Connections Academy should reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by gender- and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose. In situations where students are segregated by gender, students should be offered the option to participate in the group that corresponds to their gender identity.

Official Records

New Connections Academy shall maintain records that include a student's legal name and legal gender. However, to the extent that the schools are not legally required to use a student's legal name and gender on other school records or documents, the school shall also include the name and gender preferred by the student. New Connections Academy will change a student's official record to reflect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such change has been made pursuant to a court order, or through amendment of state or federally-issued identification.

Discrimination/Harassment

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that transgender and gender nonconforming students have a safe school environment. This includes ensuring that any incident of discrimination, harassment, or violence is given immediate attention (i.e., investigating the incident, taking appropriate corrective action, and providing students and staff with appropriate resources). Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived transgender status or gender nonconforming are to be handled in the same manner as other discrimination or harassment complaints.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

We expect all students to be free from the effects of illegal drugs, misuse of medications and alcohol while in attendance.

If we suspect that a student may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the nurse will assess the student. If the assessment indicates that the student is in medical danger, we will call the paramedics and have the student transported to the emergency room. If the assessment indicates that the student is under the influence, but not in an acute medical crisis, the parents will be notified so that they can seek further independent evaluation. The student may be sent home. We will work with the school district to determine any appropriate disciplinary actions.

If there is suspicion but no objective evidence that the student is under the influence, the principal or designee will make a determination as to the student's schedule for the remainder of the day. If the student is withdrawn or disruptive, he/she will remain under staff supervision outside of the classroom. If the principal determines that the student appears to be capable of participating in class, he/she will do so but be monitored by the staff. The school may activate the psychiatric consultant's prescription for drug and alcohol screening. The parents will be notified.

If a student is in possession of drugs or alcohol, the police will be notified. Again, the principal may suspend the student from school and will contact parents and the school district.

If a student is in possession of drug paraphernalia, the principal may suspend the student from school and contact parents and the school district. Drugs or paraphernalia will be turned over to the principal for proper disposal.

In the case of possession of drugs, alcohol, paraphernalia or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, a manifestation determination review conference with the student, family and school district will be held. Generally, we will follow the disciplinary guidelines of the student's school district. The substance abuse counselor will be notified. The team can modify the disciplinary consequences in the event that a student obtains an evaluation by a drug treatment agency, follows the recommendations of that agency and successfully completes treatment. We may also recommend a psychiatric evaluation.

If a student engages in talk or glorification of drug or alcohol usage, a RIS visit will take place. If the student repeats this behavior, the school can conduct a meeting with parents and the school district to discuss the persistent problem.

Our interest in each of these interactions is twofold, to protect the integrity of a safe school environment and to guide the student to more successful school behavior.

Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Students are expected to demonstrate respect for others. If a student is involved in sexual harassment or sexual misconduct towards another student or faculty member the following procedures are to be followed:

- Removal of student from peer group.
- Immediate 1:1 counseling with RIS.
- Referral to their therapist for additional counseling/evaluation.
- Parent contact
- Isolation from peer group and/or removal from school
- Assignments may be given to educate the student regarding personal boundaries, respect for others, sexual harassment.

- Consequences may include restrictive interventions such as exclusion from peer group, police contact, suspension, re-entry meetings with parents and/or school district personnel.

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY
SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY is committed to establishing an on-going program for staff and students to prevent sexual abuse. As such, we have developed this written policy and are expecting staff to fully participate as well as participate in the educational prevention techniques for our students.

Staff Policy and Procedure:

- 1 All staff must undergo criminal background checks with the Illinois State Police to determine any prior criminal history.
- 138635232 All staff must undergo a physical examination signed by their treating physician who attests that they are physically and mentally able to work as stated on their job description.
- 138635184 Resume references will be verbally confirmed by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** administration.
- 138635136 All staff will participate in staff training and orientation programs presented by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** administration or their designee.
- 138635088 All staff must sign in and out when entering or leaving the school.
- 138635040 No staff member is allowed to sign off to leave the school facility with a student, i.e. no staff is to leave alone with students except on immediate school grounds.
- 138634992 When staff and students leave the school, they are to carry radio communication so that they are easily accessed at any time, i.e. going to and from physical education, field trips, etc.
- 8 Any staff member who hears or sees any unusual event or expresses concern is mandated to bring their concerns to school administration. Failure to do so may be subject to disciplinary action. Please see the school policy of staff discipline. Any reported incidents will be initially investigated by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** administration and other state and local officials.

Student Educational Awareness Program

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY is committed to providing students with an educational program to address issues of sexual harassment and sexual abuse and discrimination.

The purpose of the program is to:

1. Provide students with an understanding of what sexual harassment and sexual assault are defined as.
2. Provide students with the necessary skills to deal with inappropriate comments, etc. to keep **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** free from all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment or assaults.
3. Provide students with response options when inappropriate circumstances present themselves.
4. Provide students a confidential resource for support and counseling.

POLICY FOR HIGH RISK STUDENTS

- If a student has a history of sexual abuse, making abuse allegations, etc. **ALL** 1:1 contact between staff and this student will take place in an open area or in a room with the door ajar.
- If a student makes or has ever made any comments or allegations about sexually inappropriate behavior between him/herself and a staff member, all therapeutic sessions and other 1:1 sessions will be conducted in an open area, or with the door ajar.
- Any doors which are closed during all other therapeutic sessions will be kept unlocked during these sessions.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Cultural/Racial Slurs and Ridiculing

Students are expected to be respectful towards others. At **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**, we celebrate the diversity that we all bring to the school community. If a student is involved in verbal or written cruelty towards others:

- Removal of the student from the peer group.
- Referral to RIS
- Referral to therapist for counseling
- Parent contact
- Consequences may include completing a writing assignment/project on diversity & commonalities amongst people, lack of ability to earn points during intervention time, etc.
- Continued offenses may result in restrictive interventions such as isolation from peer group, parental meeting, and suspension.

Intimidation and Bullying

Students may not behave in any fashion that is intimidating or threatening to others. Bullying, coercing or intimidating others:

- Removal of student from peer group
- Referral to RIS to address the concerns and issues.
- Referral to therapist for further counseling/evaluation.
- Parent contact
- Consequences may include restrictive interventions such as exclusion from peer group, NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), parent meetings, suspensions and a re-entry evaluation meeting.

Weapons

A weapon is defined as any real or pretend item resembling a gun, knife, razor, arrow, throwing object(s) that can inflict harm or death on another person or themselves.

- Weapon will be confiscated immediately
- Removal of student from peer group.
- Secure the situation/area/students
- Immediate 1:1 counseling intervention for student. Restrictive interventions may be used, such as NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), police contact, isolation from peer group, suspension.
- Report is to be filed with RIS.
- Counseling for the other students and staff involved and/or affected by the situation.
- Re-entry meeting with parents and/or school district.
- Manifestation Determination Meeting may be required.

Explosives

An explosive is defined as any device that can cause or have the nature to explode. This would include firecrackers, M-80's, etc. This also would include but not limited to any chemical or mechanical device used in the making of such an explosive. Any student who verbally states that they have such a device and/or infers that they will "blow up the school" or any other area will also be treated in the same manner as indicated below.

Mechanical device evident

- Immediate evacuation of area/school
- Removal of student from peer group.
- Police and fire department notification.
- A complete search of the school will be conducted.
- Any suspicious item will be identified to the bomb squad.
- The decision to close the school will be determined by the principal or designated staff member, who will be the liaison with the police and fire departments.

Verbal threat - potential use of an explosive device:

- Removal of student from peer group
- Immediate 1:1 counseling intervention by RIS and therapist.
- Counseling for others involved
- The principal or designated staff member will be advised (if not already involved) of the situation.
- Restrictive Interventions (police involvement), Suspension and Meeting will result.

Theft of Property

Theft is described as any item taken without the other party's permission. This includes both personal items as well as items belonging to the school.

- Removal of suspected student from peer group.
- Immediate 1:1 counseling with the RIS
- Referral to therapist for additional counseling/evaluation.
- The student may be searched** for items.
- The search may include clothing, backpack, purse, etc.
- Parent contact.
- The principal or designated staff member will be notified (if not already involved) of the situation.
- Restitution will be expected.
- Future searches may be indicated.

**When school personnel have reasonable cause to search a student, this will be conducted in a private setting, with two faculty members being present.

Vandalism

Any student who damages or destroys school property (which include, but not limited to walls, floors, desks, chairs, windows, etc.) before, during and after school, shall be dealt with in the following manner:

- Removal of student from peer group.
- Immediate 1:1 counseling with the RIS.
- Referral to therapist for additional counseling/evaluation.
- Restitution will be expected.
- The principal or designated staff member will be notified (if not already involved) of the situation.
- Restrictive interventions such as NCI (NON-VIOLENT CRISIS INTERVENTION), exclusion from peer group, police contact, suspension, re-entry meeting may be necessary.

Arson

Arson is classified as an attempt of setting/burning any school or personal property, in a malicious way to destroy said property. Any student found attempting arson or the threat to "burn down the school" should be dealt with in the following manner:

No Fire

- Immediate confiscation of lighter/matches.
- Removal of student from peer group.
- Immediate 1:1 intervention by RIS and therapist.
- Parental contact
- Restrictive interventions may be necessary: NCI (NON-VIOLENT CRISIS INTERVENTION), suspension, Police contact, re-entry evaluation and meeting.

Fire

- Pull the fire alarm!
- Fire department is contacted.
- Evacuation of students/staff from school grounds.
- The fire shall be contained and extinguished if applicable.
- Removal of student from peer group – isolation with staff.
- Counseling for student by RIS and therapist.
- Counseling for others involved.
- The principal or designated staff member will be advised (if not already involved) of the situation.
- Restrictive interventions such as NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), police contact, suspension, evaluation and meeting may be necessary.

Gang Behavior

Students may not wear, possess, distribute, sell, draw or display gang symbols. Students may not communicate gang representation verbally, with gestures, or with handshakes. Students may not solicit others for gang membership through any means. Gang-like behaviors will be addressed by:

- Removal of student from peer group
- Referral to RIS to address the problems and concerns of gang activity.
- Referral to therapist for further counseling/evaluation.
- Parent contact
- Consequences may include restrictive interventions such exclusion from peer group, NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention), police contact, suspension, re-entry meeting with parents and/or school district personnel.
- First offense: processing, gang education, observation and warning
- Second offense: suspension and meeting

Hostage Situations

A hostage situation is described as, any person(s) being held against their will before, during or after a crime has been committed.

- Secure the immediate area.
- Evacuate all other persons from the area.
- Call 911 * Police
- Contact the principal or designated staff member who will contact the police department
- Therapist (or other significant faculty member) talk to the subject. This is to be done only if the situation is secure enough.
- Liaison with the police department = principal or designee.
- Contact the parents of those students (if applicable) taken hostage.
- Once the police arrive, turn the scene over to the police.
- Counseling for all others involved.
- Contact all parents.

- Restrictive interventions will apply: police contact, possible NCI (NON-VIOLENT CRISIS INTERVENTION), suspension, evaluation, meeting with parents and school district personnel.

Trespassing

Any person(s) coming to **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** will sign in at the front desk and will be given a VISITOR BADGE. They must wait for the arrival of the faculty (or their representative) they are there to visit.

Staff must:

- Question any unfamiliar person who is on the property, asking if you might be able to direct them to the front desk.
- Immediately report any unidentified or suspicious person to the front desk, principal, or RIS team.

If any person or persons do not follow this procedure they will be asked to leave. Failure to do so may result in a police call and trespassing charges may be filed.

- Any person or person's causing a disturbance or threatening faculty will be asked to leave. If they do not comply, the police will be contacted and charges will be placed.
- Under no circumstances will faculty deal with a disruptive parent/person by themselves. Call for staff assistance!

Students can be charged with trespassing if they are in any unauthorized area.

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION & SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

Restrictive interventions must be listed on the student's Behavior Management Plan in their I.E.P.

Positive, proactive alternatives to suspension and other restrictive interventions are emphasized at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**. However, misbehavior by a student which endangers self, others or property may result in a recommendation to the principal and the student's home school district that the student be suspended for an aggregate of no more than 10 school days during the school year. A staffing will be requested to determine necessary revisions in the student's programming, support services and/or environmental placement options if restrictive behavioral interventions become too frequent or too great in cumulative occurrences.

THERAPEUTIC HOLDING

Necessary therapeutic holding may be utilized by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** staff under the following circumstances:

- To defend or ensure the safety of a student or another person
- For self defense
- To move or remove a recalcitrant student who engages in disruptive behavior or who refuses to obey the directions of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** staff, so long as the staff have previously warned the student, offered them alternatives to their current behavior and provided them with the expected consequences of their current behavior should it continue.

Reasonable therapeutic holding under any of the above situations shall be utilized sparingly by all staff while giving consideration to the particular circumstances involved. **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** follows NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention) guidelines of the Crisis Prevention Institute.

More restrictive interventions outside of NCI (Non-Violent Crisis Intervention) methods may be necessary in extreme emergency situations in which the life and/or safety of a student or staff is at risk. Return to less restrictive holding methods resumes once deemed safe and appropriate.

Our community at NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY is based upon mutual respect, high standards, cooperation, Belonging, Generosity, Mastery and Independence.

As a faculty it is our responsibility to:

- Honor the student's expert knowledge about the problems that challenge them
- Continually engage the student in a collaborative effort to identify the problems and identify interventions
- Support the student's efforts in recognizing, challenging, and conquering the problems that interfere with their lives
- Provide exceptional guidance
- Create outstanding curriculum
- Build a supportive school community
- Provide opportunities for generosity
- Create "vehicles" by which students find mastery over their environment
- Promote responsible independence
- Teach students new, appropriate ways of behaving in order to have their needs met

***We have an exceptionally wonderful staff.....
Creative, sensitive and energetic students and.....
Every opportunity in the world to make a difference.***

Welcome aboard!

ABOUT THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Our Company has always believed in promoting an atmosphere of open communication and cooperation among all of our employees. This Employee Handbook reflects this belief. The Employee Handbook supersedes, in all respects, any prior handbook, policy manual, benefits or practices of the Company. It has been prepared to give you general information about some of your benefits and the highlights of rules and policies under which we operate. Obviously, we could not begin to explain every Company policy or rule or benefit in this Employee Handbook. Its provisions can be considered as no more than guidelines and general summaries of benefits, work rules and policies they address.

We hope our personnel actions will continue to be positive. From time to time our Company may unilaterally, in its discretion, amend, supplement, modify, or eliminate one or more of the benefits, work rules or policies described in this Employee Handbook, or any other employment benefits, work rules or policies, without prior notice. No one has authority to bind our Company to any agreement contrary to the foregoing except the School Founders.

This Employee Handbook does not constitute a guarantee that your employment will continue for any specified period of time or end only under certain conditions. Employment at our Company is a voluntary employment-at-will relationship for no definite period of time, and nothing in the Employee Handbook constitutes an express or implied warranty of any benefits. While we hope to have a long and mutually beneficial working relationship, regardless of anything which may appear in this Employee Handbook or any other Company publication, policy, statement or practice, you have the right to terminate your employment relationship for any reason with or without cause or notice at any time, and the Company reserves the right to do the same.

Your suggestions about your work life here at ***NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY*** are welcome and valued. If you have any questions as to the interpretation or application of a specific section of this Employee Handbook or any matter not covered by this Employee Handbook, consult School Administration.

EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND PRACTICE

Faculty Expectations & Ethics

- *Students needs are the #1 priority
- *Professionalism is to be demonstrated at all times with pupils, parents, staff members and others
- *Positive, supportive attitudes will be maintained
- *Circle of Courage philosophy upheld by students and staff
- *Ethical relationships with other staff members:
Taking disagreements to the source; No gossiping, spreading of rumors or hear-say
- *Job description components fulfilled
- *Maintain updated and current certifications (to be kept on file with the school)
- *Supervision & Evaluation participation
- *Adherence to professional standards, ethics & laws
- *Good attendance and full day participation
- *Comply with staff dress code/procedures
- *Following procedures
- *Accurate documentation
- *Maintain updated knowledge in field
- *Proper use of and protection of all school property, equipment and materials.
- *Attendance at all faculty meetings and inservice training sessions
- *Immediate reporting of any unusual or unethical incident to the principal.

STAFF DRESS CODE

Education is a conservative field where staff members are expected to look and behave in a **professional** manner. The clothes you wear must represent the fact that you are a role model to our students. We expect staff to come to work dressed in ways that convey a conservative professional look that is not sloppy or provocative in any way. No facial piercing, unless for religious reasons, will be allowed (nose, tongue, eyebrow, etc.). Tattoos must be non-offensive and appropriate to the special needs of our population. No hoodies will be acceptable for staff to wear due to safety concerns. Administration at each school has the right to require staff to cover tattoos, change clothes, etc., in order to conform to our requirement of a professional dress code.

CELL PHONE AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE - STAFF POLICY USE

The personal use of cell phones and other electronic devices during the work day is strictly prohibited. Cell phones are not to be seen in use for any personal calls unless you are on a permissible break from your work duties. Cell phones are not to be used under any circumstances when transporting students in the school bus when you are the driver. In case of emergency, the driver must pull over and stop before accessing a cell phone. Cell phones may be used under limited circumstances for work related issues. An example of this would be contacting your administrator who is out of your school building to inform them of a situation you determine they need to be made aware of immediately. We know many of you have children in a day care facility that, at times, requires communication to the facility during the day. Please instruct your day care facility or child care provider to contact the main school number. Front desk staff will then notify you of the message so you can make arrangements to return the phone call. This system eliminates staff carrying cell phones and constantly looking at them during the school day for messages or return phone calls, emails, etc.

Please note this policy also refers to personal email, texting, IM, blogging, etc., on your cell phone or **any other** electronic device during the school day.

It is also important to remember that it is now illegal for teachers and other school staff to be on their cell phones while driving in close proximity to a school. Please remember this when arriving and leaving our school premises.

Any violations of this policy will be subject to discipline from your administrator.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

1. INTRODUCTION

Equal Employment Opportunity has been and continues to be both policy and practice at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**. This policy makes good business sense. It is in our Company's best interest to utilize the skills and abilities of our employees to the fullest extent, without regard to factors unrelated to job performance. Each supervisor should understand the wisdom and necessity for this policy and do his or her part to enforce it. Specific objectives of our Policy are to:

- a. Ensure that managers and supervisors understand the concepts of Equal Employment Opportunity;
- b. Ensure that managers and supervisors understand non-harassment concepts, and;
- c. Assign centralized responsibility for giving management personnel pertinent information relating to Equal Employment Opportunity and monitoring employment decisions to ensure that Company management personnel comply with the Policy.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

As stated at the outset, Equal Employment Opportunity has been and continues to be both policy and practice at the Company. Our policy of Equal Employment Opportunity is to:

- a. Recruit, hire, train and promote persons in all job classifications without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, handicap or any other protected status.
- b. Base decisions on employment to further the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity.
- c. Ensure that promotion decisions are in accord with principles of Equal Employment Opportunity.
- d. Ensure that all personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, return from layoff, and any social or recreational programs will be administered according to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity.

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY POLICY ON DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

STATEMENT OF COMPANY POLICY

It is **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** policy that we will not tolerate in the workplace any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, unfavorable discharge from the military, marital status, or disability. Included within this prohibition are unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or discriminatory nature, where there is an attempt to make submission to such conduct a term or condition of an individual's employment; or the submission or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment related decisions; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. All forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive, or which create a hostile or offensive environment must be eliminated.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY is committed to providing a workplace that is free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Any employee's behavior that fits the definition of sexual harassment is a form of misconduct, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Sexual harassment could also subject this company and/or the individual employee to substantial civil penalties.

Each employee of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** bears the responsibility to refrain from sexual harassment in the workplace. No employee, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct in the workplace. Instances of sexual harassment must be investigated in a prompt and effective manner.

All employees, regardless of position and authority level, must become familiar with the contents of this policy and to abide by the requirements it establishes.

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the Company's policy that we will not tolerate in the workplace any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or handicap. Employees should be particularly mindful of the Company's prohibition of any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, and for this reason it is clarified below.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. No supervisor or other employee shall threaten nor insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that another employee's or applicant's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that person's employment, work status evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development. Similarly, no employee shall promise, imply or grant any preferential treatment in connection with another employee or applicant engaging in sexual conduct.

Sexual harassment also includes unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or, propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, subtle pressure or requests for sexual activities, unnecessary touching of an individual, graphic or verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, sexually explicit or offensive jokes, or physical assault.

Any incidents of discrimination or harassment must be immediately reported to your supervisor so that an immediate investigation may be conducted. If that would be uncomfortable, you may directly contact Betty Lindquist or any other member of management. We will make every effort to promptly investigate all allegation of discrimination and/or harassment in as confidential a manner as possible and take appropriate corrective action if warranted.

Any employee we determine, after an investigation, to have engaged in discrimination and/or sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY has designated Betty Lindquist, Program Administrator, to coordinate the company's discrimination and sexual harassment policy and compliance. Ms. Lindquist can be reached at 847-680-2715 Ext. 227 at the main office: 31480 Highway 45, Libertyville, IL 60048. She is available to consult with employees regarding their obligations under this policy.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY OF EMPLOYEES

Each supervisor is responsible for maintaining the workplace free from sexual harassment. This is accomplished by promoting a professional environment and by dealing with sexual harassment as with all other forms of employee conduct.

Specifically, a supervisor must address an observed incident of sexual harassment or a complaint, with seriousness, take prompt action to investigate it, report it, end it and implement appropriate disciplinary action. This also applies to cases where an employee tells the supervisor about behavior that constitutes sexual harassment but does not want to make a formal complaint.

In addition, supervisors must ensure that no retaliation will result against an employee making a sexual harassment complaint.

Supervisors in need of information regarding their obligations under this policy or procedures to follow upon receipt of a complaint of sexual harassment should contact Betty Lindquist, Practice Administrator at 31480 Highway 45, Libertyville, IL 60048; 847.680.2715 Ext. 227.

EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES FOR FILING A COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT

INTERNAL: An employee who either observes or believes herself/himself to be the object of discrimination or sexual harassment must immediately report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to his/her supervisor or program administrator. If the harasser is the immediate supervisor, the problem must then be reported to the next level of supervision or directly to the program administrator. It is not necessary for the sexual harassment to be directed at the person making the complaint. If the above procedure would prove to be uncomfortable to the employee, incidents of discrimination or harassment may be brought directly to Betty Lindquist.

No one making a complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment will be retaliated against even if a complaint made in good faith is not substantiated. Any witness to an incident of discrimination or sexual harassment is also protected from retaliation. All incidents of retaliation should be reported in accordance with the procedure outlined in the preceding paragraph.

EXTERNAL: NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY hopes that any incident of discrimination or sexual harassment can be resolved through the internal process outlined above. All employees, however, have the right to file formal charges with the Illinois Department Of Human Rights and/or the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

IDHR may be contacted at: Chicago 312-814-6200
Chicago TDD 312-263-1579
Springfield 217-785-5125
Springfield TDD 217-785-5125
EEOC may be contacted at: Chicago 312-353-2713 or 800-669-3362
TDD 800-800-3302

Any harassing employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge in accord with **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** disciplinary policy and the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

FALSE AND FRIVOLOUS COMPLAINTS: False and frivolous charges refer to cases where the accuser is using a discrimination or sexual harassment complaint to accomplish some end other than stopping sexual harassment. It does not refer to charges made in good faith, which cannot be proved. Given the seriousness of the consequences for the accused, a false and frivolous charge is a severe offense that can itself result in disciplinary action.

Our yearly calendar

Student attendance days in traditional school year = 176

Summer School days = 20/21 days

Institute Days = as designated

Faculty Sick Days = 16 (See Policy Definitions)

Faculty Personal Days = 2 (See Policy Definitions)

Pay Days = 15th and last day of each month.

Tuition Reimbursement for Professional Growth

Professional growth programs are integral to our development as teachers and counselors. Tuition reimbursement is available to **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** faculty who are pursuing a degree that is related to the needs of the school (e.g. special education teaching degree or certification).

University and college course work supporting the needs of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** (e.g. earning bachelor's degrees and Type 39 Substitute Certificates, earning LBS-I Limited Certificates covering EBD/LD and/or LBS Unlimited Certificates) will be financially supported by a contribution from the school:

- on a per credit hour basis
- with a contract of continued employment

A contractual agreement, stating that the employee agrees to work for at least one full year from the date the (most recent) reimbursement is paid, is required for this policy to take effect. If an employee were to leave our employment prior to the end of that one year period, the employee would be obligated to reimburse **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** (prorated based upon the portion of the year worked).

Tuition costs up to \$200 per credit hour will be paid by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**. The maximum of \$3,000 will be paid for an employee's college course costs in one school calendar year. Tuition reimbursement forms must be completed, along with degree and course descriptions. These items must be submitted for administrative approval at least 14 days before the tuition is due. Upon completion of a course (s), an official grade report and/or transcript must be submitted to the **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** Administration.

A grade of "C" or above must be earned in each course reimbursed. If a grade of "C" or above is not obtained, the employee will need to repay tuition costs and no further reimbursement will be offered as a benefit.

An employee may wish to attend a professional conference. Conferences and workshops must have a direct relationship to the work one is involved with at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**, and the faculty member's professional growth plan. A request application must be provided along with copies of conference information. Approval will be reviewed and, if granted, registration and/or reimbursement payment will be provided by administration.

Mileage

Job related mileage will be reimbursed to faculty members when a reimbursement form has been completed. This reimbursement is for mileage between **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** and a necessary meeting outside of the building (e.g. staffing, hospital visit, school meeting, etc.).

Sick leave

Policy on Sick Leave (Revised January 2004)

All employees are required by the State of Illinois to have an up-to-date physical examination, including a TB test.

PURPOSE OF SICK LEAVE:

- To provide a valuable employee benefit.
- To provide a sick leave benefit, much like an insurance policy; saved for emergency use.

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide support for employees during time of illness
- To improve productivity through better attendance
- To maintain overall school morale by ensuring each employee meets his/her own work requirements

PAY DURING ILLNESS:

Employees will become eligible to participate in the paid time for illness program as follows:

- If employed prior to August school start date, employees will be allowed up to 16 days in the following school calendar year:
 - 3.5 paid sick leave days per school term
 - 2 paid sick leave days per summer term
- If employed after the August school start date, employees will be allowed a proportionately pro-rated number of days for illness

USE:

This leave may be used for personal illness and illness of immediate family members (spouse, children, parents, siblings). It is encouraged that doctor's appointments, dentist appointments and the like be made outside of school hours. If absolutely necessary this leave can be used for a medical appointment and/or bereavement leave (with prior authorization of School Administration). Work hours for medical appointments may be adjusted up to one (1) hour with prior approval of the principal.

NOTIFICATION:

This leave with pay is only available when the following procedures are followed:

- A phone call needs to be made to the school's main number and to the principal's phone no later than 7:00 A.M.
- Any sick day taken the day before or the day after a school holiday will require a doctor's written verification in order to be paid.

PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION:

- Teachers need to always have emergency lesson plans readily available & visible* in their classroom.
- Therapists need to always have emergency group plans available and visible* in their offices.

- * The front desk Administrative Assistants must be shown these locations so that Substitutes can be informed about their whereabouts.

CERTIFICATION OF ILLNESS:

School Administration reserves the right to require certification of illness by a physician, at any time.

EFFECT ON PERFORMANCE:

While the school pays employees for authorized sick days, up to the stated limits, it is expected that employees be honest with taking these days ONLY when ill.

- Any abuse of this benefit will be taken seriously.
- Wrongful use of this benefit may result in termination.
- School Officials reserve the right to require a statement from your doctor.
- Patterns of misuse observed by Administration (such as using all sick time available, making statements about being entitled to take these days off, use on Fridays and Mondays as a pattern, etc.) will result in only being paid for future sick call-ins when doctor's validation is secured.
- Discipline and/or termination may be taken on the basis of the absences affecting the employee's performance, or the operations of the school program, and may be taken even when the reasons for sick leave use have been legitimate.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS and/or ACCOMMODATIONS for exemplary attendance:

If a situation occurs in which a staff member has demonstrated an exemplary attendance record and is suddenly in need of additional sick-days for a doctor verified long-term illness or hospitalization, past unused sick time, accrued sick time and future sick time (within the year's allotment) may be granted at the discretion of the School Administration. (See "ACCRUAL" below)

ACCRUAL:

Sick leave may be accrued at the rate of .5 hours for every unused sick hour provided.

Fourteen (14) hours per regular school term can be accrued.

Eight (8) hours per summer term can be accrued.

These hours may be accrued indefinitely while employed with **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**, to a maximum of sixty (60) days or four hundred eighty (480) hours.

Example:

Term 1 with all sick time remaining (of possible 28 hours) = Earn 14 hours of accrued time

Term 2 with 8 hours of sick time remaining = Earn 4 hours of accrued time

Term 3 with no sick time remaining = Earn 0 hours of accrued time

Term 4 with 4 hours of sick time remaining = Earn 2 hours accrued time

Summer Session with all sick time remaining (of 16 possible) = Earn 8 hours of accrued time

End Result for the year: Used 56 hours of sick time remaining unused and earned 28 hours of accrued time

For a doctor verified long-term illness or hospitalization accrued sick-time may be used, with Administrative approval:

- (1) The accrual pay can only be used for that time (pay period) for which one would have been without pay due to the major illness/hospitalization.
- (2) The accrual pay cannot be used for later, individual days of illness. It can only be used for verified long-term illnesses or hospitalizations.
- (3) One can choose to *not use* accrual pay for a major illness/hospitalization and keep it in the "Accrual Bank" for possible future need for a long term illness/hospitalization (i.e. rather like an insurance policy).
- (4) With any qualifying major, long-term medical need such as those described here, the two (2) personal days for the year can be used for medical/sick leave purposes.
- (5) When past, current and future sick time from any one school year has been used in its entirety for any reason, ability to accrue sick-leave bank hours will not be possible during that school year.

BALANCES UPON TERMINATION:

If and when **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** employment is terminated, no amount of accrued sick leave can be compensated in time or cash.

At which time a staff member resigns and/or is dismissed no more sick time is available.

Personal Leave Time

Employees have two (2) personal leave days available to them in any given school year. These days must be requested in advance by using the appropriate form. Personal time can be requested in hourly increments or for a full day. The principal reserves the right to deny the request or ask for a change of days, when the school's staffing needs deem it necessary.

Incentive Option

Any employee who has earned at least 5 days (40) hours of accrued time in any one year may use two (2) of these days the following year as additional Personal Days. If one does not choose to transform these days into personal days they will remain in the accrued sick leave bank for that employee. This option is on a year to year basis, and does not "carry over".

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) (the "Act") was enacted on February 5, 1993, and was effective as of August 5, 1993. FMLA requires covered employers (most employers employing more than fifty employees at any individual worksite) to provide up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons. Our Company will comply with all provisions of the FMLA and, if you believe that the provisions of the Act apply to you, you should speak to your supervisor as soon as you contemplate requesting a leave under the provisions of the Act. We believe it is useful to review the major provisions of this Act here so you may refer to these provisions if you have questions about the application of The Act to your own individual situations.

1.

Employee Eligibility - To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must:

- a. Have worked for the Company a total of at least twelve months at the time of the application for FMLA leave is made; and

- b. Have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months at the time the application for FMLA leave was made.

2. Reasons for Taking Unpaid Leave -Unpaid FMLA leave may be granted for any of the following reasons:

- a. Because of the birth of a child of the employee and in order to care for such child;
- b. Because of the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- c. In order to care for the spouse, a child or a parent of the employee, if such spouse, child or parent has a serious health condition;
- d. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the position of such employee; or
- e. Because of any qualifying emergency arising out of the fact that the spouse, child or parent of the employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.

3. Utilization of Accrued Paid Leave

It will be the policy of this Company to require employees to utilize accrued time off when taking FMLA leave. The Company requires that all employees out on FMLA for a period to exceed four weeks, be paid for all accrued time off, if their FMLA leave extends beyond four consecutive weeks.

4. Advance Notice and Medical Certification

The Company reserves the right, pursuant to the provisions of the FMLA, to require you to provide advance notice of your intention to take FMLA leave and medical certification to support the alleged need for the FMLA leave when appropriate. Permission to take FMLA leave may be denied if requirements for advance notice and medical certification are not satisfactorily met. Normally, you must provide thirty days advance notice to the Company when leave pursuant to the FMLA is foreseeable. If thirty days notice is not possible, we expect you to give as much notice as is practicable under the circumstances.

5.

Job Benefits and Protection

For the duration of FMLA leave, the Company is obligated to maintain your health coverage under any "group health plan." We will maintain coverage on the same basis as exists for all other employees not on FMLA leave. When you take unpaid FMLA leave, satisfactory arrangements must be made for the payment of the health care premiums prior to the beginning of your leave. Upon your return from FMLA leave, you have the right (unless deemed to be a "key employee") to be restored to your original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Your use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued before the start of your leave.

6. Leave Year

The leave year for purposes of taking FMLA leave will be a rolling twelve- month period measured backward from the date an eligible employee uses any approved FMLA leave.

7. Accrual of Benefits

Employees on FMLA leave will not receive school holiday pay for those school holidays or school breaks occurring during the FMLA leave.

8. Employee's Responsibility

We expect employees on FMLA leave because of a serious physical condition to produce medical certification of fitness for duty upon completion of the FMLA leave. If you do not return to work on the date your physician releases you for duty, we will consider you to have voluntarily resigned without good cause connected with your employment. Furthermore, if you are absent on FMLA leave because of a serious personal illness we expect you to report to your immediate supervisor weekly concerning the status of your condition.

9. Unlawful Acts by Employees

Any employee who is out on an approved leave and who applies for other employment while out on an approved leave will be subject to termination.

10. Unlawful Acts by Employers

The FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to (1) interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of or the attempt to exercise, any right provided under the FMLA; (2) discharge or in any other manner discriminate against any individual for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for the employee's involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

11. Enforcement

The United States Department of Labor is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of violations under the FMLA. If you believe that your rights under this Act have been violated, you have the right to contact the United States Department of Labor to register a complaint.

12. Additional Information

Any employee who desires further information on the FMLA may contact Betty Lindquist. We will give any employee who notifies the Company that he or she is contemplating an FMLA leave, a Fact Sheet on the FMLA. This is published by the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. Furthermore, should you have specific questions concerning the Act, even if you are not currently contemplating an FMLA leave, direct such questions to your supervisor.

VICTIMS' ECONOMIC SECURITY AND SAFETY ACT

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) provides that employers may not discharge or discriminate against an employee who is a victim of domestic violence or who has a family or household member who is a victim of domestic violence, for taking up to a total of twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave from work during any 12-month period to address issues arising from domestic or sexual violence.

A. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY AND REASONS FOR TAKING LEAVE

Any person employed on a full or part-time basis may take VESSA leave to:

1. seek medical attention for, or recovery from, physical or psychological injuries caused by domestic violence or sexual violence to the employee or employee's family or household member;
2. obtain victim services for the employee or employee's family or household member;
3. obtain psychological or other counseling for the employee or the employee's family or household member;
4. participate in safety planning, including temporary or permanent relocation or other actions to increase the safety of the victim from future domestic or sexual violence;
5. seek legal assistance to ensure the health and safety of the victim, including participating in court proceedings related to the violence.

VESSA leave may also be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule.

B. NOTICE AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The employee shall provide the Company with at least 48 hours' advance notice of the employee's intention to take leave, except in such cases where it is not practicable to provide such notice. If an unscheduled absence occurs, the employer may not take action against the employee if the employee provides certification within a reasonable period after the absence.

The Company may require certification that VESSA leave is to be or has been taken for one of the purposes enumerated above and that the employee or employee's family or household member is a victim of domestic or sexual violence. An employee may satisfy such a certification requirement by providing a sworn statement of the employee and:

- documentation from a victim services organization, attorney, member of the clergy, or medical or other professional from whom the employee or employee's family or household member has sought assistance;
- a police or court record
- other corroborating evidence.

The Company shall maintain the confidentiality of all information pertaining to the use of VESSA leave, notice of an employee's intention to take VESSA leave, and certification provided by the employee.

BENEFITS AVAILABLE

Benefits include: Health insurance for the employee, ability to add on dependents at employee's expense, choice to participate in 401K, choice to participate in the "Flex Savings Plan" for medical expenses and/or child/elder care costs, choice to participate in group dental plan, professional growth opportunities which are pre-approved by the principal, and increasing incentives based upon numbers of years of service.

Health Insurance Coverage and Termination of Coverage

Health insurance is available for employees and their families. Employees are required to participate in the cost for this coverage. The amount they contribute may vary from year to year. Employees are responsible for the entire cost of family coverage.

Coverage will become effective the first day of the month after 30 days of employment, (i.e., if the employee's first day of employment is January 10, insurance will be effective March 1st).

Upon termination of employment, coverage will terminate immediately. However, the employee will have the cost of the premium (prorated) deducted from his/her last paycheck

Dental Insurance

Employees are able to buy into a group dental insurance plan if they wish to do so.

Continuation of Health Coverage

Continuation of health care provisions were enacted as part of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) and are codified in Part 6 of Title I of ERISA. These provisions apply to group health plans of employers with 20 or more employees on a typical working day in the previous calendar year. COBRA gives participants and beneficiaries the right to maintain, at their own expense, coverage under their health plan that would be lost due to a triggering event, such as termination of employment at a cost that is comparable to what it would be if they were still members of the employer's group. Plans must give covered individuals an initial general notice informing them of their rights under COBRA and describing the law. The law also places notification obligations upon plan administrators, employers, and qualified beneficiaries with regard to certain "qualifying events." In most instances of employee death, termination, reduced hours of employment, entitlement to Medicare, or bankruptcy, it becomes the employer's responsibility to provide a specific notice to the plan administrator. The plan administrator must then notify the qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to elect continuation coverage.

401K & Flexible Spending Plans

- 401K Plan is available to employees after three (3) months of employment with ***NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY***
- Flexible Spending Plans are available upon hire. These can be used for medical, childcare and or eldercare expenses.

Professional Staff Time Tables

It is expected that faculty will perform their duties as necessary, to promote the best educational and therapeutic resources possible for the students we serve. At minimum, professional staff is expected to report for an 8 hour work day. These hours are from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm. At times, the need will arise requiring faculty to come in early or stay late. Evening programs throughout the year will require faculty attendance.

Therapeutic staff is required to participate, one evening per month, in "Family Group". Therapists are also required to accommodate evening parental meetings when necessary. Day time hours may be equalized by these evening times, with permission from the principal.

To maintain overall school morale by ensuring each employee meets his/her own work requirements, it is expected that all staff arrive to work on time and stay for the full duration of the day. If any faculty is late for arrival and/or early in leaving, they will be "docked" for their time away from the work place if they have not received approval in advance from Administration. The team needs full participation of all faculty to fulfill the goals of the school culture.

Vacations

It is expected that faculty will only take vacations during school holiday and weekend dates, designated by the school calendar. If an emergency arises, the staff member must notify the principal and expect to utilize "personal days" and/or take these days without pay.

Any personal day or vacation need that occurs the day immediately prior to or immediately following a holiday break from school (per school calendar) will not be permissible. Such a day will be without pay.

Bereavement

A faculty member will be granted up to three (3) days bereavement in the case of death of an immediate family member or member of the household (parents, spouse, sibling, child, grandparents, guardians). Such leave shall be granted without loss of pay. Two days of "personal time" or "sick leave" may be added to this total.

Each staff member will be granted use of two (2) sick days and/or two (2) personal days to attend the funeral of anyone other than an immediate family member. Personal days will be used prior to sick days.

Over and above these limits will be without pay.

Religious holidays

Full time staff will be granted one (1) day of leave with pay for required observance of a recognized religious holiday of that staff members faith when such observance is not possible outside of the working hours.

Jury Duty

Employees of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** who are called for jury duty will receive their full pay, providing that the employee remits to the school their reimbursement for the jury duty, minus their transportation expenses.

Military Leave

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY grants military leave in accordance with applicable law. If applicable, we will offer health insurance at the group rate for the first three months of leave. After the expiration of three months, health insurance will be offered through COBRA. Life insurance and disability benefits cease on the first day following the last day of active employment.

Faculty and Staff Assignments

The principal will designate duties and assignments. These assignments may change and vary due to the needs of the educational/therapeutic environment. Requests for assignments or changes in assignments can be made to the principal. If vacancies become available such requests may be taken into consideration.

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers will be paid at a rate commensurate with the BA/step 1 level of the teacher's salary schedule. Time sheets need to be filled out by substitute teachers and approved by the Principal.

Proper Use of Business Equipment and Internet

The computers and software that are utilized by staff and students are owned by the company and are intended to be used for business purposes. Utilizing these resources for informal or personal purposes is permissible only when it is congruent with company policy and does not adversely affect productivity. Employees are expected to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and not abuse this privilege.

The use of electronic communications is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct. Additionally, employees violating this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- o The placing of unlawful or unauthorized information on a system
- o The unauthorized use of the Internet for non-business purposes
- o Any use of instant messaging (for non-business purposes) or computer games
- o The use of abusive or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages
- o Communications that contain hostile, degrading, sexually explicit, or otherwise offensive references to people based on their sex, race, nationality, religion, age, color, disability status, sexual orientation, or other protected status
- o The sending of "chain letters", jokes, solicitations or offers to buy or sell goods, or other non-business material of a trivial or frivolous nature
- o Blogging (including but not limited to working on an employee's personal blog or spending work time on others' blogs for non-business purposes
- o Any other types of use which would cause congestion of the networks or otherwise interfere with the work of others.

Email and Internet messages that are sent and received via the company's email system are public communication and remain the property of the company. Such communications should not be considered "private" by employees. The company reserves the right to access and monitor all messages on the company's email system as the company deems necessary and appropriate. There is no expectation of privacy within any of the company's electronic communication systems. The contents of an employee's email may be inspected as part of routine monitoring by the company or in the course of an investigation triggered by indications of impropriety. All communication, including text and images, may be disclosed by the company to law enforcement authorities or other third parties without the prior consent of the sender or receiver of such information.

Internet access at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** is designed for educational purposes ONLY. Any violation of the regulations is unethical and may constitute disciplinary action.

Any misuse or overuse of the Internet capabilities may result in loss of Internet privileges for staff and/or students. Furthermore, any excessive or illegal personal use by staff members may lead to

dismissal from employment at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**. Such disciplinary actions are at the discretion of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** Administration.

Staff agree to instruct students in their homeroom and classes on the acceptable use of the Internet and proper Internet etiquette.

Staff agree to keenly supervise any and all Internet use by any student in their classroom and/or immediate care. Staff agree to only allow those students with signed permission and Internet Use Contracts to use the Internet. If a student's Internet privilege has been revoked staff will not allow that student to use the Internet at any time.

Administrators, at their sole discretion, reserve the right to suspend the internet use of any student or staff at **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**.

Staff Electronic Communication and Social Media Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

New Connections Academy recognizes the growing use of technology and social media by staff, parents and students. We encourage teachers, students and staff to use electronic media as a way to share educational resources, create and curate educational content and enhance the classroom experience. We respect that there are both potential benefits and potential problems that can arise from widespread access to web-based technology. To help us navigate this quickly changing trend in user generated social connectivity we have created guidelines for our schools as 'Best Practices' for social media usage. Please read this thoroughly to understand our required guidelines for employee conduct with regard to professional and personal social media usage.

Expectations for Communicating Electronically with Students and Parents Company Electronic Communication Guidelines - Does it pass the TAP Test?

- **The communication is Transparent.** – All electronic communication between staff and students (current and present) should be transparent. Staff members are expected to maintain openness, visibility and accountability with regards to all communication by cc'ing an administrator and the parent on all electronic communication.
- **The communication is Accessible.** - All electronic communication between staff and students should be considered a matter of record, a part of school archives, and/or may be accessible by others.
- **The communication is Professional.** – All electronic communication between staff and student should be written as professional representing New Connections Academy. This includes choice of words, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a New Connections Academy professional. Always choose words that are courteous, conscientious and generally businesslike in manner.

Methods of Communication

Any electronic communication between staff and students or parents may only be done using the company e-mail system at your school. Texting, networking and playing online games is not acceptable contact.

Acceptable Communication	Unacceptable Communication Methods
School electronic mail (e-mail) School websites	Text messaging or similar mediums Non-school email accounts Friending students or parents on Facebook or similar mediums Online games and related activities

Guidelines

Confidential information – Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential it probably is. Online conversations are never private. Do not use anyone's birth date, address or cell phone number on any public web site.

Private and personal information – Always respect the privacy of the school community members. Never give out or transmit personal information of yourself, your colleagues or your students that would disclose private or personal information and/or negatively reflect on yourself, your colleagues, your students or your place of employment.

Images – Do not post or transmit any visual media (photos/ videos, etc.) of students. Do not create/take any visual media of students with personal devices.

Links – Do not blindly pass on links without personally evaluating the content.

Social Networks and Devices – School owned Devices and Networks are intended only for educational purposes.

Monitoring - All activity over the network or using the school technologies may be monitored and retained.

Restriction - Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations.

Virus Security – Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network by not opening unknown, untrusted or infected files. Do not download .exe files without permission and do not try to remove viruses yourself. Alert administration immediately if you believe your computer is infected.

Misuse - Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.

Safety and Reporting - Users of the network or other technologies are expected to alert Administration immediately of any concerns for safety or security

Mistakes – If you have made a misjudgment in any of the above areas let an administrator know immediately.

Friending – New Connections Academy does not permit accepting or requesting 'Friend' or 'Contact' requests from any current or former students or parents on any social network site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

Social Media Page – New Connections Academy does not currently have a business Social Media page. If you have a personal Social Media page we highly recommend a careful use of privacy settings that prevent student access. No reference should ever be made to a student's enrollment at one of our schools. Informing students that it is school policy that you are prohibited from communications with students outside of school is important.

Search Engines and Social Media – New Connections Academy does not allow the use of web-based tools for non-volunteered student information.

E-Mail Contacts – New Connections Academy does not permit the use of personal email for work related contact.

Text Contacts – New Connections Academy does not allow texting with students or parents

Business Review Sites – New Connections Academy does not allow staff to elicit an endorsement from current or former parents or students on any profession forum or business related sites and may not respond to any review whether positive or negative.

Use of New Connections Academy Reference - Every employee represents New Connections Academy with any public reference to New Connections Academy. Any contact or comment with public media regarding New Connections Academy must be cleared with administration.

Proper use of Business Equipment and Internet - The school computers and business equipment are to be used for business purposes only.

Use of Web Enabled Notebooks, Laptops, etc. in the Classroom -Staff is expected to instruct students on the proper use of the internet and internet etiquette. Staff agrees to keenly supervise any and all Internet use by any student in their classroom and/or immediate care. For a more detailed description of this policy see "Proper use of Business Equipment and Internet" in the Faculty Handbook.

All employees may be subject to disciplinary consequences for violations of this policy.

FACULTY – STUDENT RELATIONS

Faculty members are expected to regard each student as an individual and to accord each the rights and respect due any individual. The role of staff shall be seen, not as dictator or controller, but as resource person, aide, facilitator, and guide in the learning process. Students will be treated with courtesy and consideration. Neither insults nor sarcasm will ever be used. Integrity, generosity, and nurturing will be the emphasis.

Each student will be urged to regard faculty and staff members as people with specific skills and knowledge which can be utilized to aid in their own development and growth.

Students will be expected to regard faculty as individuals, employed to provide direct and indirect contributions to their learning, educational and emotional growth.

While students are to have considerable latitude in making choices for themselves, they shall be required to respect the rights of others; teachers teaching and students learning.

Faculty supervision, evaluation, Retention and/or Probation

Supervision and evaluation will result in the retention of faculty who are fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, pursuing the vision of the school and promoting positive learning and emotional growth amongst the students and faculty as a whole.

SUPERIOR: Superior level of competency; exceptional in effectiveness; creative in planning and presentation; exceptional attention to students; establish an exemplary classroom environment, managerial system and student evaluation program; and improves the academic climate of the school. Exceptional quality, multiple strengths in all skill areas, and full support of school philosophies and practices.

ABOVE AVERAGE: Above average level of performance; above average planning, behavioral management and presentation. Strengths in many areas of teaching and clinical effectiveness.

AVERAGE: Satisfactory level of performance. Generally accepted levels of performance; job requirements adequately carried out. Improvements in several areas of performance are desired.

UNSATISFACTORY: Unsatisfactory level of performance; Inability or lack of desire to prepare adequately; possible lack of cooperation, lack of organization, ineffective teaching/therapeutic techniques; lack of support for the school community; lack of adequate behavioral intervention techniques. Observations reveal significant weaknesses in areas of teaching and/or therapeutic standards. Negative impact upon students and the school environment are observed.

Salary increases will be based upon merit.
Excellence will be rewarded.

At times it may be necessary to place a staff member on a probationary status. It will be the intentions of the ***NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY*** Administration to put a mentor program in place to provide support and direction in such a situation.

If any staff member violates the law or moral/ethical conduct expected by **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**

they will be released from their duties, immediately and without pay.

Misconduct definitions include:

- Insubordination or refusal to carry out a directive or policy of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** or an Administrator of **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**.
- Possession of, use of, distribution of or attempt to use or distribute any illegal or controlled substance, such as drugs, dangerous weapon or contraband at any **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** activity or related event.
- Any abusive, profane, or intimidating words or gestures towards co-workers, students or school patrons.
- Endangering the physical or psychological safety of any school personnel, patrons or students.
- Absence from duties without notice.
- Conduct which is immoral, illegal, and salacious or which will tend to discredit **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY**.
- Conduct which is unbecoming: party to malicious gossip, or activity that would be disruptive to school morale or bring discredit to the school, its employees, students or families.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE AND SUSPENSION POLICY

The Company's Standards of Conduct and Progressive Disciplinary Policy are established to benefit the employee and guide the employee on proper and expected conduct and behavior. If you do receive the benefit of any of these methods of discipline, please learn from your mistakes and improve your behavior and conduct.

When employee misconduct occurs, it is in the Company's best interest to take corrective measures in an effort to prevent the employee from engaging in further similar misconduct. The approach we take to discipline may vary depending, in our discretion, on, among other things, the gravity of the offense, the circumstances under which it occurred, your duties, your length of service with our Company, and your overall work record, including any prior misconduct. Discipline can take one of the following forms:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Written warning;
3. Written warning with suspension;
4. Discharge.

The Company has no obligation to its employees to follow these disciplinary steps before discharging an employee, and any or all of these steps may be omitted as the Company deems appropriate, in its discretion. Notwithstanding this disciplinary procedure, the Company has the right to discharge an employee for any or no reason at all, at any time, an employee may be suspended with or without pay or dismissed upon oral or written notice by administration.

The use of a progressive disciplinary policy is discretionary, in our Company's judgment. The Company's decision in every case is final and binding.

Definitions:

- Misconduct shall include any conduct, behavior or activity which causes, or may reasonably lead one to believe that there will be injury or disruption or material interference with the educational process or the rights of students or of school personnel, or interference with the management of

NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY .

- Misconduct also includes, but is not limited to the following types of conduct, behavior or activity:
 1. Insubordination to persons who have the responsibility to supervise the employee or insubordination by failing to carry out a directive or policy of administration. The failure or refusal to follow directions, verbal or written, and conduct such as the use of gestures that may reasonably be construed as insubordination.
 - 138636624. Possession of, use of, distribution of, or attempts to use or distribute any illegal or controlled substance, such as alcohol and drugs or dangerous weapons or contraband.
 - 138637104. Verbal abuse of school personnel, students or the use of profane words or gestures to such persons.
 - 138637200. Intimidating or attempting to intimidate school personnel, students and their families.
 - 138636336. Fighting with or assaulting school personnel and/or students.
 - 138636144. Endangering the physical or psychological well-being of school personnel or students.
 - 138636048. Willful actions or conduct which directly or indirectly jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of school personnel or students.
 - 138637248. Absence from duties without notice to appropriate school personnel or without a valid excuse or absence with an improper or fraudulent reason or medical or other reports.
 - 138636000. Conduct which is immoral, illegal, and salacious or which will tend to discredit **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** or its employees.
 - 138636960. Being a party to significant malicious gossip, report or activity that would tend to disrupt school morale or bring discredit to **NEW CONNECTIONS ACADEMY** or its employees.

Misconduct to which disciplinary sanctions are applicable may occur on school grounds, during the school day or at school functions held at other times. Such conduct outside school grounds is punishable when that conduct is directly related to the employee's educational role.

UPON TERMINATION

On your last day of work, you must return all Company property charged to you such as keys, passwords for phones and computers, uniforms, tools, books, equipment, and other items. Clearing yourself of these personal accountabilities will expedite disbursing your final paycheck. Administrative staff must observe/participate in determining that the items you are removing from school are personal property only.

Before you depart, your supervisor or administrator may conduct an Exit Interview with you, advising you on such matters as insurance and your final status. They will also welcome your frank opinion on how we can improve our Company.

EMPLOYMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received, read and had the opportunity to ask questions about the Company's discrimination and sexual harassment policy. I acknowledge the seriousness of this policy and I recognize that if I engage in acts of discrimination and /or sexual harassment, I am subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. I hereby commit to abide by the Company's discrimination and sexual harassment policy.

_____ Employee Name (Print Please)

_____ Employee Signature

_____ Social Security Number

_____ Date

MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received, read and had the opportunity to ask questions about the Company's discrimination and sexual harassment policy. I acknowledge the seriousness of this policy and I recognize that if I engage in acts of discrimination and/or sexual harassment, I am subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. I hereby commit to abide by the Company's discrimination and sexual harassment policy.

I further understand my responsibility as a member of management to take all steps necessary to prevent and resolve situations that could be deemed to be discrimination and/or sexual harassment. If I become aware of a possible situation that could be construed as either of these, I agree to take appropriate and immediate steps to report to Administration and/or investigate and/or remedy the particular situation. I also understand that I will not retaliate nor permit any retaliatory measures to be taken against any employee who makes a complaint alleging that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment. Finally, I understand that as a member of management I am not expressly or impliedly authorized at any time to engage in any act of discrimination or sexual harassment and that the Company absolutely forbids me from engaging in any such activity.

Employee Name (Print Please)

Employee Signature

Social Security Number

Date

EMPLOYER'S RECEIPT FOR COPY OF HANDBOOK

(For New Hires Only)

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial (Please Print)
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I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Company's Employee Handbook and understand my responsibility to familiarize myself with its provisions. I also understand that my employment is not for any definite period of time, and that nothing in this Handbook in any way creates an express or implied contract of employment or warranty of any benefits. I further understand that this Handbook is only a brief summary of benefits currently offered by this Company and an overview of some of its work rules and policies. I further understand that any and all of the rules, policies, wages and benefits referred to in this Handbook may be unilaterally amended, modified, reduced or discontinued at any time by the Company, in its judgment and discretion. *I also agree that either the Company or I can terminate my employment at will at any time, with or without cause or notice.*

Date

Employee Signature

Witness

Employee's Social Security Number