Nowell Academy
Student & Family Handbook

*Updated June 2021*
Letter from Nowell’s Executive Director

Dear Nowell students and families,

I am excited to start the new year with you all in our new building! After a tough year of distance learning, I’m excited to see everyone’s faces again! I have served in a leadership role at Nowell Academy for the past 5 years and during that time I’m often asked, “What sets Nowell Academy apart from other public high schools in Rhode Island?” Here are the things that make Nowell special and why I call Nowell my home.

Personal History (why I call Nowell home)

I am a former high school dropout. When I was a young girl, my family was ripped apart from incarceration and addiction. These family issues caused many barriers to my educational success. In 9th grade, I found myself working several jobs and living alone as a young adult. Thankfully, I found my way back to school and it changed my life. It truly was the single most important decision I have ever made. It wasn’t easy being a young mom and the first in my family to go to college. There were many obstacles but I eventually went on to earn my bachelors and masters degrees doing work in education. My personal mission is to give the gift of education to others just like me. I am here to believe in you until you believe in yourself. This is why I call Nowell my home.

Mission

Nowell is a public charter high school that serves Rhode Island’s pregnant, parenting and underserved youth. We are dedicated to support you to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in college, career and family life. We are different from many other high schools in that we have a daycare on site, robust professional readiness training, rigorous and relevant project based curriculum, high touch wrap around services and a family like atmosphere.

Family

Relationships are core to everything we do at Nowell. For four years Nowell has out performed almost every high school in the state in the Panorama survey, which indicates a strong culture and community. The entire staff at Nowell care deeply about our students. We also foster positive peer relationships and value relationships amongst all members of our community.

Welcome to our family!

Jessica Waters
Executive Director
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Mission Statement and Vision
The mission of the Sheila C. “Skip” Nowell Academy is to ensure that Rhode Island’s pregnant, parenting and underserved youth graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for success in college, career and family life.

Our vision is to become a national leader in providing an exceptionally high quality, competency-based high school experience to pregnant, parenting and underserved students.

- **Goal-** All Nowell students will have engaging, rigorous, and authentic learning experiences.
- **Theory of Action-** If we focus on equity through community and academics, then all Nowell students will have engaging, rigorous, and meaningful learning experiences.
- **Nowell Mission-** All students will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary for college, career, and family life.

Nowell School Anchors

Nowell Academy’s Anchors
Nowell Core Competencies/Skills

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Analysis and Synthesis</th>
<th>Writing and Composing</th>
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<th>Sharing and Active Listening</th>
<th>Self-Direction and Academic Self-Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Big categories to name a set of skills</td>
<td>To notice and make sense of key information, details or patterns</td>
<td>To employ research, evidence and/or reason to advance an idea or prove a truth</td>
<td>To convey and exchange ideas, perspectives, and information</td>
<td>To follow agreed-upon norms to actively engage in discussion, share ideas and listen</td>
<td>To demonstrate skills of self-direction and academic self-management</td>
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</table>

### Definition
- To notice and make sense of key information, details or patterns
- To employ research, evidence and/or reason to advance an idea or prove a truth
- To convey and exchange ideas, perspectives, and information
- To follow agreed-upon norms to actively engage in discussion, share ideas and listen
- To demonstrate skills of self-direction and academic self-management

### Cog Skills
- Smaller, discrete skills to support Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cog Skills</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Self-Direction and Academic Self-Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✗ Inferences</td>
<td>Argumentative Claim</td>
<td>- Track your own academic data in Summit</td>
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<tr>
<td>✗ Connections</td>
<td>Selecting Evidence</td>
<td>- Utilize feedback to revise work</td>
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<tr>
<td>✗ Compare / Contrast</td>
<td>Explaining Evidence</td>
<td>- Set SMART goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>✗ Patterns and Relationships</td>
<td>Counter-argument</td>
<td>- Utilize a variety of task and time management strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>✗ Communicate Accurately and Precisely</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>- Reflect on goals; celebrate wins and shift strategies as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>✗ Oral presentation</td>
<td>Sharing</td>
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### Board of Directors

Nowell Academy is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board meets regularly and is composed of community members with expertise in management, education, business, arts, and community leadership. The Board leads the school in making decisions regarding school financial, legal, and academic outcomes. The Board assists the school in achieving its goals and ensures that its mission is met.

Nowell Academy is a public school. All of its board meetings are open to the public. Board agendas are posted and can be found on the Secretary of State website two days before meetings are held.

Students and their families who wish to appeal a decision made by administration will be referred to the Board of Directors. Further appeals typically go to the Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.
The Nowell Academy Board will convene committees to address important issues related to the school and overall organization. These committees often involve parents, students, faculty/staff and individuals from the community.

**Board Members (effective July 2021):**

- Larome Myrick (Chair)
- Rilwan Feyisitan (Vice-Chair)
- Rebecca Dupras (Secretary)
- Juan Carter
- Maria Carvalho
- Easton Dickson
- Sulina Mohanty (Vice-Chair)
- Sharon Lee
- Anjel Newman
- Hon. Maria Rivera
- Dr. Patricia Flanagan

**Where can I learn more about Nowell? online**

In March of 2017, the Nowell Leadership Academy adopted a strategic plan. This document is intended to guide Nowell’s growth and development over the 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. You can find a copy of the strategic plan [online here](#).

Our school has been featured in several news articles over the years. To learn more about what kind of school we are, consider watching [this video](#) produced in April of 2017 or reading [this article](#).

**Staff Contacts**

All staff members at Nowell are issued school cell phones. Students and families are encouraged to contact teachers, advisors and other staff members as necessary by phone or by text message. Staff are available by phone or by text message until 8:00 PM at night Monday through Friday, with the exception of holidays. A list of staff and their cell phone contacts can be found in the table below.

**Faculty & Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(401) 286-0866</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(401) 408-3583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(401) 525-6798</td>
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Section 2. Enrollment, Schedule, & Attendance Expectations

**Enrollment Process**

Rhode Island students who are interested in attending Nowell Academy must submit an application. Admission to the school is open to all prospective high school students that are between the ages 15 – 20 years old as of September 1 of the school year, regardless of their age, sex, race, national origin, citizenship status, religion, sexual orientation, color, disability, or handicap. Each spring, an enrollment lottery is held for the following school year. Students will be notified of their opportunity to enroll or their position on the waiting list. Applicants applying
after the lottery is held will be placed on the waiting list. If you’d like to know more, a detailed enrollment policy is available, which describes the lottery and waiting list procedures.

**Address Updates**
It is important to have current addresses and phone numbers for all of our students and their families. If you need to make a change to your address or phone number, please contact Johanny Toribio at johannytoribio@nowellacademy.org or 401-408-3579.

**School Attendance Policy**
Many students who enroll at the Nowell Leadership Academy come to our school with academic skills that are significantly below grade level. In order for our students to catch up to their grade-level peers and get prepared to graduate ready for success in college, careers and in family life, we find that our students benefit from as much time as possible in school. We also offer frequent Saturday school learning opportunities, and four weeks of summer school.

Good attendance is very important to the success of our students. Absences are detrimental to the learning process and work completed outside of the class is not as effective or meaningful as the actual classroom experience.

Students are expected to attend school daily and on time. In the instance that a student is absent in excess of 20% of their scheduled school time Nowell Academy will follow their defined attendance procedures, those procedures are listed below.

- **It is important that all students are in attendance daily with all of their teachers.**
  When a student has missed 10 or more days of school per quarter (each quarter has 8 weeks of instruction), the chances of students passing their classes are significantly reduced. When absent, students are expected to complete missed class work within a reasonable amount of time. Please note that work may not be readily available because students may need to meet with a teacher or may need instruction prior to completing assignments.

Students may occasionally seek modified schedules for learning that takes place outside of the school building. We are proud to assist students with childcare, transportation needs and other logistical challenges. If a life challenge is making it hard for you to come to school on time, please tell the Dean of Students or your advisor immediately. The school will work with you to try and resolve whatever challenge you are experiencing. Communication is key; do not simply stop coming to school and ignore the school’s attempts to contact you. Doing so may result in your being referred to truancy court and/or being unenrolled from the school.

**2A. Attendance Playbook**
(Revised July 2020)

The Nowell Leadership Academy Attendance & Student Outreach Policy Handbook exists to (1) articulate our school’s guiding principles and orienting philosophies, (2) document our school’s daily protocols, and (3) assign specific responsibilities and management structures relating to student attendance and outreach.
I. Personnel

Attendance & Student Outreach at the Nowell Leadership Academy is principally managed by a team of seven full-time staff members. They are: the Student Support Specialists (2), the Dean of Students (1), Director of Operations (1), and the School Social Worker (1). This team reports to the Chiefs of College and Career Planning and Chief of Student Supports. As outlined below, these individuals plus teacher mentors are responsible for providing different levels of intervention related to student outreach.

Primary Person
Role: The primary person is responsible for checking in with students every day and serves as the point person for that student. The primary person serves as the first contact for a student and initiates any support or services for a student.

- Text every morning reminding students of the start of school as well as words of encouragement.
- Takes attendance during pod time.
- Coordinates making sure the right staff member is alerted when a student is in crisis or needs supports (food insecurity, emotional support, financial support, medical needs, and other services).
- Initiates MTSS process.
- Attend student and parent conferences when necessary.

Director of Operations
Role: Overseer of Attendance Team;

- Attend and run daily attendance meetings with all necessary documents.
- Schedule student and parent conferences as necessary.
- Document all interventions and communications on the Outreach Log.
- Report daily attendance percentages to ED.
- Report monthly to the academic team to provide updates on student attendance issues.
- Manages a caseload of students who are chronically absent.

Student Support Specialists
Role: Support for Director of Operations in outreach and coordination
Responsibilities:

- Attend daily attendance meetings with all necessary documents.
- Make parent phone calls as necessary.
● Schedule student and parent conferences with the Chief of College and Career Planning when a student reaches more than 5 absences for the quarter.
● Document all interventions on the Outreach Log.
● Distribute weekly Attendance Outreach Log to all staff.
● Report monthly to the academic team to provide updates on student attendance issues.
● Manages a caseload of students who are chronically absent.
● Greet students daily in the morning and supports with student check in.

Social Worker
Role: Primary contact person for parents and students of extreme attendance issues and who require special services
Responsibilities:
● Attend daily attendance meetings with all necessary documents.
● Make parent phone calls as necessary.
● Attend and/or schedule student and parent conferences as necessary.
● Document all interventions on the Outreach Log.
● Coordinates all outside services for support to students who are chronically absent.
● Conducts home visits as needed.
● Manages a caseload of students who are chronically absent.

Dean of Students
Role: Primary support for day to day management of campus life
Responsibilities:
● Attend daily attendance meetings with all necessary documents.
● Make parent phone calls as necessary.
● Attend and/or schedule student and parent conferences.
● Greet students daily in the morning.
● Serves as the coordinator for students who return to campus after 5 or more absences.
● Manages the on-time incentive program.
● Manages any student who is requesting to leave school early.
● Manages a caseload of students who are chronically absent.
● Manage PBIS program.

Chief of College and Career Planning and Chief of Student Supports
Role: Oversees Nowell’s attendance policy providing leadership to attendance team
● Provides a weekly update to the leadership team.
● Has 1:1 Check in with the Director of Operations bi-weekly.
● Holds meetings with students and families who have missed 5 or more days for a quarter.
● Informs the ED on success of attendance policy and makes recommendations as needed.
● Leads monthly meetings with ED to discuss progress towards attendance goals.
● Coordination or provision of services.
● Develops and Ensures that all steps of a students re-engagement are being followed by attendance team.
● Manages the prerequisite engagement plan.
● Audits attendance coding and ensures correct codes are being followed.
II. Beliefs & Goals regarding Attendance

Relative to daily attendance at Nowell, we hold the following six Beliefs to be true for all students:

First, we believe that being in school every day is the goal for 100% of our students. School is where young people belong. School is where students can receive academic, social, emotional and health support. There is no substitute for physically attending and being fully engaged in school.

Second, we accept that it’s going to take time. Many of our students have been chronically absent from school for years. We work to help our students change their behavior, but we don’t get discouraged when results don’t materialize overnight. We expect that progress comes slow, and we look for small wins.

Third, we are driven to be the best school in Rhode Island at serving chronically absent students. Because of who we are and who we serve, we know that we must be the MOST driven, the MOST determined, the MOST creative high school in our state when it comes to re-engaging disconnected youth.

Fourth, we believe classroom teachers hold the keys to engaging students. Every teacher at our school must develop (1) meaningful, deep, personally supportive relationships with students and (2) intellectually challenging and engaging classroom environments. This is a pre-requisite.

Fifth, we believe that attendance and engagement is a whole school outcome. Everything we do is in service of re-engaging disengaged students. In other words, our uniform policy, our field trips, our community meetings – all of these things, in their own way, are about developing a whole-school supportive community where students feel like they belong.

Sixth, we recognize the human hierarchy of needs. We know that attending school and meaningfully participating in classes is particularly challenging when our students are homeless, hungry, lacking in childcare or suffering from debilitating levels of toxic stress and trauma. We are determined to use the resources within our control to address these and similar barriers to school attendance. And while we recognize this hierarchy of needs, we refuse to accept these social and behavioral health needs as an excuse for a student to miss school. Rather, they push us ever more urgently to assist students in resolving these barriers to engagement.

Nowell maintains two simple Goals related to student attendance & outreach:

1. We have a goal that we will connect with every student every day.
   a. Even if a student is not physically in school, we must know what they are doing, how they are doing, why they are out of school and what support they might need to return tomorrow and stay engaged.

2. We have a goal that no fewer than 70% of students will attend every day.
III. Attendance Outreach Design Principles

In designing, reflecting on and evaluating Nowell’s attendance initiatives, we seek to develop a system that is:

**Robust.** We recognize that our outreach and engagement efforts must be intentionally designed to engage a population of students with a history of chronic absenteeism.

**Tiered.** We recognize that our students come to us with different needs and varying levels of school readiness. Our outreach and engagement efforts must be effective at providing varied levels and types of supports based on student needs. Our outreach efforts look different for a student who misses one day versus a student who typically only attends one or two days per week.

**Effective.** Attendance and engagement outreach is labor intensive and can be fatiguing for Nowell staff involved. We seek a system that removes duplication of efforts and matches our best efforts with high yield results.

**Informative.** We use our attendance outreach and engagement system as a vehicle to collect information at all points along the way. Data is stored in a central repository and pulled frequently for analysis and program improvement.

**Progressively Flexible.** Every student at Nowell, regardless of attendance barriers, has an on-ramp towards full-time attendance. We “meet students where they are” no matter where they are.

IV. What does it mean to be present?

Recognizing that Nowell students are often in a process of returning to school that looks different than physically attending for a full-day, Nowell has developed a set of attendance guidelines in October of 2018 (Revised July 2021; please note additions for Distance Learning circumstances). This section provides an overview of how Nowell matches different attendance codes to real-life scenarios we encounter at our school.

V. The Action Plan

The purpose of this section is to clearly document a detailed Action Plan for the specific steps Nowell will take to engage absent students. These are not meant to be sequential in some instances but serve as a guide to all of the actions that will take place.

**Action:** Every morning, the primary person will text all students on their caseload with a positive message for the day and to let them know they are wanted and welcome at school.

If a student is more than 15 minutes late they must sign in with the Student Support Specialists. The SSS will mark those students tardy for the day. More than 1 tardy for the week results in loss of leaving for lunch privileges. If a student has perfect attendance and no tardies for the week, they will receive a $10 gift card to a local restaurant (Serendipities, Pizza King and Frisky Fries). Gift cards are dispersed on Monday in Pod for the previous week.
Teachers take attendance in Pod. Tues-Fri (11:35-12:40) and Monday (9-11).

**Action:** Each day the attendance team meets from 2:00-2:30. During this time they look at the Absent student roster and determine outreach for absent students. This includes sending a robo phone call, call to parents, home visit etc. The team records all notes and actions taken.

**Action:** In the event that a student is absent for three days, someone from the attendance team will reach out to the student and record all pertinent information about the student’s absence in Infinite Campus. Contact notes should include (1) individual who made contact, (2) date, (3) pertinent information learned during a phone call, and (4) next steps.

**Action:** When a student reaches 5 absences for a quarter, the Director of Operations alerts the Chief of College and Career Planning who will send a letter to students and families explaining the risk of not receiving quarter credit. The attendance team will then seek to establish a re-engagement meeting with the student or guardian. The primary person is also alerted. This list of students and notes, including letters sent home and re-engagement meeting notes, is shared with the academic team during the monthly meeting.

**Action:** When a student reaches 10 absences for the quarter they will not be eligible to receive quarter credit (.25) in core classes. Every project in every class requires students to reach at least a 70% on all cognitive skills for the class. Being present, participating in class, and engaging in a project requires you to show up. This is true of anything in your life including showing up for work and for your family and partner when they need you. If you miss more than 10 classes you have not shown up enough and therefore cannot meet the required expectation for this project. You will still be eligible for the next quarter so it’s not too late to earn course credit. This is not punitive. On the contrary, this triggers an action of supportive steps to help students deal with and remove barriers to attending school.

**Supports**
When a student reaches this 10 absence mark for the quarter the Chief of College and Career Planning and Chief of Student Supports will develop a reengagement plan in collaboration with the attendance team. This plan will include prerequisite steps the student and team should take to support re-engagement with school. The family and student will have a meeting with the Chiefs and sign a commitment plan to get the student back on track. The team will also work with the school social worker to ensure support is provided for a successful reentry plan.

Prerequisites include but are not limited to:
- Attending Pod Time
- Attending night engagement classes (elective credit)
- Meeting with social worker
- Meeting with Chief of College and Career Planning
- Attending art week
- Rosetta Stone independent work
- Attend mentoring with primary person
- Attend Community Meetings
Complete Re-engagement project that focus on social and emotional well-being

**Action:** Midway through each quarter (approximately 20 days from the start of the quarter), the attendance team will compile a list of students who (1) are under the age of 18, and (2) have had no contact with the school to Nowell’s legal counsel for referral to family court. This list is then given to the Chief of College and Career. (See next section for more information on truancy proceedings). On this same date, Chief of College and Career sends a letter home to students who are (1) over the age of 18, and (2) have disengaged from Nowell that the student will be withdrawn from school due to no contact with the school.(See next section for more information on withdrawal procedures, including the warning letter referred to here). A copy of this letter is placed in each student’s file.

**VI. Referral to Family Court and/or Withdrawal from Enrollment**

Students who are under the age of 18 and fail to engage with the school are immediately referred to family court for truancy proceedings. The Chief of College and Career manages Nowell’s truancy caseload in partnership with school counsel.

Nowell will withdraw a student over the age of 18 at the end of the quarter if Nowell has lost *all* contact with the student and their family. The Chief of College and career recommends a student for withdrawal to the Executive Director, and the Executive Director approves (or rejects) such recommendations. No student shall be recommended for withdrawal unless Nowell has attempted contact with or sent a certified letter to the student at a minimum of 3 times.

Students who are peripherally connected to Nowell (i.e. making good faith efforts to identify childcare, working with the Dean of Students or Chief of College and Career to make academic progress from home) are not withdrawn.

**VII. Post-Enrollment Services**

When we withdraw a student from Nowell, we think of their enrollment as having been indefinitely suspended rather than permanently terminated. Even though they are no longer officially our student, we believe we have a responsibility – to the extent that our resources allow – to help prepare them to return to Nowell (or another program) when they are ready to re-engage in school.

Nowell’s Family Coach will maintain responsibility for providing post-enrollment services to any student who has left Nowell within the previous three months. Outreach is individualized. The Family Coach provides unlimited, on-demand social work counseling to any former student who has been enrolled with Nowell Academy. The Family Coach will call, text, and mail home letters to recently withdrawn students seeking information on their well-being and offering assistance to return to Nowell or another institution.

**Sample: Risk of Withdrawal / Truancy Notification Template**
Dear student of the Nowell Leadership Academy:

This letter is to inform you that you are at risk of withdrawal and termination of enrollment / at risk of referral to family court for truancy proceedings at Nowell Academy. The reason you are at risk of withdrawal / at risk of referral to family court is because, according to our records, you have been absent from school without excuse for a minimum of 50% of the current academic quarter. Additionally, you have been unresponsive to phone calls, text messages and announced/unannounced home visits.

We know that persisting in school can be challenging. Our mission is to support you and help you reach your post-secondary goals. If you wish to remain an enrolled student at Nowell, it is important that you contact the school immediately.

We will continue to try to contact you for the remainder of this academic quarter. If we do not hear from you and/or if you accumulate 10 or more unexcused absences from school we will refer your case to family court / assume that you have elected to terminate your enrollment at Nowell.

My personal cell phone number is (401) 578-4177. If you believe you are receiving this letter in error, or if there is anything else we can do to support you, please contact me right away.

Sincerely,

Melissa Slaiger
Chief of College and Career

**School Calendar**

In the 2021-2021 school year, Nowell will be open for 208 school days. Appendix 1 shows the current year school calendar. You can find a copy of the 2021-2022 school year calendar on the Nowell Leadership Academy website here.

**Daily Schedule**

Below, please find a copy of the student schedule. The daily schedule may be adjusted from time to time to test out new programs or accommodate special events. An up-to-date copy of the daily schedule will always be available at the school.
● **Project change regularly throughout the year**

**Mentoring/Community Monday**

**Academics Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY SCHEDULE</th>
<th>TUESDAY - FRIDAY SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 9:00 Breakfast</td>
<td>8:30 - 9:00 Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 10:00 Pod / Mentoring / SDL</td>
<td>9:00 - 10:30 Project 1 / TLE / 90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 - 11:00 Pod / Mentoring / SDL</td>
<td>10:35 - 11:35 Single-Subject 1 / 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:05 - 12:05 Community Meeting</td>
<td>11:40 - 12:10 Lunch 1 / Pod A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:10 - 12:40 Lunch 1 / Pod A</td>
<td>12:15 - 12:45 Lunch 2 / Pod B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 - 1:15 Lunch 2 / Pod B</td>
<td>12:50 - 2:20 Project 2 / TLE / 90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 Student Dismissal</td>
<td>2:25 - 3:25 Single-Subject 2 / 60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 - 2:15 PD</td>
<td>3:25 - 3:30 Announcements / Daily Wrap up (whole-school; Melissa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 - 4:30 Planning / Co-Planning Time</td>
<td>3:30 - 4:30 Planning / Co-Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Snow Days/Closing of the Building**

Occasionally, Nowell Academy closes the school building due to inclement weather or for other reasons. In terms of academics and community, Nowell no longer has snow days, instead, they will be distant learning days from home. All teachers and staff will report to school online or via zoom on snow days. The school building may be closed (meaning no work bar or wrap around services), but classes will still be in session.

With that said, Nowell makes its own determinations regarding school building closures. Please do not assume that the Nowell campus is closed just because the Providence school district is closed due to inclement weather! You can find out if the building will be closed due to inclement weather through local TV and radio, by visiting the Nowell Academy website or the RI Broadcasters website, or by following Nowell’s social media accounts on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

**Fire Drills and Other Emergencies**

The Nowell Academy Emergency Management and School Safety Plan is in accordance with all Department of Education mandates. A manual is available in each classroom.

If a fire drill, lockdown, or other emergency should occur, students will follow the instructions given by staff and will also view and follow the posted fire emergency exit plan.

**Monthly Electronic Newsletter**

Once a month, the Nowell Leadership Academy sends out an electronic newsletter (“Nowell News”) with general updates on school activities. You can subscribe to Nowell News on the Nowell Leadership Academy website by visiting [www.nowellacademy.org](http://www.nowellacademy.org). In addition to the monthly newsletter, we will be posting any updates, events, and communications on the website under the “Nowell Communications” tab.
Pods

All Nowell students are assigned a Pod number and a Pod teacher at the beginning of the school year. The Pod teacher serves as the students Mentor (coach, advocate, and confidante) throughout the year. The Pod teacher helps students set goals, create plans, and make good decisions -- the skills of becoming a self-directed learner. In addition to the Dean of Students, the Pod teacher / Mentor also serves as a main point of contact for a student's family with the school. Pods will meet daily.

Students will also meet with their Pod teacher in a one-on-one setting every Monday for Nowell Mentoring. Mondays will serve as the Mentoring time. Pod teachers will meet with students regarding their safety, health, housing, food, SEL needs as well as the typical Summit academic check in.

In the instance that students need additional support, parents may be called in for a meeting to give their input into a more intensive intervention strategy.

Child Care

Providing reliable, exceptional child care for students is one of Nowell Academy’s founding principles. Research confirms that parenting students who have access to good child care are more likely to have a successful high school experience than students who do not. Students in need of assistance with childcare should speak with the Dean of Students or the School Nurse.

Nowell is pleased to announce a partnership with Dr. Day Care and boasts a newly designed, state-of-the-art facility for the daycare here on campus. This arrangement supports Nowell’s mission by providing a haven for pregnant and parenting high school students while offering the comfort and convenience of having parent and child in the same building.

Attending the Nowell Child Center at Dr. Day Care is a privilege and participating students are required to adhere to a few basic expectations in order to use this service. We have a low child to teacher ratio that ensures your child will receive the attention and care that he/she needs. Day care costs may be paid out of pocket or through a DHS child care subsidy if needed. The parenting student must apply and be approved for the DHS subsidy. Please speak to our school nurse for details.

Transportation

Nowell offers all students transportation to school via its transportation support program. Students are able to access any of the following transportation supports on a weekly basis:

- A RIPTA 10-ride pass;
- A $20 gas card;
- A $20 gift card (if a student walks and elects not to use a gas-card or bus fare).
In order to participate in Nowell’s transportation support program, students must sign and return a transportation support form. For more information on Nowell’s transportation support program, please see the main office.

**Food Services**

All Nowell Academy students are provided a *free* hot breakfast, a *free* hot lunch, and snack service every day. During limited in-person instruction or if school is closed, Nowell will serve grab-and-go breakfast and lunch to pick up at the rear entrance of the school. Our school food partner, Sodexo, provides Nowell students with nutritious meals with multiple options at every meal. Students with any special dietary needs should notify the School Nurse. Members of the Skipper Society may leave school for lunch (if under 18, Skipper Society members need parental permission.) Students who are not members of the Skipper Society may not leave school for lunch.

Students are welcome to bring a bagged lunch; these should be taken to the kitchen each morning, and they will be refrigerated until lunchtime. Students may not eat meals during class time. Students may be permitted to bring a drink or snack into class at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Students who arrive to school with food may ask the Dean of Students to store it in the cafeteria until lunchtime. Students may not order food to be delivered to the school unless given special permission.

At times other than breakfast and lunch, Nowell will maintain a supply of fresh fruit, healthy snacks and bottled water. Students - especially our expecting mothers - are welcome to enjoy one of these snacks in class so long as they take care to enjoy their snack in a way that is as minimally disruptive to the learning environment as possible.

Occasionally, Nowell may order a special lunch for the whole campus.

**Section 4. Student Health and Wellness**

**What makes Nowell unique for pregnant and parenting young adults?**

The Nowell Academy was founded specifically to serve pregnant and parenting young mothers and fathers. We maintain program offerings that are unique to this population of young adults. These program offerings are described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For students who are not pregnant or parenting</th>
<th>● Nowell requires all students to complete a four-semester health and wellness course that includes comprehensive sexual health education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For students who are pregnant</td>
<td>● Nowell’s school nurse will advise students throughout their pregnancy. She will meet with students in person at the Nowell building or virtually to answer their questions, help them understand their options and develop a plan for a healthy and safe birth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For students immediately</td>
<td>● Following childbirth, Nowell students typically spend six to eight weeks at home on “home learning”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
after child birth

- During home learning, students will complete an academic maternity project for which they receive school credit
- In an effort to prevent community spread of COVID-19, home visits by the school nurse will be suspended. Instead, Nowell’s school nurse teacher will complete postpartum visits virtually to check on the student’s and baby’s health, to monitor the parent’s progress on the maternity project, and to develop a plan to return to school.

For students with children

- Nowell offers private spaces for nursing mothers to breast-pump during the school day
- Nowell offers quarterly opportunities for students and their children to engage in fun activities together at school including playgroups, arts and crafts experiences, holiday themed parties, etc.
- Nowell offers a supportive community of understanding peers dedicated to your success and your baby’s success.

Counseling Services

Nowell is pleased to provide counseling services to students who elect to receive these services. Our school social worker is available to meet with students confidentially in one-on-one and group settings. Students can make an appointment to meet with the school social worker by speaking with their mentor, the Dean of Students or another staff member.

Nowell also maintains a partnership with Sojourner House, a Providence-based non-profit organizing provided assistance to victims of sexual assault. For information on speaking with Sojourner’s School Based Advocate, students may notify any school staff member.

Illness and Medications

If a student becomes seriously ill at school, they should ask their teacher to see the School Nurse. The nurse (or if the nurse is not available, another school administrator) will call the student’s parent or guardian, and arrangements may be made for student dismissal. If a student is having a critical medical emergency, the school nurse (or advisor if the nurse is not available) will first call 911 and then contact the student’s parent or guardian to inform them of the student’s status. If a parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact for the student will be notified.

Students suffering from chronic illness or medical conditions must alert the school nurse of their condition with proper documentation and directions for prescription delivery. In addition, students with allergies to foods, insects, medication, or any other substances must notify the school nurse immediately.

All students who are prescribed medication that needs to be taken during school hours must notify the School Nurse to make a plan for medication administration.

Tobacco Policy

All members of the Nowell community are encouraged to make decisions which support optimal health and well-being. Students who wish to quit smoking should contact the school nurse for support. In accordance with Rhode Island state law, all forms of tobacco use (Cigarette, e-cigarette, vapor, hookah pen, chewing tobacco) are prohibited within 100 feet of the school building.
Health
Nowell Academy offers Health and Wellness Education to students. Nowell’s health program is to provide information needed to make important decisions about health, wellness, and individual lifestyle. Topics related to health such as personal health and wellness, social and emotional health, safety, nutrition and physical activity, family life and sexual education will be discussed. The goal of Nowell’s health curriculum is to ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary to assume responsibilities for their own health. Any student, parent, or guardian with concerns about the teaching of sexual education may contact the Executive Director.

Maternity Leave Project:
Students who have a baby during the school year are granted a 6-8 week maternity leave. This amount of time away from school could be detrimental to a student's progression in high school. Nowell has created a maternity leave project that keeps students in connection with our school nurse and teachers and provides a way for students to exhibit competencies that are happening in their core classes while they are out. Students who complete the Maternity Leave project are given credit upon completion and are able to pick up in their classes where they left off.

Section 5. Academic & School Program

In the fall of 2017, the Nowell Academy adopted a new set of graduation requirements. These graduation requirements are described below. These graduation requirements apply to students who maintained 10 or fewer high school credits as of the start of the 2017-2018 school year, or to any newly enrolling student. Students who were considered juniors (11 - 15 credits) or seniors (15 - 20 credits) as of the start of the 2017-2018 school year are exempt from the graduation requirements described below. These students can meet Nowell's graduation requirements by successfully completing 20 high school credits and a senior Capstone project.

Graduation Requirements
The mission of the Nowell Academy is to ensure that Rhode Island’s pregnant, parenting and underserved youth graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for success in college, career and family life.

Nowell’s graduation requirements are intended to ensure that all students who graduate from our program have demonstrated true readiness in each of these three areas: post-secondary education, careers and family life. Our goal is to graduate students who are prepared to succeed in a college freshmen seminar, to find and maintain family sustaining jobs, and to serve as healthy, resilient heads of households.

These ambitious goals require students to reach a high bar before graduating. Our graduation requirements, program of studies, and system of supports therefore, are designed to do three things simultaneously, namely:

  (1) To set consistently high expectations for student success,
  (2) To offer multiple pathways and multiple opportunities for students to reach this standard
  (3) To provide an exceptional level of intervention and support – including more time in school – to assist students in meeting these standards.

Requirement #1: Prepared for Success in Post-Secondary Education

Like all high schools in Rhode Island, Nowell maintains a requirement that students complete our program of studies. Our program of studies includes coursework in the disciplines of
mathematics, English language arts, the sciences, social studies, health, foreign languages and financial literacy. Our program of studies also includes elective courses and a capstone requirement that applies to our seniors.

Like other high schools, Nowell translates mastery of course content into course “credits.” Students who demonstrate mastery in a course typically earn one course credit. Students can move through a course at their own pace and are not bound by “seat time” in order to earn credit. In some courses, students can elect to pursue deeper study in the content and earn more than one course credit upon demonstration of mastery. Students at Nowell successfully demonstrate mastery of content by completing both projects (scored by teachers against a common rubric that assesses mastery of cognitive skills) and content assessments.

Nowell’s academic program is designed to develop students who possess both content knowledge and the skills of self-directed learning. Self-directed learners seek challenges, demonstrate persistence, know how and when to shift strategies, seek help appropriately and respond to setbacks without giving up. Nowell develops self-directed learners through its project-based curriculum and its aligned cognitive skills rubric.

Because nearly all students at Nowell have attended one or more high schools before enrolling, most students begin at Nowell with some number of credits that transfer from a previous high school. These credits are determined upon enrollment by the principal in conjunction with the student and, when possible, the sending high school. A student whose transcript indicates that she has taken but failed a course at a previous high school has the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the content and, if so demonstrated, earn the requisite credit in the course.

Nowell’s program of studies is aligned with the admission standards of Rhode Island’s public colleges and universities. This alignment ensures that students who graduate from our school can, at a minimum, meet the threshold for enrollment at Rhode Island College and/or the University of Rhode Island. The program of studies requires students to demonstrate this level of mastery through four math courses, four English language arts courses, three science courses, three social studies courses, two health courses, two foreign language courses, two elective courses, and a financial literacy course. These courses, in combination with a workplace learning requirement, constitute 22.5 course credits or the equivalent that students must accumulate in order to be eligible for graduation.

**Summerbridge:** Nowell Summerbridge will support graduating seniors who are intending to enroll in postsecondary education (two year or four year programs) in the fall of 2020. The targeted students are first-generation college-intending students, with a special emphasis on multilingual learners. Nationally, these students are especially susceptible to *summer melt* and are at risk of not enrolling in college as intended. The purpose of Nowell Summerbridge is to help students navigate the multiple stumbling blocks that can arise in the time between high school graduation and college matriculation.

**Course Offerings**
Nowell’s specific course offerings and minimum requirements are listed below.

- Nowell offers Math Lab, Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and Financial Literacy. Students must demonstrate mastery in four math courses or their equivalent and at a minimum demonstrate mastery of Algebra 2.

- Nowell offers English 1, English 2, English 3 and English 4 (URI partnership College Writing Class). Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in each of these four
Nowell offers Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Food Revolutions, Disease in the United States, and a STEM course called Maker Space. Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in at least three courses or their equivalent.

Nowell offers Race and Class, Women's Studies, AP Government, Civics. Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in at least three courses or their equivalent.

Nowell offers a health program that includes a focus on reproductive health, pregnancy, early childhood development and healthy parenting. Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in the courses of this program or the equivalent.

Nowell offers instruction in foreign language. Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in no fewer than two foreign language courses.

Nowell offers elective courses. These elective courses include Nowell’s arts programming as well as courses available to students at Nowell at other institutions. Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in no fewer than two elective courses.

Students at Nowell must demonstrate mastery in financial literacy, either by successful completion/mastery of Nowell’s financial literacy course or its equivalent.

Students at Nowell must successfully complete a workplace learning experience (Professional Readiness) and a senior capstone experience, both described in further detail below.

Students pursuing a diploma from Nowell are required to complete and demonstrate mastery in no fewer than five courses (or, at a minimum, four and a half credits/courses) during their time as an enrolled student at Nowell regardless of how many credits/courses are transferred. This requirement is intended to ensure that all students spend at least twelve months with us prior to graduating.

A summary of the course requirements described above appears below:

- Math: 4 course credits
- English Language Arts: 4 course credits
- Science: 3 course credits
- Social Studies: 3 course credits
- Health: 2 course credits
- Foreign language: 2 course credits
- Electives: 2 course credits
- Financial literacy: 1 course credit
- Capstone: 1 course credit
- Workplace Learning: 1 course credit

Students who meet the required performance standards for the Seal of Biliteracy will receive the appropriate designation on their diploma.

Before graduating, students at Nowell must also demonstrate basic high school level proficiency in reading and mathematics prior to graduating from Nowell. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in one of several ways, as outlined below. Students can:

- Reach a minimum score of 50th percentile of eleventh grade proficiency in reading and
in math on the Northwest Educational Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessment, or

- Reach a minimum score of the 50th percentile in reading and in math on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or

- By earning a grade of 3 or higher on Advanced Placement ("AP") level courses in the math or sciences or in the humanities, or

- By earning a grade of B+ or higher in college courses in the math & sciences or in the humanities disciplines. Students at Nowell have the opportunity to take advantage of college courses at no cost through the State of Rhode Island’s Advanced Course Network; if taken for satisfaction of this graduation requirement, the course must be approved by the Principal in advance of registration.

Finally, students can satisfy the requirement of demonstrating readiness for post-secondary level reading and math coursework by earning acceptance to an accredited, Bachelor’s degree granting college or university, or by enrolling in a community college with an Accuplacer result demonstrating that a student does not require any remedial college coursework.

None of these opportunities to demonstrate proficiency serve as absolute gatekeepers. For example, students may demonstrate proficiency in reading by reaching the 50th percentile of ninth grade proficiency on the NWEA MAP assessment while demonstrating proficiency in math by earning a B+ in an introduction to engineering course at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Requirement #2: Prepared for Success in Careers

All graduating seniors at Nowell must complete a workplace-learning experience. Juniors at Nowell (students with between 11 and 15 high school course credits) are required to complete a minimum of two five-hour internship experiences. Seniors at Nowell complete a minimum of one twenty-hour internship experience. This internship experience will form the foundation of the student’s capstone research project.

Workplace experiences at Nowell are intended to further develop the cognitive skills that are assessed in the completion of Nowell’s academic projects. These cognitive skills include domains such as critical analysis, synthesizing data, writing, speaking, and presenting, explaining and integrating evidence, actively listening and oral presentation.

Under the supervision of the principal, students who demonstrate mastery of academic content during their workplace learning experience that is closely aligned with the content of a course requirement at Nowell may use their workplace learning experience to satisfy all or a portion of their course requirement. Students who meet the required performance standards for a Pathways Endorsement in the Arts, Business and Industry, Humanities and World Languages, Public Service, STEM or Teaching will receive the appropriate designation on their diploma.

As noted above, all seniors at Nowell complete a senior capstone project prior to graduating. The senior capstone project is grounded in a topic of the student of the student’s choosing and aligned to their internship experience. The senior capstone serves as an opportunity for students to demonstrate the elements of self-directed learning. The capstone project and presentation are graded against the cognitive skills rubric described above; students satisfy this requirement by demonstrating both deep knowledge of the subject matter chosen and mastery of the aligned cognitive skills. More information on capstone can be found in the Nowell
Requirement #3: Prepared for Success in Family Life

Nowell maintains a four-semester health and wellness course that is designed specifically for pregnant and parenting teenagers. The course includes material on reproductive health, preventing unplanned pregnancy, maintaining healthy pregnancies, preventing second pregnancies, parenting, child development, emotional, mental and social health and maintaining a positive body image. This health and wellness program is intended to provide all students – whether or not they are pregnant and parenting – with foundational skills and knowledge related to both adult and child health and wellbeing.

In order to satisfy the requirement of graduating students who are prepared for success in family life, students must demonstrate mastery in this health and wellness course or its equivalent. Successful completion of an evidence based parenting skills program may be used as an equivalent to satisfy this requirement with the approval of the principal.

Work Based Learning Experience

Nowell Academy is relentless about inspiring students through a project-based learning model aligned to competencies. A cornerstone of project-based learning is connecting students with experts connected to the content and/or skills in the project. Additionally, all Nowell juniors participate in a career readiness course and engage in a semester-long internship. We employ a full time Work Based Learning Director to support students in professional readiness and internships. We are currently piloting internships with plans to fully implement by Fall 2022.

2021-2022 Project Offerings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Co-Taught Classes</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makerspace</td>
<td>Students will learn the foundations of engineering and design. These foundations provide students with a broad outlook of what “maker” is along with a detailed examination of the engineering design process and why this interdisciplinary process is so integral to the identities of makers. Additionally, students will be exposed to the many tools and skills that are commonly used within the maker movement, such as 3D design using CAD software, technical sketching, brainstorming, testing.</td>
<td>Science Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race and</td>
<td>Students will grapple with the Essential Questions: (1) What is systemic racism? (2) What are the critical moments in our nation's history that led to today's systemic inequities? (3) What are the cascading effects of those moments, and could things have turned out differently? Through reading, reflection, and discussion, students will arrive at complex, nuanced and informed understandings that are critical to their awareness of American society.</td>
<td>English US History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Revolutions</td>
<td>This course will empower the next generation of citizens to understand food and sustainability choices that will empower them to become strong advocates for change. Students will make connections between environment, social issues and learn from the past. They will grapple with the following Essential Questions: (1) How has the development of agriculture and technology advancements impacted humans? (2) How can the lessons of the past inform today's solutions to sustainably feeding the world? (3) How can I apply my knowledge of sustainability to contribute positively to the future?</td>
<td>World History Environmental Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease and US History</td>
<td>This course explores the history of infectious disease, physical and mental challenges, public health, and the concept of the common good against the backdrop of a developing new nation. Students will grapple with the following Essential Questions (1) How did cultural diffusion impact social, economic, political and health in the development of America? (2) Is Capitalism at odds with the moral compass of humanity? (3) With whom or what does the responsibility for human health rest?</td>
<td>Science History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>In this course, students will examine the power of diverse voices and stories in shaping social and cultural identity. Students will look at different social movements in history and how the inclusion of diverse voices incited or furthered social change. Students will also look at the structure of stories, and the role of storytelling through different mediums to shape politics, culture, and society. Finally students will look at their own community, and how they could tell their own story or the stories of others to foster social change that aligns with their values and beliefs.</td>
<td>English History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Studies</td>
<td>This class focuses on the role of women and men in historical and contemporary America. It is a theme-based academic course that will address gender and equity issues, civil rights, basic human rights, and social movements. The scope of the course explores cultural and social constructions of gender, media stereotypes, the history, experiences, and contributions of women to society, and examines the influences these have on the lives of young women and men and will highlight the pioneers of the fight for equality, labor reform, and social policy.</td>
<td>English History</td>
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<td>ELD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Single Subject Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math</th>
<th>World Language</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algebra 1</td>
<td>World Language (Rosetta Stone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra 2</td>
<td>World Language (Rosetta Stone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>World Language (Rosetta Stone)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Policy

Every student will have co-taught, interdisciplinary courses as well as single-taught single-subject courses. For example, a co-taught class will cover two content areas (such as English and History) and a single-subject course will cover only one content area (such as Chemistry).

Earning Credit: To earn full credit (2 credits) for a co-taught, interdisciplinary course or any single-taught class (1 credit), a student must:
- Pass at least 70% of Checkpoints assigned to the Project (see below)
- Pass all Cognitive Skills assigned to the Project with a minimum of 70%
- Pass any assigned Focus Areas

Note on Checkpoints:
- 100% - 90% of Checkpoints passed → student is eligible for an A given that scores on Final Products are 90% or higher
- 89% - 80% of Checkpoints passed → student is eligible for a B given that scores on Final Products are 80% or higher
- 79% - 70% of Checkpoints passed → student is eligible for a C given that scores on Final Products are 70% or higher

All classes must be completed with a grade of 70 (C-) or higher. Any grade below this is an incomplete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nowell Academy Grading Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Grade</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below a 70 is an Incomplete (I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Nowell has established an academic culture of Feedback and Revision where students who receive yellow or red on a Checkpoint will have specific feedback from their teacher to guide their revisions. Students who receive yellow or red for a Checkpoint are expected to revise until the Checkpoint earns green (passing grade). Similarly, students will have the opportunity to submit drafts of Final Products in order to revise prior to submitting the version that will be graded.

Quarterly-Grading: Nowell no longer has year-long grades. Students’ grades will be formally calculated and closed at the end of each quarter. Students will receive a Progress Report at the end of Quarters 1 and 3 and a report card at the end of quarters 2 and 4. Each quarter will reflect a .25 credit upon work completion.

End-of-Year Credit Completion Week: In the case that a student is unable to complete a Project or Course and has a minimal amount of work to complete, they will have the opportunity to attend an intensive course completion week where they are expected to complete and submit any remaining work in order to receive credit.

Summer Credit: All Nowell students are eligible and encouraged to take Summer Projects which are designed to offer .5 credit in both History and English and Math and Science.

Art Exploration Weeks

Nowell believes helping students find their passion and interests keeps students motivated to learn, be curious, and persevere through challenges. That’s why, every six to eight weeks, Nowell hosts what we call an “art exploration week.” During art exploration week, students at Nowell spend half the day in their regular classes and half the day in different artistic workshops. These workshops include theater, fashion design, dance, drawing, sculpture, and more. In the 2020-2021 school year, Nowell is pleased to partner with the Providence arts nonprofit AS220 during its four art exploration weeks.

Credit Acceleration

Extension Project: Students at Nowell often enroll at our school behind their graduation peer cohort. These students are sometimes referred to as “over-age and under-credited.” Our students become over-age and under-credited in a variety of ways, often because they have missed school for an extended period of time before enrolling at Nowell. Nowell offers “credit acceleration” as a way for these students to recover credits they did not fully earn in previous classes and move towards graduation faster. Students who take and pass a class that is eligible for credit acceleration earn one and a half credits as opposed to the traditional one credit.

In order to earn one and a half credits in these courses, students will demonstrate a deeper understanding of the content area by completing additional focus areas and projects in the
course. Students work with the Dean of Students to determine if credit acceleration is a good fit for them.

**NWEA Credit:** Another avenue toward credit acceleration is through attainment of proficient scores through the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). In order to achieve a proficient score, one must earn the equivalent of the 75th percentile of their peers in the 11th grade in reading and the 65th percentile in math. The scores that achieve such proficiency are 234 in reading and 241 for math. Attainment of these scores will earn students one credit in the subjects of math or English. Credit attainment in this form may only happen once for each English and math during one’s high school tenure at Nowell Academy. Beginning during the 2020/2021 school year, in addition to the reading proficiency score, one must also complete a writing assessment, evaluated by the English teacher, in order to earn a full English credit.

**Earning College Credit**
Nowell offers concurrent classes through the University of Rhode Island and Dual Enrollment opportunities (for 11th and 12th graders who are in good academic standing). The concurrent enrollment program allows qualified students to earn college credits while attending classes at the Nowell Campus. Students who are dual enrolled at the Community College of Rhode Island have the opportunity to earn credit on the CCRI campus while attending classes at Nowell. In a few instances, students may only be placed in CCRI classes during their senior year. Nowell also offers students the opportunity to take the CLEP exam in a foreign language. Students who pass the CLEP exam can earn up to 12 college credits.

**Special Populations**
Nowell Academy adheres to state and federal regulations governing the education of children with disabilities. Nowell also maintains a staffing and programming designed to provide extra support and small group interventions to students with acute needs in math and reading as well as students who are learning the English language.

The Director of Special Education provides leadership and support to the school community through quality special education services, alternative school programs, and student services so that all students achieve high academic standards. If you would like more information regarding Special Education services, please feel free to contact Donna Charlton, Director of Special Education at donna.charlton@nowellacademy.org

**Nowell Multi Language Learning Program**

We believe:

- Multilingualism is a resource and a strength, not a deficit. We encourage all students to sustain their languages and cultural heritage at home and in our community.
- English Learners can and should learn social and academic English while maintaining and developing proficiencies in their own languages.
- English Learners are a diverse population with wide ranges of academic strengths and areas of growth.
- English Learners need sufficient time, explicit instruction in English language development, and differentiated access to content classes in order to be successful.
- English Learners should be integrated into school activities and content classes as much as possible.
➢ All Nowell teachers are responsible for creating pathways for English Learners to access the curriculum.

Nowell has a strong English Language Development (ELD) program built in collaboration with Dorcas International to support Level 1 and 2 English language learners. Highly skilled teachers offer students rich opportunities to build academic language skills that will support students as they aspire to their college and career goals.

In addition, students receive support in collaborative content classes in which teachers are coached to imbed English language development strategies into core courses providing students with access to the entire curriculum.

**Academic Integrity**

At Nowell Academy we believe honesty and integrity are fundamental in preparing our students for college, career, and family life. We revere these values and hold them essential in promoting personal responsibility, moral and intellectual leadership, and pride in ourselves and our community.

We expect our students will represent themselves truthfully, claim only work that is their own, and engage honestly in all academic assignments.

Please refer to the chart below for examples of academic dishonesty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plagiarism</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
<td><strong>Don’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust the value of your own intellect.</td>
<td>Don’t purchase papers or have someone write a paper for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake research honestly and credit others for their work.</td>
<td>Don’t copy ideas, data or exact wording without citing your source.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unauthorized Collaboration</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
<td><strong>Don’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust the value of your own intellect.</td>
<td>Don’t collaborate with another student beyond the extent specifically approved by the instructor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cheating</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
<td><strong>Don’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate your own achievement.</td>
<td>Don’t copy answers from another student; don’t ask another student to do your work for you. Don’t fabricate results. Don’t use electronic or other devices during exams.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accept corrections from the instructor as part of the learning process. | Don’t alter graded exams and submit them for re-grading.
---|---
Do original work for each class. | Don’t submit projects or papers that have been done for a previous class.

### Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Showcase your own abilities.</td>
<td>Don’t allow another student to copy your answers on assignments or exams. Don’t take an exam or complete an assignment for another student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Every student will sign a **Nowell Academy Plagiarism Declaration**. (See Appendix)

**Nowell Academy Plagiarism Declaration**

1. I know that plagiarism is using someone else’s work as if it were my own.
2. I know that plagiarism is fraudulent.
3. I understand that I will be penalised severely if my work shows any form of plagiarism.
4. I will acknowledge contributions from other sources, be they someone else’s words or precise information.
5. I declare that, besides the acknowledged contributions, the work will be my own work.
6. I will not allow any other person to copy my work.

Name: (Please print): ____________________________________________________

Signature: _____________________________________________________________

Grade: ___________ Date: ____________________

**Plagiarism Consequences:**

In the event that a student *violates this agreement*, the teacher will immediately notify the student’s other teachers as well as the Chief of Academics and the Dean of Students. The student will be given one opportunity to revise the assignment to reflect his/her own work. If the student does this successfully, he or she can receive full credit. If the student, does not do this, the assignment will remain red which could result in an Incomplete for the entire course.

In the event that a student plagiarizes or cheats *a second time*, his/her other teachers will be notified and he/she will not receive credit for the assignments. The Dean of Students will organize a parent meeting. The Chief of Academics and the Chief of College and Career will
meet with the student and draft a Contract with stated consequences, including but not limited to a school-community presentation and possible failure of the course for the Semester.

In the event that plagiarism or cheating continue beyond this, consequences will be up to the discretion of the Chief of Academics and the Chief of College and Career.

**Professional Conduct**

Students are expected to maintain a professional decorum at all times. Nowell is a small school by design and all members of this community are expected to respect our need for high professional standards. For more information, please refer to the Respect Agreement in the appendix of this handbook.

Students found in violation of these standards will receive a single redirection from their classroom teacher. The Dean of Students will be asked to support students who do not respond to a redirection from the classroom teacher.

Students are expected to be in the class they are scheduled to be in for the period. In the instance that a student is granted permission by a teacher to work in an alternative setting they should expect that any staff member may ask them why they are not in class. Nowell holds the same high standards for professional conduct during remote instruction. Please see the [Digital Professionalism One Pager](#) (also on our website).

**Laptop & Computer Policy**

All students at Nowell sign a Digital Citizenship Agreement prior to using school issued laptops and technology. Students at Nowell may be eligible to take a school laptop home with them if:

- The student is on “home learning” due to maternity leave,
- The student is out of school for an extended period of time due to a medical need, or
- The student is participating in an approved college level course for which they may need access to a laptop computer.

A student must make a request to their teacher in order to bring a computer home. Students who are issued computers to take home may also be eligible to take home a wifi “hotspot” in order to access the internet.

**Cell phone policy**

The expectation at Nowell is that cell phones stay away during the school day unless a student is given specific permission to have a cell phone accessible by a classroom teacher.

Each teacher and each classroom may have a different expectation for when cell phones are available for use and when they are not. The common expectation, however, is that when a student is inappropriately using their cell phone they will receive a single direction to put their cell phone away. If the student refuses to comply with the expectation set by the teacher, the Dean of Students will be called to support. At that time, the student must surrender their cell phone to the Dean of Students until lunch time or dismissal, whichever comes first. In the situation that the student refuses to turn in their cell phone, they will be sent home for the remainder of the day in accordance with our remainder of the day suspension procedures.
Students with children who need to be accessible by phone may have their childcare provider call the Dean of Students and or the Student Support Specialist in the case of an emergency. Each campus also has a main phone line that anyone can call. Students with children who need to be accessible by phone can choose to also give this number to childcare providers. The Student Support Specialist will answer this phone during regular school hours.

Section 6. Nowell Community Membership

In this section, students and families will find some information on what it means to be a member of the Nowell community.

S.K.I.P. Values

Nowell has adopted four core values that guide our work in everything we do. These are the “SKIP” values of Strength, Knowledge, Integrity and Purpose.

**Strength.** Students of the Nowell Academy demonstrate strength by persevering through challenges, setting and working towards goals and resolving conflicts peacefully.

**Knowledge.** Students of the Nowell Academy demonstrate knowledge by having a growth mindset, participating in school to the fullest of their abilities, and applying what they learn at Nowell in their life and community.

**Integrity.** Students of the Nowell Academy demonstrate integrity by cooperating with others, exhibiting academic honesty at all times and representing Nowell with pride.

**Purpose.** Students of the Nowell Academy demonstrate purpose by arriving at school on time each day, being fully present and on-task during school hours, and remaining on-track to graduate.

More examples of how students demonstrate the SKIP Values each day in the section on Nowell Bucks below.


The purpose of this policy is to:
- Raise school-wide awareness about bullying, teen dating violence and sexual violence;
- Provide direction in responding to incidents; and
- Prevent new incidents of bullying, dating violence, and sexual violence.

**Definitions:**

**At school** means in a classroom, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, or at any school-sponsored activity or event whether it is on school grounds or not.
Bullying occurs when a student intentionally assaults, batters, threatens (including threats if the victim "tells" on the perpetrator), harasses, stalks, menaces, intimidates, extorts, humiliates, or taunts another student. Bullying also occurs when a student or a group of students organize a campaign of shunning against another student or when a student or a group of students maliciously spread rumors about another student. Cyberbullying occurs when any of the above occur over the computer or other digital device and is included in this policy.

Dating violence is a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

Sexual assault includes behaviors that are attempted or perpetrated against a victim's will or when a victim cannot consent because of age, disability, harmful threats or promises, or the influence of drugs or alcohol. Sexual assault may involve actual or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion (using force or intimidation to gain compliance), intimidation, or pressure and may include:

- Intentional touching of someone in ways that are unwanted
- Voyeurism (observing sexual objects or acts)
- Exposure to exhibitionism (undesired observation of sexual images or private body parts)
- Undesired exposure to pornography
- Public display of images or
- Stalking behavior.

Reporting Responsibilities
The Nowell Leadership Academy expects all members of our community to report bullying. The victim of bullying (including cyberbullying), dating violence, or sexual violence; witnesses/bystanders to such actions; or anyone who has information that these actions have occurred may file a report. If a student is involved in an incident of bullying (either victim or offender), we will follow the appropriate protocol, supply the student with relevant information and resources, and involve the parents and/or police, if appropriate.

Investigation
The school administration has developed procedures and guidelines for the investigation of a bullying, dating violence, or sexual violence report. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary sanctions, subject to due process, shall be imposed. Whenever bullying, teen dating violence, or sexual violence involves conduct that violates criminal law, the police shall be notified.

Procedures & Guidelines for Reporting and Investigating
- All reporters will complete the Complaint Form and submit it immediately to a school administrator or other trusted adult. Every effort will be made to maintain the anonymity of the reporter.
- Reporters will be provided with both appropriate school-based and out-of-school services and resources.
- An investigative protocol will be followed for each incident, informing the appropriate parties and taking disciplinary action.
- If appropriate, a legal no-contact order and/or a school-based “stay away” agreement will be implemented. This may include changing a student’s schedule or vigilantly monitoring contact between students.

Victim Rights & Protection
The Nowell Academy is committed to creating a school environment (which extends off-campus) that promotes timely and fair adjudication of bullying, violence, teen dating violence, and sexual violence cases. Administrators shall establish guidelines to protect the rights and privacy of the alleged victim as well as the due process rights of the alleged perpetrator. This protocol provides specific guidelines for the treatment of both victim and alleged perpetrator.

**Prevention**
The administration of The Nowell Leadership Academy shall ensure that students and staff are instructed on how to identify, prevent, and report bullying, teen dating violence, and sexual violence. The administration shall also ensure that the school health program and counseling services include the appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and help them interact in a healthy manner.

All staff shall model correct and courteous behavior to each other, to students, parents and visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor shall not be accepted. The staff shall ensure that each student is known by a teacher/staff member that the student can turn to if abuse develops. This is accomplished through our comprehensive commitment to building a safe learning community.

**Community Meetings**
Nowell holds weekly all-school community meetings every Monday. During our distance and limited in-person time, these will be held virtually via zoom. Community Meeting is a time for teachers to share updates and reminders on the week ahead and to celebrate accomplishments at the close of the week. Nowell may invite guest speakers to participate in Community Meetings. Attendance at Community Meetings is required for all students and staff members. Respectful and professional conduct is expected from Nowell Leaders.

**Dress Code**
Nowell maintains a uniform policy for students. The purpose of our uniform policy is to create a sense of community and to support the development of a professional learning environment for students and teachers alike. School uniforms also give students an opportunity to tangibly demonstrate that they are prepared to meet the school’s expectations for community participation for the day.

Students at Nowell wear a top with a Nowell Academy logo. These tops include polos, button-up Oxford shirts, t-shirts and hooded sweatshirts. Any of these Nowell tops are acceptable, including Nowell tops from previous school years.

Tops should be worn appropriately and un-altered. Wearing a Nowell top with writing on it or one that has been cut in various ways, or simply draping a Nowell top over one’s shoulder does not meet the uniform expectation. If another shirt is visible under a student’s uniform shirt, the undershirt is expected to meet traditional business casual standards.

Nowell does not maintain a uniform policy for bottoms; students are permitted to wear shorts, pants, skirts, dresses, shoes, or other accessories of their choosing. The school will not allow any clothing or accessory that includes the depiction of violence, references to drugs or alcohol, or is otherwise obscene/gratuitous in any manner.

Students should come to school wearing their school issued uniform. If a student comes to school without their uniform, the school will make one immediately available to a student to borrow for the day. Students should recognize, however, that these “loaner” shirts may not always be available in a student’s preferred size.
A student who simply refuses to comply with the dress code will not be allowed to attend class for the day and will be sent home in accordance with the procedures described below.

**Nowell Bucks & the School Store**
Students at Nowell have the opportunity to earn and spend “Nowell Bucks.” Students have the opportunity to earn Nowell Bucks throughout the school day by exhibiting any of our SKIP values. These Nowell bucks will be given out at the discretion of a Nowell staff member in increments of $5, $10, and $20.

Typically, students can earn:
- for meeting a particular expectation
- for exceeding a particular expectation, and
- for exceptionally exceeding a particular expectation.

For example, a student who arrives at school in their uniform may earn $5 Nowell Buck from the Dean of Students in the morning. A student who settles into class right away and enthusiastically begins work on a teacher’s “Do Now” without prompting may earn $10 from the classroom teacher. A student who demonstrates significant resilience in the face of a difficult challenge may earn $20 from the Student Support Specialist.

Students can redeem their Nowell Bucks in the School Store. Students will be limited to the purchase of a single item per day. The School Store will be stocked with different gift cards and other items.

**Skipper Society**
In nautical terms, a “skipper” is someone in charge aboard a boat or watercraft. Members of the Skipper Society are the captains, or student leaders, of the Nowell Academy. Skipper Society is the mechanism for which Nowell Academy re-enforces the positive behavior of our students.

Students who attend school a minimum of four out of five days earn admission into the Skipper Society for the following week. Students in Skipper Society will be eligible to go off campus during lunch time. The Skipper Society list will refresh every week.

Students who violate the privileges of the Skipper Society may risk losing their status in the Skipper Society for the remainder of the week. For example, if a student on the Skipper Society leaves for lunch but returns to school significantly late, they may lose the privilege to remain on the Skipper Society for the remainder of the week.

**Violating the SKIP Values**
Students and teachers alike work hard to make our campuses positive learning environments that allow all of us to focus on the work at hand - getting prepared to graduate ready for success in college, careers and family life. Certain behaviors that violate the SKIP values distract us from this work. Swearing, being rude to your teachers, or skipping class and roaming around the school building - behaviors like these are unacceptable because they waste time, cause frustration, and push us off the path towards graduation and success beyond high school.

Nowell has adopted a tiered approach to addressing instances of SKIP Value violations. In the event of a SKIP Value violation, the Dean of Students and the student will jointly determine the appropriate restorative action to address the issue. Restorative actions aim to help someone who has violated the SKIP Values restore their relationship with the school community. This
The approach is different from a punitive approach based solely on punishment or suspension from school.

Samples of SKIP Value violations and potential restorative actions are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 behaviors/actions</th>
<th>Tier 1 Restorative Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unprepared for class, disengaged, minor class disruption, negative attitude</td>
<td>Reflection sheet, check in with dean, apology to teacher or student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 2 behaviors/ actions</th>
<th>Tier 2 Restorative Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disrespect to property, gossiping, general rudeness, repeated tier 1 behaviors</td>
<td>Facilitated conversation with Social Worker, PM school, meeting with support system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 3 Behaviors/actions</th>
<th>Tier 3 Restorative Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe contact, verbal altercation, Major unprofessional behavior, repeated tier 2 violations</td>
<td>Check in with social worker, Meeting with Parent, Restorative circle up, Plan developed with leader and family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the instance that students exhibit behavior or actions that are beyond that described above, the Nowell Leadership Academy reserves the right to take other actions that we believe may be necessary to maintain the safety and integrity of our learning community. These actions are described below.

- **Sent home for the remainder of the day.** Students who exhibit egregious actions or behaviors that indicate they are not ready or are deemed incapable of maintaining a professional demeanor will be sent home for the remainder of the day.

  Students who are 18 years old or older will be expected to leave the campus immediately and under their own volition. If students are incapable of leaving on their own they may be given up to 30 min to secure transportation home, this decision will be made by the Dean of Students and on a case by case basis. The student may be required to have a re-entry meeting at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

  Students who are under 18 years old and must be sent home for the remainder of the day will be sent home either with the permission of their parent/guardian or preferably will be picked up by their parent/guardian. The student may be required to have a re-entry meeting at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

- **Emergency multi-day removal.** Students who exhibit egregious actions or behaviors that jeopardize the safety of the community may be immediately removed from the
community on an emergency basis for up to three days while school officials create a safety plan for that students return to school

Students who are 18 years old or older will follow the procedure identified under “sent home for remainder of the day” and in addition will have to attend a meeting in which school officials will review a plan for the students return to school.

Students who are under 18 years old will follow the procedure identified under “sent home for remainder of the day” and in addition to, will have to attend a meeting, along with a stakeholder in their lives, in which school officials will review a plan for the students return to school.

- **Exclusionary actions extending beyond 3 days.** In the rare instance that the Nowell Leadership Academy feels it is in the best interest of the student and the school community to consider a removal from school that extends beyond three days, a plan for longer-term home learning will be developed by the Principal, the Dean of Students and the Director of Wrap-around Supports. In the instance that a student or their parent/guardian does not support the home-learning plan presented by the school, the student or parent/guardian may appeal the plan to the Executive Director.

**Physical violence & threats of physical violence**

Nowell is a safe school community. Especially because we serve a population of pregnant and parenting young women, Nowell takes physical violence - and threats of physical violence - very seriously. Any student over the age of 18 years old who physically harms another student may be automatically withdrawn from Nowell. Any student under the age of 18 years old who physically harms another student will be placed on a plan of home learning until such time the school is confident that the student can be reintegrated into the school community safely.

Students who make threats of physical violence may also face serious consequences, up to and including un-enrollment or long-term home learning. These threats include both direct and indirect threatening language (i.e. “If someone crosses me today, I am going to hit them”). These policies apply both in and out of school, and also apply to social media interactions. A student who threatens another student on social media, directly or indirectly, during or outside of school hours, will be subject to the consequences described here. Students may be financially responsible for any damages that occur as a result of any violent behavior or vandalism. As dictated by law, these types of behaviors will require the notification of law enforcement authorities.

Students may also be subject to in- or out-of-school suspension. The Principal approves recommendations for suspension on the recommendation of the Deans of Students.

**Appealing Disciplinary Decisions**

Families (or students over the age of 18 years old) have the right to appeal disciplinary decisions to the Board of Directors for review. If a family believes that the school has made a disciplinary decision in error - for example, because the review process omitted key facts or because disciplinary decisions reached were in-equitably applied to multiple parties - they should notify the Executive Director of their intention to appeal the decision within five (5) business days of receiving notification of the disciplinary decision. The Executive Director will present the Board of Directors with the facts of the incident, the investigation conducted by Nowell staff and the disciplinary actions that have been recommended. The family will have an opportunity to present alternative evidence and seek a review of the school’s decision. The
Board of Directors will vote to either uphold the school’s initial decision or to overturn the school’s decision with a requirement that the school conduct a new investigation and seek an alternative disciplinary outcome. Families also have the right to appeal decisions of the Board of Directors to the state Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. More information on the RIDE appeals process can be found here.

**Use and Possession of Alcohol and Drugs**

Given reasonable suspicion (i.e. a student comes to school with a strong odor of marijuana), students will be questioned as to their possible use of alcohol or drugs and referred to the school nurse or a school administrator. Students who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol may be sent home for the day. Students who are not under the influence of drugs or alcohol but may be exhibiting other signs associated with drug or alcohol use (i.e. a student whose clothing bears a strong odor of marijuana) may be asked to change into another uniform shirt (to be provided by the school), apply body spray or allow the Dean of Students to hold the odiferous item until the end of the day.

If staff have sufficient evidence to indicate that state law has been violated with respect to the use, possession, or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs, the school will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the individual and the community as a whole. These steps may include but are not limited to the following:

- Reporting home to parents,
- Sending the student home for the day,
- Consequences extending beyond being sent home,
- Significant medical intervention,
- Report to police in accordance with state law and practices by local law enforcement agencies
Nowell Academy 2020 - 2021

Respect Agreement

As a Leader at Nowell Academy I understand and agree that every day I will do my best to meet the expectations listed below.

● I will be Present.
  o I will attend school daily.
  o I will arrive on time.
  o I will engage in class.

● I will be Purposeful.
  o I will stay focused on my academic and life goals.
  o I will ensure that my actions are building a safe, welcoming, and supportive community.

● I will be Professional
  o I will wear my uniform as I am expected to.
  o I will turn in my cellphone to ensure that it is not a distraction to others or myself.
  o I will use professional language at all times.

As a leader at Nowell Academy, I understand and agree that every day the Nowell staff will do their best to meet the expectations listed below

● We will be Present.
  o We will be there, without judgment, when you come to us.
  o We will give you our undivided attention when you need it.

● We will be Purposeful.
  o We will value and support both your academic and life goals.
  o We will ensure that our actions are building a safe, welcoming, and supportive community.

● We will be Professional.
  o We will treat you and your peers with the utmost respect and dignity.
  o We will enforce school policies, rules, and norms in a manner that is both fair and consistent.

Name:____________________________________

Signature:_________________________________
Addendum Nowell Academy Student and Family Handbook In Response to Covid-19

*Updated 7/2020*

**Attendance, Promotion, Schedules, and Covid-19 Sick Policy:** Attendance is vital for the well-being and academic success of individual Nowell Leaders and the school community. It is expected that all Nowell Academy Leaders attend school regularly in order to gain the skills needed for college, career, and family life.

Nowell Academy Leader’s Daily School and Class attendance will be recorded, in the following categories:

- Present, In Person (Pods)
- Present, Distance Learning (online class and office hours)
- Absent (non-traditional school setting)
- Absent

To report your attendance, you MUST complete the Nowell Academy Attendance Form each day. This is imperative and must be done each day even if you are going to be absent. Attendance information is important for teachers, school leaders, school social workers, and the school nurse. Each morning, the attendance link will be sent directly to your Nowell Academy email.

If you must be absent for a sickness or emergency, please do two things:

1. Notify your POD teacher. (teacher names and numbers are located in the student handbook).
2. Indicate your absence in the attendance form. We will work with you to determine the appropriate procedures for receiving and completing missed assignments.

If you must participate in Distance Learning for a sickness or emergency (for an unknown amount of time), please notify both Johanny Toribio at 401-408-3579 or Melissa Slaiger at 401-578-4177 with as much advance notice as possible. We will work with you to determine the appropriate procedures for participating in Distance Learning.

In order for the absence to be verified, you must provide documentation following the absence explaining the nature of the sickness or emergency (e.g. doctor’s note or a detailed note including the date(s) and reason(s) of the absence).

Undocumented/unnecessary absences are not acceptable (e.g. family vacations). More than ten (10) *undocumented/unnecessary absences* in a year may lead to truancy (for students under 18 years of age) and could lead to an “incomplete” in courses.

Nowell Leaders are expected to arrive at school on time every day, at their designated arrival time, especially with our COVID restrictions. It is important that we are all in our designated pod areas and following school social distancing requirements. Also, excessive tardiness will impact your attendance records. When determining calculations for retention and/or truancy court referrals, every five tardies may count as an absence.
Nowell Academy is required to report attendance daily to the Rhode Island Department of Education. In addition, Nowell Academy is required to submit truancy reports for students under the age of 18 years old who are absent 10 or more days in an academic year.

As critical as attendance is, our Nowell Academy Leader’s health and wellness is critically important as well. Very ill children should not be in school and need to be seeing a doctor or at home recovering. Please consult nurse Russell at 401-408-3580 if you are unsure whether you should not attend school due to illness, but the following are guidelines and they should be followed very closely:

- Students with a fever greater than 100°F should remain home until fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours
- Students with vomiting or diarrhea should remain home until free of symptoms for 24 hours
- Unusual rashes should be evaluated by medical professionals with documentation provided prior to return to school
- Follow the recommendation (and provide documentation) of your pediatrician if you are taking antibiotics, have extreme pain, or are experiencing flu-like symptoms.
- Students showing any COVID symptoms are to be tested and show a negative test result in order to return to school. Students should participate in Distance Learning and self-quarantine while awaiting results.
- Students who live in the same household or are in close contact with someone who has tested COVID positive are to be tested and show a negative test result in order to return to school. Again, students should participate in Distance Learning and self-quarantine while awaiting results.

**Social Distancing:** Social distancing (6 feet) is critical to minimize the spread of Covid-19. Nowell Academy Leaders who consistently violate social distancing expectations may be assigned to participate in Distance Learning at the discretion of the school leadership.

**Testing, Grading, and Report Cards:** As in previous years, Nowell Academy uses a range of assessment tools to monitor our Leaders’ progress and mastery of grade-level standards. In determining Nowell Academy’s assessment plan for this year, we have taken into account the need to preserve as much instructional time as possible, while gathering the information needed to address unfinished learning and plan instruction so that all students are able to engage in grade level content. Nowell Academy regularly uses NWEA map testing as a screening tool to prioritize assessments that are immediately useful instructionally and to identify pre-requisite skills or content that may be needed for upcoming projects. This year, the Fall NWEA testing will take place during the first week of school in isolated pods.

Nowell Academy frequently communicates to families regarding Leader’s progress and mastery of grade level standards. We plan to communicate to families regarding Leader’s progress and mastery of grade level standards in the following ways,

- **Report Cards & Progress Reports, 9-12:** All Nowell Academy Leaders will receive 2 semester grades and 2 progress grades each year. Leaders are scheduled into semester long classes and are awarded grades in January and June. Progress reports are sent out in November and April. It is important that all Leaders know that work can not be made up or worked on once each semester closes.

- **Exhibition Days:** At the close of each semester, exhibition days are open to families and the community. Students use this time to show off what they have done during the semester. This is a great time of community and celebration. In the case of COVID, these exhibitions will be held via zoom.
• **POD teacher/family connections:** we will hold formal family-teacher conferences times to update families on their Leader’s progress. Teachers and school leadership may request to hold additional family-teacher conferences if academic, behavioral, or attendance concerns arise. For the 2020-2021 school year these meetings will be held virtually (e.g. Zoom, FaceTime, Phone Call) by the Leader’s POD or CORE teacher.

• **POD teacher Check-Ins:** Each Leader will be assigned a Nowell POD Teacher at the start of the school year. This may be their science teacher, the school social worker, the case manager for their IEP, or another adult in their building. For the 2020-2021 year, this person will check in with you and/or caregiver for at least 15 minutes every Monday and log their interactions in a tracker. POD teachers will be assigned by school leaders. POD Teachers will be responsible for scheduling these check ins at times that work for them and their students, and they can take place via phone, Zoom, or other agreed upon tool.

• **Family Nights:** NEW THIS YEAR- Nowell Academy will be hosting monthly family nights. We will be sending out a schedule. We’d love to see you there!

• **Virtual Home Meet and Greets:** Like our yearly home visits days, we will be scheduling virtual home visits with our Leaders and their families. These will serve as a great time to ask questions about how your child is doing in school and a great way to meet the teachers and staff at Nowell Academy.

**Face Masks and Covering:** Currently, Nowell Academy encourages and recommends that students wear face coverings in situations where they cannot easily, continuously, and measurably maintain at least six (6) feet of distance from others or the sanctity of related pods cannot be maintained. Face masks/coverings must cover both the nose and mouth. Nowell Academy will adhere to all Federal and State government mandates with regard to the wearing of masks and facial coverings.

Face masks are only effective for protection if they are handled, worn, stored and disposed of properly. In addition to using face coverings, Nowell Academy Leaders and staff should heed the advice of experts who urge everyone to maintain a social distance of 6 feet even when wearing a face mask.

• **Practice proper hand hygiene.** Before and after handling the mask (to put on, adjust, or take off), either wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to reduce cross-contamination risk. The outside of the mask is considered dirty.

• **Mark the outside of the mask** in some way so you can easily identify which side is the outside of the mask, and handle it accordingly. It is recommended to mark the outside of a mask with permanent ink showing your initials or some other identifying mark.

• **Keep a paper bag handy for storing the mask** every time you take it off; an open plastic Ziploc-style baggie is an alternative if a paper bag is not available. Always store a mask in a clean place. Never store it in a purse or pocket.

• **Do wash your mask at home after each use.** The CDC provides the following guidelines for hand or machine washing

• **Don’t touch the outside of your mask while it is on your face.**

• **Don’t pull your mask below your chin while you are wearing it.** Leaving the mask dangling or improperly fitted to your face creates opportunities for cross-contamination.
• **Do wash your mask at home after each use.** The CDC provides the following guidelines for hand or machine washing

• If students refuse to wear a mask while working in the school building (at the work bar, during pod time, etc), they will be asked to leave and will be put on a strict distance learning plan.

**Visitor and Meeting Procedures:**

**Distance Learning Expectations:** Nowell Academy is committed to providing a safe and orderly school culture in which all Leaders can improve their academic achievement, whether in-person or in distance learning. We expect that Leaders, staff, and families continue to demonstrate our SKIP values as they would be expected in-person. In addition to Nowell Academy’s Self Directed Expectations outlined in our 2020-2021 Student and Family Handbook, while engaged in distance learning and completing academic work outside of the physical school building, we expect all Leaders and families to comply with the following policies listed below:

- **Dress Expectations**
  - Leaders are encouraged to be fully dressed.
  - Leaders may not wear clothing that would be deemed unacceptable (e.g. vulgar language, inappropriate images).

- **Video Conferencing Expectations**
  - While video conferencing in a public area of your home (i.e. dining area, living room, home office) is advised, we recognize this may not always be possible. As much as possible, avoid video conferencing while clearly laying in bed or consider setting a faux background, if necessary.
  - As with in-person instruction, communication between Leaders, staff, and family members should be respectful and professional.
  - As with in-person instructions, Leaders should be present (video on as much as possible), engaged, and participating in class activities and conversations. Students who are not participating and virtually “not present” may be exited from the class.
  - Leaders and families are prohibited from distributing teacher and peer materials outside of the “school environment.” For example, a family is prohibited from posting a teacher’s video on social media, a leader is prohibited from posting an image of another scholar’s work on social media.

- **Other Reminders**
  - As a Nowell Academy Leader, you should not expect privacy with respect to any of your activities using the Nowell Academy-provided email, internet access or services and/or hardware issued by Nowell Academy. Nowell Academy reserves the right to review or otherwise monitor any files, messages, or communications sent, received or stored in the Nowell Academy computer or electronic storage.
systems (e.g. Google Drive) associated with your Nowell Academy email/accounts.

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**Graduation Requirements**

- **22.5 Credits**
  - 4 English
  - 4 Math
  - 3 Science
  - 3 history
  - 2 Health
  - Capstone
  - Internship

- **Reading Proficiency**: All seniors must demonstrate reading proficiency in order to graduate.

- **Math Proficiency**: All seniors