

# **Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities and Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

2020–2021 School Year

All children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, are to be located, identified and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1200 et. seq. (“IDEA 2004”).

Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code requires the publication of a notice to parents regarding public awareness activities sufficient to inform parents of children applying to or enrolled in the charter school of available special education services and programs and how to request those services and programs and of systematic screening activities that lead to the identification, location and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in the charter school.

In addition, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality, requires educational agencies to notify parents annually of their confidentiality rights.

The Charter School fulfills its duties with this annual notice and has incorporated several sections of the PATTAN Procedural Safeguards Notice into the Board-approved Child Find Notice, Policies and Procedures described below. **The Charter School also directs parents to the procedural safeguards notice from PATTAN available at the school’s main office for additional information regarding rights and services.** Parents may contact the **Principal, Environmental Charter School at Frick Park, (412) 247-7970, 829 Milton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15218** at any time to request a copy of the procedural safeguards notice or with any other questions about special education, services, screenings, policies or procedures. The Procedural Safeguards Notice is made available to parents by the school: (1) upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation; (2) upon filing by parents of their first State complaint under 34 CFR §§300.151 through 300.153 and upon filing by parents of their first due process complaint under §300.507 in a school year; (3) when a decision is made to take a disciplinary action that constitutes a change of placement; and (4) upon parent request.

The purpose of this annual notice is to comply with the school’s obligations under Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code and to describe: (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify the child for special education, (2) the special education programs and related services that are available, (3) the process by which the Charter School screens and evaluates such students to determine eligibility, (4) the special

rights that pertain to such children and their parents or legal guardians and (5) the confidentiality rights that pertain to student information.

A copy of this Annual Notice is also available on the school's website at:  
environmentalcharterschool.org

### **Qualifying for special education and related services**

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, or "IDEA 2004," children qualify for special education and related services if they have one or more of the following disabilities and, as a result, need special education and related services: mental retardation; hearing impairment, including deafness; speech or language impairment; visual impairment, including blindness; serious emotional disturbance; orthopedic impairment; autism; traumatic brain injury; other health impairment; specific learning disability; deaf-blindness; or multiple disabilities.

IDEA 2004 provides legal definitions of the above-listed disabilities, which may differ from those terms used in medical or clinical practice or daily language.

### **Services for Protected Handicapped Students**

Under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined above might nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program and otherwise qualify under the applicable laws.

The Charter School must ensure that qualified handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student. In compliance with applicable state and federal laws, the Charter School provides to each qualifying protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities and to the extent required by the laws.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" may be distinct from those applicable to eligible or thought-to-be eligible students. The Charter School or the parent may initiate an evaluation if they believe a student is a protected handicapped student. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students, parents should contact the school **Principal, Environmental Charter School at Frick Park (412) 247-7970, 829 Milton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15218.**

### **Children Below Mandatory School Age**

Most Charter Schools do not enroll students under school age. If a Charter School admits children below school age, the Commonwealth provides early intervention services to eligible children with special needs. Any questions about services available to children under school age should be directed to the **Principal, Environmental Charter School at Frick Park (412) 247-7970, 829 Milton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15218.**

### **Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities**

Charter Schools ensure that children with disabilities are educated to the maximum extent possible in the regular education environment or “least restrictive environment”. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of students with disabilities from the general educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes, even with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Programs and services available to students with disabilities, might include: (1) regular class placement with supplementary aides and services provided as needed in that environment; (2) regular class placement for most of the school day with itinerant service by a special education teacher either in or out of the regular classroom; (3) regular class placement for most of the school day with instruction provided by a special education teacher in a resource classroom; (4) part time special education class placement in a regular public school or alternative setting; and (5) special education class placement or special education services provided outside the regular class for most or all of the school day, either in a regular public school or alternative setting.

Depending on the nature and severity of the disability, a Charter School can provide special education programs and services in locations such as: (1) the charter school the child would attend if not disabled, (2) an alternative regular public school either in or outside the school, (3) a special education center operated by a public school entity or IU, (4) an approved private school or other private facility licensed to serve children with disabilities, (5) a residential school, (6) approved out-of-state program, or (7) the home.

Special education services are provided according to the educational needs of the child, not the category of disability. Types of service that may be available, depending upon the child’s disability and needs include, but are not limited to: (1) learning support; (2) life skills support; (3) emotional support; (4) deaf or hearing impaired support; (5) blind or visually impaired support; (6) physical support; (7) autistic support; and (8) multiple disabilities support.

Related services are designed to enable the child to participate in or access his or her program of special education. Examples of related services that a child may require include but are not limited to: speech and language therapy, transportation, occupational therapy, physical therapy, school nursing services, audiologist services, counseling, or training.

Some students may also be eligible for extended school year services if determined needed by their IEP teams in accordance with Chapter 711 regulations.

The Charter School, in conjunction with the parents, determines the type and intensity of special education and related services that a particular child needs based exclusively on the unique program of special education and related services that the school develops for that child. The child's program is described in writing in an individualized education program, or "IEP," which is developed by an IEP team consisting of educators, parents, and other persons with special expertise or familiarity with the child. The participants in the IEP team are dictated by IDEA 2004. The parents of the child have the right to be notified of and to be offered participation in all meetings of their child's IEP team. The IEP is revised as often as circumstances warrant but reviewed at least annually. The law requires that the program and placement of the child, as described in the IEP, be reasonably calculated to ensure meaningful educational benefit to the student. In accordance with IDEA 2004, there may be situations in which a Charter School may hold an IEP team meeting if the parents refuse or fail to attend the IEP team meeting.

IEPs generally contain: (1) a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance; (2) a statement of measurable annual goals established for the child; (3) a statement of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports will be provided; (4) a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided, if any; (5) an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in activities; (6) a statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on State and school assessments; and (7) the projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications and the anticipated frequency, location and duration of those services or modifications.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 14, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals and transition services needed to assist in reaching those goals. The Charter School must invite the child to the IEP team meeting at which the transition plan is developed.

Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, the IEP must include a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority.

### **Screening and Evaluation Procedures for Children to Determine Eligibility**

#### **Screening**

The Charter School has established a system of screening which may include intervention services to accomplish the following:

(1) Identification and provision of initial screening for students prior to referral for a special education evaluation.

- (2) Provision of peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum.
- (3) Identification of students who may need special education services and programs.

The screening process includes:

Hearing and vision screening in accordance with Section 1402 of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § 14-1402) for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education.

Screening at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects.

The Charter School has established and implements procedures to locate identify and evaluate children suspected of being eligible for special education. These procedures involve screening activities which may also include but are not limited to: review of data and student records; motor screening; and speech and language screening. The school assesses the current achievement and performance of the child, designs school-based interventions, and assesses the effectiveness of interventions. If the concern can be addressed without special education services, or is the result of limited English proficiency or appropriate instruction, a recommendation may be made for interventions other than a multidisciplinary team evaluation. Parents nevertheless have the right to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time, regardless of the outcome of the screening process.

In accordance with Chapter 711, in the event that the charter school would meet the criteria in 34 CFR 300.646(b)(2) (relating to disproportionally), as established by the State Department of Education, the services that would be required include:

- (1) A verification that the student was provided with appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (20 U.S.C.A. § 6368(3), and appropriate instruction in math.

- (2) For students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student's performance in relation to State-approved grade level standards.

- (3) For students with behavioral concerns, a systematic observation of the student's behavior in the school environment where the student is displaying difficulty.

- (4) A research-based intervention to increase the student's rate of learning or behavior change based on the results of the assessments under paragraph (2) or (3), or both.

- (5) Repeated assessments of achievement or behavior, or both, conducted at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal monitoring of student progress during the interventions.

- (6) A determination as to whether the student's assessed difficulties are the result of a lack of instruction or limited English proficiency.

- (7) A determination as to whether the student's needs exceed the functional ability of the regular education program to maintain the student at an appropriate instructional level.

(8) Documentation that information about the student's progress as identified in paragraph (5) was periodically provided to the student's parents.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an on-going fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted at the Charter School, unless other arrangements are necessary or arranged.

The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation is not to be considered an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.

**If parents need additional information regarding the purpose, time, and location of screening activities, they should call or write the Principal of Charter School at:**

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER SCHOOL AT FRICK PARK  
829 MILTON STREET  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15218  
(412) 247-7970**

**Screening or pre-referral intervention activities may not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request an evaluation, at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of screening or pre-referral intervention activities.**

### **Evaluation**

An evaluation under IDEA 2004 involves the use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent that may assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability and the content of the child's IEP. The Charter School does not use any single measure or assessment as a sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child. Technically sound instruments are used to assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors in addition to physical or developmental factors.

Parental consent must be obtained by the Charter School prior to conducting an initial evaluation to determine if the child qualifies as a child with a disability, and before providing special education and related services to the child. Parental consent for an evaluation shall not be construed as consent for their child to receive special education and related services. The screening of a child by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation is not considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services; therefore, parental consent is not required in this instance.

The law contains additional provisions and due process protections regarding situations in which parental consent for an initial evaluation is absent or refused discussed more fully below and in the PATTAN Procedural Safeguards Notice. If you have any

questions about where to obtain a copy of the PATTAN Procedural Safeguards Notice, kindly contact Principal, at Environmental Charter School at Frick Park...An Imagine School (412) 247-7970, 829 Milton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15218.

The evaluation process is conducted by a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which includes a teacher, other qualified professionals who work with the child, the parents and other members as required by law. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection-in-evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

The MDE process results in a written report called an Evaluation Report (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction.

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request, at any time, that the Charter School conduct a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. **Requests for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation must be made in writing to the Principal, Environmental Charter School at Frick Park, (412) 247-7970, 829 Milton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15218.**

If a parent makes an oral request for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation, the Charter School shall provide the parent with a form(s) for that purpose within 10 days. If the public school denies the parents' request for an evaluation, the parents have the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or through voluntary alternative dispute resolution such as mediation.

Reevaluations are conducted if the Charter School determines that the educational or related services needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, of the child warrant a reevaluation; or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation. A reevaluation may occur not more than once a year, unless the parent and the Charter School agree; and must occur once every 3 years, unless the parent and the Charter School agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary. Students with mental retardation must be reevaluated every two years under State law.

### **Educational Placement**

The determination of whether a student is eligible for special education is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The IEP team includes: the parents of a child with a disability; not less than one regular education teacher, if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment; not less than one special education teacher, or when appropriate, not less than one special education provider; a representative of the school who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the School; an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described above; other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or the agency, who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services

personnel as appropriate; and whenever appropriate, a child with a disability. IEP team participation is directly addressed by the regulations. If the student is determined to be eligible for special education, the IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP shall be based in part on the results of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. The IEP team may decide that a student is not eligible for special education. In that instance, recommendations for educational programming in regular education may be developed from the ER.

Placement must be made in the “least restrictive environment” in which the student’s needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

### **Parents and Surrogate Parents**

For purposes of this Notice, the charter school considers parents to be biological or adoptive parents of a child; a foster parent; a guardian generally authorized to act as the child’s parent, or authorized to make educational decision for the child; an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare; or a surrogate parent.

A surrogate parent must be appointed when no parent can be identified; a public agency, after reasonable efforts, cannot locate a parent; the child is a ward of the State under the laws of Pennsylvania, or the child in an unaccompanied homeless youth as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(6). A person selected as a surrogate parent must not be an employee of the SEA, the charter school or any other agency that is involved in the education or care of the child; has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interest of the child the surrogate parent represents; and has knowledge and skills that ensure adequate representation of the child. The surrogate parent may represent the child in all matters relating to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child and the provision of FAPE to the child. Reasonable efforts must be made to ensure the assignment of surrogate parent not more than 30 days after it is determined that the child needs a surrogate parent.

### **Prior Written Notice**

The charter school will notify the parent whenever the charter school:

- a. Proposes to initiate or to change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child, or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to your child; or
- b. Refuses to initiate or to change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child or the provision of FAPE to your child.
- c. Change of placement for disciplinary reasons.

- d. Due process hearing, or an expedited due process hearing, initiated by the charter school.
- e. Refusal of the charter school to agree to an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at public expense.

In Pennsylvania, prior written notice is provided by means of a Prior Written Notice Form/Notice of Recommended Educational Placement. You should be given reasonable notice of this proposal or refusal so that if you do not agree with the charter school you may take appropriate action. Reasonable Notice means ten days.

The prior written notice must:

Describe the action that the charter school proposes or refuses to take;

1. Explain why the charter school is proposing or refusing to take the action;
2. Describe each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the charter school used in deciding to propose or refuse the action;
3. Include a statement that you have protections under the procedural safeguards provisions in Part B of IDEA;
4. Tell how you can obtain a description of the procedural safeguards if the action that the charter school is proposing or refusing is not an initial referral for evaluation;
5. Include resources for you to contact for help in understanding Part B of the IDEA;
6. Describe any other choices that your child's IEP Team considered and the reasons why those choices were rejected; and
7. Provide a description of other reasons why the charter school proposed or refused the action.

The notice must be:

- 1) Written in language understandable to the general public; **and**
- 2) Provided in your native language or other mode of communication you use, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.
- 3) If your native language or other mode of communication is not a written language, the charter school will ensure that:
  - a) The notice is translated for you orally or by other means in your native language or other mode of communication;
  - b) You understand the content of the notice; **and**
  - c) There is written evidence that 1 and 2 have been met.

*Native language*, when used with an individual who has limited English proficiency, means the following:

- a. The language normally used by that person, or, in the case of a child, the language normally used by the child's parents;

- b. In all direct contact with a child (including evaluation of a child), the language normally used by the child in the home or learning environment.

For a person with deafness or blindness, or for a person with no written language, the mode of communication is what the person normally uses (such as sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

### **Parental Consent**

*Consent* means:

- a. You have been fully informed in your native language or other mode of communication (such as sign language, Braille, or oral communication) of all information about the action for which consent is sought;
- b. You understand and agree in writing to that action, and the consent describes that action and lists gave your consent and before you withdrew it.

### **Need for Parental Consent**

#### **1. Initial Evaluations (34 CFR §300.300)**

- a. **General Rule: Consent for initial evaluation**  
The charter school cannot conduct an initial evaluation of your child to determine whether your child is eligible under Part B of the IDEA to receive special education and related services without first providing you with prior written notice of the proposed action and without obtaining your consent. The charter school must make reasonable efforts to obtain your informed consent for an initial evaluation to decide whether your child is a child with a disability. Your consent for initial evaluation does not mean that you have also given your consent for the charter school to start providing special education and related services to your child. If your child is enrolled in public school or you are seeking to enroll your child in a public school and you have refused to provide consent or failed to respond to a request to provide consent for an initial evaluation, the charter school may, but is not required to, seek to conduct an initial evaluation of your child by utilizing the Act's mediation or due process complaint, resolution meeting, and impartial due process hearing procedures. The charter school will not violate its obligations to locate, identify and evaluate your child if it does not pursue an evaluation of your child in these circumstances.
- b. **Special rules for initial evaluation of wards of the State**  
Under Pennsylvania law, if a child is designated a ward of the state, the whereabouts of the parent are not known or the rights of the parent have been terminated in accordance with State law. Therefore, someone other than the parent has been designated to make educational decisions for the child. Consent for an initial evaluation should, therefore, be obtained from the individual so designated.

*Ward of the State*, as used in the IDEA, encompasses two other categories, so as to include a child who is:

1. A foster child who does not have a foster parent;
2. Considered a ward of the State under State law; **or**
3. In the custody of a public child welfare agency.

## **2. Consent for Initial Placement in Special Education (34 CFR §300.300)**

### *Parental consent for services*

The charter school must obtain your informed consent before providing special education and related services to your child for the first time. The charter school must make reasonable efforts to obtain your informed consent before providing special education and related services to your child for the first time.

If you do not respond to a request to provide your consent for your child to receive special education and related services for the first time, or if you refuse to give such consent, the charter school may not use the procedural safeguards (i.e. mediation, due process complaint, resolution meeting, or an impartial due process hearing) in order to obtain agreement or a ruling that the special education and related services as recommended by your child's IEP Team may be provided to your child without your consent.

If you refuse to give your consent for your child to start receiving special education and related services, or if you do not respond to a request to provide such consent and the charter school does not provide your child with the special education and related services for which it sought your consent, the charter school:

1. Is not in violation of the requirement to make FAPE available to your child for its failure to provide those services to your child; **and**
2. Is not required to have an IEP meeting or develop an IEP for your child for the special education and related services for which your consent was request.

## **3. Consent for Reevaluations (34 CFR §300.300)**

*The charter school must obtain your informed consent before it reevaluates your child, unless the charter school can demonstrate that:*

1. It took reasonable steps to obtain your consent for your child's reevaluation; **and**
2. You did not respond.

## **4. Documentation Reasonable Efforts to Obtain Parental Consent (34 CFR §300.300)**

The charter school must maintain documentation of reasonable efforts to obtain parental consent for initial evaluations, to provide special education and related services for the first time, to reevaluation and to locate parents of wards of the State for initial evaluations. The documentation must include a record of the charter school's attempts in these areas, such as:

1. Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;
2. Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; **and**
3. Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

#### **5. Consent Not Required Related to Evaluation**

##### **Your consent is not required before the charter school may:**

1. Review existing data as part of your child's evaluation or a reevaluation;  
**or**
2. Give your child a test or other evaluation that is given to all children unless, before that test or evaluation, consent is required from all parents of all children.

#### **6. Refused Consent to a Reevaluation**

If you refuse to consent to your child's reevaluation, the CHARTER SCHOOL may, but is not required to, pursue your child's reevaluation by using the mediation, due process complaint, resolution meeting, and impartial due process hearing procedures to seek to override your refusal to consent to your child's reevaluation. As with initial evaluations, the charter school does not violate its obligations under Part B of the IDEA if it declines to pursue the reevaluation in this manner.

The charter school may not use your refusal to consent to one service or activity to deny you or your child any other service, benefit, or activity.

#### **7. Disagreements with an Evaluation**

##### **a. Independent Educational Evaluations (34 CFR §300.502)**

###### **1) General**

As described below, you have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of your child if you disagree with the evaluation of your child that was obtained by the charter school. If you request an IEE, the charter school must provide you with information about where you may obtain an IEE and about the charter school's criteria that apply to IEEs.

###### **2) Definitions**

- a) *Independent educational evaluation* means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the charter school responsible for the education of your child.
- b) *Public expense* means that the charter school either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to you, consistent with the provisions of Part B of the IDEA, which allow each State to use whatever State, local, Federal and private sources of support are available in the State to meet the requirements of Part B of the Act.

###### **3) Parent right to evaluation at public expense**

You have the right to an IEE of your child at public expense if you disagree with an evaluation of your child obtained by the charter school, subject to the following conditions:

- a) If you request an IEE of your child at public expense, the charter school must, without unnecessary delay, either:
  - (a) File a due process complaint to request a hearing to show that its evaluation of your child is appropriate; or (b) Provide an IEE at public expense, unless the charter school demonstrates in a hearing that the evaluation of your child that you obtained did not meet the charter school's criteria.
- b) If the charter school requests a hearing and the final decision is that the charter school's evaluation of your child is appropriate, you still have the right to an IEE, but not at public expense.
- c) If you request an IEE of your child, the charter school may ask why you object to the evaluation of your child obtained by the charter school. However, the charter school may not require an explanation and may not unreasonably delay either providing the IEE of your child at public expense or filing a due process complaint to request a due process hearing to defend the charter school's evaluation of your child.
- d) You are entitled to only one IEE of your child at public expense each time the charter school conducts an evaluation of your child with which you disagree.
- e) Charter School criteria  
If an IEE is at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same as the criteria that the charter school uses when it initiates an evaluation (to the extent those criteria are consistent with your right to an IEE).  
Except for the criteria described above, a charter school may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an IEE at public expense.

**b. Parent-initiated evaluations**

If you obtain an IEE of your child at public expense or you share with the charter school an evaluation of your child that you obtained at private expense:

- 1) The charter school must consider the results of the evaluation of your child, if it meets the charter school's criteria for IEEs, in any decision made with respect to the provision of FAPE to your child; **and**
- 2) You or the charter school may present the evaluation as evidence at a due process hearing regarding your child.

**c. Requests for evaluations by hearing officers**

If a hearing officer requests an IEE of your child as part of a due process hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

## **ANNUAL NOTICE OF RIGHTS REGARDING STUDENT RECORDS:**

### **CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (34 CFR §300.622)**

Unless the information is contained in education records, and the disclosure is authorized without parental consent under FERPA, your consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to parties other than officials of participating agencies. Except under the circumstances specified below, your consent is not required before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies for purposes of meeting a requirement of Part B of the IDEA.

Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services.

### **ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION RELATED TO STUDENT (34 CFR §300.611)**

1. **Related to the confidentiality of information, the following definitions apply:**
  - a. *Destruction* means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable.
  - b. *Education records* means the type of records covered under the definition of “education records” in 34 CFR Part 99 (the regulations implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA)).
  - c. *Participating agency* means any charter school, agency or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information, or from which information is obtained, under Part B of the IDEA.
  - d. ***Personally identifiable (34 CFR §300.32)*** means information that has:
    - 1) Your child’s name, your name as the parent, or the name of another family member;
    - 2) Your child’s address;
    - 3) A personal identifier, such as your child’s social security number or student number; **or**
    - 4) A list of personal characteristics or other information that would make it possible to identify your child with reasonable certainty.
2. **Access Rights (34 CFR §300.613)**
  - a. **Parent Access**

The charter school must permit you to inspect and review any education records relating to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the charter school under Part B of the IDEA. The charter school must comply with your request to inspect and review any education records on your child without unnecessary delay or before any meeting regarding an IEP, or any impartial due process hearing (including a resolution meeting or a hearing regarding discipline), and in no case more than 45 calendar days after you have made a request.

- 4) Your right to inspect and review education records includes:
- 5) Your right to a response from the charter school to your reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records;
- 6) Your right to request that the charter school provide copies of the records if you cannot effectively inspect and review the records unless you receive those copies; **and**
- 7) Your right to have your representative inspect and review the records.
  - a) The charter school may presume that you have authority to inspect and review records relating to your child unless advised that you do not have the authority under applicable State law governing such matters as guardianship, or separation and divorce.
  - b) If any education **record includes information on more than one child**, the parents of those children have the right to inspect and review only the information relating to their child or to be informed of that specific information.
  - c) On request, each charter school must provide you with a **list of the types and locations of education records** collected, maintained, or used by the charter school.

**b. Other Authorized Access (34 CFR §300.614)**

The charter school must keep a record of parties obtaining access to education records collected, maintained, or used under Part B of the IDEA (except access by parents and authorized employees of the participating agency), including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

**3. Fees**

The charter school may charge a fee or copies of records (34 CFR §300.617) that are made for you under Part B of the IDEA, if the fee does not effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review those records. The charter school may not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information under Part B of the IDEA.

**4. Amendment of Records at Parent's Request (34 CFR §300.618)**

If you believe that information in the education records regarding your child collected, maintained, or used under Part B of the IDEA is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of your child, you may request the charter school that maintains the information to change the information.

The charter school must decide whether to change the information in accordance with your request within a reasonable period of time of receipt of your request.

If the charter school refuses to change the information in accordance with your request, it must inform you of the refusal and advise you of the right to a hearing for this purpose.

**5. Opportunity for a Records Hearing (34 CFR §300.619)**

The charter school must, on request, provide you an opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in education records regarding your child to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child.

**a. Hearing Procedures (34 CFR §300.621)**

A hearing to challenge information in education records must be conducted according to the following procedures for such hearings under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. Section 1233g (FERPA):

- 1) The educational agency or institution shall hold the hearing within a reasonable time after it has received the request for the hearing from the parent or eligible student.
- 2) The educational agency or institution shall give the parent or eligible student notice of the date, time, and place, reasonable in advance of the hearing.
- 3) The hearing may be conducted by any individual, including an official of the educational agency or institution who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing.
- 4) The educational agency or institution shall give the parent or eligible student a full and fair opportunity to present evidence to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the education records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy rights of the student. The parent or eligible student may, at their own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of his or her own choice, including an attorney.
- 5) The educational agency or institution shall make its decision in writing within a reasonable period of time after the hearing.
- 6) The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

**b. Result of Hearing (34 CFR §300.620)**

If, as a result of the hearing, the charter school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it must change the information accordingly and inform you in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, the charter school decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child, you may place in the records that it maintains on your child a statement commenting on the information or providing any reasons you disagree with the decision of the participating agency.

Such an explanation placed in the records of your child must:

1. Be maintained by the charter school as part of the records of your child as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by the participating agency; **and**
2. If the charter school discloses the records of your child or the challenged portion to any party, the explanation must also be disclosed to that party.

**c. Safeguards (34 CFR §300.623)**

**Each charter school must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.**

One official at each charter school must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. All persons collecting or using personally identifiable information must receive training or instruction regarding your State's policies and procedures regarding confidentiality under Part B of the IDEA and FERPA.

Each charter school must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

**6. Destruction of Information (34 CFR §300.624)**

**The charter school must inform you when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child, and the information must be destroyed at your request.**

However, a permanent record of your child's name, address, and phone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitation.

**PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.**

There are special rules in Pennsylvania for excluding children with disabilities for disciplinary reasons:

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**AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL (34 CFR §300.530)**

**1. Case-by-case determination**

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis, when determining whether a change of placement, made in accordance with the following requirements related to discipline, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a school code of student conduct.

**2. General**

To the extent that they also take such action for children without disabilities, school personnel may, for not more than **10 consecutive school days**, remove a child with a disability (other than a child with mental retardation) who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate

interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension. School personnel may also impose additional removals of the child for not more than **10 consecutive school days** in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement (see ***Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals*** for the definition, below) or exceed 15 cumulative school days in a school year. Once a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for a total of 15 school days in the same school year, the charter school must, during any subsequent days of removal in that school year, provide services to the extent required below under the sub-heading **Services**.

**3. Additional authority**

If the behavior that violated the student code of conduct was not a manifestation of the child's disability (see ***Manifestation determination***, below) and the disciplinary change of placement would exceed **10 consecutive school days**, school personnel may apply the disciplinary procedures to that child with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as it would to children without disabilities, except that the school must provide services to that child as described below under **Services**. The child's IEP Team determines the interim alternative educational setting for such services. Under PA special education regulations, a disciplinary exclusion of a student with a disability for more than 15 cumulative school days in a school year will be considered a pattern so as to be deemed a change in educational placement (explained under Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals). The charter school is required to issue a NOREP/Prior Written Notice to parents prior to a removal that constitutes a change in placement (removal for more than 10 consecutive days or 15 cumulative days).

**4. Services**

The services that must be provided to a child with a disability who has been removed from the child's current placement may be provided to an interim alternative educational setting. A charter school is only required to provide services to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for **10 school days or less** in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who has been similarly removed. Students may have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and may be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by their charter school.

A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement for **more than 10 consecutive school days** must:

- a. Continue to receive educational services, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; **and**
- b. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not happen again.

After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for **10 school days** during one school year, or **if** current removal is

for **10 consecutive school days** or less, **and** if the removal is not a change of placement (see definition below), **then** school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, determine the extent to which services are needed to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

If the removal is a change of placement (see definition below), the child's IEP Team determines the appropriate services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

**5. Manifestation determination**

**Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct (except for a removal that does not constitute a change in educational placement i.e., is for 10 consecutive school days or less and not a change of placement), the charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the charter school) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:**

- a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; **or**
- b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the charter school's failure to implement the child's IEP.

If the charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either of those conditions was met, the conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was the direct result of the charter school's failure to implement the IEP, the charter school must take immediate action to remedy those deficiencies.

**6. Determination that behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability**

If the charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:

- a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the charter school had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; **or**
- b. If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Except as described below under the sub-heading **Special circumstances**, the charter school must return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

**7. Special circumstances**

Whether or not the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the child's IEP Team) for up to 45 school days, if the child:

- a. Carries a weapon (see the **Definitions** below) to school or has a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the charter school;
- b. Knowingly has or uses illegal drugs (see the **Definitions** below), or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, (see the **Definitions** below), while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the charter school; **or**
- c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury (see the **Definitions** below) upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State Educational Agency or a charter school.

#### **8. Definitions**

- a. *Controlled substance* means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202 (c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).
- b. *Illegal drug* means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.
- c. *Serious bodily injury* has the meaning given the term "serious bodily injury" under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.
- d. *Weapon* has the meaning given the term "dangerous weapon" under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18, United States Code.

#### **9. Notification**

On the date it makes the decision to make a removal that is a change of placement of the child because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the charter school must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents with a procedural safeguards notice.

### **Change of Placement because of Disciplinary Removals (34 CFR §300.536)**

A removal of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement is a **change of placement** requiring a NOREP/prior written notice if:

1. The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days; **or**
2. The removal is for 15 cumulative school days total in any one school year;
3. The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
  - a. The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;
  - b. The child's behavior is substantially similar to the child's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in a series of removals;
  - c. Of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another; **and**

Whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement is determined on a case-by-case basis by the charter school and, if challenged, is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

### **Determination of Setting (34 CFR §300.531)**

The IEP must determine the interim alternative educational setting for removals that are **changes of placement**, and removals under the headings **Additional authority** and **Special circumstances**, above.

#### **1. General**

The parent of a child with a disability may file a due process complaint (see above) to request a due process hearing if he or she disagrees with:

- a. Any decision regarding placement made under these discipline provisions; **or**
- b. The manifestation determination described above.

The charter school may file a due process complaint (see above) to request a due process hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

#### **2. Authority of hearing officer**

A hearing officer that meets the requirements described under the sub-heading **Impartial Hearing Officer** must conduct the due process hearing and make a decision.

The hearing officer may:

- a. Return the child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed if the hearing officer determines that the removal was a violation of the requirements described under the heading Authority of School Personnel, or that the child's behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability; or
- b. Order a change of placement of the child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

These hearing procedures may be repeated, if the charter school believes that returning the child to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

Whenever a parent or a charter school files a due process complaint to request such a hearing, a hearing must be held that meets the requirements described under the headings **Due Process Complaint Procedures, Hearings on Due Process Complaints**, except as follows:

1. The SEA must arrange for an expedited due process hearing, which must occur within **20** school days of the date the hearing is filed and must result in a determination within **10** school days after the hearing.
2. Unless the parents and the charter school agree in writing to waive the meeting, or agree to use mediation, a resolution meeting must occur within **7** calendar days of receiving notice of the due process complaint. The hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the

satisfaction of both parties within **15** calendar days of receipt of the due process complaint.

A party may appeal the decision in an expedited due process hearing in the same way as they may for decisions in other due process hearings. When, as described above, the parent or charter school has filed a due process complaint related to disciplinary matters, the child must (unless the parent and the State Educational Agency or charter school agree otherwise) remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer, or until the expiration of the time period of removal as provided for and described under the heading ***Authority of School Personnel***, whichever occurs first.

### **Special Rules for Students with Mental Retardation**

The disciplinary removal of a child with mental retardation attending either a charter school for any amount of time is considered a change in placement and requires NOREP/prior written notice (if the disciplinary event does not involve drugs, weapons and/or serious bodily injury). A removal from school is not a change in placement for a child who is identified with mental retardation when the disciplinary event involves weapons, drugs, and/or serious bodily injury.

According to certain assurances the Commonwealth entered into related to the PARC consent decree, a charter school may suspend on a limited basis a student with mental retardation who presents a danger to himself or others upon application and approval by the Bureau of Special Education and only to the extent that a student with a disability other than mental retardation could be suspended.

### **Protections for Children Not Yet Eligible for Special Education and Related Services (34 CFR §300.534)**

#### **1. General**

If a child has not been determined eligible for special education and related services and violates a code of student conduct, but the charter school had knowledge (as determined below) before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred, that the child was a child with a disability, then the child may assert any of the protections described in this notice.

#### **2. Basis of knowledge for disciplinary matters**

**A charter school must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if, before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred:**

- a. The parent of the child expressed concern in writing that the child is in need of special education and related services to supervisory or administrative personnel of appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child;
- b. The parent request an evaluation related to eligibility for special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA; **or**
- c. The child's teacher or other charter school personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the charter school's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel of the charter school.

### **3. Exception**

#### **A charter school would not be deemed to have such knowledge if:**

- a. The child's parent has not allowed an evaluation of the child or refused special education services; **or**
- b. The child has been evaluated and determined to not be a child with a disability under Part B of the IDEA.

### **4. Conditions that apply if there is no basis of knowledge**

If prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, a charter school does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability, as described above under the sub-headings ***Basis of knowledge for disciplinary matters*** and ***Exception***, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures that are applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors. However, if a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.

Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the charter school, and information provided by the parents, the charter school must provide special education and related services in accordance with Part B of the IDEA, including the disciplinary requirements described above.

## **REFERRAL TO AND ACTION BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES (34 CFR §300.535)**

### **1. The state and federal regulations do not:**

- a. Prohibit an agency from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities; **or**
- b. Prevent State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.

Subsequent to a referral to law enforcement, an updated functional behavior assessment and positive behavior support plan are required.

### **2. Transmittal of records**

If a charter school reports a crime committed by a child with a disability, the charter school: must ensure that copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records are transmitted for consideration by the authorities to whom the agency reports the crime; and May transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent permitted by FERPA.

**THIS ANNUAL NOTICE AND STATEMENT OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 711 OF TITLE 22 OF THE PA CODE.**

**THE CONTENT OF THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN STRAIGHTFORWARD, SIMPLE LANGUAGE. IF A PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS NOTICE, HE OR SHE SHOULD ASK THE CAO OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL FOR AN EXPLANATION. THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR AN INTERPRETER FOR PARENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY. IF A PARENT IS DEAF OR BLIND OR HAS NO WRITTEN LANGUAGE, THE SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR COMMUNICATION OF THIS NOTICE IN THE MODE NORMALLY USED BY THE PARENT (E.G., SIGN LANGUAGE, BRAILLE, OR ORAL COMMUNICATION).**

**THIS NOTICE IS ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES, EVALUATION AND SCREENING ACTIVITIES, AND RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS PERTAINING TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, CHILDREN THOUGHT TO BE DISABLED AND THEIR PARENTS AND ARE ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY RIGHTS REGARDING STUDENT INFORMATION.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST EVALUATION OR SCREENING OF A CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL AT ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER SCHOOL AT FRICK PARK, (412) 247-7970, 829 MILTON STREET, PITTSBURGH, PA 15218.**

**NOTHING IN THIS NOTICE IS INTENDED TO CONFLICT WITH OR SUPPLANT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S CURRENT "PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE" WHICH IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL FOR YOUR REVIEW OR WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS.**

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## **Student Records Policy**

The Charter School recognizes the need to protect the privacy rights of students and their parents. The Charter School will adhere to the provisions of state and federal law pertaining to those privacy rights, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA"), as amended, and its accompanying regulations; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), as amended, and its implementing regulations; the Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949, and Chapter 12 of the Pennsylvania Administrative Code containing the regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. The Principal is designated as the Administrator responsible for the maintenance, access and release of student records and the maintenance, access and release of academic records.

The Principal shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

### **I. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- A. The term "disclosure" means permitting access to or the release, transfer or other communication of personally identifiable information contained in education records to any party, by any means, including oral, written or electronic means. 34 C.F.R. § 99.3.
- B. The term "educational institution" or "educational agency or institution" means any public or private agency or institution which is the recipient of funds under any federal program referenced in applicable law. The term refers to the agency or institution recipient as a whole, including all of its component parts. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (a)(3).
- C. The term "education records" means those records that are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. The record can be recorded in any form, including but not limited to, handwriting, print computer media, electronic files, electronic mail, video or audio tape, film, microfilm and microfiche. The term does not include:
  - 1. Records that are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record, are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record.

2. Records of the law enforcement unit of an educational agency or institution, subject to the provisions of 34 C.F.R. § 99.8;
3. Records relating to an individual who is employed by an educational agency or institution that:
  - a. Are made and maintained in the normal course of business;
  - b. Relate exclusively to the individual in that the individual's capacity as an employee; and
  - c. Are not available for use for any other purpose;

However records relating to an individual in attendance at the agency or institution who is employed as a result of his or her status as a student are education records and are not excluded under this provision.

4. Records on a student who is eighteen years of age or older, or is attending an institution of post-secondary education that is:
  - a. Made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in her professional capacity or assisting in a professional capacity;
  - b. Made, maintained or used in connection with the treatment of the student; and
  - c. Disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment. For the purpose of this definition, "treatment" does not include remedial educational activities or activities that are part of the program of instruction at the agency or institution; and
5. Records that only contain information pertaining to time periods after the individual is no longer a student at the Charter School. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4).

D. The term "Charter School" means the Charter School and its officers, employees and agents, individually or collectively. The term does not include any other public or private school or other educational agency, or any officer, employee or agency thereof, at which the Charter School students are enrolled or from which the Charter School students receive services. 24 P.S. § 17-1715A.

- E. The term "student" except as otherwise means any school-age person who is attending the Charter School and with respect to whom the Charter School maintains education records. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (a)(6).
- F. The term "eligible student" means a student who has attained eighteen (18) years of age, or is attending an institution of post-secondary education. Whenever a student has attained eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the permission or consent shall be required of, and the right accorded to the student, except that the parent of an exceptional child or a disabled child as defined by state and federal law or a parent who claims the student as a dependent under Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall have the right of access to the student's records and information contained therein (as provided in Section IV.A.).
- G. The term "parent" means a natural or lawfully-adoptive parent or legal guardian of a student, or a surrogate parent appointed in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.515 of the regulations implementing Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, or a person acting as a parent who is supporting a student gratis and has signed an affidavit assuming educational responsibility for the student in accordance with Section 1302 of the Public School Code, 24 P.S. § 13-1302. The Charter School shall afford to any person who qualifies as a "parent" under this section all of the rights afforded to parents by this policy or by any state or federal law, unless the responsible administrator receives and has reasonable opportunity to review a lawful custody order, divorce decree, separation agreement or similar document expressly terminating the right of that person to receive or have access to the student's records. 34 C.F.R. § 99.4. The Charter School does not assume responsibility for the discovery or location of such documentation.
- H. The term "directory information" means any of the following personally-identifiable information when, in the judgment of the responsible administrator, the release of such information would not be harmful to or constitute an invasion of privacy for the student or his or her family; the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of attendance or participation in the Charter School program, date of graduation, and similar information. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(5)(A).

- I. The term "school official with a legitimate educational interest" means
  1. Any person in one or more of the following positions:
    - a. the Principal and his specifically authorized designees;
    - b. the responsible administrator and his or her specifically-authorized designees;
    - c. the Principal of any building to which the student is assigned and any other administrators employed by the Charter School who are responsible for the administration of programs in which the student is enrolled or participating;
    - d. instructional staff, counselors, psychologists, social workers, educational diagnosticians, psychiatrists, program specialist, therapists, physicians, and nurses who are employed or used by the Charter School and are involved in the provision of education other services to the student;
    - e. attorneys or similar legal representatives of the Charter School, when the attorneys or legal representative is providing advice to the Charter School concerning the education or discipline of the student or where the records are relevant or thought to be relevant to the legal matter for which the attorney or legal representative is being consulted;
    - f. members of any Charter School student assistance program team to which the student is referred, including members who are not employed by the Charter School;
    - g. special education due process hearing officers and administrative review officers designated by the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
  2. A school official has a legitimate educational interest in personally identifiable information when access to that information is required for the effective, efficient or proper provision of education or other services to the student to whom the information pertains or with

respect to required investigations, administrative or legal proceeding. The Charter School shall maintain for public inspection and for access under Section IV.A.4 of this policy a list of the names and positions of school officials who are entitled to disclosure under this paragraph. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(A).

- J. The term “destruction” or “destroy” means the physical destruction, obliteration or permanent removal of all or any portion of the information in a student record. Permanent removal of a record from the custody, care and control of the Charter School shall constitute destruction of that record even if the information contained therein is maintained by another agency or entity.
- K. The term “record” means any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, microfiche. 34 C.F.R. § 99.3.
- L. The term “applicable law” shall mean all statutes and regulations applicable to the student records that are in effect when any action is taken or is to be taken and shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34 Part 99, the United States Code § 1232 and the regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education at 22 Pa. Code §§ 12.31 *et. seq.*
- M. The term “Review Panel” shall mean a panel created by the Board of Trustees composed of qualified professional personnel to determine the validity of Category ”C” data and to provide for parental challenges of such data on occasion where their transfer to Category “B” is held to be desirable. Panel members should not be limited to school employees.

## **II. MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT RECORDS**

**A. Collection of Information** – No information shall be collected from students without either prior representational consent of the School Board or informed individual consent from the parent and/or students.

### **1. Prior Consent**

Prior to the collection of anecdotal materials for the purpose of preparing reports, informed consent of the parent or eligible student must be requested, except as indicated in subparagraph a. below.

**a. Representational Consent** - Representational consent is hereby granted to the appropriately elected school representatives and may satisfy the principle of consent for gathering of information which does not require individual consent by the parent or eligible student under state and federal law. 22 Pa. Code § 12.33 (Guideline 1.1).

1. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to grant consent for the collection of all Category “A” and Category “B” information as stated below.

2. In situations in which representational consent is sufficient, students and their parents shall be informed in advance, by school officials, annually of the purposes and character of the information collection and shall be given reasonable opportunity by the Board of Trustees to contest the necessity or desirability of the collection process or the proposed use of the information.

**b. Individual Consent** - If individual consent by the parent of eligible student is required by state and federal law, prior to gathering such information, such consent shall be obtained in writing. 22 Pa. Code § 12.33 (Guideline 1.2).

1. Individual consent from parents and/or “eligible” students shall be required for all Category “C” information as stated below:
  - a. Prior to the requesting of individual consent, parents shall be fully informed, in writing, as to the methods by which the information will be collected.
  - b. The uses to which it will be put;
  - c. The methods by which it will be retained; and the persons to whom it will be retained;
  - d. The persons to whom it will be available, and under what conditions.
  - e. If the above explanations are impossible or undesirable, the reasons shall be presented.

- f. In all situations where individual consent is obtained, it shall be in writing.
2. **Special situations** where the principle of informed consent cannot be met, as for example in the course of interviews by school personnel, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a. The school will inform the student as fully as possible about the data that is likely to be obtained;
  - b. The school will stress the voluntary nature of the student's participation;
  - c. Where reasonable doubts exist as to the capacity of the student to understand the implications of the situation, either because of the student's age or other circumstances, parental permission will be sought before proceeding. In addition, where a student clearly in need of intervention declines to participate, the professional involved will seek parental consent.
  - d. In either case, if parental consent cannot be obtained or is not given, further steps to provide assistance will be initiated only if:
    1. The guidance counselor or designated school official is entirely convinced, giving full attention to the privacy interests involved, that intervention is imperative;
    2. both the student and parents have been fully informed to the extent that is possible;
    3. and appropriate school authorities such as the school's review panel has consented.

**D. Information Collected for Non-School Purposes**

1. Where the information and/or data to be collected are for non-school purposes, either by school personnel or outsiders then the above recommendations shall be fully applied with the further provision that prior informed consent must be obtained from the responsible school authorities.

2. In cases where the information is to be collected under conditions of anonymity, the collecting agency must still obtain the appropriate form of consent. The school authorities shall establish procedures for regulating the collection of such information, including the following:
  - a. Notification to the students and parents that their participation is voluntary.
  - b. Careful review of the instruments and procedures to be used for any such information collection to determine whether the methods and/or inquiries constitute a significant potential invasion of privacy, even though the information is to be collected under conditions of anonymity.

## **2. Notification of Rights**

- a. Parents and eligible students shall be notified annually of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA"). The notice must inform parents of students currently in attendance, or eligible students currently in attendance, of their rights under the Act and this part.

The notice must inform parents or eligible student that they have the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and § 99.31 authorize disclosure without consent; and
4. The procedure to file complaints for non-compliance concerns.
5. The parent or eligible student who wishes to file a complaint with regard to compliance of this policy

may do so contacting the Chief Administrative Officer.

6. If further appeal is necessary, the parent or eligible student may contact the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Officer, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605. 34 C.F.R. § 99.7.

- b. A listing of the types, content and location of education records maintained by the Charter School shall be made available annually to include the names, titles, and addresses of the school officials responsible for such records.
- c. The annual notification shall be accomplished by publication in the local newspaper and distributed to parents of currently attending students.

### **III. CLASSIFICATION OF INFORMATION COLLECTED**

All information collected in the pupil record shall be classified as follows:

#### **A. Category "A" Information**

This category includes official administrative records that constitute the minimum personal information necessary for the operation of the educational system. If collected, it shall include the following items:

- 1. The student's name, address, telephone number, birth date, sex, date of entry, and date of withdrawal;
- 2. Standardized Achievement Test results;
- 3. The student's grades and class rank;
- 4. The student's record of participation in school activities, awards, etc.
- 5. The names and addresses of parents or guardians and other family background of non-confidential nature.

These records should be maintained for at least 100 years.

#### **B. Category "B" Information**

This category includes verifiable information of clear importance, but not absolutely necessary to the school, over time, in helping the child or protecting others. If collected, it shall include the following items:

1. Scores on standardized intelligence and aptitude test;
2. Students Health data;
3. Interests inventories;
4. Family background information;
5. Systematically gathered teacher or counselor ratings and observations;
6. Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.

#### **C. Category “C” Information**

This category will includes potentially useful information but not yet verified or clearly needed beyond the immediate present. This information is highly confidential information and should be reviewed at least once a year and destroyed as soon as their usefulness is ended or transferred to Category “B”. Transfer to Category “B” may be made if two conditions are met, namely,

1. The continuing usefulness of the information is clearly demonstrated, and
2. Its validity has been verified, in which case parents must be notified and the nature of information explained.

If collected, may include the following:

1. Legal or clinical findings including certain personality test results;
2. Unevaluated reports of teachers, counselors and others which may be needed in ongoing investigations and disciplinary or counseling actions.

**D. Category “D” Information:** Confidential, Personal Files of Professionals in the School (School Psychologist, Social Workers, Counselors)

We recognize that, in some instances, professional working in the school may maintain personal and confidential files containing notes, transcripts of interviews, clinical diagnoses and other memory aids for their own use in counseling pupils. Any and all data that are considered to be the personal property of the professional should be guarded by the rules given above in addition to those dictated by professional ethics, subject to the terms of the employment contract between the school and the professional and any special agreements made between the professional and individual parent and/or students. Such records kept in the sole possession or the maker of the record and not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of record are not considered education records, and therefore, are not subject to access requirements enumerated in this policy. Upon termination of professional employment with the Charter School, all personal data, and files are to be destroyed or reclassified. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4)(B)(i).

#### **IV. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

All student information shall be retained and maintained in the school in accordance with procedures identified with the classification of the material.

##### **A. Category “A” Information as outlined above:**

Information in this category shall be retained by the school for at least 100 years.

##### **B. Category “B” Information as outlined above:**

1. Great care must be exercised by the school to ensure the accuracy of the information in this category. In particular, reported behavior patterns and specific incidents must be unambiguously described and clearly verified before they become part of any continuing record.
2. The school shall give serious consideration to the elimination of unnecessary information in this category at periodic intervals such as at points of transition from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to senior high school.
3. All information in this category shall be destroyed, or else retained under conditions of anonymity for research purposes, when the student leaves the school. Exceptions may be made where, under

rigorous standards and impartial judgment, good cause for retention can be shown or according to statute.

- a. Parents shall be periodically informed of the content of Category "B" records, and of their right of access to this data.
- b. The health record and Category "B" information shall be maintained for a period of two years after the pupils' class graduation date. Therefore, these records shall be destroyed.

**C. Category "C" information as outlined above:**

1. Information in this category shall be reviewed at least once a year and destroyed as soon as its usefulness is ended. It may be transferred to Category "B" under certain conditions.
2. Transfer to Category "B" may be made only if the following two conditions are met:
  - a. The continuing usefulness of the information is clearly demonstrated.
  - b. The validity of the information has been verified in which case the parents must be notified and the nature of the information explained.
3. If for any reason temporary unevaluated information is held for more than one year, the existence of this information must be discussed with the parent and the reason for its maintenance explained fully. Parents then should have an opportunity to challenge the decision to maintain such information.
4. The previously defined review panel composed of qualified professional personnel should determine the validity of Category "C" data.

**V. ADMINISTRATION OF SECURITY**

- A. The CEO or designee shall be responsible for record maintenance and access and release of records. Staff training programs will be conducted for the professional staff on the record policy, with emphasis placed on security and confidentiality.

- B. Student records will be kept in locked filing cabinets at all times under the supervision of designated personnel, e.g., the CEO of the Charter School or his/her designee.
  
- C. The Charter School shall protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information including at the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages of that information. The Charter School will insure that any records kept or transmitted electronically are subject to high standards of electronic security. The Charter School uses electronic firewalls and encryption systems, and monitors and tests the system regularly to ensure its stability and integrity. All the Charter School electronic mail correspondence shall include the following:

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE**

The information in this transmission is intended only for the individual or entity named above. It may be legally privileged and confidential. If you have received this information in error, notify us immediately by calling the Charter School at Environmental Charter School, 412-247-7970. Send the original transmission to us by mail. Return postage is guaranteed. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication or its contents is strictly prohibited.

**VI. CHALLENGING THE VALIDITY OF INFORMATION**

If the parent or student wishes to challenge any of the information in the student record as a result of the initial conference, and if the conflict cannot be resolved informally, the following formal procedures will be followed:

- A. The parent or student must submit a written request for amendment of the record of the student. The request will contain a brief statement which specifies the records to be amended and the reason that the amendment is requested. This request will be submitted to the CEO.
  
- B. The challenge will be reviewed by the school's review panel within a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days from the receipt of the written request.
  - 1. If the school does decides to refuse to amend the information in accordance with the request of the parent, the school shall inform

the parent in writing of both the refusal and the specific reasons for the refusal and shall notify the parent in writing of the right to request and receive a hearing.

2. The hearing shall be conducted according to the following provisions:
3. The hearing shall be held at mutually agreed upon time and place within thirty (30) days after the school received the request for a hearing from the parent.
  - a. The parent shall be notified in writing of the date, place and time of the hearing, no later than five (5) days in advance of the hearing.
  - b. The hearing shall be conducted by the review panel which does not have direct interest in the outcome of the hearing. The duties of the review panel shall be the following:
    1. to review challenges made by parents and/or students and render decisions as to the correction or deletion of inaccurate or misleading information.
    2. to determine the validity of category "C" data and the transfer of category "C" data to category "B".
    3. to grant representative consent in situations where the intervention is judged to be imperative, parental consent cannot be obtained, and there is reasonable doubt as to the capacity of the student to understand the implications of the situation.
    4. to grant representative consent to persons or agencies to conduct studies involving the school population under the conditions of anonymity.
4. The party conducting the hearing may be an official of the school.
5. The parent shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to information in the educational records that the parent believes is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or rights of the child.

6. The parent may, at the hearing, be assisted or represented by persons of his/her choice at his/her expense, and such persons may include legal counsel.
7. The school shall render a written decisions on the issues presented at the hearing and shall render such decision within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the hearing. The decision shall be based solely upon evidence presented at the hearing and shall include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.
8. If as a result of the hearing the review panel that the information is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or rights of students, the school shall amend the education records accordingly and so inform the parent in writing.
9. If as a result of the hearing the review panel decides that the information if not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of students, the review panel shall inform parent of his/her right to place in the educational records of the student a statement which sets forth the written comments of the parent in the educational records of reasons for disagreeing with the decision of the review panel or both written comments and reasons.
10. The statement of the parent shall be appended by the school to the educational records so long as the record or the contested portion thereof is maintained by the school.
11. If the education records of the student or the contested portion thereof is released by the school to any party, the statement of the parent shall also be released to the party.

Nothing in this section on parent requests for amendment of records shall be interpreted to mean that the parent and the school may not, by mutual agreement, meet prior to either a parent request for a hearing or the hearing itself in order to discuss the concerns of the parent regarding the accuracy or inaccuracy of the records of the student.

## **VII. DISSEMINATION OF STUDENT INFORMATION**

In situations in which the school is asked by other agencies, institutions or individuals to transmit student information to those parties, stringent

precautions are required to protect the rights of the student against infringement of privacy, misinterpretation of data and inappropriate use.

#### **A. Release of information to Educational Officials**

The school may, without the consent of parents or student, release appropriate information in a student's permanent record file, including previously defined Categories "A" and "B" to:

1. All school personnel, other than those directly involved with the child (the child's teacher, the counselor, CEO, etc.) desiring access to pupil records shall be required to sign a written form which will be kept permanently on file, indicating specifically the "legitimate educational interest" that they have in seeking this information.
2. Such a file will be available to parents and to the school officials responsible for record maintenance.
3. The Pennsylvania Secretary of Education and officers or subordinates as long as the intended use of the data is consistent with the Secretary's statutory powers and responsibilities.
4. Officials of other school systems in which the student intends to enroll.
  - a. The student's parents shall be notified of the transfer and shall receive a copy of the records, if desired.
  - b. The student's parents shall have an opportunity to challenge the record's content via a review panel as previously defined.

#### **B. Release of Information to Other Than Educational Officials**

The school or any school personnel may not divulge, in any form to any persons other than the education officials listed above, any information contained in the school records except:

1. **With written consent from the student's parents specifying records to be released and to whom**
  - a. A copy of the records to be released shall be given to the student's parent and/or the student if desired by the parents.
  - b. Or in compliance with the judicial order, pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena.

1. Parents and/or students shall be notified of all such orders in advance of the school's compliance.

## 2. Parental or Student Consent and Requests

- a. Where parental and/or student permission is required for the release of school records, procedures for obtaining this permission shall take into account the differences in the kinds of information contained in the student's record file.
- b. Routine, nonspecific consent applies only to Category "A" information.
- c. Additional, separate and specific consent shall be required for the release of any information in Category "B."
- d. Under no conditions, except by judicial order or subpoena, or by parental consent, shall the school release information in Category "C."
- e. Under no conditions, except by judicial order or subpoena, shall the school release information gathered by any non-school agency which is included in the school record with the exception of birth date.
- f. Each matter of request for consent must be handled separately and no blanket permissions for release of information within an extended period of time may be solicited.
- g. The school may comply with parental requests for the release of information to other persons or agencies with the following exceptions based on the student's age;
  1. When a student reaches the age of eighteen, or is an emancipated minor, or is married (whether eighteen or not), his or her consent alone must be obtained.
  2. This includes the right to deny parental access to his records.
- h. Either a child or the child's parents or guardians, or their legal representative, may have access to Category "A" information. Students may have access to Category "B" information with parental permission, unless they qualify without parental permission due to age or marital status.

- i. This right of access includes the right to challenge the validity of information contained in the record through procedures to be developed by the school and involving a formal review process incorporating previously outlined due process principles.

### **3. Anonymous Information for Outside Research**

The school may provide anonymous information from the records for outside research purposes without consent under conditions where the likelihood of identifying any individual because of his unique characteristics is negligible.

### **4. Government Mandating of Information Release**

- a. In cases in which local, state, and federal governmental agencies mandate the release of information on individuals, the principle of informed consent should apply except in those cases involving school responsibilities under existing child abuse or neglect statutes.
- b. Governmental agencies, in mandating the provision of information, should abide by the recommendations herein contained to assure the rights of privacy.
- c. Where identification of individuals is nevertheless legally required, with or without consent, written protest shall be made by the school to the requesting agency, parents shall be informed of the specific information which has been provided and legislative redress should be sought.

### **5. Waiver**

Rights of access may be waived for school's confidential statement submitted as part of the student's process of applying for admission to another educational institution.

Such waivers shall be required before confidential statements are made on behalf of the school but shall not be required before other aspects of the application are completed by the Charter School.

## **IV. ACCESS TO STUDENT EDUCATION RECORDS**

### **A. Access to Records**

1. The Charter School shall provide the parent or eligible student access to the educational records of the student. 34 C.F.R. § 99.10(a).
2. Access rights of the parent or eligible student shall consist of the right to:
  - a. Inspect and review the content of the education records
  - b. Obtain copies of the education records at the expense of the parent or eligible student, at a cost not to exceed the actual cost of the Charter School reproducing such records. No parent or eligible student shall be refused copies if the financial obligation would prevent them from exercising their right to inspect and review the education records. 34 C.F.R. § 99.11.
  - c. A response from the Charter School to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the education records. 34 C.F.R. § 99.10(c).
  - d. An opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of those records, as provided in Section V of this policy.
  - e. Inspect and review only material or documents that relate to the student in question. 34 C.F.R. § 99.12(a).
3. Procedure for gaining access to records:
  - a. The parent or eligible student seeking access to education records shall make a written request of the CEO or his/her designee.
  - b. Access to the education records requested shall be granted as soon as possible, but no later than 45 days after the receipt of a written request. 34 C.F.R. § 99.10(b).
4. The Charter School shall maintain a current list of the names and positions of the professional employees who are

authorized to have access to personally identifiable information. This list shall be available in the school office.

**B. Record of Access**

1. the Charter School shall maintain a record, kept with the education records of each student which will indicate all parties (other than those listed in Section IV.B.1.a.) who have requested or obtained access to a student's education record and which will indicate specifically the legitimate interest that each such party had in obtaining this information. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(4)(A).
2. Such record of access shall be available only to the parent or eligible student, to the school officials and their assistants who are responsible for the custody of such records, and to persons and organizations authorized to see such records. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(4)(A).

**C. Transfer of Information by Those Gaining Access to Education Records.**

The Charter School shall release personal information on a student only on the condition that the party to whom the information is being transferred will not permit any other party to have access to such information without the written consent of the parent or the eligible student.

**D. Destruction of Records:**

1. An education record shall not be destroyed by the Charter School if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review it by the parent or eligible student. 34 C.F.R. § 99.10(e).
2. The Charter School maintains the right to destroy some records that are considered to be invalid because of age and content matter. Student education records shall be maintained in accordance with Sections III.A.6., III.C. and IV.E. of this policy, and shall be destroyed in such time as provided therein.
3. Before any such destruction of student records (except as provided in III.C. of this policy) the parent or eligible student shall be given advance notice of the date after which the

records will be destroyed and the opportunity to obtain copies of records prior to the specified date.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS CONTROL.

***Annual Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the 2010-2011 School Year /Notice to Parents and Guardians Regarding the Disclosure of Student “Directory Information”***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records.

These rights are briefly summarized below and are explained more fully in the Board’s Student Records Policy which is on file at the school and is available upon request:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the School Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official may include a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or

support staff member (including health or medical staff and law unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605**

### **Directory Information**

Directory information means information contained in the educational record of a student, which is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, so that it may be disclosed without prior parental consent, unless you have advised the Environmental Charter School at Frick Park the contrary in accordance with the Environmental Charter School at Frick Park procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Charter School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school-related publications or notices.

As part of the Environmental Charter School at Frick Park's annual notification under FERPA, we designate for the school year 2013-2014 the following types or categories of information as "directory information":

- Student Name
- Participation in officially recognized activities, clubs and sports
- Naming of Student to the Honor Roll, National Honor Society or as Valedictorian
- Address
- Telephone listing

- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic Mail Address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

Examples of how and where the Environmental Charter School at Frick Park may disclose directory information include disclosing the directory information in the following, by way of example:

- Newsletters
- A playbill, showing student's role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook
- Honor Roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members
- Companies or outside organizations that manufacture class rings or yearbooks
- Newspapers or other news sources
- Class Lists
- Staff and/or Student Directories and/or listings
- School Website
- School Bulletin Boards

These examples are for illustration only and are not an exclusive list of the manner in which directory information may be disclosed. This notice provides you as a parent or eligible student with an opportunity to object in writing to any or all of those types of information that the School has designated as directory information. You have the right to refuse to permit the release by notifying the School in writing that you do not want any or all of those types of information to be designated as directory information for your child or yourself.

Please submit any refusal with the types of information you wish removed from the list of directory information and mail your written objections on or before **September 20, 2013** to the Principal(s) of the Environmental Charter School.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please call or write the Principal(s) of the Environmental Charter School. **If you do not submit a written refusal on or before September 20, 2013 then the school may disclose directory information without your prior consent.**

**THE CONTENT OF THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN STRAIGHTFORWARD, SIMPLE LANGUAGE. IF A PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS NOTICE, HE OR SHE SHOULD ASK THE CEO OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL FOR AN EXPLANATION. THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR AN INTERPRETER FOR PARENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY. IF A PARENT IS DEAF OR BLIND OR HAS NO WRITTEN LANGUAGE, THE SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR COMMUNICATION OF THIS NOTICE IN THE MODE NORMALLY USED BY THE PARENT (E.G., SIGN LANGUAGE, BRAILLE, OR ORAL COMMUNICATION). IF A STUDENT HAS A DISABILITY, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN THE SCHOOL'S ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS AND RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.**

c. the records (if any) that will be released and to whom; and

You understand that the consent does not negate (undo) an action that has occurred after you

