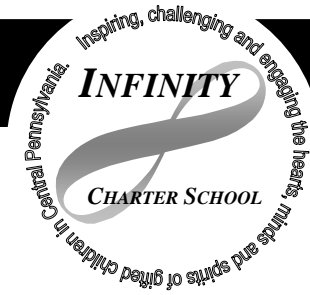


**INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL**



**2014 - 2015**

**PARENT  
HANDBOOK**

Infinity Charter School  
51 Banks Street, Suite 1  
Penbrook, PA 17103

(717) 238-1880 (phone)  
(717) 238-1190 (fax)

website: [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org)

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**\*NOTE: ALL POLICIES APPROVED BY INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL’S BOARD OF TRUSTEES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.INFINITYSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.INFINITYSCHOOL.ORG)**

# 2014-2015 School Calendar

## Infinity Charter School 2014-2015

Monday, August 18 <sup>th</sup>	Teachers Report to Work	
<b>Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>First Day of School</b>	
Monday, September 1 <sup>st</sup>	No School	Labor Day
Monday, October 13 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Teacher In-Service
Thursday, November 6 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, November 7 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Thursday, November 27 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Thanksgiving Break
Friday, November 28 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Thanksgiving Break
Monday, December 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Friday, January 2 <sup>nd</sup>		Winter Break
Monday, January 19 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Day
Thursday, January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Monday, February 16 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Presidents' Day
Thursday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Friday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Parent/Teacher Conf.
Mon., March 30 <sup>th</sup> – Fri., April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	No School	Spring Break
Friday, May 1 <sup>st</sup>	No School	PAGE Conference
Monday, May 25 <sup>th</sup>	No School	Memorial Day
<b>Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Last Day of School</b>	
Friday, June 5 <sup>th</sup>	Portfolio Sharing	
Tuesday, June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Teachers' Last Day	

**2013-2014 INFINITY STAFF/BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**INFINITY STAFF**

<b>Director</b> .....	Suzanne Gausman
<b>School Secretary</b> .....	Tracie Miller
<b>Business Manager</b> .....	Shelly Fredericks
<b>Kindergarten-First Grade Teacher</b> .....	Erin Confer
<b>Kindergarten-First Grade Teacher</b> .....	Vivian Galebach
<b>First -Second Grade Teacher</b> .....	Melissa Kohr
<b>Third-Fourth Grade Teacher</b> .....	Michelle McGowan
<b>Fourth-Fifth Grade Teacher</b> .....	Julia Keefer
<b>Sixth-Seventh Grade Teacher</b> .....	Erin Doyle
<b>Seventh-Eighth Grade Teacher</b> .....	Amanda Nace
<b>Learning Specialist</b> .....	Cynthia Walker
<b>Guidance Counselor</b> .....	Sarah Raimondi
<b>Community Resource Coordinator</b> .....	Michelle Grey
<b>Art Specialist</b> .....	Mary Grissett-Havrilak
<b>Foreign Language Specialist</b> .....	Barb Eddy
<b>Music Specialist</b> .....	Sarah Williams
<b>P.E. Specialist</b> .....	Kyle Parrish
<b>Paraprofessionals</b> .....	Beth Roberts
.....	Janine Roosenberg

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<b>President</b> .....	Michelle Coleman
<b>Vice-President</b> .....	Bill Beaver
<b>Secretary</b> .....	Joe Schell
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	Matthew Blaylock
<b>Parent Representative</b> .....	Michelle Haring

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools embody a new approach to public education. Since 1991, 42 states and the District of Columbia have authorized the creation of charter schools in response to public demands for more effective and more accountable public schools. Many view charter schools as exciting and innovative initiatives that are changing and improving the educational landscape across America. Some argue that charter schools introduce a competitive dynamic into the public school system. Others prefer to think of charter schools as the research and development division of the public school system by providing a new stimulus and vehicle for innovation. There are those who see charter schools as a threat to the conventional public school system. The fact is charter schools are increasing in number. According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, there were 5,997 charter schools in the 2012-2013 school year, making up 6.3 percent of all U.S. public schools.

A charter school is an independent public school, custom-designed by local citizens. It is typically endorsed or chartered by a public agency and has more freedom and flexibility than it would have as a magnet school or through waivers. A charter school may not charge tuition and it may not discriminate. Charter schools typically focus on a special curriculum approach, a new school organization approach, or some other feature that sets them apart from regular public school offerings.

### INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

Infinity was conceived by Nancy Hall and Doug Morrow. In the fall of 2000, Ms. Hall, Mr. Morrow and two Central Dauphin parents, Cynthia Doherty and Kathleen Jessop, wrote a planning grant for Infinity and submitted it to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This grant was successful and helped fund the initial application process.

The actual charter application was submitted to the Central Dauphin School Board on July 30, 2001. The School Board held three public hearings. Many parents and students attended, and a number spoke to the Board in support of the school. In spite of this, the Central Dauphin School Board denied the application on November 19, 2001.

Organizers began the appeal process immediately. This started with obtaining over 1,400 signatures of Central Dauphin residents within 60 days. These signatures were then submitted in January 2002, to the Court of Common Pleas to be verified. This process dragged on until August of 2002, when a sufficient number of signatures were approved. This allowed us to submit our information to the state Charter Appeals Board and get scheduled on their agenda.

Our hearing in front of the CAB took place in October of 2002, and many parents and students attended. On November 21, 2002, the state Charter Appeals Board voted unanimously to overturn Central Dauphin's denial and to approve Infinity's charter application.

Since Central Dauphin refused to sign the charter, it needed to be signed by the Secretary of Education. However, due to the gubernatorial election, there was soon to be a change in

administration. Fortunately, we were able to get the Interim Secretary of Education to sign the charter without having to wait for the new Secretary of Education to be approved. This occurred in late January of 2003.

Throughout this long process, many of our parents stood by us. Unfortunately, some had children who had grown too old for the school, while others became discouraged by the contentious process, or perhaps lost faith, that we could open. By the end of June, even the Board did not believe we had enough students to begin. However, a small group of committed parents refused to let this dream die and began a grassroots effort to recruit more students and raise more money. Encouraged by their efforts, the Infinity Board voted on July 8, 2003, to move forward to open the school. Between July 8th and August 26th, we secured and renovated a building, enrolled students, hired staff, and purchased materials and equipment, and did the million other things it takes to start a school. Parents, students and staff worked together to make the vision a reality, and in so doing, created a caring community.

### **GOVERNANCE**

Infinity Charter School is organized as a Pennsylvania Non-Profit Corporation and has been granted recognition as a tax-exempt public charity, as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The Charter School Act calls for a body to govern each charter school. For Infinity Charter School, that governing body is called the Board of Trustees. This currently consists of five members. It cannot include any employees of the school. It does consist of one parent who currently has a child enrolled in the school. All Board members are unpaid.

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the school. While the board hires the CEO to manage all day-to-day operations, the board is responsible for oversight of the CEO, budgeting, and governance.

Specifically, the Board of Trustees has legally mandated responsibilities, which include:

- Evaluating the school's management, and appointing or dismissing as necessary,
- Fixing salaries or compensation of administrators, teachers or other employees of the charter school,
- Overseeing and approving the school's annual budget,
- Enacting policy,
- Locating new buildings or changing locations of old,
- Approving curriculum, adopting courses of study and/or textbooks,
- Adopting the school calendar,
- Entering into contracts on behalf of the school.

In addition to the legally mandated responsibilities, the Infinity Board is responsible for:

- Carrying the vision,
- Serving as advocates for the student body, as a whole,
- Evaluating its own performance,
- Serving as a focus group for the management,
- Bringing stakeholder concerns to the management ,



- Problem-solving, as requested,
- Serving as key communicators to the parents and staff,
- Serving as “cheerleaders” for the school, as warranted, and
- Serving as good-will ambassadors to the larger community.

The exact rules under which the Board operates are described in the school Bylaws.

Notice of Board meetings is posted on the Banks Street entrance to the school and on our web site. All regular Board meetings are open to the public. Executive sessions, to discuss legal and

### **INFINITY STAFF**

Reporting to the Board and responsible for the overall management of the entire school is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO/Director). This individual is, in effect, the “principal” of the school. The CEO/Director is the school’s educational leader, and focuses on curricular and instructional issues. Reporting to the CEO/Director is the school’s Business Manager. The Business Manager is responsible for financial aspects of the school’s functioning.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

### DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL:

**1. Name, address and phone number of school:**

Infinity Charter School  
51 Banks Street, Suite 1  
Penbrook, PA 17103  
Voice: (717) 238-1880  
Fax: (717) 238-1190  
Web Site: [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org)

**2. Grades served:** K through 8

**3. Average class size:** 21

**4. Educational philosophy:** Utilizing state and national curriculum as a base, teachers implement different and innovative instructional strategies appropriate for gifted students.

**5. Reading program(s) and strategies:** Teachers use a variety of methods to help students learn to read and develop critical reading skills. A Learning Specialist is available to assist those children who need extra support in this area.

**6. Tests and measures used:** Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA), student portfolios, skills checklists, and diagnostic assessments.

**7. Special educational program(s):** The Learning Specialist provides direct services to students and assists staff in working with special needs students. Infinity also works with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to provide additional specialized staff and services to students. These include, but are not limited to, students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or those covered by Section 504 of the Federal ADA legislation.

**8. Student discipline philosophy, strategies and program(s):** We emphasize clear behavior expectations, rule setting with consequences, discussions with students and communication with parents.

**9. Child care:** Infinity does not currently offer its own before-and-after school options. The Penbrook Learning Center, located in the building, does offer this service.

**10. Highlights unique to this school:** Addresses the needs of intellectually and/ or academically gifted students, foreign language at all levels, continuous progress, portfolios, checklists, Personal Learning Plans, multi-age classrooms, frequent field trips and speakers, a Learning Specialist, and direct parent involvement.

**11. Opportunities for parent participation:** Board of Trustees membership, parent volunteering in/on the—library, office, playground, lunchroom, fund raising, school committees, computers, and so on.

## MISSION, VISION, GOALS

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Infinity Charter School is to operate and maintain a world-class charter school in the Central Dauphin School District that addresses the intellectual, academic, and social-emotional needs of mentally gifted children.

### VISION

The “vision” of the Infinity Charter School is to inspire, challenge, and engage the hearts, minds, and spirits of gifted children in Central Pennsylvania. It speaks to our belief in, and commitment to, serving the whole child, and of finding ways to give these individuals, as Carl Sandburg said, “... the deepest possible roots and the highest possible flowering...”

### INFINITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### Academic

- To increase and improve pupil learning,
- To ensure that each child meets or exceeds local, state and national academic standards,
- To increase appropriate learning opportunities for each child by providing full-time instruction geared to their special needs and abilities,
- To provide ongoing professional opportunities for staff, including staff development in diverse and innovative teaching and assessment methods appropriate for gifted children, and
- To utilize different and innovative teaching and assessment methods.

#### Non-academic

- To prepare each child to be a lifelong learner,
- To work with parents and students concerning the students' unique social-emotional needs,
- To actively and consistently encourage parental involvement with public school education,
- To provide parents and students with expanded choices in available public educational opportunities, which may result in enrollment of children currently in home-schooling or private education settings,
- To facilitate student service to, and involvement in, the community, *and*
- To blur the boundaries between school and community and actively promote the concept that the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other.

## CORE VALUES

As the school grows, we are creating a school culture staff and the Board. The more understood, accepted and cohesive the culture is, the better the school community is able to move towards achieving its mission, vision and goals. that includes the values, symbols, beliefs and shared meanings among parents, students, The following are the core values embraced by the Infinity learning community:

**1. Education First**

At Infinity, education is our primary business. Activities that seek and support educational excellence shall be given priority over those which do not. The role of teachers is to help children learn.

**2. Quality**

Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through school, the subject of quality and how it relates to schoolwork is discussed with students. Students, parents and teachers will challenge students to do their very best. It is not our goal to have students merely completing assignments without attempting to produce a quality product.

**3. Hard Work**

Creating high quality work is not always easy. Our staff is committed to making learning interesting, exciting, and even fun, as much as possible. However, we recognize, and want parents and students to recognize, that learning, while necessary, is not always easy.

**4. Life-long Learning**

We recognize learning does not begin or end with school. We want students to learn skills, which will allow them to continue to direct their own learning. The essence of this is independence and self-reliance.

**5. Love of Learning**

Children need to learn to love learning as its own reward. We work to encourage students to rely on internal rewards and motivations, while acknowledging some external rewards may be necessary.

**6. Self-esteem**

We believe self-esteem is built upon competence. We can, and will, praise children appropriately, but we will not engage in false praise. We will actively assist and encourage children in their journey toward competency. We want them to take pride in what they do well. We also want them to believe they can make a difference in the world.

**7. Respect**

We strive to create a climate of mutual respect among students, parents, staff and community members. Students will be expected to show respect to others, and can, in turn, expect to be treated with respect by others.

**8. Personal Responsibility**

We expect students to take personal responsibility for their own learning. We cannot teach them anything, if they are determined not to learn. We also expect them to take personal responsibility for their actions and to be willing to accept the consequences.

**9. Responsibility to Others**

Any member of a community has some responsibility to his neighbor. Our students have some special abilities that carry with them greater opportunities to serve. We want students to understand the contributions they can make to society and to act responsibly.

**10. Role Models**

We have high expectations for our students. We, as parents and staff, are committed to serving as appropriate role models for our students. We need to demonstrate our values to our students on a daily basis in our own behavior. We can't reasonably expect from them that which we are not willing to do ourselves.

**11. Diversity**

We live in a diverse society. Students need to understand and respect differences, while seeking to find common ground. Students also need to understand and evaluate different opinions and intellectual perspectives. All of this is an integral part of our curriculum.

**12. Continual Improvement**

We have adopted the Japanese philosophy of *Kaizen* or continuous improvement. We acknowledge and recognize effort, celebrate the achievement of benchmarks and milestones, and strive to get better each day.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Utilizing the Pennsylvania core standards as a base, the teachers implement different and innovative strategies appropriate for gifted students. Infinity has set high, rigorous standards for pupil performance to commensurate with student ability, and expects students to meet or exceed state and district standards. We utilize a variety of methods to assess student achievement, as well as several measures to assess programmatic success. These include individual learning plans, student portfolios, standardized achievement tests and parent surveys.

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS (CURRENT OR PLANNED) INCLUDE:**

**Competency-based Progress:**

Students will be able to advance based on achieving mastery of content or skills instead of being required to submit to an arbitrary amount of seat time. For example, if a 4<sup>th</sup> grader demonstrates competency in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level of fractions and decimals, s/he will be able to start learning the 7th grade level skills and concepts in this area.

**Flexible Ability Grouping for Skills Instruction:**

Students will be assessed regularly in math and reading. Based on these assessments, they will be grouped with other students of similar abilities for instruction. For example, if a 2nd

grade child is reading at a 6th grade level, s/he will be grouped with other students who are performing at the same level (most likely from the same class). Groups are likely to change over the course of the year, as students improve their skills at different rates. We will not track children, forcing them to always remain in the same group.

**Broad-based Interdisciplinary Themes:**

Helping students to understand how various subject areas are interconnected is beneficial at all grade levels; therefore year-long interdisciplinary themes (incorporating smaller sub-themes) are implemented. The primary integration is with history, geography, civics and government, economics, science, technology and health, but efforts are also made to bring in math, language arts, music, art, physical education and foreign language. The integration of disciplines is more reflective of the real world, reinforces concepts and skills, and is perceived as more relevant by students.

**Personal Learning Plans:**

Teachers work with parents and students to develop a personal learning plan for each child. The plan incorporates measurable goals that pertain to the student's school performance, but do not duplicate the curriculum framework checklists. These goals are reviewed at each conference during the year.

**Curriculum Compacting:**

Curriculum compacting is a strategy enabling a student to complete required learning objectives in a shortened period of time. Normal practice assignments may be reduced and students may test out of particular units of study.

**Acceleration:**

It is our goal to appropriately challenge our students both intellectually and academically. The majority of the “acceleration” needs normally exhibited by gifted children in a regular classroom can be accommodated at our school by homogeneous skill groupings within the classroom necessitated by the continuous progress philosophy. Guidelines and procedures for grade skipping are being refined.

**Some Curriculum Based on Student Interests:**

Gifted students often have passion areas, which do not always intersect with the required curriculum. Therefore, time may need to be set aside for students to pursue their own interests. The student should not be left to his own devices, but should have access to the teacher or other adults for assistance.

**Guidance and Counseling for Gifted:**

The school has a part-time counselor who understands the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted children. This is very important, but finding the right person is critical. The wrong person can do more harm than good. The counselor also works with students on career exploration and leadership.

**Metacognition Skills:**

Metacognition involves students examining how they and their classmates think, as well as the variety and effectiveness of the processes and strategies they use. This can help students

not only to have a larger repertoire of thinking strategies, but also to evaluate which strategies may be most effective in different situations.

**Creative Thinking Skills:**

Skills, processes and attitudes can be modeled and taught, which result in greater creativity expressed by students. This includes encouraging divergent thinking, teaching and using brainstorming and creative problem solving models, and presenting activities that stimulate fluency, flexibility, and elaboration.

**Critical Thinking Skills:**

Our students are constantly bombarded by information from a wide variety of sources. Students must be able to analyze and evaluate the pieces of information, the sources of information, and the claims or assertions they encounter, if they are to navigate successfully through the sea of data.

These skills include:

1. Distinguishing between verifiable facts and value claims
2. Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information, claims, or reasons
3. Determining the factual accuracy of a statement
4. Determining the credibility of a source
5. Identifying ambiguous claims or arguments
6. Identifying unstated assumptions
7. Detecting bias
8. Identifying logical fallacies
9. Recognizing logical inconsistencies in a line of reasoning
10. Determining the strength of an argument or claim

**Problem-Finding/Problem-Solving:**

Gifted children bring, perhaps, the greatest potential to problem-solving situations. But just as gifted athletes must train and exercise their bodies to maintain and improve their performance, our students must train and exercise their minds. We want our students to be able to synthesize their creative, critical and communication skills, as well as utilize specific problem-solving strategies, in addressing a variety of issues. But beyond problem-solving, gifted children often have the ability to recognize problems—to detect a discordant situation, a gap that needs to be filled, or a contradiction that begs for resolution. We want to encourage our students to be sensitive to anticipating situations that could become problems, and learn how to determine which problems are important and worth solving.

**Self-Directed Learning/Lifelong Learning:**

We do not expect our students to be solely dependent on their teachers for learning, since school eventually comes to an end, but learning never should. We strive to keep our students' joy in learning alive and teach them how to access and evaluate a variety of information sources.

**Research Skills:**

There are times when students need to be able to gather information produced by others. This type of research also requires a set of skills, such as selecting a topic, locating sources, evaluating sources, selecting sources, reading for information, taking notes, organizing information, presenting information, and crediting sources.

We also want our students to learn skills that will assist them in becoming idea producers, who are able to conduct real research. This might include scientific experimentation or collecting survey data.

**Independent Study:**

Sometimes it is appropriate and important for a gifted child to work alone. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that s/he has the skills to do so productively.

**Teaching of Prerequisite Skills:**

Too often in gifted education, teachers' attempts to be creative and challenging overreach the skills of the child. For example, requiring a student to write a play without first teaching the child the elements of a play, how to write dialogue and so on, is unfair to the student and generally results in superficial products. We attempt to provide sufficient depth of instruction to facilitate a student's success in creating a quality product.

**Brain-compatible Learning:**

We incorporate actual brain research related to the teaching/learning process. One aspect of this involves building on one of the strongest brain impulses a child has: to make sense of her world. Teachers can facilitate this by providing massive input and helping the children detect and recognize patterns.

**Communication Skills:**

There is an obvious need for all students to be able to communicate orally, in writing, and through telecommunications. It is of little value for a gifted child to have great ideas if s/he cannot communicate these ideas to others.

**Futures Orientation:**

The future is "where" our students will live. They need the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them shape that future. Being able to critically evaluate complex issues and creatively approach problems, understanding they can make a difference, and accepting civic responsibility for participating in our democracy, are all contributing factors to creating a positive future.

**Multi-age Grouping:**

Children are grouped in classes that encompass what would normally be a two-grade level span. These are not treated as combination classes, with a clear demarcation made between students at each grade level and the delivery of instruction is based on the child's grade level, rather than performance level.



**Experiential Learning:**

It is often said children learn best by doing. A wide variety of instructional materials and equipment are used, but our curriculum is not textbook-based.

**Utilization of Community Resources:**

Education at Infinity is not just campus-based. There is a vast array of resources available to students throughout our local communities and beyond. Sometimes the community will come in to the student, and sometimes the student will go out to the community. Field trips and speakers are an integral part of the educational program, with goals and objectives clearly tied to the curriculum.

**Mentorships/Internships:**

While gifted students can be very advanced in one or more subjects, the teacher cannot be expected to be an expert in all areas. However, a student's education in a specific area can be continued through a careful matching with a non-staff member who is an expert in that specific area. This mentorship relationship can be established face-to-face or through technology.

An internship usually provides an opportunity for a student to explore or pursue their passion area by working part-time with professionals in that field. An internship generally takes place over a specified period of time, is unpaid, and is available only to older students.

**Artist-in-Residence/Scientist-in-Residence:**

This involves having a practicing professional at the school. This person is generally contracted for a specific period of time, during which s/he teaches classes or conducts workshops with students, and continues his/her own work part of the day. This can be done through existing programs or can be designed by the school.

**University/College-School Partnerships:**

College level instructors can be guest speakers in classrooms; they can offer more advanced classes; they can offer classes we couldn't otherwise provide, all of which are directly beneficial to students. This could occur at either site. Our teachers and university professors can design curriculum and/or team-teach, and student teachers can be trained at the school, which would be beneficial for staff development, and presumably students. Other possibilities would only be limited by the imagination of the parties involved.

**Outdoor Education or Extended Field Trips:**

Some sort of outdoor education or extended field trip is offered at each grade level. These experiences not only provide an opportunity for social development, but are also an outgrowth of the academic curriculum. These experiences are articulated across grade levels, just as the regular curriculum is.

**Community Service Projects:**

As stated in our goals and objectives, we believe the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other. While we hope our students will be able to take advantage of a wide variety of community resources to enhance our curriculum, we also want our students

to use their time and talents to give back to the community. Ideally, each class would participate in some type of community service activity on a regular basis.

**Appropriate Technology:**

Students and staff must be empowered with modern tools to multiply learning and increase productivity. “High tech” has the potential to enable more effective “high touch” interactions between staff and learners. However, Infinity does not embrace technology for technology’s sake. We see technology as a tool, but it is not the right tool for all situations. We believe it is critically important for adults and children to learn how to assess which tool is most appropriate in a given situation. The school will carefully assess the specific needs of its learners and its community to determine the optimal combination of technologies.

**Telecommunications:**

The Internet has become an essential way to gather, exchange and disseminate information. Gifted students need to learn how to constructively use technology to serve themselves and society, rather than becoming expert “hackers”. Other means of telecommunications will be evaluated for use based on a cost/benefit ratio.

We have delineated above the major components of our educational program, our teaching methods, if you will. However, this is, of necessity, an abbreviated, rather than an exhaustive, list. Joyce and Weil (1986) have identified more than 80 models of teaching. We could, perhaps, narrow this down somewhat, since less than 25 percent of these have been designed specifically for gifted students. Even so, June Maker (1995) has stated that “No single model or way of teaching the gifted can provide the comprehensive curriculum needed by the students.”

Beyond the numerous teaching models, there are an even greater number of specific instructional strategies. One important element in successful teaching is the teacher’s ability to effectively utilize a variety of instructional strategies. One of the central reasons for this is the fact that children don’t all learn the same way. Even among the gifted, there can be significant differences in learning styles.

Consequently, the instructional staff at Infinity will continually review and evaluate models, strategies, and curriculum materials that will be most effective with our students.

**SPECIALS**

In addition to the core curriculum, students at Infinity have the opportunity to participate in art, foreign language, music and physical education classes at all grade levels. Instruction in the subjects takes place either one hour once per week or one-half hour twice a week.

These specialists design their lessons to meet state standards, enhance the core curriculum, and to engage the students.

**OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Learning Specialist**

Infinity’s Learning Specialist works collaboratively with the classroom teachers to address a variety of student needs. She is certified in special education, so she can work with students who

may need learning support as part of an IEP or 504 Plan. In addition, she works with students who may have uneven academic development and need additional instruction in specified areas.

### **Counselor**

The Counselor will meet with classes on a weekly basis. At this time, she works with students regarding social emotional needs, leadership skills, and career exploration. As needed, the Counselor may also meet with small groups or individuals, after receiving parental permission to do so.

### **Community Resources Coordinator**

Infinity's commitment to create a symbiotic relationship with the community is also reflected in our staffing. Our Community Resource Coordinator is an integral part of the educational program at the school. She is primarily responsible for assisting classroom teachers to enhance the educational experience by coordinating speakers, field trips, assemblies and other resources in the community. She is also responsible for arranging community service activities.

## **ASSESSING & COMMUNICATING STUDENT PROGRESS**

Student evaluation at this school is primarily for the purpose of individual improvement. Assessment measures are used to diagnose student strengths and weaknesses, and are then utilized in tailoring instruction and developing an appropriate plan to make progress on specific goals. Evaluation measures are also utilized in assessing the extent of the student's progress in relationship to those goals. These measures are designed to teach as well as test. We are not primarily interested in how students compare to each other.

### **At Infinity, we use the following procedures:**

#### **Reading**

Teachers begin the year with a diagnostic reading test to assess the reading level of the child and then set up flexible ability groups to work with the children on those levels. Infinity is firmly committed to continuous progress, which means that each child starts working at the assessed level and progresses at his or her own pace.

#### **Math**

Diagnostic measures are used at the beginning of the year to assess skills and concepts. Then flexible ability groups are formed for instructional purposes. Children are often uneven in their mastery of math skills from one standard to another, and so it is typical to assess children as teachers begin each standard. Of course, teachers also assess progress after a particular unit. However, teachers usually do not conduct this testing immediately after the finishing the unit. Rather, they wait until at least one more unit is taught, to determine how much the student has really retained. Teachers often use PSSA released items to design their pre-and post-tests in math.

#### **Themes**

For themes, in which we combine history, geography, civics, economics, science, technology, environment, ecology and more, we also follow the state content standards. Assessment in these areas is not always as cut and dried. Often, the focus is on particular projects that students are

doing related to the theme, and these projects are evaluated. Teachers have a checklist or rubric to evaluate these projects, often on both content and presentation.

### **Homework**

Many schools assign homework on a daily basis, with the amount of time dependent on the grade of the student. Infinity does not do this.

First of all, we require the students to work hard during the school day. Everyone needs some “down time,” especially younger students. Furthermore, many of our students are occupied with various lessons, such as ballet or piano or family activities after school, so they do not always have time to complete homework.

If a teacher assigns homework that students need to complete in order to be prepared for the next day, and many students do not complete this work for various reasons, it makes it much more difficult to conduct the lesson when students are not appropriately prepared.

As you are probably aware, Infinity provides significant differentiation in daily math and reading instruction. Classroom teachers are generally planning for four math groups and four reading groups per day. It takes a significant amount of time to prepare for both the direct instruction and for the independent work that students complete when not receiving direct instruction. It also takes a significant amount of time for the teacher to evaluate the work done by students at school on a daily basis.

For homework to be meaningful in these areas it would also have to be differentiated, which creates a significant amount of additional planning and evaluating. We believe it is more important for our teachers to focus on what students do during the school day.

Your child may have homework, if s/he has not used class time effectively, and has not completed work that should have been done in school. Students often have homework related to theme projects that are primarily completed at home. There will be more homework at the middle school level. Of course, there are also general things that students can do at home, such as practice math facts or read, even if not assigned.

At Infinity, since we are encouraging students to become self-directed learners, we believe students can be involved in learning activities outside of school that are not assigned by the teacher/s. Furthermore, we find that students who are really interested in learning about something don't need external motivation to do so.

### **Grades**

Letter grades are not used at Infinity. The research on grades indicates they are not reliable indicators of student performance. Letter grades are often assigned based on how the student compares to other students in the classroom. An “A” or a “D” in a subject does not convey what content or skills the student has learned or the level of difficulty of the work, nor does it indicate what skills s/he has mastered, or which skills s/he is working on. A “B” in one school may mean something entirely different than a “B” in another school. The letter grade does not indicate what criteria were used to evaluate student learning. Nor does a letter grade, with a brief comment, tell a student specifically what s/he must do to improve.

We believe letter grades are not effective in communicating with parents or other schools (should a student transfer) about content or skills learned, and because we believe letter grades do not help students identify specific strengths they need to build on, nor specific weaknesses they need to improve. Therefore, we use other more qualitative measures of evaluation, as noted below.

### **Report Cards**

Students at Infinity do not receive report cards. We use portfolios instead. Portfolios are updated each quarter for each child, including Language Arts and Math Checklists and Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). Copies of the Conference Record Form completed at each conference are sent home to parents following the conference.

### **Student Portfolios**

Infinity's student portfolios are **cumulative**. They are passed on from teacher to teacher. Work that is purged is sent home to the parents. Infinity's student portfolios are **growth** portfolios. They do not always show a student's best work. Through samples taken throughout the year, they do show the progress a student has made. Sometimes work from an entire process, such as the writing process, is included.

Infinity's student portfolios are also **documentation** portfolios. Skills marked on the checklists, either as introduced or as proficient, are backed up with evidence in the portfolio, as much as possible. For example, the concept of synonyms can be covered at a variety of levels. The teacher will include some student work to indicate to which level the student has progressed.

As students mature, they begin having more ownership of their portfolios and start taking more responsibility for selecting what goes in them. They will be able to include written comments about why they selected each item and what they learned. (However, this will not alleviate the teacher of his/her responsibility to ensure that necessary samples are included.)

### **Checklists**

At Infinity, we have a checklist for language arts and one for math. These checklists are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards and include the skills our students are working on in grades K - 8. These checklists also indicate at which grade level these skills would normally be mastered by the average student. In this way, we, as teachers, are able to address any "holes" our students have, and parents can rest assured that their child is learning what s/he needs at each grade level.

Including the skills for more than one grade level on the checklists allows us to show when a student is working on skills at a higher, or lower, grade level. It also means these checklists are cumulative and will follow the student from class to class. The checklists also have columns to indicate when the skill was introduced and when the teacher has evidence that the child is consistently proficient at this skill.

### **Personal Learning Plans (PLPs)**

In addition to the checklists, each student has a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) developed in conjunction with the student, the parents and the teachers. This plan will be reviewed quarterly, with the aforementioned parties, and revised as necessary. Although specific academic goals may be included, we do not want to simply restate all the skills from the checklists. Therefore, for the

most part, PLPs focus more on behavioral goals, self-directed learning goals and goals related to theme and theme projects.

Teachers send home blank PLP forms before the first conference. We do not expect families to complete the entire form, but we do ask them to sit down and discuss, as a family, what kinds of goals they want for their child/ren during the year. When they bring these ideas to the conferences, they are able to discuss them with the teacher and come to an agreement. The teacher is also prepared with goals s/he believes each student should be working on during the quarter, or during the year, and shares those with the family. In this way, we try to make the PLPs more of a working document and more useful to everyone.

### **Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences**

Because we believe it is important to meet with parents to discuss these evaluations, we schedule four conferences during the year. The first three conferences are 30 minutes long, because we really do want to be able to discuss your child's progress with you. The majority of the conferences times are during the scheduled release times on the calendar and include evening times for those parents who cannot come during the day.

Students are encouraged to attend. Even at the younger grades, we feel it is important for the child to be aware of his/her progress and to take responsibility for his/her own learning. As the children mature, they will take on more responsibility for conducting the conferences themselves.

The fourth conference of the year is held shortly after the last day of school and is student-led. It is more of a portfolio review and celebration of the year's learning. Teachers are available to answer questions, but up to six conferences may be scheduled during the same two-hour block of time. Morning and afternoon times are available.

### **Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA)**

Furthermore, to ensure that each child meets or exceeds local, state and national academic standards, our students participate in the state PSSA and any other mandated assessments.

Moreover, consistent with our goals, our teaching staff will continue to participate in professional development to become more skilled in using a variety of assessment measures. They are also encouraged to explore and experiment with different types of assessment, with the goal of improving student learning.

### **Monday Folders/Take Home Folders**

These are folders that were sent home with your child/ren every Monday. Traditionally, included in these folders were weekly newsletters from the classroom teacher, a weekly school-wide letter from the Director, student papers and other notices. Monday letters, calendars, and notices are now sent to parents via email each Monday. We still use the folder to send home student papers, forms, etc.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

From the beginning, parents have been involved in the school in a multitude of ways. Infinity would not be the same without the commitment and efforts of its parents. Parents have devoted many hours of their time and labor to the school, as well as donating a variety of materials.

Productive partnerships allow us to provide more for the children than any of us could accomplish alone. We welcome parents' talents, skills and energies toward that end.

### *Partnership*

I dreamed I stood in a studio,  
and watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind,  
and they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher; the tools he used  
were books and music and art;  
One was a parent with a guiding hand,  
and a gentle, loving heart.  
Day after day, the teacher toiled with touch,  
that was careful, deft, and sure.  
While the parent labored by his side,  
and polished and smoothed it o'er.  
And when at last their work was done,  
they were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child,  
could never be sold or bought.  
And each agreed he would have failed,  
if he had worked alone.  
For behind the parent stood the school,  
and behind the teacher, stood the home.

*Unknown*

### **INFINITY VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES**

The Infinity Volunteer Organization (IVO) was established to organize and mobilize Infinity families in support of the Infinity Mission, to strengthen the productive partnership between home and school, and to deepen the roots of Infinity student learning. IVO works closely with the Infinity Director and Board, and is responsible for organizing all extracurricular events and activities, as well as staff appreciation initiatives, and other volunteer efforts at Infinity Charter School. Infinity parents, teachers, staff, and Board are welcome as IVO members; there is no formal membership process. If you wish to contribute in some way at Infinity, IVO can help involve you with one of the many opportunities available.

To get involved with IVO, or for more information, contact Gillian Brown (717-730-2040), or email [gillian.brown@verizon.net](mailto:gillian.brown@verizon.net).

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Volunteering in General**

- Be a courteous, considerate representative of the school.
- Do not use volunteer time to discuss your child. Please make other arrangements.
- Maintain the confidentiality of staff, students and families.
- Follow the school dress code, to set a good example for the students.
- The use, possession or distribution of tobacco, alcohol or any controlled substance is forbidden during school hours, on school property or at any school-sponsored event.
- It is the policy to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment in any form. The term harassment includes, but is not limited to, repeated, unwelcome, and offensive slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, or handicap/disability that create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Ethnic harassment includes the repeated, unwelcome, and offensive use of any derogatory word, phrase, or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

- Volunteers are required to obtain child abuse clearances before working with children. Please contact Mickey Grey, Infinity's Community Resource Coordinator, for details.

### **Volunteering in the Classroom**

- The teacher is the classroom authority.
- Volunteers participate exclusively at the direction and discretion of the teacher.
- Teachers may or may not choose to use classroom volunteers.
- Volunteers should not be involved in classroom discipline or other conflicts.
- Do not take time away from the students by excessive socializing with the teacher or other volunteers.
- Due to liability issues, non-enrolled siblings should not be in the classroom during the school day.



### **Volunteering Outside the Classroom**

- Staff is the authority on their responsibilities and on their need for volunteer help.
- Be a courteous, considerate representative of the school.
- Be supportive of staff. Ask how you can help instead of offering unsolicited advice.
- Maintain the confidentiality of staff, students, and families.
- Socializing is not appropriate in most volunteer positions. Please don't distract staff and other volunteers from their duties.
- Due to liability issues, non-enrolled siblings should not be in the building or on the playground during the school day.

### **VOLUNTEERING AS A SPEAKER/MENTOR**

Utilizing community and parent resources is an integral part of the educational program at Infinity. To meet the needs of our students, we need to identify resources and area experts who are willing to become involved with the school as speakers, information sources and mentors. If you are interested in helping, or know someone who might be, please contact our Community Resources Coordinator, Mickey Grey (717) 238-1880 or e-mail her at [mgrey@infinityschool.org](mailto:mgrey@infinityschool.org), so she can include you or your information in our resource database. She will use this to assist the teachers in enhancing the classroom experience by coordinating speakers, field trips, assemblies and other resources in the community.

### **INFINITY STAFF SUGGESTIONS REGARDING PARENT PARTICIPATION**

As teachers and staff at Infinity, we want parents to know that we understand how special you are. Not only is your child very special to you, as is true for all parents, but you have a child who has unique educational and socio-emotional needs. We recognize you have already gone beyond the interest most parents take in their child's education by choosing a different school. We understand many of you want to continue to be closely involved in your child's education. We welcome you and recognize that, as partners, we are able to do more for the children than we could ever accomplish on our own. In order to work together most effectively, we have set forth some reminders.

- Our first goal, as teachers, is to teach your child and the other children in the classroom. Anything you can do to aid us in this goal is appreciated. When we are with children, the children are our first priority. Teaching is our job. We want to do our job well.
- Help us maintain a focused learning environment. Interruptions are distracting to the children. Unless you are working as a classroom volunteer, staying with your child in the classroom for more than a few moments does not help him/her focus on learning.

- If you are volunteering to cover lunch/recess and are bringing food to have with your child during lunch, please do not bring the food in early and sit in class. This is very distracting to your child, as well as to the rest of the class.
- We understand the school is not the only place children can learn, nor do we believe our every word is a pearl of wisdom. However, we do try to make every moment your child is in school worthwhile. Please try to get your child to school on time, and don't take him/her out unnecessarily. Many learning activities cannot be made up easily.
- While we are happy to set up times to talk with you, we are usually not able to do this while we are with the children. If we try to visit during class time, we are not doing our jobs, and we will not be able to give you the attention you deserve.
- If you need to meet with a teacher, please schedule an appointment with him/her. We are not necessarily available when the children are out of the classroom. These are our planning periods, and we usually need to use them as such. Before and after school times are generally available when scheduled ahead of time.
- If you have a problem or question about something related to your child's classroom, please meet with the teacher. If you gossip with other parents, you only feed on each other's concerns. Please talk directly to the person who can do something about it.
- Treat teachers with respect, particularly in front of the children at school and at home. Think about the behavior you are modeling for your child and other children.
- If you have made a volunteer commitment, please honor that commitment. We are counting on you. However, we understand emergencies and illnesses will occur. Please be sure to notify your child's teacher as soon as possible if you are not able to fulfill your commitment on a particular day.
- Please respect the privacy of the teacher and other students. Do not remain in the classroom without the teacher present unless you have permission to do so.
- We are happy to have you visit in the classroom, but we would appreciate it, if you would notify us and schedule a time to do so. We would like to be able to help you schedule a time that would enable you to see what you are looking for. For example, watching your child take a test is probably not what you had in mind.
- We always welcome your feedback and input about what you believe is best for your child. Please remember we sometimes have other factors to consider, including the needs of the other children, district, state, and national education standards, and the limits of what is humanly possible.

If we can keep in mind that we all want what is best for each child, we will be able to work together to do great things for our children.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If you have a conflict with your child's teacher:

- Please don't discuss it with other parents or children—contact the teacher.
- Make an appointment with that teacher to discuss it. (Don't interrupt a teacher during class time or try to catch him/her during a planning period, in the hallway, or in the parking lot.)
- At the meeting, be specific about your concerns and what you feel would be an appropriate resolution.
- Remember to treat the teacher the way you would want to be treated.
- Give the teacher an opportunity to reflect on what you have said.
- When a solution/option is agreed upon, be sure you have set a time for you and the teacher to communicate about how it is working. At that time, you may need to meet again to try an alternate solution.
- If you do not believe the teacher's response is improving the situation for your child, you may want to contact the Director and set an appointment to discuss your concerns.
- The Director may arrange a meeting with you and the teacher.
- If you are not satisfied with the Director's handling of the situation, you may wish to contact the chair of the Board of Trustees.

## RESOLVING CONFLICTS PRODUCTIVELY

The following is a list of suggestions published by the Colorado School Mediation Project that you may want to keep in mind when trying to resolve conflicts:

- Focus on the problem, not the person.
- Express your feelings in a non-blaming way. Use "I"-messages.
- Take ownership for your part of the problem.
- Listen and seek to understand the other person's point of view before giving or defending your own.
- Look for needs behind the stated positions or solutions.
- Don't rush into solving someone else's problem; take time outs when needed.
- Encourage different points of view, controversy, and honest dialogue—and then respect those ideas.
- Focus on what can be done, not what can't
- Solve the problem and build the relationship.
- Use objective criteria when making decisions.

## **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

### **ADMISSIONS**

Charter schools in Pennsylvania cannot make admissions decisions based on intellectual and/or academic abilities. After learning about the school, parents decide if this is an appropriate choice for their child/ren.

If more students apply than we have space available, we are required to conduct a lottery. Information packets (as well as details regarding lottery dates and deadlines) are available in the Infinity School Office. Once a child is enrolled at the school, s/he does not have to go through the lottery process again. Infinity is a public school and as such, is open to all students, regardless of physical disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

### **BOUNDARIES**

Infinity School has to give first priority to students who reside within the boundaries of the Central Dauphin School District. Students from outside the District can be admitted if there is space available.

### **PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS**

Each child is placed in a multi-age classroom, based on a number of factors determined by the teaching staff. These factors may include a student's demonstrated achievement, work and study habits, level of independence, discipline needs, leadership abilities, learning styles, and gender ratio. We do not consider placing friends together a high priority. Children are adaptable and will make friends in any classroom. Furthermore, friendships can be mercurial; a child's best friend one month may be his/her worst enemy the next. Class placement is a complicated process and is based on the staff's best educational assessment of each child and their needs.

After your child has been attending Infinity for at least six weeks, and if you believe s/he needs to be accelerated to a higher grade, please make an appointment to meet with the Director. She can provide you with the guidelines for the acceleration process request.

### **REGISTRATION**

At the time of registration, the following information is required:

- ICS Enrollment Form
- ICS Home Language Survey
- Complete PDE Enrollment Form
- Proof of Residency
- Applicable health forms
- Verification of any sibling attending Infinity, if applicable
- Birth Certificate
- Attendance at a
- Immunization Records
- tour/informational meeting

A child transferring into Infinity School from another school must also complete a records request form, so that we can obtain his/her records.

## OFFICE INFORMATION

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER/EMAIL ADDRESS

Please notify the school office if you change your address or telephone number, email, or if you change employment. In addition, it is important to keep all emergency names and telephone numbers current, **so we can reach you in case of an emergency.**

### TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL

Please notify the school office at least one week in advance, if your child will be transferring or withdrawing from school. If possible, please provide your forwarding address, and the name and address of the school your child will be attending. Student records will be forwarded upon receipt of the request from the new school as long as there are no fines or other school property outstanding.

### TELEPHONE USE

Infinity has a telephone in every classroom. Student use of the telephone is at the discretion of individual teachers. In general, school telephones are for educational use by the students and business use by the staff. Only emergency messages will be delivered to your child. The office telephone is not for the personal use of students, except in emergencies.

### VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at Infinity. However, please call first to set up an appropriate time to visit, to ensure the class you wish to observe is in the building.

All visitors are required to sign in at the school office upon entering the building. Each visitor will be given a visitor “badge” to wear. At the end of the visit, visitors must return to the school office to sign out and leave the visitor “badge” in the office. Please note that parents, or other authorized volunteers, must also sign in and out at the school office and wear a volunteer “badge.” **These procedures are designed to protect our children from unauthorized individuals, and also to document total volunteer hours.**

### NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Infinity School Office publishes a weekly Calendar of Events, including items of interest to the school community. This is a regular means of communicating important dates, such as parent/teacher conference days, committee meeting times, fundraisers, and school release days. Also included may be reminders, thank-yous and celebration notices. This weekly calendar is sent home with each child every week in his/her Monday folder. Please read it to keep yourself current with news and changes at school. To submit an item, call Tracie Miller at (717) 238-1880, before noon on Thursdays, so it can be approved by the Director and included in this publication.

Also, the Director writes a weekly letter, which will be emailed with Monday folder items. This letter is used to communicate additional school news, evaluation results, surveys, information on

many aspects of raising and educating gifted children, staff activities, as well as reprints of items of related interest. Also included with the Monday Folder items is the Infinity Volunteer Organization newsletter.

## LOST AND FOUND

Every effort is made to return lost articles to the rightful owner. Clothing and other items worn, or brought, to school are easier to return, if marked with your child's name. Found items are placed in a box near the office. Students and parents may check the box for lost articles at any time. All unclaimed items are given to a charity at the end of the school year.

## SCHOOL LUNCH

Infinity does not currently have the facilities to prepare hot lunches on site. Please be sure to pack a lunch for your children. If a child forgets a lunch, we do have peanut butter, jelly and bread available in the office. Students have an option of ordering up to two slices of pepperoni or cheese pizza for lunch on Fridays. Students may also order subs/pretzel sandwiches for the first and third Monday of the month.

# ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

## ATTENDANCE

A significant part of your child's educational experience is derived from classroom participation, activities, discussion, and relationships. **Daily attendance is crucial for your child to attain the maximum benefit from the school experience.** It is the responsibility of the child and the parent to maintain the child's attendance in accordance with the Infinity calendar. If a child has three unexcused absences, this will be reported to his/her home district to be handled by their truancy personnel. Poor attendance may necessitate a meeting with the Director to come to a mutual agreement on how to improve your child's attendance at Infinity. **State law requires that after ten consecutive days of unexcused absences, the child must be dropped from our rolls and will no longer be allowed to attend Infinity.**

## ABSENCE

A child who is ill should not be sent to school. This may result in his/her health becoming worse and it exposes other children to the disease if it is communicable. "Rest at home is best."

For the protection and safety of our students, we ask parents to email or call the school at (717) 238-1880, before 9:00 a.m., on the days their child/ren is absent from school for any reason. The office will call the parents, if not notified. If a child will be absent for more than one day, we request that parents notify the school each day the child is out.

If your child will be absent for any reason other than illness (doctor's appointment, religious observance, family trip, etc.), please make arrangements ahead of time with the office and with your child's teacher.

When students miss classroom instruction, much of the content may not be able to be made up. However, your child's teacher will be able to inform you whether or not missed work and assignments can be made up.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Excused absences include the following:

1. *Illness upon receipt of a written excuse from parents.* Parents' excuses for illness will be accepted with limitations: (i) all excuses for absences must be turned in to Infinity Charter School within three days after the pupil's return, or the absence will be recorded as unexcused; and, (ii) for three or more consecutive days of illness absence, Infinity Charter School may require a statement, after notice, from a physician verifying the child's inability to attend school. The limit for excused illness absence will ordinarily be an accumulation of ten days during the school term.
2. *Family emergencies.*
3. *Prearranged doctor and dentist appointments.*
4. *Authorized school activities.*
5. *Prearranged absences for purposes of accompanying parents on trips upon receipt of a written request from the parents.*

The written request by the parents shall include the purpose of the trip, an itinerary of travel, and the period of absence. Students will be required, at the convenience of the teacher, to complete all work missed due to prearranged absence for a trip. **A student will be permitted to take no more than two prearranged absences per school year, not to exceed a total of five school days. Trips may not be taken during the first, or last, seven days of the school year, nor during the days PSSA tests are scheduled.**

6. *Attendance in a religious instruction program, as permitted by the School Code.* The School shall, upon written request of the parents or guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program acknowledged by Infinity Charter School. Such instruction shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six hours per school year, and its organizers must inform Infinity Charter School of the child's attendance record in the religious instruction program. Infinity will not provide transportation to religious instruction.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Unexcused absences (i.e., truancy) include the following:

1. *Absence from school without knowledge or permission of parents and school authorities.*
2. *Leaving school during school hours and going directly home without office permission.*
3. *Absence from school with parental consent for reasons other than those considered excusable.*

A pupil who has been truant shall complete all work missed and make up the time s/he was truant. In case of continued nonattendance without acceptable reasons, a student may be suspended. Re-admittance will be granted only after a satisfactory conference is held between the pupil, his/her parents, and the CEO/Director.

Also, please remember that three or more unexcused absences are reported to the student's home district, to be handled by their truancy personnel.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER/EARLY DISMISSAL**

Infinity complies with the Central Dauphin School District regarding the closure or delay of schools due to inclement weather. Only the Director may authorize school closure. If this happens before the school day, it will be announced via local media outlets. You can check for school delays or closings at ABC 27 WHTM, WGAL TV8, TV21, TV 15, WHP Talk Radio, The River 97.3, Bob 94.9, KISS FM 99.3, WINK 104, WITF 89.5, and on Infinity's website, [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org). If we are closed for any reason after the beginning of school, we will only release students according to the **"Release of Students"** procedure.

In addition, in the event of inclement weather that affects dismissal, each school district generally dismisses at a different time. Therefore, to avoid confusion, we will call each family to give them specific information. Please do not call the school, since it will slow down our calling process.

## **EMERGENCY PLANS FOR INCIDENTS AT TMI**

The Emergency Planning Zone consists of an area of about ten (10) miles in radius around the fixed nuclear facility at Three Mile Island (TMI). **Since Infinity is just outside this area, our students will not be evacuated to a special location.**

Depending on the situation, Infinity students may be dismissed at the regular time and transported according to their normal schedule. However, it is possible transportation schedules may be delayed because some schools in the Central Dauphin School District (and possibly other districts) may be evacuated. It is possible Infinity students may be evacuated early. It is also possible parents will be requested to pick up their child/ren at school. Given the different possible scenarios, we urge you to listen to the Emergency Broadcast System (listed below) for the most accurate information. Infinity will post our most current information on our web site at [www.infinityschool.org](http://www.infinityschool.org). **Please do not try to call the school, since we will probably be using the phones to contact all the parents.**

Take time to review your plan of action with each member of your family if an order to evacuate be issued. Should an incident at TMI be announced, two of the most critical problems will be communications and transportation. Parents are urged to listen carefully to public announcements over the Emergency Broadcast System and avoid calling or driving to school. Your cooperation in implementing this plan will be absolutely necessary, if we are to protect the health and safety of our children.

### **Emergency Broadcast System Stations for Dauphin County include:**

1. Primary Station
  - a. WHP 580 AM, 97.3 FM Harrisburg, Channel 21 TV.
2. Secondary Choices
  - a. WKBO 1230 AM Harrisburg
  - b. WFEC 1400 AM Harrisburg
  - c. WMSP 94.4 FM Harrisburg
  - d. WQIN 1290 AM Lykens



- e. WHTM Channel 27 TV Harrisburg
  - f. WITF Channel 33 TV Harrisburg
3. Prepared announcements will generally fall into the following categories:
- a. Initial alert
  - b. Take shelter
  - c. Selective evacuation
  - d. General evacuation
  - e. School evacuation

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Classes are in session from 8:26 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., Monday through Friday.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Arrival time is 8:15 - 8:26 a.m. Departure time is 3:15 - 3:30 p.m. Since there is no one to supervise children before or after the arrival and departure times, we ask that you do not drop your children off early or pick them up late. Children arriving early or leaving late are at risk in terms of health and safety, as they are unsupervised and exposed to the weather. Students are not permitted in the classrooms before school starts.

### **BUILDING ACCESS**

For security reasons, all entrances to the building are locked. The official school entrance is on the Banks Street side of the building. There is a security camera at this entrance. Ring the buzzer, and the school secretary will let you in after you have identified yourself by name. Please go to the office in the basement and sign in prior to going to classrooms or other locations in the building. Neither the third floor nor the basement can be accessed from the elevator without a code.

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Currently, Infinity does not provide this service. The Penbrook Learning Center, located in the same building as Infinity, does provide a before and after school program. If you are interested in this, please contact the Director, Deanna Hobbs, at (717) 236-1239.

### **TARDINESS AND EARLY DEPARTURE**

If your child arrives at school late (after 8:26 a.m.), or leaves early (before 3:15 p.m.), a parent must come into the school office to sign the child in or out.

### **TRANSPORTATION/CARPOOLING**

School districts with boundaries within a ten-mile radius of Infinity that provide transportation for their own students are required to provide bus transportation for their students who attend Infinity. If you would be interested in contacting other parents who live in your area about carpooling options, please contact the office at (717) 238-1880.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

As a school staff, we need to know to whom we are releasing each child. If you are in a carpool, you must complete a form (available in the office) listing your carpool drivers. You may also wish to consider having a back-up driver for emergencies. If a child wishes to go home with someone else, we must have **written permission** for this, unless the pick-up person is listed on your child's emergency card. The same form may be used for all of these circumstances, or you can write a note. We are unable to release students via verbal permission over the phone or by fax. Students who walk or ride bicycles to and from school do so at their own risk, and we need written permission for this also. The school does not provide crossing guards or bike racks.

### **LATE PICKUP**

There are infrequent occasions when a child is not picked up. If that happens, we will call the parents/guardians listed on the emergency card and then the emergency contact person. If no one can be reached, and an hour has passed, the school has no choice but to call the police and have them pick up the child. In most cases, the police will then turn the child over to Social Services.

### **TRAFFIC PATTERN/PARKING**

Because of the buses that drop students off in our parking lot, as well as those parents from the Penbrook Learning Center who drop off their children, we have been asked not to park in the parking lot next to the school. Our landlord has requested that our parents park in the church parking lot across the street from the school and walk students to the school.

### **SCHOOL ZONE**

Following is a reminder about our designation as a School Zone and general drop-off, pick-up information. The Penbrook Police have informed us that the sign on Elm Street, between Banks and the school parking lot exit that says "No Parking between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. and between 3:00 p.m. and 4:45 p.m." means just that. This area is now designated for buses only during those times. You may still park on Elm Street between the school parking lot exit and Butler Street, Banks Street or in the church parking lot when you are dropping off or picking up children.

We have also been asked to remind you to:

- Enter the parking lot from Banks Street and exit the parking lot onto Elm Street.
- Keep speeds low around the school and in the parking lot. Many children are walking in these areas each day.
- Do not park in the School Safety Zone or in front of the No Parking sign located on the fence beside the Elm Street entrance.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping to keep our children safe.

## HEALTH SERVICES

### HEALTH AND MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Infinity employs a part-time nurse to provide health services for the school. She is at the school for approximately two hours over the lunch and recess times. However, we may contact her or our school physician at other times, if necessary. First aid kits are located in every classroom, and teachers are familiar with basic first aid procedures.

If your child is ill or injured to an extent that requires care beyond first aid, or simple comfort measures, the parent or other designated adult indicated on the child's emergency card will be notified to take the child home or to the doctor. **It is essential that you keep the school informed of any change in address and/or telephone numbers so a responsible party may be reached in an emergency.**

If a contagious disease is suspected, the school will notify the parents, and the child will be sent home from school.

Parents should bring special health concerns to the attention of teachers, the school nurse, and the school office.

If your child is to take prescription medication or over-the-counter medication during school hours, you must do the following:

- Submit the “Authorization For Medication During School Hours” form (Contact the school nurse for this form.). This must be signed by both the physician and the parent.
- All medication must be hand-delivered to the school by the parent/guardian or other adult. Please give the medication and signed Authorization For Medication During School Hours form to the school nurse (if she is present) or to the administration upon entering the school. Under no circumstances should a child be permitted to carry any type of medications (prescription or over-the-counter), such as Advil, Tylenol, cough drops, eye drops, or the like.
- Student name, instructions for dose, and time of administration must be clearly marked on the medication label. The container must be labeled by the physician or pharmacist.

The medication will be for school use only. When getting the prescription filled, request a separate container labeled For School Use Only, with the information above. If your child uses an inhaler to treat asthma, also request a doctor's prescription to obtain an inhaler for school use.

The above procedures are for prescribed medications that must be administered during school hours. If your child needs medication, let your doctor know it can be administered most easily during the lunch hour. Special arrangements for other medication administration times can be discussed with the school nurse.

## **HEALTH SCREENING**

Health screenings consist of the following:

- Vision (K-8)
- Hearing (K, 1, 2, 3, 7)
- Height (K-8)
- Weight (K-8)
- Body Mass Index (BMI) (K-8)
- Scoliosis (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade only)

Our school nurse conducts these screenings. These screenings are done based on state guidelines and requirements. If you do not want your child to participate in these screenings, please contact the Director.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

### INFINITY BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

It is Infinity's goal for behavior expectations to work in conjunction with academic standards to create a total learning environment for all students, at all grade levels. The eight behavior expectations are:

#### **Work Habits/Time Management:**

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*Students, staff, and parents will develop and use productive work habits.*

##### **Indicators:**

- Complete work to the best of their ability
- Strive for excellence in all their work
- Honor time commitments
- Arrive at school prepared to work
- Work cooperatively with others and independently when appropriate
- Persevere even when tasks are difficult

#### **School Climate:**

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*Students, staff, and parents will behave in a manner that fosters a positive school environment.*

##### **Indicators:**

- Participate actively in the learning process
- Encourage parent/community involvement
- State expectations clearly
- Show sensitivity toward others
- Use courteous and polite language and behavior
- Exercise self-discipline
- Follow school rules

#### **Dress:**

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*Students, staff and parents will dress appropriately for the school environment.*

##### **Indicators:**

- Dress in a clean, neat, and safe manner
- Dress in a manner that is non-demeaning to self or others
- Dress in a manner that promotes practices that are consistent with Infinity policies (See Infinity Dress Code, page 65.)
- Dress in a manner that is conducive to the activity in which engaged

#### **Physical and Emotional Safety:**

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*Students, staff, and parents will promote, create, and maintain an environment free from physical and emotional harm.*

##### **Indicators:**

- Ensure conflicts are resolved through non-violent means
- Ensure school is free from weapons
- Ensure school is free from harmful substances
- Ensure that school is free from intimidation, discrimination, and harassment

**Respect for Grounds and Property:**

*Students, staff, and parents will be thoughtful caretakers of the school property and the property of others.*

**Indicators:**

- Use property and materials for their intended purpose
- Take responsibility for maintaining school property
- Show respect for the personal property of others

**Integrity and Responsibility:**

*Students, staff, and parents will accept personal responsibility and accountability for their actions or inactions.*

**Indicators:**

- Accept responsibility for one's actions
- Be honest in communications with others
- Promote excellence by setting challenging and attainable goals
- Serve self and others through community involvement
- Take the initiative to help others
- Determine the right thing to do and do it

**Diversity:**

*Students, staff, and parents will respect the unique attributes and qualities of every individual.*

**Indicators:**

- Treat others with fairness, respect, and compassion
- View diversity as enhancing the school environment and community
- Promote and encourage increased knowledge and understanding of diversity in the curriculum

**Communication:**

*Students, staff, and parents will communicate effectively to build a more positive school environment.*

**Indicators:**

- Communicate with positive intent
- Communicate in an open, trusting, and truthful manner
- Express ideas clearly
- Communicate in a timely and ongoing manner
- Discuss misunderstandings or concerns directly with the source

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR STANDARDS**

Infinity's Behavior Standards are what most schools call a discipline policy. We have purposely not used that terminology because we want to focus on a more positive approach. We have included student rights and student responsibilities. It is important to make sure the students understand the expectations and abide by them, so we can all work together constructively.

We ask that you sit down with your child/ren and discuss these Behavior Standards. If you do not agree with our standards, please contact the Director and make an appointment to discuss your concerns.

At Infinity, we believe children, who learn to solve problems constructively at an early age develop lifelong skills that will help them solve more complex problems as they get older. Our behavior plan is based on the following principles:

- Children should learn from their experiences.
- Children should solve their problems without making additional problems for anyone else.
- Children should do as much, or more, thinking about their behavior than adults do.
- Children should think, make decisions, and live with the consequences of their actions.
- Children who experience consistent, logical and realistic consequences learn that they have positive control over their lives.

In order for school to be a safe, happy place for learning, we need to honor everyone's rights, act responsibly, and follow certain rules.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **I. Safe Environment:**

#### ***A. I have the right to learn in a safe environment.***

School should be a place where I can feel comfortable and not be afraid.

#### ***B. I have a responsibility to help create a safe environment at school.***

I will not intentionally hurt other children or adults. I will not bring these things to school: weapons, real or imitation, or weapon-type items (guns, swords, knives), skates, roller-blades, heelies, or skateboards.

### **II. Fairness:**

#### ***A. I have the right to be treated fairly at school.***

I should be treated fairly regardless of my abilities or differences, whether I am tall or short, boy or girl, have blond, brown, red or black hair, have red, brown, white, or yellow skin, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.

#### ***B. I have the responsibility to treat others fairly at school.***

I should treat others fairly regardless of their abilities or differences, whether or not they look like me, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.

### **III. Respect:**

#### ***A. I have a right to be treated with respect at school.***

I deserve to be treated with respect. Other children or adults should not laugh at me, make fun of me, or intentionally hurt my feelings.

#### ***B. I have the responsibility to treat others with respect at school.***

I have the responsibility to treat other children and adults with the same respect I expect. Name-calling, put-downs, insulting words and gestures are not allowed at Infinity.

### **IV. Property:**

#### ***A. I have the right to expect that my personal belongings will be safe at school.***

I expect that my personal belongings will not be intentionally damaged or stolen.

#### ***B. I have the responsibility to respect the property of others.***

I will not intentionally damage or steal things that belong to another student, a staff member, or the school.

**V. Communication:**

**A. *I have the right to tell my side of the story.***

When I have a disagreement with another person, I may talk about or write down my behaviors, ideas and feelings without being disrespectful to, or about, anyone else.

**B. *I have the responsibility to listen to the other person's side of the story.***

I need to listen/read carefully to what the other person says/writes about the situation and to think about what they said/wrote.

**VI. Mistakes:**

**A. *I have the right to make mistakes.***

I have the right to try new skills, explore new ideas, and make mistakes without having others criticize or make fun of me. School should be a place where I can "fail" in a safe environment.

**C. *I have the responsibility to stretch myself.***

If I only repeat skills I have already mastered, and I only repeat information I already know, I will never learn anything new. In order to grow, I must take some risks.

**VII. Education:**

**A. *I have the right to a free appropriate education.***

I will not have to pay to go to school. My teachers will work hard to address my intellectual, academic and social-emotional needs.

**B. *I have the responsibility to actively participate in my education.***

No one can teach me anything, if I am determined not to learn. I will attend school regularly, I will arrive at school on time, and I will make my best effort to learn and participate in class and homework.

**DUE PROCESS:**

All students are entitled to:

1. Verbal or written notice of the charges, or of the rule, that has been broken,
2. An explanation of the evidence, and
3. An opportunity to present his/her side of the story.

**WE DO NOT TOLERATE THESE BEHAVIORS AT INFINITY:**

- Intentional hitting or physical abuse,
- Damaging or stealing property,
- Throwing inappropriate objects or bringing dangerous objects to school,
- Leaving room/school grounds without permission,
- Disrespectful/abusive language or gestures/name calling,
- Defiance or refusing to follow directions,
- Threats to self or others,
- Damaging/stealing property, and
- Continuous disruptive behavior that interferes with students' rights to learn and teachers' rights to teach.



### CONSEQUENCES

If there is a problem, one or more of the following strategies may be used to correct it:

- Warning
- Written reflection by student
- Conference with teacher
- Loss of privileges
- In school suspension/detention
- Conference with Director
- Formal Remedial Discipline Plan
- Modification of personal learning plan goals and objectives
- Out-of-school suspension
- Opportunity to cool off
- Written Behavior Contract
- Meeting with counselor
- Conflict resolution with those involved
- Work detail
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement

### RECESS GUIDELINES

In addition to the general behavior expectations and standards, the following are guidelines for recess and before school time, whether outside on the playground, or in the gymnasium. To maximize the safety of each student at Infinity, the following behaviors are to be observed by all students.

- Leave playground or gym only with permission. Inform an adult when you return.
- Only adults can retrieve balls/other items, which have gone over the fence.
- Use toys, games, and equipment for their intended purpose.
- Go down the slide feet first.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Make sure all participants wish to join your game (Don't force anyone to play.).
- Be safe.
- Follow supervising adults' directions.
- Be respectful and kind to others, trees, plants, flowers, toys and equipment.
- Follow all Infinity School Behavior Standards.

### Clean up:

- Take all games and toys inside at the end of each recess.
- Take found items to Lost and Found in the office.

### Enforcement Procedures:

- Physical or verbal aggression and/or harm—immediate referral to staff member on duty.
- All other inappropriate behavior:
  - First Offense: verbal prompt or warning
  - Second Offense: walking along the fence or time-out sitting near the building silently for ...
    - 2-5 minutes for younger students
    - 5-10 minutes for older students.
    - Length depends on both age of student and seriousness of problem.
  - Third Offense: referral to designated staff member

\*Playground supervisors have access to a first aid kit, if needed, in case of injuries.

## STUDENT EXPULSION, SUSPENSION AND DUE PROCESS

### Purpose

At Infinity, all students will be afforded due process.

The Board of Trustees shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain exceptional students shall be governed by all applicable sections of the Public School Code (relating to discipline). If a student commits such an offense, the following procedures are followed.

### Guidelines

#### I. In-school Suspension:

- A. In-school suspensions may be imposed only by the CEO/Director or the Board of Trustees.
- B. No student should receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- C. Parents or guardians shall be notified of the suspension action by the school.
- D. If an in-school suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive days, an informal hearing with the CEO/Director shall be offered to the student and the student's parents or guardians prior to the eleventh (11th) school day in accordance with the following informal hearing procedures.
- E. The informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event(s) for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents or guardians to meet with the CEO/Director to discuss ways in which future offenses can be avoided. The informal hearing shall have the following due process elements:
  1. Notification of the reasons for suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student;
  2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given;
  3. A student shall have the right to question any witness;
  4. Educational assignments will be made to the student during the period of the in-school suspension.

#### II. Out-of-school Suspension:

- A. Out-of-school suspensions may be imposed only by the CEO/Director or the Board of Trustees.
- B. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- C. The parents shall be notified in writing when the student is suspended.
- D. If a suspension exceeds (3) school days, the student and parents shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the informal hearing requirements set forth previously with respect to in-school suspensions.
- E. Out-of-school suspensions may not be made to run longer than ten (10) consecutive

school days.

- F. Students have the responsibility to make up examinations and work missed and shall be permitted to complete their assignments in compliance with administrative practice.

### **III. Formal Hearing/Expulsion**

The Board of Trustees is permitted to expel a student. Expulsion is the exclusion from school for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and includes permanent expulsion. All expulsions require a formal hearing.

During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except if an in-school or out-of-school suspension is imposed in accordance with this Policy, or if it is determined after an informal hearing that the student's presence in his normal class will constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension.

Whenever any student is referred to the Board of Trustees, a formal hearing is to be held before the Board or a duly authorized committee of the Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board. When the hearing is conducted by a committee of the Board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire Board is required to expel a student.

The following due process requirements are to be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

- A. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
- B. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent request a public hearing.
- C. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
- D. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- E. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- F. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his or her own behalf.
- G. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder.
- H. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
- I. The proceeding must be conducted with all reasonable speed.

# INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

## Student Conduct Report

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date Parent Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
By phone \_\_\_\_\_ By note home \_\_\_\_\_

Report Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Parents will be notified as soon as possible if their child is involved in any situation requiring a student conduct report. After notification, parents will be asked to become involved with Infinity staff in correcting the problem(s). Consequences will be logical, reasonable, and respectful, designed to help the student change his/her behavior.

### INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR (including, but not limited to):

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| _____ Disrespectful/abusive language, gestures/name-calling   | _____ Cheating/Lying                 |
| _____ Bringing dangerous objects/weapons to school  | _____ Threats to self or others      |
| _____ Intentional hitting or physical abuse   | _____ Damaging/stealing property     |
| _____ Defiance/refusing to follow directions  | _____ Throwing inappropriate objects |
| _____ Continuous disruptive behavior that interferes with students' right to learn and teachers' right to teach |                                      |
| _____ Other. Explain: _____   |                                      |

### Summary of Behavior/Incident:

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### Action Taken/Strategies for Resolution (may include, but are not limited to):

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| _____ Warning   | _____ Behavior Support Plan          |
| _____ Opportunity to cool down/reflect                        | _____ Conference with Counselor      |
| _____ Written reflection by student                           | _____ Conference with Director       |
| _____ Written behavior contract                               | _____ Loss of privileges             |
| _____ Conference with teacher                                 | _____ In school suspension/detention |
| _____ Conflict resolution with those involved                 | _____ Out-of-school suspension       |
| _____ Formal remedial discipline plan                         | _____ Referral to Law Enforcement    |
| _____ Modification of personal learning plan goals/objectives |                                      |
| _____ Other _____   |                                      |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature Date Parent Phone Number

cc: director, teacher, parent, office

## MISCELLANEOUS

### DRESS CODE

School is a place where learning takes place. Dress can positively or negatively affect a student's attention to the educational process. Dress can also reflect the pride a student takes in her/himself and her/his school. Students are required to adhere to the following dress code, while in school and when attending school functions. **If a student violates the dress code at school, parents may be called to bring in more appropriate clothing for their child, or the child may have to wear something from the lost and found to remedy the situation. If the child violates the dress code at a school function, s/he may be required to leave.**

We ask that all adults, at the school, during the day or for school functions, follow this code as well, **in order to provide consistency and to set a good example for the students.**

1. Shirts must be long enough to touch the top of the pants when the person is involved in normal school movements. Please remember that students may raise their hands or kneel on the floor for projects. Please be sure midriffs or bottoms will not be exposed in these positions either.
2. No spaghetti strap shirts; no muscle shirts. Straps must be at least 3 fingers wide.
3. Shorts/skirts/dresses must be at least mid-thigh length. When a student's arm is down at his/her side the fingertips must reach the bottom of the clothing.
4. Clothing must not be revealing.
5. No pajamas may be worn to school.
6. Ripped jeans, or other ripped articles of clothing, are not allowed.
7. Clothing or accessories with improper or objectionable pictures, sayings, gestures, or language, or which promote substances prohibited by Board Policy or state law, must not be worn.
8. Shoes must be worn at all times. No flip-flops or hee-lies are allowed. Crocs and clogs may only be worn, if straps are used.
9. Hats are not to be worn inside. However, they can be worn outside for protection from the sun or inclement weather.
10. Sunglasses are for outdoor use, and are not to be worn indoors.
11. No gloves may be worn indoors.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

After school programs are more difficult to arrange at Infinity because we share the facility. For example, the gym is not available to us after 4 p.m. In addition, we have very dedicated teachers, so the classrooms are generally occupied after school. However, we would be happy to work with parents who are interested in organizing some types of school activities. For example, parents have organized and run Destination Imagination, Odyssey of the Mind, and TSA teams that met in people's homes.

### **Class Parties**

There will be three school-wide parties during the year; one in the fall near Halloween, one before Winter Break, and one for Valentine's Day. These parties will start at 2:30 p.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Parents may attend, bring treats and/or organize activities for these parties, in conjunction with the classroom teacher.

### **Student Birthdays**

We understand that a birthday is an important day in the life of a child. Classroom teachers will choose a way to recognize each child on his/her birthday. One example would be to have the class sing "Happy Birthday." Parents are welcome to send in a special treat for snack that day. If you want to invite the child's classmates to a party outside of school, you need to send invitations through the mail, rather than distribute them at school. This will minimize hurt feelings for children who are not invited.

### **Spelling Bee**

Infinity students often participate in the local Spelling Bee competition, organized by WITF.

### **Geography Bee**

Infinity students have participated in this competition in the past.

### **Instrumental Music Lessons**

Instrumental music lessons have been offered to interested students in certain grades by qualified instructors. There is a fee for these lessons.

### **Chess Club**

The Infinity Chess Club was established to provide an opportunity for chess play and instruction to Infinity Charter School students and siblings, grades K-8. Chess Club members enjoy the many benefits of chess play, as well as enjoy an extracurricular opportunity for Infinity students to interact socially, across grade/ chess ability levels. There is no enrollment fee or formal registration associated with the club, and members can come to as many, or few, meetings as they like. Meetings are typically held twice a month, at a local library. Watch the school calendar for more information.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

### Notice of Special Education Services and Programs Child Find

Infinity Charter School, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, to offer assistance to parents, and to describe the parents' rights, with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process.

The content of this notice has been written in English. If a person does not understand any of this notice, s/he should contact Cindy Walker, Infinity's Special Education Contact, and request an explanation.

#### Identification Activity

*Child Find* refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the State, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that, if found, may cause a child to need services are: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment, including blindness.

Infinity is required to annually provide notice describing the *identification* activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of *personally identifiable information*. This notice is intended to meet this requirement.

*Identification activities* are performed to find a child who is suspected of having a disability that would interfere with his/her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called *screening* activities. The activities include: review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior, and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Screening activities can take place during the school day at Infinity Charter School. Input from parents is also an information source for *identification*. After a child is identified as a suspected *child with a disability*, s/he is evaluated once parents give their written permission. Regardless of screening activities, parents who think their child has a disability may request in writing, at any time, that an evaluation be conducted to determine if the child is eligible to receive special education services. Written requests should be sent to Cindy Walker, Infinity Charter School's Special Education Contact. All evaluations related to the above listed disabilities, including psychological assessments, are at no cost to the parents.

Educational Records/Confidentiality

All records that are directly related to an individual child are called “educational records” and are maintained by the local school district. Information contained in these records, such as the child’s name, the name of the child’s parents or other family members, the address of the child or their family, a personal identifier such as social security number or a list of characteristics or information that would make the child’s identity easily traceable, is called *personally identifiable information*.

Infinity Charter School, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 and other applicable federal and state laws, protects the confidentiality of *personally identifiable information*, regarding students that are identified as children with disabilities and eligible for special education services and protected handicapped students. The school district protects the personally identifiable information by one school official being responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of the records; training being provided to all persons using the information, and maintaining for public inspection a current list of employees’ names and positions who may have access to the information. The school district will inform you when this information is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child and will destroy the information at the request of the parent, except general information, such as your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, and grade level completed, which may be maintained without time limitation.

As the parent of the child you have a number of rights regarding the confidentiality of your child's records; for example, the right to inspect and review any education records related to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the school district. The school district will comply with a request for you to review the records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding planning for your child's special education program (called an IEP meeting), before a hearing should you and your school district disagree about how to educate your child who needs special education, and in no case, take more than 45 days to furnish you the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records.

You have the right to an explanation and interpretation of the records; to be provided copies of the records if failure to provide the copies would effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records; and the right to have a representative inspect and review the records.

Upon your request, Infinity Charter School will provide you with a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used by ICS. Additionally, Infinity Charter School may charge a fee for copies of records made in response to your request for copies, except it will not charge a fee if doing so will prevent you from inspecting and reviewing your child's records. Infinity Charter School will not charge a fee to search or retrieve information.

You have the right to request the amendment of your child's education records that you believe are inaccurate or misleading, or violate the privacy or other rights of your child. Infinity Charter School will decide whether to amend the records within a reasonable time after receiving your request. If Infinity refuses to amend the records you will be notified of the refusal and your right to a hearing. You will be given at that time, additional information regarding the hearing



procedures and, upon request, ICS will provide you a records hearing to challenge information in your child's education files.

Parent consent is required before *personally identifiable information* contained in your child's education records is disclosed to anyone other than officials of Infinity Charter School collecting or using the information for purposes of identification of your child, locating your child and evaluating your child or for any other purpose of making available a free appropriate public education to your child. 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. Additionally, Infinity Charter School, upon request, discloses records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which your child seeks or intends to enroll.

School districts may establish a policy for disclosure of some types of student information known as *directory information*. *Directory information* is not subject to access or disclosure rules under FERPA. *Directory information* is that portion of an educational record which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. This information may include, but is not limited to, the student's name and school activities, local and permanent address, family members' names, addresses and telephone numbers, major fields of study, names of previous school attended and enrollment status. Parents may refuse to allow the school district to designate any or all of their child's record as *directory information*. Parents should contact Infinity Charter School if they do not want directory information released about their child.

When a child reaches age 18, the rights of the parent, with regard to confidentiality of *personally identifiable information*, is transferred to the student.

A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided to the following:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
Division of Compliance  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

The Department of Education will investigate the matter and issue a report of findings and necessary corrective action within 60 days. The Department will take necessary action to ensure compliance is achieved.

Complaints alleging failures of the school district with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information may also be filed with:

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

Early Intervention Identification

In Pennsylvania, a child between three years of age and the school district's age to begin school who has a developmental delay, or one or more of the physical or mental conditions as listed on page 1, is identified as an "eligible young child." The parents of these children have the same rights described previously in this document.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. Screening for preschool children is available from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU). To schedule an appointment for screening, or for additional information, please call Eric Bostick, CAIU Preschool Program Supervisor, at 717-732-8400 ext. 8619.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students, and therefore be protected by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. Infinity Charter School must ensure that protected handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student. In compliance with state and federal law, Infinity Charter School will provide to each 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. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" may be distinct from those applicable to exceptional or thought-to-be exceptional students. Infinity 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 Cindy Walker, Infinity's Special Education Contact.

**"THE SPECIAL KIDS NETWORK" INFORMATION**

The Special Kids Network is a statewide resources and referral services for teachers, parents, agencies and others who are looking for help with a child (ages 0 through 21 years) with special needs. Anyone can use the Network and there are no charges for this service.

By calling the toll-free number (1-800-986-4550), a caller is connected to an information specialist in one of six regional offices. This professional and friendly staff is ready to provide support, up-to-date information and referrals to state-wide agencies and organizations that serve children with special needs.

## 201. SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

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### **Purpose:**

Every exceptional student attending the schools of this district shall be offered an educational program that meets his/her individual needs and is suited to his/her unique abilities. Such a program of special education shall be designed to comply with law, conform to the goals of this school, and shall, to the extent feasible and consistent with the best interests of the student and other pupils, integrate programs of special education with the regular instructional program of the school.

Exceptional children to be served by the special education program of this district shall include those school-age children as defined by law, resident in the district, who so deviate from the average in physical, mental, emotional or social characteristics that they require special educational programs or facilities or services and shall include all school-age persons in detention homes and hospitals.

In order to maintain a more effective program of special education, the CEO/Director is authorized to participate in special education programs of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit or any other approved state program.

### **Guidelines:**

The CEO/Director shall annually recommend to the Board the employment and retention of such staff and the provision of such facilities and services as may be necessary and feasible to provide for the needs of the exceptional children of this district.

The program to which each exceptional child is assigned shall be that which best assures his/her success in learning and offers him/her the least restrictive environment in accordance with state and Federal regulations. All procedures for the implementation of a program of special education shall be so designed as to guard the privacy of the student and family.

No exceptional student who is so classified shall be denied, because of handicap, participation in co-curricular, intramural or interscholastic activities or any of the services offered or recognitions rendered regularly to the students of this district, unless such participation is not practical because of the handicap.

All services which are extended to the general population of students shall be provided for the exceptional pupil, where feasible.

The CEO/Director shall develop procedures for the continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's plan for the exceptional pupil and shall periodically report to the Board the criteria by which such evaluations are made and the results of such evaluation.

### **Assistive Technology:**

Infinity Charter School will facilitate the provision of assistive technology devices and/or assistive technology services to a child with a disability, if they are required as part of the child's IEP. A child who has use of a technological device, provided to the by the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU), or their home school district, will bring the device with them when they come to Infinity. The cost for the use of the equipment will then be taken over by Infinity and paid to the CAIU or the child's home district for the use of the item. If a child is in need of a

new device, Infinity will locate and pay for the use of the device for that child while they attend Infinity. If staff (including teachers and instructional aides) needs additional assistive technology resources or additional training, these would be available through the CAIU.

Hearing aids worn during the school day by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, will be tested periodically by the school nurse. The nurse will be responsible for reviewing procedures for maintaining the proper functioning of hearing aids, and obtaining additional training, as needed.

**Independent Evaluation:**

The parents of a child with a disability have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation of the child at public expense. An independent educational evaluation is one that is conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the public agency (school) responsible for the education of the child. The public agency is responsible for the full cost of the evaluation. The public agency shall provide to parents information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained, along with the agency criteria applicable for independent educational evaluations. If an independent evaluation is at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner shall be provided to the parent. The public agency may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an independent educational evaluation.

The independent educational evaluation may occur if the parents disagree with an evaluation obtained by the public agency. The public agency may ask for the parent's reason why he or she objects to the public evaluation. However, the explanation by the parent may not be required. The public agency must, without unnecessary delay, either initiate a hearing to show that its evaluation is appropriate to the needs of the child, or ensure that an independent evaluation be provided at public expense. If the public agency initiates a hearing, and the final decision is that the agency's evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an independent evaluation. This evaluation need not be at public expense. If a hearing officer requests an independent educational evaluation as part of a hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

When an independent educational evaluation is conducted at private expense, the results of the evaluation must be considered by the public agency, if it meets agency criteria. The evaluation must be considered with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education of the child (FAPE). The evaluation may be presented as evidence at a hearing regarding that child.

**FSB – Behavior Management Policy For Special Education:**

**Positive Behavior Support**

- (a) Positive rather than negative measures shall form the basis of positive behavior support programs to ensure that all students shall be free from demeaning treatment, the use of aversive techniques and the unreasonable use of restraints. Behavior support programs must include research based practices and techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Behavior support programs and plans shall be based on a functional assessment of behavior and utilize positive behavior techniques. When an intervention is needed to address problem behavior, the types of intervention chosen for a particular student must be the least intrusive necessary. The use of restraints is considered a measure of last resort, only to be used after other less

restrictive measures, including de-escalation techniques in accordance with subsection (c)(2).

- (b) Notwithstanding the requirements incorporated by reference in 34 CFR 300.34, 300.324, 300.530 (relating to related services; development, review, and revision of IEP; and authority of school personnel), with regard to a child's behavior, the following words and terms, when used in this section, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

*Aversive techniques*—Deliberate activities designed to establish a negative association with a specific behavior.

*Positive behavior support plan*—A plan for students with disabilities who require specific intervention to address behavior that interferes with learning. A positive behavior support plan shall be developed by the IEP team, be based on a functional behavior assessment and become part of the student's IEP. These plans include methods that utilize positive reinforcement and other positive techniques to shape a student's behavior, ranging from the use of positive verbal statements as a reward for good behavior to specific tangible rewards.

*Restraints*—

- i. The application of physical force, with or without the use of a device, for the purpose of restraining the free movement of a student's body. The term does not include briefly holding, without force, a student to calm or comfort him, guiding a student to an appropriate activity, or holding a student's hand to safely escort him from one area to another.
  - ii. Excluded from this definition are hand-over-hand assistance with feeding or task completion and techniques prescribed by a qualified medical professional for reasons of safety or for therapeutic or medical treatment, as agreed to by the student's parents and specified in the IEP. Devices used for physical or occupational therapy, seatbelts in wheel chairs or on toilets used for balance and safety, safety harnesses in buses, and functional positioning devices are examples of mechanical restraints which are excluded from this definition, and governed by subsection (d).
- (c) Restraints to control acute or episodic aggressive or self-injurious behavior may be used only when the student is acting in a manner as to be a clear and present danger to himself, to other students or to employees, and only when less restrictive measures and techniques have proven to be or are less effective.
1. The use of restraints to control the aggressive behavior of an individual student shall cause Infinity to notify the parent of the use of restraint and shall cause a meeting of the IEP team within 10 school days of the inappropriate behavior causing the use of restraints, unless the parent, after written notice, agrees in writing to waive the meeting. At this meeting, the IEP team shall consider whether the student needs a functional behavioral assessment, reevaluation, a new or revised positive behavior support plan or a change of placement to address the inappropriate behavior.
  2. The use of restraints may only be included in a student's IEP when:
    - (i) Utilized with specific component elements of positive behavior support.
    - (ii) Used in conjunction with the teaching of socially acceptable alternative skills to replace problem behavior.
    - (iii) Staff are authorized to use the procedure and have received the staff training required.
    - (iv) There is a plan in place for eliminating the use of restraint through the application of

- positive behavior support.
- (3) The use of prone restraints is prohibited in educational programs. Prone restraints are those in which a student is held face down on the floor.
  - (4) The use of restraints may not be included in the IEP for the convenience of staff, as a substitute for an educational program or employed as punishment.
  - (5) Infinity shall maintain and report data on the use of restraints as prescribed by the Secretary. The report will be reviewed during cyclical compliance monitoring conducted by the Department.
- (d) Mechanical restraints, which are used to control involuntary movement or lack of muscular control of students when due to organic causes or conditions, may be employed only when specified by an IEP and as determined by a medical professional qualified to make the determination, and as agreed to by the student's parents. Mechanical restraints must prevent a student from injuring himself or others or promote normative body positioning and physical functioning.
  - (e) The following aversive techniques of handling behavior are considered inappropriate and may not be used by Infinity in educational programs:
    - (1) Corporal punishment.
    - (2) Punishment for a manifestation of a student's disability.
    - (3) Locked rooms, locked boxes or other locked structures or spaces from which the student cannot readily exit.
    - (4) Noxious substances.
    - (5) Deprivation of basic human rights, such as withholding meals, water or fresh air.
    - (6) Suspensions constituting a pattern.
    - (7) Treatment of a demeaning nature.
    - (8) Electric shock.
  - (f) Infinity has the primary responsibility for ensuring that behavior support programs are in accordance with Chapter 711, including the training of personnel for the use of specific procedures, methods and techniques, and for having a written policy and procedures on the use of behavior support techniques and obtaining parental consent prior to the use of restrictive or intrusive procedures or restraints.
  - (g) Infinity may convene a review, including the use of human rights committees, to oversee the use of restrictive or intrusive procedures or restraints.
  - (h) Subsequent to a referral to law enforcement, for a student with a disability who has a positive behavior support plan, an updated functional behavior assessment and positive behavior support plan shall be required.

## **Educational Records Confidentiality**

Infinity Charter School (ICS) recognizes the need to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the education records of eligible children. This policy has been prepared to ensure the privacy rights to both the parents/guardians and the eligible child in the collection, maintenance, release and destruction of these records. This policy incorporates provisions from the Regulations of the State Board of Education of Pupil Records (PA Code 22, Ch. 12), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Confidentiality Section of P.L. 94-142, and the Confidentiality Section of PA Special Education Regulations and Standards.

Information in this policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

**Definitions:**

**Authorized school official** – means an administrator, supervisor, or instructor who has a legitimate educational interest (as defined by the LEA or APS) in the student’s education.

**Destruction** – means physical destruction or permanent expungement of personally identifying data from a student’s educational records so the information in those records is no longer personally identifiable.

**Directory information** – includes the following information relating to a student: the student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student and other similar information.

**Education record/records** – means those records which are directly related to an exceptional student, and are maintained by Infinity. This includes records for a student who is currently or in the past received special education and related services from Infinity. Records include permission to evaluate, evaluation reports, individual education plan, notice of recommended educational placement, progress reports, etc. (Personal notes of instructional, supervisor or administrative personnel are not considered to be part of educational records.)

**Eligible student** – means a student who has attained eighteen (18) years of age, or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

**Personally identifiable** – includes data or information that identifies the student or family members by name, by address, by information such as telephone or social security numbers, or by a list of characteristics or other information that could make the student’s identity easily traceable.

**Release** – the giving of access to or the allowance of inspection, transfer, disclosure, or communication of any portion of a student’s education records which includes in it personally identifiable information; the term also means release to any person by any means.

**Student** - means exceptional school age person, preschool pupil (eligible young child) with respect to whom an educational agency maintains education records.

**Parent** – includes a parent, guardian or a surrogate parent who acts as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. Unless there is a state law or court order which provides to the contrary, Infinity Charter School may presume that the parent has the authority to exercise the rights inherent in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

**Special Educational Records**

An educational record shall be maintained for each child receiving special education services from the school at the following locations:

1. A special education file shall be maintained in the main office at Infinity. This file shall be considered the complete special education file.
2. A permanent record shall be maintained for each current child and stored in the Infinity main office.
3. A health record for each currently enrolled student will be kept in a locked cabinet in the

Health Office.

4. A copy of the special education file, permanent file and health file will be stored in the Records Room for students who are no longer enrolled in Infinity.

### **Transferring Files to Other Districts**

A parent/guardian has the right to review the files of his/her child. The parent may also request and receive the following:

1. An explanation of information in the student's education records.
2. A copy of all or part of the student's education records (the cost of which will not exceed the costs of duplication).
3. A list of the types and location of the student's education record collected, maintained, or utilized by Infinity.

### **Access Record Log**

Infinity will maintain a record indicating the names of those persons who have obtained access, the date of access, and the purpose of access.

Administrators, teachers, instructional aides and the administrative assistant are authorized to have access to personally identifiable information.

The parent/guardian has the right to inspect the access record of this child.

### **Maintenance Records**

The Special Education teacher shall be responsible for ensuring that the education records, confidentiality rules, and this education records policy for eligible young children is enforced and administered. This official will:

1. Annually notify parents/guardians and eligible students of this policy, its procedures, and their rights. The notification shall be in their primary language unless it is not feasible to do so.
2. Develop a system of safeguards which will protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at the point of collection, storage, release and destruction.
3. Be responsible for ensuring that all Infinity faculty and subcontracted agency employees, who collect or use personally identifiable information, receive in-service regarding the implementation of this policy. In-servicing shall consist of providing, at the least, yearly presentation of the information to staff and subcontractors.

### **Destruction**

Infinity will not destroy any part of an education record or personally identifiable information necessary for the education of a student who is enrolled, or has been enrolled, in Infinity.

### **Release of Information**

In order to protect the rights of the student and his/her parents/guardians against infringement of privacy, misinterpretation of data, and inappropriate use, Infinity shall obtain the written consent of the student's parent/guardian or the eligible student prior to disclosing personally identifiable information from the education records of a student, other than directory information, except



when prior consent for disclosure is not required by law. Consent shall be obtained using the Consent to Release Information form.

Prior consent for release of such information is not required when disclosure is:

1. To authorized school officials or subcontracted agencies have a legitimate educational interest (A **legitimate educational interest** for an authorized school official means that his official will have administrative, supervisory, or instructional duties with regard to the student's educational program.).
2. To officials of another school, or school system, in which the student is enrolled or intends to enroll; records will not be released without notifying the parents/guardians.
3. To authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary, or state and local educational agencies.
4. To state and local officials or authorities, if a state statute adopted before November 19, 1974, specifically requires disclosures to those officials and authorities.
5. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided Infinity makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian of the student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance.
6. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions provided such organizations have received approval from the Infinity Board of Directors.
7. To a parent/guardian of a dependent student, as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.
8. In connection with a health or safety emergency, only if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Written consent will be obtained prior to release of personally identifiable information to any party not mentioned above. Prior to requesting consent, Infinity will provide the parent/guardian or eligible student in writing the following:

1. A general description of the information or record to be released.
2. The form of the release.
3. The reason the release was requested.
4. The party or agency to whom the information will be released.

Whenever the student's school district of residence, Intermediate Unit, or the Department of Education requests the release of information, an approved private school must comply with the request within ten (10) days of receiving the request.

When a school district in which the student is enrolled or intends to enroll requests the release of information, Infinity will comply with the request within ten (10) days of receiving the request.

### **Parental Request For the Amendment of Records**

A parent/guardian has the right to request that Infinity amend information contained in education records collected, maintained, or used by Infinity if s/he believes it to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student.

Subsequent to a request for an amendment, Infinity shall decide whether to amend the disputed information within forty-five (45) calendar days after the receipt of the request to amend.

If Infinity agrees to amend the disputed information, the parent/guardian or eligible student shall be notified in writing.

If Infinity decides not to amend the education record in accordance with the request of the parent/guardian, Infinity shall inform the parent/guardian in writing of the refusal, the reason(s) for the refusal, and shall provide further notification of their right to request and receive a records review hearing.

The following procedure will be followed when the opportunity for a hearing is actualized:

1. The hearing shall be held at a mutually agreed upon time and place within thirty (30) days after Infinity receives the request of a hearing from the parent/guardian.
2. Infinity shall give written notification to the parent/guardian of the date, place, and time of the hearing not later than five (5) days in advance of the hearing.
3. The parent/guardian shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the specific information and reason(s) for requesting that information be amended, and may be represented as his/her own expense by an individual of his/her choice, including legal council.
4. The hearing officer shall render a written decision within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the hearing. This decision shall be based solely on evidence presented at the hearing and include a summary of the evidence and reasons for the decision.
5. If the decision rendered is to amend the education record(s), Infinity will inform the parent/guardian of this in writing.
6. If the decision rendered is not to amend the education records, Infinity shall inform the parent/guardian in writing of his/her right to place in the educational records of the student a statement commenting upon the information in the educational records and/or setting forth any reason for disagreeing with the decision of Infinity. Parents/Guardians will also be informed of their right to request an impartial due process hearing.
  - a. This response shall be maintained by Infinity as part of the educational records of the student as long as the record or contended portion thereof is maintained by Infinity.
  - b. If the educational records of the student or the contested portion thereof disclosed to any party, the explanation shall also be disclosed to that party.

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**206. SURROGATE PARENT POLICY**

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**Purpose:**

To insure the rights of children who are the wards of the state or whose parents or guardians are unknown or unavailable, Infinity Charter School will identify eligible students and recruit, select, train and assign volunteer surrogate parents to represent children in educational matters in a timely manner, through the Surrogate Implementation Plan of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit.

**Guidelines:**

The procedure will include the following:

1. Infinity Charter School will identify students whose parents cannot be identified or located after reasonable efforts are made to find them, or students who are wards of the state.
2. Infinity Charter School will maintain this list of students who are in need of surrogate parents.
3. Infinity Charter School will contact the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to seek the assistance in locating surrogate parents.
4. Infinity Charter School will receive from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit documentation showing the assigned surrogate parents have been properly recruited, selected, trained and assigned. The assignment will take place within 30 days after a determination that the child needs a surrogate parent.

Surrogate parents are afforded all the same rights as other parents of students with disabilities enrolled in Infinity Charter School.

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**ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE/BILINGUAL POLICY**

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**ELL/ESL/Bilingual Program Outline**

**State of Program Goals and Objectives**

In accordance with Infinity Charter School's Board of Trustees goal to provide a quality educational program for all students, the school provides appropriate planned instruction in ESL and content classes for identified students whose dominant language is not English. The objectives of the program include:

- developing English language skills, leading to English proficiency,
- providing for meaningful participation in subject area content, and
- providing for the attainment of the PA academic standards.

**Student and Parent Orientation Procedures**

Every effort will be made to orient students and parents to the practices and procedures of the school. Guidance will be given, if needed, for completing registration forms. Forms may be translated into the native language when necessary.

## **Identification and Placement**

### **Screening Procedures/Entry and Exit Criteria**

As part of Infinity's student registration process, the Home Language Survey is completed for all new students and filed in their permanent record. When one of the three required questions is answered, "not English," the student's English language proficiency is assessed.

### **Assessment Process**

Identified English Language Learners are assessed for their achievement levels and native language proficiency using multiple measures, such as standardized tests, PSSA results, portfolio assessments, teacher observations, interviews with parents, and so on. Consideration is given to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, as well as academic progress.

## **Instructional Program**

### **Describe Type of Program**

Identified students are placed in the appropriate level of the ESL instructional program. The ESL instruction will be based on sound educational and language learning theory and staffed by an appropriately prepared instructor. The program will be evaluated at least twice yearly.

### **Planned Instruction/Standards**

The planned instruction in ESL will include Language Arts areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **Indicate the Amount of Time in ESL classes**

The amount of time allotted for instruction will be based on the proficiency of the student. Approximate times are two to three hours for non-English speaking students; two hours daily for beginners; 1.5 hours daily for intermediate learners; and one hour daily for advanced students. Student performance will be monitored for at least one year after they have graduated from these classes.

### **Indicate the Amount of Time in Content Classes**

Students will receive content instruction aligned with the Pennsylvania standards of instruction. Teachers will accommodate the individual learning needs of the student when the student experiences difficulty in comprehending instruction.

## **Student Participation in Related and Extracurricular Activities including Gifted Education**

English Language Learners will have the opportunities to participate in all the federal or other programs available within the school for which they qualify. Students have access to, and are encouraged to participate in, all aspects of the academic and extracurricular opportunities available through the school or home district.

ELL students are eligible for gifted education or any other program that is available to all students in the school and for which they qualify. However, Infinity does not currently comply with Chapter 16 guidelines, since charter schools are not required to do so.

## **Pupil Personnel Services**

### **Counseling**

Infinity employs a part-time guidance counselor. ELL students have equal access to the counselor and to any programming s/he provides.

### **Special Education**

An IEP will be developed for students who have a disability that is not due to a lack of proficiency in the English language. In developing an IEP, interpreting services will be available for parents, if necessary.

### **Other Related Services**

Any service offered to other Infinity students will be made available to ELLs.

## **Staff Development Related to Program**

All staff will receive applicable in-service opportunities if the school enrolls students who have limited English proficiency. Infinity's Act 48 Professional Development Plan will be adjusted, as necessary. In-service will focus on cultural information, second language acquisition, adapting/modifying classroom instruction, and appropriate assessment practices. The goals of such in-service will be to assure that programs offered to the students are based on sound educational theory; are effectively implemented; and result in successfully removing language barriers.

## **Community Involvement**

### **Program Planning**

Funds will be allocated to implement the ESL program in proportion to amounts spent for the general population and basic programs.

### **Communication with Students' Homes**

As necessary, information disseminated to students and their parents will be provided in a language preferred by parents, including student assessment information, what special programs are available, and policy handbooks. Infinity will provide translation and/or interpretation services, as needed.

### **Program Advisory Committee**

The ESL teacher, special education teacher, CEO, or administrative designee, and community resource agencies will collaborate to plan the school program, to develop processes to communicate with parents of ELL students, to refine the complaint resolution process and to plan in-service activities.

### **Complaint Resolution Process**

Complaints will be directed to the CEO/Director. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, then the issue will be addressed by the Board of Trustees. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, advice will be sought from the ESL Regional Monitoring Center and/or Program Advisory Committee.

### **Program Evaluation Procedures**

The program will be evaluated at least twice annually to assess whether it is producing positive results. Revisions will be made to address any deficiencies and to increase effectiveness.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: RESOURCES

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**State G/T Consultant - Shirley Curl**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 80203  
Phone: (717) 786-6361

**Pennsylvania Association of Gifted Education (PAGE)**

PAGE, Inc.  
P.O. Box 15350  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237  
Helpline: (888) 736-6443  
Website: [www.giftedpage.org](http://www.giftedpage.org)

**National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)**

1331 H Street, NW, Suite 1001  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 785-4248  
Website: [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

**National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented**

University of Connecticut  
2131 Hillside Road, Unit 3007  
Storrs, CT 06269-3007  
Phone: (860) 486-4826  
Website: [www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt.html](http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt.html)

**American Association for Gifted Children**

Duke University  
P.O. Box 90539  
Durham, NC 27708-0539  
Phone: (919) 684-8459 / Margaret Evans Gayle  
Website: [www.aagc.org](http://www.aagc.org)

**Hoagies Gifted Education Page**

Website: [www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)

**John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth**

Website: <http://cty.jhu.edu/>

**Rochester, Minnesota School District Gifted Resources Page**

[www.rochester.k12.mn.us/se3bin/clientgenie.cgi](http://www.rochester.k12.mn.us/se3bin/clientgenie.cgi)  
-Go to “Academics”, then “Gifted Services”

## **Appendix B: A Bill of Rights for the Parents of Gifted Children**

By Gina Ginsberg Riggs

### **Parents Have:**

1. The right to a free public education for their gifted children.
2. The right to an education that enables their children to learn all they are able to learn.
3. The right to educator's awareness that gifted children learn earlier, better, faster and often differently from most other children.
4. The right to be accepted and respected as parents of children with legitimate and special learning needs.
5. The right to be involved in the planning for the education of their gifted children.
6. The right to information in the child's file and the right to an explanation if that information is in unfamiliar terms.
7. The right to freedom of expression as they voice the joys and problems of raising gifted children.
8. The right to become change agents in the legislature and schools when gifted children are not adequately served.
9. The right to an environment of acceptance and pride in what gifted children can accomplish for themselves, but also for the quality of all our lives.

## **APPENDIX C: FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parent certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when her or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest;

- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in case of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and "dates of attendance." However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.



## APPENDIX D: CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND ALCOHOL POLICY

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### **PURPOSE:**

The Board recognizes that the misuse of controlled substances and/or alcohol is a serious problem with legal, physical and social implications for the whole school community. As the educational institution, Infinity Charter School shall strive to prevent abuse of controlled substances.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

This policy covers the following:

1. All dangerous controlled substances prohibited by law, including illegal drugs of any kind.
2. All look-alike drugs.
3. Anabolic steroids.
4. Any drug paraphernalia.
5. All alcoholic beverages, which includes any beverage that contains any concentration of alcohol and/or is sold as an “alcoholic” product.

The Board prohibits the use, possession, and distribution of any controlled substances and/or alcohol during school hours, on school property, and at any school-sponsored event by any staff member.

Incidents of possession, use or sale of controlled substances and/or alcohol by any person on school property or at any school-sponsored event shall be reported to the Office of Safe Schools on the required form at least once each year.

## APPENDIX E: TOBACCO USE POLICY

### **Purpose:**

The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco by staff during school hours, on school property or at school activities presents a health and safety hazard which can have serious consequences for the user and the nonuser and the safety of the school.

### **Definitions:**

For purposes of this policy, “tobacco” is defined as a lighted or unlighted cigar, cigarette, or pipe; any other lighted smoking product; and smokeless tobacco in any form.

The Board prohibits tobacco use by any staff members in the school building, on school grounds, on school buses, or at any school-sponsored activity.

Incidents of use and sale of tobacco by any person on school property shall be reported to the Office of Safe Schools on the required form at least once each year. Any staff person found responsible of use or sale shall be subject to disciplinary action by the CEO/Director.

## APPENDIX F: UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT POLICY

### **Purpose:**

It is the policy of the Infinity Charter School is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment in any form. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, student, or approved volunteer to harass an employee, student, approved volunteer, or visitor through conduct or communication. The Board recognizes that harassment is a form of discrimination, which is prohibited by law and violates the standards of the school

### **Authority:**

The Board prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of employees by all district students and staff members, contracted individuals and vendors, and volunteers in the schools. The Board encourages employees who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents to the CEO/Director.

The Board directs that complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of harassment.

### **Definitions:**

The term harassment includes but is not limited to repeated, unwelcome, and offensive slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, or handicap/disability that create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Ethnic harassment includes the repeated, unwelcome, and offensive use of any derogatory word, phrase, or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**Sexual harassment** shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is a term or condition of an individual's continued employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, touching or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading words to describe an individual; jokes, pin-ups, calendars, objects, graffiti, vulgar statements, abusive language, innuendoes, references to sexual activities, overt sexual conduct, or any conduct that has the

effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's ability to work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or working environment.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The school shall annually inform students, staff, parents, independent contractors, and volunteers that unlawful harassment of employees will not be tolerated, by means of publication in handbooks.

Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain a working environment free from all forms of unlawful harassment.

Each employee shall be responsible to respect the rights of district staff, students, parents, and approved volunteers and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful harassment.

The CEO/Director shall be designated to receive harassment complaints. If the CEO/Director is the subject of the complaint, the complainant shall report the complaint directly to the Board of Trustees.

### **Guidelines**

When an employee believes that s/he is being harassed, the employee should immediately inform the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive, or inappropriate. If the unwelcome, offensive, or inappropriate behavior continues, the employee shall follow the established complaint procedures.

### Complaint Procedure

1. An employee shall report a complaint of harassment, orally or in writing, directly to the CEO/Director, who shall inform the employee of his/her rights and of the complaint process.
2. The building principal immediately shall notify the CEO/Director or designated administrator and shall conduct an impartial, thorough and confidential investigation of the alleged harassment.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred shall be investigated.

3. The CEO/Director shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the Board of Trustees and others directly involved, as appropriate.
4. If the investigation results in a substantiated charge of harassment, the school shall take prompt corrective action to ensure the harassment ceases and will not recur.

### Discipline

A substantiated charge against a school staff member shall subject such staff member to a disciplinary action, including termination.

A substantiated charge against a student shall subject such student to disciplinary action, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and may include educational activities and/or counseling.

If it is concluded that an employee has made false accusations, such employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

#### Appeal Procedure

1. If the complainant or accused is not satisfied with the CEO/Director's decision, the employee may file a written appeal to the Board of Trustees.
2. The CEO/Director shall review the initial investigation and report and may also conduct a reasonable investigation. S/He shall prepare a written response to the appeal. Copies of the response shall be provided to the complainant, the accused and others directly involved, as appropriate.

## **APPENDIX G: BULLYING**

### **PURPOSE:**

Infinity Charter School recognizes that bullying of students by students has a negative effect on the educational environment and overall climate of its school. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school. Bullying can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the school strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.

### **AUTHORITY:**

The School will not tolerate known acts of bullying occurring on school property, or at school-sponsored activities.

Complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified. Neither reprisals nor retaliations shall occur as a result of the submission of a complaint.

The school shall annually inform students that bullying of students will not be tolerated.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Bullying** shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

1. Directed at another student or students;
2. Which occurs in a school setting;
3. That is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
4. That has the effect of doing any of the following:
  - a. Substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - b. Creating a threatening environment; or
  - c. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and "school" setting shall mean in the school, on school grounds, or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school.

### **DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY:**

*Development of Educational Programs* – The CEO/Director or designee shall develop administrative procedures and programs to increase the awareness of the problems of bullying, and train teachers and support staff to effectively intervene if bullying is witnessed in their presence or brought to their attention.

*Intervention* – Teachers and staff workers who observe acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene to stop such conduct, unless intervention would threaten a teacher’s or worker’s safety. The nature of the intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both the victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student’s involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of the intervention is to take prompt remedial steps to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not acceptable behavior.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyber bullying.

Students shall be encouraged to report bullying or cyber bullying complaints to school employees, who will notify administrators.

The CEO/Director or his/her designee will inform parents of the victim and person accused.

#### Student, Parent/Guardian and Employee Reporting

The school expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, administrators, or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Students should be encouraged not to stand by as third parties and tolerate bullying by others. Parents/guardians may contact the administrator to report acts of bullying.

#### **GUIDELINES:**

If teachers cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they shall report the bullying to the building administrator. Other school employees who observe acts of bullying shall report the conduct to the building administrator. The CEO/Director, or his/her designee, shall investigate any report of bullying and shall resolve this instance in a manner consistent with the school’s stance that such acts will not be tolerated and that students are to be taught that bullying is unacceptable behavior.

#### Investigation Procedures

The CEO/Director or designee is authorized to investigate reports of bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians or school employees. Any investigation of a report may include meeting with students, parents/guardians or employees; a review of student records and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

#### Consequences/Discipline

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parental conference, suspension, expulsion, loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities.

Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the building administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. Such steps may include the implementation of a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing employee support for students as needed; reporting incidents to law enforcement, if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with parents/guardians.

#### Dissemination and Training

1. A summary of this policy shall be included in the Parent Handbook.
2. Discussion of the policy shall be included in the orientation of each new teacher and periodically in

staff development workshops.

Confidentiality

The Infinity Charter School recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged bully/extorter have a strong interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witness will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and any discovery or disclosure obligations. As limited by FERPA protections, the CEO/Director or his/her designee may inform the complaining student/parent/guardians of the outcome of the investigation.

Reprisal

Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

**APPENDIX H: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

**PURPOSE:**

Discipline at Infinity shall be handled in a non-discriminatory manner. At no time shall discipline include physical punishment of any kind.

Student expulsions shall be enforced consistent with the school’s code of conduct and shall conform to all applicable federal and state regulations.

The Infinity Code of Conduct is based on the premise that one’s education involves a love of learning, respect for knowledge and others, and self-discipline. Basic to this premise is the belief that effective learning situations can best be provided and positive behavioral patterns enforced when unacceptable behavioral patterns and their consequences are outlined, communicated, and understood by students, parents, and school personnel. When discord does arise, adherence to this code will assure that all parties are treated with courtesy, respect, and fairness, yet with a firmness that will direct students to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner.

**DIVERSITY:**

We believe we are more alike than different. We also believe in, and value, diversity. We know that a diverse school means people are different in size, color, shape, culture, religion, strengths and weaknesses. All children have the right to feel safe and supported in our school community. If we are to meet the needs of all students, we must model how to interact. We must provide an environment that is safe from damaging comments and physical harm.

**JURISDICTION:**

Unless otherwise defined in the Code of Conduct for specific offenses, the school has authority over its students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on all home district and/or Infinity transportation. This jurisdiction includes any activity during the school day on school grounds and some acts which occur within 300 feet of school property. This jurisdiction also includes any attendance at any school-sponsored activity, regardless of time or location, and any school related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

**RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY:**

**Responsibility and Authority for Administration and Enforcement of the code of Conduct;**

1. The Chief Executive Officer and/or designee shall have the responsibility of implementing the Code of Conduct.
2. Assignment of a student to an Alternative Education Placement (AEP), in accordance with the Code, may be made by the Chief Executive Officer or designee.
3. Suspension of a student from school, not to exceed three (3) days, may be imposed by the Chief Executive Officer or designee if the student engages in conduct for which one may be placed in the AEP.
4. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall have the authority to expel a student for disciplinary infractions and/or violations of the law in accordance with this Code and state and federal law.
5. The Chief Executive Officer may order the immediate suspension or placement in an AEP of a student whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with school operations or activities. Additionally, a student may be immediately recommended for expulsion if the Chief Executive Officer reasonably believes that such action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm.
6. The school Chief Executive Officer shall make available to each employee a copy of the Charter School Law and a copy of the school's local discipline policies.
7. The school Chief Executive Officer shall inform each teacher who needs to know of a Student who has committed an expellable offense.

**Role and Responsibilities of School Personnel in Maintaining Acceptable Conduct:**

***The Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility to:***

1. Ensure a safe and orderly environment for teaching and learning.
2. Enforce the Code of Conduct.
3. Provide appropriate support for teachers who seek help in discipline management.
4. Ensure that parents are notified within 48 hours of receipt of a report of violation of the Code of Conduct.
5. Provide in-service training to students and staff related to the Code of Conduct.
6. Communicate with parents when their child becomes a discipline concern.
7. Report firearm offenses to PDE in accordance with the Charter School Law.
8. Schedule a removal conference within three (3) class days after a formal teacher removal of a student.
9. Provide parents with notice of conferences, hearings, reviews, and appeals as required by state and federal law.
10. Make appropriate reports to law enforcement.
11. Strive to provide discipline that is instructive.

***Teachers and other school personnel have the responsibility to:***

1. Develop, maintain, and communicate classroom rules and discipline management procedures consistent with the Code of Conduct philosophy.
2. Remove from class a student who commits a mandatory removable or expellable offense under the Charter School Law.
3. Maintain an orderly classroom and atmosphere.
4. Establish rapport and an effective working relationship with parents.
5. Report to the Chief Executive Officer or designee any known violation of the Code of Conduct.
6. Maintain confidentiality of student records, including receipt of information that a student has committed an expellable offense.

### ***Responsibilities of Parents***

Throughout this policy, “Parents” include natural parents, single parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons active in parental relation to the student.

Parents assume a highly significant role in the education of their children. Parents should:

1. Make every effort to provide for the needs of the child.
2. Teach the child to pay attention and obey the rules.
3. Be sure their child attends school regularly, and promptly report and explain absences and tardies to the school.
4. Be sure their child is appropriately dressed at school and during school-related activities.
5. Ensure that the child develops proper study habits at home.
6. Participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences regarding their child’s progress, behavior, and general welfare.
7. Keep informed of school policies and academic requirements of school programs.
8. Participate in school-related organizations.
9. Inform school authorities of any learning concern or condition that may relate to their child’s education.
10. Provide all records required for enrollment, maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school.
11. Cooperate with school administration and teachers, and seek resolution of disputes.
12. Require their child to attend school tutorials when required for as long as the need arises.
13. Control their child. A student’s parent is legally liable for property damage if the proximate cause of the damage is caused by: a) the negligent conduct of the student if such conduct is reasonably attributable to the negligent failure of the parent to exercise the duty of control and reasonable discipline; or b) the willful or malicious conduct of a student who is at least 12 years of age but under 18 years of age.
14. Work in partnership with school personnel to ensure student success.

### ***Expectations of Students***

All students are entitled to enjoy the basic right of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. Infinity fosters a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other staff. Students shall exercise their rights responsibly, in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of the school’s mission. The school’s rules of conduct and discipline are established to achieve and maintain order in the school. Students who violate the rights of others or who violate district or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures designed to correct the misconduct and to promote responsible citizenship.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

The following words and terms, when used in this code, shall have the stated meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**Alternative Education Program (AEP)** – An instructional setting other than the general classroom, completely apart from students who are not assigned to the program, with instruction that focuses on core subjects and self-discipline, and provides for behavioral needs through supervision and counseling.

**Class Disruption** – Any behavior which violates the rules of a particular classroom and interferes with a teacher’s presentation or other students’ opportunity to concentrate on the presentation of assignment.

**Co-Curricular** – Directly related to a specific course.

**Detention** – A required study hall, usually outside of the school day.



**Discipline Management** – Any action which is intended to promote proper behavior and/or discourage misconduct.

**Expulsion** – Removal of a student from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. Expulsion for periods up to one year is required by law for certain student offenses, and expulsions further contain a provision that prohibits attendance at school activities.

**Extracurricular** – An activity sponsored outside of the school day.

**In-School Suspension** – An in-school setting, apart from the regular classroom where the student continues to receive instruction to the extent possible, for students who commit disciplinary infractions (where applicable).

**Parents** – Includes single parent, legal guardian, or person in lawful control of a student.

**Reassignment of Classes** – A student may be removed from the assigned classroom and placed in another class. To the extent possible, the student should continue to receive instruction in the subject from which the student has been removed. The purpose of this type of removal is to remove the student from a potentially disruptive situation and/or to separate students who have been involved in a conflict. Length of removal or stay shall be determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

**School Premises** – Any property owned by the school or over which the school or its personnel exert lawful control, including property visited by students in connection with a school-operated activity, such as a field trip or extracurricular activity.

**Suspension** – Removal of a student from school and school activities for a period not to exceed ten (10) days at a time, for disciplinary infractions.

#### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Discipline should be instructive in order to reinforce appropriate behavior and foster a safe, positive learning environment.

1. Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and maintain essential order and discipline.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Factors to consider shall include:
  - A. Seriousness of the offense;
  - B. Student's age;
  - C. Frequency of misconduct;
  - D. Student's attitude and honesty; and
  - E. Potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment
3. Discipline options may include the following educational interventions:
  - Counseling by teachers, special services, or administrative staff
  - Parent-teacher conferences
  - Peer mediation
  - Quiet time
  - Behavioral contracts
  - Verbal correction

### **STANDARDS FOR EXTRA OR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All students are expected to adhere to the Infinity Code of Conduct as it applies to school-related or school-sponsored activities. Students involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethics and conduct. Infinity students, staff, and parents view participation in these extracurricular and co-curricular activities as a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the teachers, sponsors, coaches, and directors of these activities may develop and enforce codes of conduct that will take into consideration both school-related misconduct and conduct that occurs outside of the school's usual jurisdiction, regardless of time or location. This will include any misconduct that would reflect negatively upon Infinity. Before an extracurricular or co-curricular activity sanction will be imposed, evidence must be presented to the Chief Executive Officer in one of the following forms.

- A report from a law enforcement agency
- Personal admission by the participating student
- Observed behavior by a school employee

The student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the offense and afforded the opportunity of a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer to discuss the offense.

### **OFFENSES & CONSEQUENCES BY LEVEL**

#### **Level 1 Offenses**

Level 1 acts of misconduct include repeated infractions of classroom management procedures or rules, or other misconduct that disrupts the educational process to the extent that the classroom teacher needs administrative support to correct the problem. The following is a non-inclusive list of Level 1 infractions:

1. Being tardy to class;
2. Being late to school;
3. Refusing to follow classroom instructions;
4. Refusing to participate in classroom activities or fulfill assignments;
5. Failure to bring appropriate materials to class;
6. Possessing and/or using nuisance items, for example noise makers;
7. Eating, drinking, or gum chewing in an undesignated area;
8. Disruption of the orderly classroom process;
9. Violation of dress code;
10. Running, making excessive noise, or other disruptions in halls, buildings, classrooms, or other supervised settings;
11. Improper use of electronic equipment during school hours.

#### **Level 1 Disciplinary Options**

Any one or combination of the following consequences may be considered:

1. Teacher/student or Chief Executive Officer/student conference;
2. Parent conference call;
3. In-class disciplinary action or assignment;
4. Withdrawal of student privileges;
5. Detention;
6. Counselor/student conference;
7. Confiscation of nuisance items or materials;
8. Supervised school/community service assignment.

### **Level 2 Offenses**

When a student's behavior does not change as a result of action taken on Level 1, and the student is referred for a second time in the Chief Executive Officer's office for repeated Level 1 infractions, the student is moved to Level 2 for discipline purposes.

### **Level 2 Disciplinary Options**

Any one or any combination of the following may be considered:

1. Any combination of teacher, Chief Executive Officer or designee, parent, and student conference;
2. Any discipline technique outlined in level 1;
3. In-school suspension, not to exceed three (3) days.

### **Level 3 Offenses**

Level 3 acts of misconduct include those student infractions, which are somewhat more serious than those in Levels 1 and 2 in their effect on the orderly process of the school program. Examples of level 3 misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Cheating or copying the work of another student;
2. Leaving the classroom, building, grounds, or assigned activity without permission;
3. Failure to comply with lawful directives issued by school personnel;
4. Truancy;
5. Altering school records or documents, or forgery of a name on school documents;
6. Vandalism or defacing of school property;
7. Inappropriate acts of familiarity/public displays of affection, for example, touching private parts;
8. Throwing or irresponsible use of objects which are otherwise not dangerous that can cause bodily injury or damage to property when used irresponsibly;
9. Possession or use of tobacco products;
10. Exhibiting any unacceptable or unwanted physical contact that could, but does not result in injury;
  
11. Disobeying school bus conduct rules;
12. Falsifying identification in any form.

### **Level 3 Disciplinary Options**

Any one or any combination of the following may be considered:

1. Any combination of teacher, Chief Executive Officer or designee, parent, and student conference;
2. Any discipline technique outlined in Level 2;
3. In-school suspension, not to exceed ten (10) days.

### **Level 4 Serious Offenses**

Level 4 offenses include those acts of misconduct that seriously disrupt the educational process, endanger or seriously affect other students, and perhaps violate the law.

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Any repeated offense of Level 3, or a new violation while being disciplined for a Level 3 offense;
2. Repeated acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior which may prove to be detrimental to the school, harmful to health and safety, or that may inhibit the rights of others;
3. Being overly disrespectful toward school personnel or defiant refusal to comply with lawful requests or directions of school personnel;
4. Threats, oral or written, to do bodily harm to another, or to the property of another;
5. Bullying one another; encouraging, permitting or assisting, in bullying;
6. Fighting is defined as physical conflict between two or more individuals. A fight has occurred if a

student who is attacked strikes back. (To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel help.);

7. Non-felony theft or extortion;
8. Using profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, or racially or ethnically offensive language and/or gestures;
9. Possession of materials containing any of the elements of #8;
10. Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences;
11. Possessing a device, object, or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in any school setting;
12. Failure to report to school personnel the knowledge of an event, device, object or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in any school setting;
13. Possession, use, or distribution of any substance represented to be a drug or alcohol;
14. Indecent conduct, non-criminal sexual misconduct, and/or sexual harassment;
15. Hazing;
16. Gang-related behavior or activity, or gang membership;
17. Possession of drug paraphernalia;
18. Non-felony burglary of school facility or major vandalism to school property;
19. Assault or threatening bodily injury or causing offensive physical contact;
20. Possessing, placing, or discharging fireworks;
21. Engaging in felony conduct away from school if the Chief Executive officer or designee determines that the student's continued presence threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process;
22. Possessing any BB gun, CO2 pistol or rifle, toy gun, or other object that appears to be a firearm;
23. Behavior that threatens the safety of the school environment.

#### **Level 4 Disciplinary Options**

Any one or any combination of the following may be considered:

1. Any discipline technique outlined in Level 3;
2. Suspension from school, not to exceed ten (10) days at a time;
3. Involvement of law enforcement personnel;
4. Alternative Education Placement (AEP);
5. Reassignment of classes.

#### **Level 5 Mandatory Removal or Expulsion Offenses**

##### ***Mandatory Removal***

A teacher shall remove from the classroom a student who repeatedly engages in conduct described under Level 4 of the Code of Conduct. The Chief Executive Officer shall either place a student removed under this provision into an Alternative Education Placement (AEP) or recommend expulsion, as appropriate. When a student is removed from class by a teacher under this provision, the Chief Executive Officer shall schedule a removal conference within the next three (3) days. The conference shall include the Chief Executive Officer, parent/guardian, student, and the teacher who removed the student, when appropriate. Even if all persons are not present, if valid attempts have been made to require their attendance, the Chief Executive Officer may still order the appropriate placement and the duration of the placement.

If the Chief Executive Officer's decision is that the student should be expelled, the student shall be provided a due process hearing for expulsion consistent with this Code of Conduct.

If the Chief Executive Officer's decision is that the student should be returned to that teacher's classroom following completion of the assignment to an AEP, and the teacher withholds his or her consent for that return, the Placement Review Committee shall determine the student's placement. The committee shall not return the student to that teacher's classroom unless it determines that placement is the best or only alternative available.

Terms of removal under this provision shall prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

### **SUSPENSION**

The Chief Executive officer may suspend a student who commits a Level 4 offense. A suspension may not exceed ten (10) school days, and the student shall be responsible for all class work missed during the period of suspension. Multiple suspensions for subsequent offenses are permissible.

Before suspending the student, the Chief Executive Officer shall conduct an informal conference at which:

1. The student is advised of the conduct of which he or she is charged;
2. The student is given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.

School personnel shall make every effort to notify the parent prior to suspending a student from school. If the parent cannot be contacted prior to removal, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible and shall be informed of the reasons for suspension.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide adequate supervision of the student during the period of suspension.

### **EXPULSION**

A Board decision is required to expel a student.

- a. Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than ten (10) days. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing.
- b. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless on suspension, shall be placed in his normal class except:
  1. If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others; and
  2. If it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than ten (10) school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonable delayed.

### **EMERGENCY PLACEMENT**

The Chief Executive Officer may order a student to be immediately placed in an AEP if it is reasonably believed that the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it interferes with:

1. A teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students in a class;
2. The ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
3. The operation of the school or school-sponsored activity.

At the time of the emergency placement, the student shall be given oral notice of the reasons for emergency placement in an AEP. Within a reasonable time after the emergency placement, the student will be afforded a removal conference as outlined in this code. The Chief Executive Officer or appropriate administrator shall not be liable for civil damages for an emergency placement.

**DETENTION**

For infractions of the Code of Conduct or other policies or regulations, students may be required to serve detention during, before, or after school and/or on Saturdays. Before assigning the student to detention, the teacher or administrator shall inform the student of the conduct that allegedly constitutes a rules violation, and the student shall be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.

When detention is used, notice shall first be given to the student's parent or guardian to inform them of the reasons for detention and to permit arrangements for necessary transportation of the student.

**PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Any school employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student that the employee reasonably believes is necessary in order to:

1. Protect a person, including the employee, the student, or other students from physical injury;
2. Obtain possession of a weapon or dangerous object;
3. Protect property from serious damage;
4. Restrain an irrational student;
5. Remove from a specific location a student refusing a lawful command of a school employee, including from a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or impose disciplinary measures.

**BUS CONDUCT**

The bus driver is responsible for discipline on the school bus. Misconduct must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, who will take the appropriate disciplinary action.



Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent/Student Agreement

You and your child/ren are asked to read this handbook carefully and sign below. After doing so, please return the form to school.

Please check here asserting that you have read, and agree to abide by, all the policies and procedures as outlined in the Parent Handbook.

We have read this handbook and agree to abide by the policies, procedures, rules and regulation of Infinity Charter School as set forth in the Parent Handbook.

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Parent Signature

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Parent Signature

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Student Signature

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Student Signature

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Student Signature

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Student Signature

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Student Signature

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Student Signature

Please return this form to school after signing it.

Thank you!