



The Lois & Richard Nicotra Early College  
Charter School

*Student and Family Handbook*



School Year 2020-2021

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**Integration Charter Schools**  
**The Lois & Richard Nicotra Early College Charter School**  
*From High School to College to Beyond: Together!*

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Dear Students and Families,

Welcome back to school! We miss you and cannot wait to see you whether it is virtually or in person!

The Lois and Richard Nicotra Early College Charter High School is dedicated to the proposition that we must foster unity, celebrate diversity, and work toward the goal of social justice. Whatever pathway we choose, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Business and Entrepreneurship, or a career in Teaching, we can act as social entrepreneurs to improve American society.

At Nicotra, we want you to graduate ready to pursue your lifelong dreams while enjoying a rich and rewarding experience. We also want you to become active and informed citizens of the world ready to improve your community. This will take hard work, dedication, perseverance, and most of all, patience. I am confident that, together, we can change the world! Good luck for an academically successful and enjoyable school year!

Please see the below important information for those partaking in our hybrid model.

Founding Principal

Sincerely,

**Joseph F. Zaza**  
*Founding Principal*

# Welcome to Nicotra Charter!

To help you plan your education to meet your future goals, The Lois & Richard Nicotra Early College Charter School has developed this *Student and Family Handbook*. This *Handbook* provides you with the requirements for success in both the College Preparation Phase and the Early College Phase at St. John's University. In addition, this handbook provides information relative to promotion guidelines, testing, planning for post-secondary experiences, behavioral management, student rights and responsibilities and the policies and procedures of Integration Charter Schools (ICS).

## Mission Statement

The Lois & Richard Nicotra Early College Charter School (Nicotra Charter) is designed to provide an innovative pathway to college graduation for all students, including those with special needs or who are economically disadvantaged, that is both academically accelerated and more economically feasible than a traditional pathway to college graduation. Nicotra Charter is designed to fully integrate students living with emotional challenges as well as those with other disabilities in all classes and activities. Full integration of students empowers them to break down barriers through the power of their daily academic and social experience, enabling them to develop the academic skills, emotional fluency, and confidence required to be successful students today and thoughtful, open-minded leaders tomorrow. In fostering both the academic and emotional growth of all students, Nicotra Charter will serve as an innovative educational model.

## Promoting Student Success at Integration Charter Schools

A continuing goal of Integration Charter Schools is promoting higher standards and greater student achievement for all learners in an inclusive environment. Each summer, this handbook will be reevaluated and amended in order to be appropriate for the upcoming school year.

## Planning Your Nicotra Charter Career

Please read the *Student Planning Handbook* carefully and use it when registering for courses you will take in high school and for choosing the program you will follow at St. John's University. We invite and support parents and families to participate in every phase of a student's education while enrolled at Nicotra Charter.

High School credit is earned when students receive at least 180 minutes of instruction per week throughout the school year (108 hours of instruction for a full year course), or the equivalent, and demonstrates their mastery of the learning outcomes in the course. This option allows credit to be awarded after receiving instruction from certified/highly-qualified teachers that is designed to facilitate the achievement of the State's learning standards. Some courses offered do have prerequisites. A prerequisite is a course that you must take before you can take another course. Your counselor will assist you with the prerequisites and sequential courses in the College Preparation Phase and the Early College Phase.

## Vision Statement

*From High School to College to Beyond: Together!*

# **The College Preparation Phase**

Planning is a vital part of a well-designed program. During your first year at Nicotra Charter, counselors and/or teachers will meet with you in a group setting to develop your College Preparation Phase. The purpose of the meeting is to familiarize students with graduation requirements, diploma options, and pathway options. With the appropriate selection of electives and requirements, students will have opportunities to receive the preparation needed to choose their pathway and get ready to succeed in the Early College Phase.

## **Wellness and Posse**

The Wellness and Posse Program is designed to offer students access to certified counselors to assist with students' social emotional learning as well as support positive relationships between teachers and students. Through these programs students will be better served and more effectively taught if teachers know students well and understand their distinct learning needs, interests, and aspirations.

## **Wellness (College Preparation Phase)**

An important predictor of future success is self-efficacy. Students that are motivated to learn, confident in their abilities, and learn resilience are more likely to achieve than students that do not possess these characteristics. The Wellness and Posse Program addresses social-emotional learning in both the College Preparatory and the Early College phases.

Wellness is a unique and essential ingredient of Nicotra Charter educational design, one that fosters academic engagement and growth for all students. Students who appraise themselves and their abilities realistically (self-awareness), regulate their feelings and behaviors appropriately (self-management), interpret social cues accurately (social awareness), resolve interpersonal conflicts effectively (relationship skills), and make good decisions about daily challenges (responsible decision making), are headed on a pathway toward success in school and later life.

The Wellness Curriculum focuses on strategies that enable students to succeed in a rigorous high school academic program. For many students, lack of school success is rooted not only in academic deficits but also in an inability to overcome social and emotional issues that interfere with academic performance. The Wellness Curriculum provides the tools to achieve this objective by equipping students with the tools (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) that enable them to effectively manage the challenges that confront them in their lives, and to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities.

In their first year at Nicotra Charter, students are oriented into the program using a Wellness curriculum tailored to team building, executive functioning, school culture, and academic strategies for success. In their second year at Nicotra Charter, students build their social emotional and problem-solving skills using the DBT STEPS–A curriculum. This curriculum includes support in four sets of skills, which are Mindfulness: the practice of being fully aware and present in this one moment; Distress Tolerance: how to tolerate pain in difficult situations, not change it; Interpersonal Effectiveness: how to ask for what you want and say no while maintaining self-respect and relationships with others; Emotion Regulation: how to change emotions that you want to change. In their third year, students will focus primarily on the skills



needed to succeed in college and career. Examples of these skills include resume writing, entrance essay workshops, professionalism, interview skills, and executive functioning in the work place.

### **First Year Summer Intensive**

In order to meet the accelerated demands of college readiness, incoming Nicotra Charter students will start in the summer session prior to their first year. In this summer school session, students will take an intensive writing workshop with a focus on non-fiction content and research skills as well as pre-algebra to ensure they are ready for the academic writing and mathematical demands that await them. Student success in the initial summer program will generate data to guide individualized academic planning and initial instructional expectations while orienting students to Nicotra Charter culture. For Nicotra Charter students' second and third summers, flexible and individualized programming will be available. During their second and third summers, all students will participate in a Language Immersion Institute in order to fulfill their Language Other Than English requirement.

### **Writing Intensive (Summer Grade 8/9)**

This is a course designed to help all incoming students develop into proficient writers and readers. Concentration is on improving those skills as well as developing study skills and learning test-taking strategies. Students receive course credit upon completion.

### **Summer Intensives**

Each summer, Nicotra will offer summer intensive courses, opportunities for students to serve in internships, and credit recovery courses for students that need to make up credit. In the summer before grade 9, students that wish to pursue three years of foreign language may take a language immersion course. This introductory course will enable students to obtain proficiency in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing within the context of the target language and its culture. The value of speaking a foreign language for success in careers both in business and criminal justice is indisputable.

## **Nicotra Charter Graduation Requirements**

Four years of English (8 credits)	One term of music (1 credit)
Four years of social studies (8 credits)	One term of art (1credit)
Three years of mathematics (6 credits)	
Three years of science (6 credits)	120 hours community service
One year of a foreign language (2 credits)	
Three and one half years of physical education (4 credits)	
One-half year of health education and 7 terms of Wellness (1 credit)	
Electives (7 credits)	

A New York State Regents Diploma will be awarded to students who pass the Regents Examinations in:

- English
- Foreign Language
- Global History
- Living Environment

- American History
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Algebra II/Trigonometry
- Chemistry
- Physics and/or Earth Science

## **Credits**

The total number of credits needed for graduation is 44.

## **Elective Courses**

Students may elect to take a number of courses throughout their high school career and obtain credit for these courses toward graduation. Elective courses provide for success in your chosen pathway at St. John's University.

## **Pathways**

Nicotra Charter students choose a pathway and select one course for each term they are enrolled in the College Preparatory Phase to prepare them for course work they will take in the Early College Phase. All core courses at Nicotra Charter are taught through the lens of both pathways as appropriate. Students in mathematics and science courses will understand, through case study, activities, and problem solving, how the content relates to the pathway as appropriate. In humanities courses, students will read, discuss, and study business and economics topics as well as criminal justice and law enforcement when it makes the most sense. For example, students that read excerpts from Matt Taibbi's [The Divide: American Injustice in the Age of the Wealth Gap](#) are learning and evaluating both criminal justice and concepts in business and economics. In American history courses, student study Constitutional Law, Supreme Court cases, human and civil rights as well as capitalism, economic systems, and entrepreneurship. Students need electives to graduate so Nicotra Charter electives are specific courses that align to one of either pathway.

## **Business and Finance Pathway**

Nicotra Charter offers courses designed to prepare students with 21st Century Skills in order to become college and career ready. Course offerings develop skills in computer technology, analyzing financial information, marketing, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making as well as the ability to develop presentations and reports. Nicotra Charter will offer electives based upon teacher and budget availability coupled with student interest level. Participation in this pathway allows students the opportunity for Work Based Learning Experiences such as guest speakers, career research, mock interviewing, job shadowing, mentoring and internships. Industry partners support the program in order to provide students with real world knowledge and expertise. Students that successfully complete the sequence with a "B" average will obtain economics credit and be eligible to enroll in classes at SJU aligned to their interests in Business and Finance. Some of the courses Nicotra Charter plan to offer include the following: accounting, business math, computer applications, business law, and entrepreneurship.

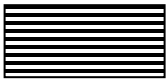
## **Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Pathway**

Criminal justice is an exciting subject for students to study. There are many sub-fields of criminal justice that students can choose to study, and each field can lead to different types of careers. Majoring in criminology helps students learn about the social reasons as to why crimes take place. In addition to knowledge relating to criminal justice, students who major in criminology also have to study topics relating to psychology, sociology, law, and much more. For people who are looking for a career as a forensic psychologist, majoring in criminology is an excellent choice to make. One of the most popular criminal justice majors is one pertaining to law enforcement. Students that wish to become police officers and detectives will greatly benefit from majoring in law enforcement. In addition to these career paths, a person who has a criminal justice degree with a major in law enforcement will likely find he or she can work as a game warden, sheriff, conservation officer, or in the field of counter terrorism. Nicotra Charter will offer electives in Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice to prepare students for the college level classes students will take while enrolled in SJU. Courses that could be made available to students at Nicotra Charter include: Constitutional Law, Criminal Justice, Concepts in Law, psychology, and forensic science.

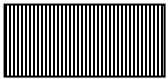
# Diploma Requirements Worksheet

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF ADMISSION: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Area	Diploma Requirements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HA S	NEED S	ELEC
English	8 Credits														8.0	
Social Studies	8 Credits														8.0	
Mathematics	6 Credits														6.0	
Science	6 Credits														6.0	
Second Language	2 Credits														2.0	
Art	1 Credit														1.0	
Music	1 Credit														1.0	
Health Education	1 Credit														1.0	
Physical Education	4 Credits (7 terms)														4.0	
Electives	7 Credits														7.0	
Wellness	8 Terms															
Total															44	



**Nicotra Charter Recommendation**



**Required**



**Electives**

## Regents Examination Requirements

Science      Math      Global Studies      US History      English

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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### Diploma Requirements Community Service Hours (40)

#### Regents Diploma

#### 5 Regents (4+1)

Math, Science, English, Global Studies, U.S. History

Must pass each with a grade of 65% or higher

#### Advanced Regents Diploma

#### 8 Regents

2 Math, 2 Science, English, Global Studies,  
U.S. History, Foreign Language

Must pass each with a grade of 65% or higher; a  
90 average will earn you an Honors Diploma

## **Advanced Placement (AP)**

Advanced Placement (AP) classes are post-secondary level classes that are taught at the high school during the regular school day. A national exam is given at the end of the course and graded by readers employed by the College Board. Many post-secondary institutions either award post-secondary credit for a successfully completed exam or allow a student to exempt certain courses. Some post-secondary institutions do not honor AP credit. The exam is optional and the student is responsible for fees. Fee waivers are available based upon need.

## **Targeted Intervention Electives (TIE)**

In addition to rigorous core work and summer intensives, an integral component of Nicotra Charter programming is our innovative approach to “elective” offerings, Nicotra Charter will offer Targeted Intervention Electives (TIE) to all students each year. TIE courses are interest and skill based elective courses offered in core areas including ELA, Algebra and U.S. History in 10-week cycles. By piquing student interest and exposing students to innovative curriculum while thoroughly supporting core requirements and individualized instruction, Nicotra Charter students can enter their post-secondary endeavors with a better idea of their interests, talents and strengths. TIE courses will be scheduled on the basis of academic performance and interest. For example, should a student be deficient in introductory Algebra skills, they will have the opportunity to take up to three 10-week cycles targeting those specific skills in a systematic manner which differs from their core Algebra course; while students who excel in Algebraic thinking will be able to take other TIES more suitable for their specific needs, all the while earning credit. Individualized TIE offerings will enable Nicotra Charter to maintain an intensive and fast-paced learning environment.

## **Internships, Shadowing, Apprenticeships**

Exposure to college and career is the hallmark of a Nicotra Charter education. Throughout their career at Nicotra Charter students will have opportunities to interact and engage with professionals in the world of business and criminal justice whether that interaction is a guest speaker, a trip, an internship, or apprenticeship. In the field of criminal justice, students can visit the local police precinct, One Police Plaza, the Courts, or a forensic laboratory. By partnering with businesses on Staten Island, student trips could include, for example, a visit to the Pratt Industries Paper Mills. More importantly, through community based partnerships and resources available at SJU, students in grades 10 and Early College can be matched to an internship or apprenticeship that meet their career interest. Career development activities such as interning and volunteering help students academically, prepare them for college and career, and teach students skills they may not learn in high school or college. In addition to academics, students need to develop a work ethic, acquire communications skills, and learn to work as part of a team; these can be gained through career development activities. Students can also receive course credit as a result of working in an internship.

## **English to Non-English Learners (ENL)**

English to Non-English Learners (ENL) are courses that address commencement-level English Language Arts standards in addition to ELL standards that bear core English or elective English credit to non-English speaking students. Beginner ENLs are programmed for 540 minutes per week of ENL; one core English and one elective English credit for Intermediate ENLs (who are

programmed for 360 minutes per week of ENL; and one elective English credit for Advanced ELLs (180 minutes per week of ESL), who also must be programmed for one non-ESL core English credit.

## **Special Education**

Nicotra Charter curriculum and comprehensive design will be geared to fully integrate students with special needs and to enhance the education of all students regardless of background or disability. All students will experience learning in small classes. We deliver our instructional model for at least 60% of the normal school week in the form of

1. A dually certified teacher supported by a teacher assistant, or
2. A content specialist and a certified special educator working as a team.

Students who require adapted curriculum work and related services such as speech-language therapy or occupational therapy, will receive them within the classroom whenever appropriate. Students with disabilities at the School will have the opportunity to fully participate and progress in the general education curriculum and will participate in State and District-wide assessments in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Under the supervision of the principal or his/her designee, a teacher certified in Special Education to ensure compliance will review IEPs of incoming students.

Students will also receive Computer Assisted Instruction (CAS) that will include individualized learning activities in line with the student's IEP goals and present levels of performance. The School will also utilize technology to support all students including those with disabilities and to help students work around their challenges in order to improve learning.

## **Integrated Model**

Nicotra Charter is committed to the Integrated Model as the means for serving the needs of all of its students. Nicotra Charter curriculum and all classes will be specifically designed to fully integrate students with special needs and to enhance the education of all students regardless of background or disability. The classroom environment will be responsive to the individual needs of all students, including students with disabilities. Examples of this include differentiated and adapted curriculum work based on student needs, skills assessments and learning styles. Therapies such as speech-language therapy and occupational therapy will be provided within the general education classroom whenever appropriate, and in accordance with their IEP, compliant with governing laws and regulations.

The Integrated Model enhances the education of all students by providing for:

- Dually certified teachers who are certified in special education as well as academic content for at least 60% of the normal school week or teachers who are certified in content and certified in special education working as a pair to deliver instruction for at least 60% of the normal school week
- Highly qualified and trained teacher assistants who work with the teachers to differentiate instruction and address individual student needs;
- Computer assisted instruction which includes specific learning activities prescribed for students, based on a diagnosis of their skill needs by teachers, data analysis from

individual assessments and special needs according to their Individualized Education Programs and academic goals;

- Positive behavior interventions and supports designed to motivate students and promote positive student behavior and sense of community;
- Wellness classes offered twice a week for the entire time that students are in Nicotra Charter

Nicotra Charter will implement the IEP developed by the CSE of the student's district of residence for each student with a disability and will collaborate with the student's district of residence to ensure that all services recommended in the IEP are provided to the student.

During the Early College Phase, staff in the Early College Posse Program will make sure that students are reaching the goals as stated in their IEPs by working alongside college professors while advising, counseling, and tutoring students.

# The Early College Phase

The **Early College Phase** follows completion of the three-year College Preparation Phase and comprises the student’s final two years at Nicotra Charter.

## Nicotra Charter - ST. JOHN’S UNIVERSITY (SJU)

The school year will be organized on a three-semester system beginning during the summer of their fourth year called Year 1. Students accepted into the St. John’s program will participate each year in a 6-week summer session (semester 1) held on the Nicotra Charter site (or elsewhere to meet particular curriculum goals) and two fifteen-week semesters (semesters 2 and 3) to be held on SJU Staten Island Campus. On the SJU campus, business concentration students will take concentration courses such as Modern Statistics, Accounting, Business Law, and Principles of Marketing. Criminal Justice concentration students can choose from among the following, Introduction to Criminal Justice, Police and the Community, The American Judicial System, and Homeland Security. All students will take appropriate general study courses in the University Core, College of Liberal Arts, and/or College of Professional Studies in consultation with their Nicotra Charter counselor and Academic Advisor at SJU. These courses include: Core Literature, English Composition, Discover New York, Writing for Business, and Core History-Global Society. Students may enroll in up to 15 credits per semester and earn a total of 60 credits within two years.

## POSSE

While at SJU, all students will spend at least one hour a day at the Nicotra Charter Posse Headquarters, where a Nicotra Charter faculty team composed of counselors and teachers will provide individualized counseling and tutoring as well the continuing two-period/week Nicotra Charter Wellness Curriculum. During the 6-week summer session, students may take immersion courses in languages other than English, work in a small group with a member of the faculty on an in-depth research project, or engage in a community service project.

Students who have completed the College Preparation Phase without attaining a “B” average will complete their requirements for high school graduation in a career-oriented co-op program in which students spend alternate weeks in Nicotra Charter academic classes and in internship settings. The internship setting, student learning tasks, and supervising faculty member will be chosen on the basis of the student’s career aspirations as well as the academic and credit needs of the student. In the internship, the students’ work will be directly supervised by a host-setting staff member and closely monitored by an appropriate member of the Nicotra Charter faculty who is responsible for assigning grades and credits to the student based on performance as evaluated against core-curriculum based rubrics. Students will maintain logs of their field learning experience and will meet regularly as a group with supervising faculty.

## Sample Pathway Sequences

### Sample Business Major Sequence - 24 Credits from the following courses:

ACC	1007	Fundamentals of Accounting 1	3
ACC	1008	Fundamentals of Accounting 2	3
BLW	1001	Law and Business	3



CUS	1102	Software Application	3
ECO	1001	Principles of Economics 1	3
ECO	1002	Principles of Economics 2	3
ENG	1006	Effective Business Writing	3
MGT	1001	Principles of Management 1	3
MKT	1001	Principles of Marketing	3

**Sample Criminal Justice Major Sequence -18 Credits from the following courses:**

CRJ	2000	An Introduction to the Criminal Justice System	3
CRJ	2001	Crime and the Criminal	3
CRJ	2002	The Police and the Community	3
CRJ	2003	The American Judicial System	3
CRJ	2004	American Correctional Systems	3

3 credits may also be chosen from the additional Criminal Justice offerings.  
The remaining courses will be in a major course of study that SJU offers.

**College Common Core - 24 Credits**

DNY	1000C	Discover New York	3
ENG	1000C	English Composition	3
ENG	1100C	Literature in a Global Context	3
HIS	1000C	Emergence of a Global Society	3
PHI	1000C	Philosophy of the Human Person	3
PHI	3000C	Metaphysics	3
SCI	1000C	Scientific Inquiry	3
THE	1000C	Theology	3

**Other Liberal Arts Requirements - 6 Credits**

MTH	Electives	Any Math	6
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**Free Electives — 6 Credits**

The SJU administration and faculty will determine what courses and paths the Nicotra Charter students will follow while at the university.

**Sample Schedule - Fourth year Nicotra Charter student attending SJU  
(Business Pathway)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-9:30	ACC 1007	DNY 1000C	ACC 1007	DNY 1000C	SCI 1000C
9:30-10:00	SCI 1000C	BLW 1001	HIS 1000C	BLW 1001	HIS 1000C
10:00-11:30	Library/ HW Help	PHI 1000C	Library/ HW Help	PHI 1000C	Library/ HW Help
11:30-12:00	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
12:00-12:30	Library/HW Help	Library/ HW Help	Library/ HW Help	Library/ HW Help	Library/HW Help

12:30-1:30	Wellness	Tutoring	Wellness	Posse	Posse/Tutoring
1:30-2:30	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Posse/Tutoring

### **SJU COURSES- TOTAL OF 18 CREDITS**

ACC 1007 (3 CREDITS) Fundamentals of Accounting 1  
 SCI 1000C (3 CREDITS) Scientific Inquiry  
 DNY 1000C (3 CREDITS) Discover New York  
 BLW 1001 (3 CREDITS) Law and Business  
 PHI 1000C (3 CREDITS) Philosophy of the Human Experience  
 HIS 1000C (3 CREDITS) Emergence of a Global Society

## **Early College Planning Calendar**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Attend orientation and complete a College Preparation Plan
2. Continue to focus on career possibilities.
3. Visit with counselors.
4. Attend school every day and do well in your classes.
5. Choose your pathway for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade.
6. Track your community service hours to reach 40 for the year.
7. Plan your Summer Intensive with your counselor.

### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Begin a formal measure of career exploration and aptitude (e.g., self-directed search). Discuss results with parents, other adults, teachers, and peers. Plan to take elective courses that are related to an academic major and visit some job sites.
2. Visit with counselors.
3. Prepare for College exams.
4. Attend school every day and do well in your classes.
5. Track your community service hours to reach 40 for the year.
6. Plan your Summer Intensive with your counselor.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Attend school every day and do well in your classes.
2. Take the PSAT in the fall.
3. Prepare for the SAT for Early College Year 1.
4. Visit your counselor regularly to explore the SJU course book to select your Early College Year I schedule.

5. Design your Early College Year 1 schedule (spring).
6. Using your High School Planner, ensure you are meeting high school graduation requirements.
7. Track your community service hours to reach 40 for the year.
8. Plan your Summer Intensive with your counselor.

### **Early College Year 1**

1. Take the PSAT or SAT in the fall. To qualify for National Merit Scholarship and other scholarship competition, you must take the PSAT again.
2. Take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring. Check post-secondary catalogs of the College Handbook to determine which test is required for admission to the post SJU college of your choice if you do not elect to remain at SJU.
3. Visit your high school counselor regularly to review your Year 3 college application process (Post Nicotra Charter/SJU)
4. Begin to visit college/university campuses.
5. Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse if interested in an athletic scholarship in a Division I or II school (after second semester grades have been posted).
6. Begin the process for military appointments, if applicable.
7. Track your college credit accumulation to reach your goal of 30 for the year or your high school graduation requirements to reach your goal of 44.
8. Track your community service hours to reach 40 for the year.
9. Track your internship hours, if required.
10. Attend college every day and do well in your classes.

### **Early College Year 2**

1. Re-take the SAT/ACT as often as needed.
2. Take the SAT II (Subject tests), if desired.
3. Visit your high school/Posse counselor regularly to continue/prepare your Year 3 college application process (Post Nicotra Charter/SJU)
4. Continue to visit college/university campuses.
5. Apply to continue your College education by December 1.
6. Continue to track your college credit accumulation to reach your goal of 60 or your high school graduation requirements to reach your goal of 44.
7. Track your internship hours, if required.
8. Track your community service hours to reach 40 for the year.
9. Attend college every day and do well in your classes.

### **Post-Nicotra Charter/SJU Admissions Testing**

Since different colleges, universities, and technical institutes have varying admission policies, students must carefully check into the admissions requirements for institutions to which they

plan to apply. The school counselors can help with details of registering to take the various tests. Answers to the most frequently asked questions about college admission tests are provided in the next few pages.

# Educational Information and Support

## Guidance Counselors

Every student has a Guidance Counselor who provides advice on programming, academic, college advisement as well as offering assistance on any personal or school problems.

## Grading Philosophy and Policy

**"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted." – Albert Einstein**

Grades are evaluative instruments and indicators that measure students' achievements, efforts, and extent of progress in their classes. The components of a grade are academically and standards based and reflect each student's competency in the course content. Nicotra Charter issues report cards four (4) times per year and two (2) progress reports per year. Each semester, final grades are entered onto students' transcripts for single term courses and each June for yearlong courses. Students earn one credit for each passing grade and no grades carry additional weights.

Grades reflect the students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as measured against learning standards. All assessments are returned to students with constructive feedback and/or reflective questions to assist students in improve their understanding. Students that demonstrate a deep understanding of the course based upon end of year assessments will not have earlier formative assessments count against their grade. Students will have opportunities to make up missing work.

At Nicotra Charter, our mastery based learning environment focuses primarily on student growth. Teachers facilitate experiences to empower students. Students monitor and assess themselves through guided reflection.

Progress reports at Nicotra Charter provide students and families with clear, actionable feedback about each student's mastery of knowledge and skills. In an effort to prepare students for high school, college and beyond, we ask students to apply what they know and are able to do in various situations. Students at Nicotra Charter have demonstrated mastery when they have shown their understanding independently, across time and in many different situations.

### **1. Examinations, quizzes, and semester projects comprise 60% to 75% of the final grade.**

A minimum of four (4) full period classroom examinations is required for all students in each class during each semester. All examinations must reflect the content and format of the Regents' examinations. The frequency and specific value of examinations and quizzes are established by department guidelines and rubrics for all students. Teachers will make comments, suggestions, and correctives on each examination so students can learn from their mistakes and improve performance on future examinations. These guidelines and rubrics for grading will be distributed by departments in a contract to be signed by students, parents or guardians, and teachers.

### **2. Semester projects comprise 10% to 25% of the final grade.**

Projects must provide students with opportunities for independent learning as well as the enhancement of their research, reading, reasoning, and writing skills. The specific nature, scope, complexity, format, and value of these projects are determined and designed by each department.

**3. Class participation shall comprise not more than 25% of a student's final grade.**

This component is determined by the quality and frequency of performance in class activities, including written assignments, oral recitations, and presentations as well as participation in group and individual activities, exercises, discussions, and projects in the class. In this area, students should be graded objectively on the basis of achievement level.

**4. Performance on the end of course Regents exam shall not comprise more than 10% of a student's final grade.**

All students in all courses that end in a Regents examination must take the examination. In order to meet graduation requirements, students must pass five (5) Regents. In order to obtain an Advanced Regents Diploma, students must pass eight (8) Regents. The Regents examination may not be the sole determining factor of whether or not the students receive a passing mark.

**5. Homework**

Homework is used to reinforce learning and/or prepare the student for upcoming learning. Homework is an important measure of good habits of effective students. We encourage students to complete missed homework and engage in any extra practice to improve their academic mastery.

**6. Attendance.**

All students are expected to maintain a 95% attendance rate.

**7. Making Up Class Work.**

It is the policy of ICS that students who have been absent from class for verified, legitimate reasons (such as illness, court appearances, family emergencies, or attendance at funerals) are to be given a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work, including examinations.

**8. Appealing a Final Grade.**

To appeal a teacher's final grade, students must present all documentation to the teacher to argue their case. If the teacher denies changing the final grade, the student may appeal to the assistant principal who will make a determination for the final grade based on evidence provided by both the teacher and the student. The student may appeal the decision of the Assistant Principal to the principal who has the option of changing the grade after notifying the teacher in writing of the reason(s) for the change.

**Promotion**

In order to be promoted to the next grade at Nicotra Charter, students must earn at least 12 credits per year.

For students who do not meet the promotion and/or graduation standards, there are options to help them both recover credits and graduate. For those whose academic performance falls under the promotional standard, students will have options to make up for missed work and/or content. Computer based interventions, cumulative projects assigned by the respective course teachers, summer school, TIEs curricula, and lunch tutoring will all be viable options for students

to improve academic performance deficits. Opportunities to make up any and all failed regent(s) will also be made at the times Regents are offered.

All students admitted to Nicotra Charter will meet with an advisor to develop an Individual Learning Pathway that will provide a map of courses and Regents exams to be taken in order to participate in the Early College Phase. Individual Learning Pathways are to build on prior student achievement.

<b>Grade credit minimum-maximum achievement guidelines</b>	
Nicotra Charter Grade 8	12 -14 high school credits
Nicotra Charter Grade 9	Accumulated 24 -28 high school credits
Nicotra Charter Grade 10	Accumulated 36- 44 high school credits; Meets requirement for Regents Diploma and distribution of course credits required by NYS
Early College Year 1	Accumulated 36-44 high school credits; Meeting requirement for Regents Diploma and distribution of course credits required by NYS  24-30 College credits (may earn dual credits)
Early College Year 2	Accumulated 36-44 high school credits; Accumulated 30-60 College credits (may earn dual credits); Meeting requirement for Regents Diploma and distribution of course credits required by NYS

## **Community Service**

All students must perform at least 40 hours of community service(s) per year during the College Preparation Phase. Students may obtain community service credit for any on-campus and off-site activities in which they volunteer their time and talent to the community.

## **Program Cards**

Students must carry their program card and photo identification at all times.

## **Attendance and Lateness**

Daily attendance is required of all students for success in class work and necessary for passing grades. Absentee students must submit an absence note to their teachers upon return to school that has been signed by a parent, guardian or doctor. Parents and guardians must make every effort to contact the school to obtain homework assignments when their students are out from school for an extended period of time. While 90% sounds high, this equates to 18 absences per year. Thus, at Nicotra Charter we expect a 95% attendance rate for every student.

Students have to quickly transition from one class to another. Be prompt! Excessive lateness will prevent students from full participation in subject classes.

## **Transportation Cards**

Students who meet eligibility requirements of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) may obtain free MTA Cards by completing and submitting applications to the Transportation Coordinator at the beginning of the school term. These cards may be used on school days for a maximum of four trips daily from 5:30 AM to 8:30 PM. Students are urged to take care of each monthly MTA card as lost and stolen cards may not be replaced.

## **Illness in School**

Students should have an updated Emergency Contact Card on file in the Main Office so that the school may contact parents or guardians when students become ill or are injured. If it is necessary for students to go home, and they are younger than eighteen years old, their parents or guardians must come to the school to pick them up at the main office.

## **Passes**

Students must obtain a pass if it is necessary to leave a class unless there is a medical emergency. Teachers have the right to limit use and duration of the classroom pass.

## **Textbooks**

Students must return all textbooks at the end of the school year in good condition so that the next class may use them. Students who fail to return books will have their names listed on an "unreturned book list" and will not be given books for the new class until the previous class books are returned.



## Food Services

Breakfast and Lunch will be served daily even on half days. All families are required to fill out the full or reduced rate form (meal eligibility form).

## Immunization

All students must have complete and up to date immunization records. Students who do not have current immunization will be excluded from school. In addition, for all students' health and safety, they must have annual medicals to participate in physical activities. Immunization records and medicals are stored in the Health Office. As New York State Law, as of June 13, 2019, there is no longer a religious exemption to the requirement that children be vaccinated against measles and other diseases to attend either a public, private or parochial school (for students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade), or child day care settings

New York State immunization requirements include:

Vaccines	Prekindergarten (Day Care, Head Start, Nursery or Pre-k)	Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4	Grade 5	Grades 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10	Grades 11 and 12
Diphtheria and Tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (DTaP/DTP/Tdap/Td) <sup>2</sup>	4 doses	5 doses or 4 doses if the 4th dose was received at 4 years or older or 3 doses if 7 years or older and the series was started at 1 year or older		3 doses	
Tetanus and Diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine booster (Tdap) <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable			1 dose	
Polio vaccine (IPV/OPV) <sup>4</sup>	3 doses	4 doses or 3 doses if the 3rd dose was received at 4 years or older	3 doses	4 doses or 3 doses if the 3rd dose was received at 4 years or older	3 doses
Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR) <sup>5</sup>	1 dose	2 doses			
Hepatitis B vaccine <sup>6</sup>	3 doses	3 doses or 2 doses of adult hepatitis B vaccine (Recombivax) for children who received the doses at least 4 months apart between the ages of 11 through 15 years			
Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine <sup>7</sup>	1 dose	2 doses	1 dose	2 doses	1 dose
Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) <sup>8</sup>	Not applicable			Grades 7, 8 and 9: 1 dose	Grade 12: 2 doses or 1 dose if the dose was received at 16 years or older
Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine (Hib) <sup>9</sup>	1 to 4 doses	Not applicable			
Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine (PCV) <sup>10</sup>	1 to 4 doses	Not applicable			

## Students Who Require Daily Medication

### Pharmacies

Only those medications necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours will be administered in school. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day or while participating in School-sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, athletics) should comply with all procedures.

Any prescribed medication that requires administration through a subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or rectal route, or prescribed medications being administered through pumps, tubes or nebulizers, or oral, topical or inhalant medication needed by non-self-directed students will be given by the School nurse or licensed practical nurses under the direction of the School nurse. *The other members of staff will not perform administration of such prescribed medications.*

Designated staff in the school setting, following assignment and in conjunction with approval by the School nurse, may assist *self-directed students* with the taking of their own oral, topical and inhalant medication. The School nurse as well as the School administration will ensure that the staff person receives the training and supervision needed to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner.

### Physician Orders

The School requires a written order from a duly licensed prescriber and written parental permission to administer medication. All medications given in school, including nonprescription or over the counter (OTC) drugs, shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status.

The School nurse may request additional information, such as self-administration orders, diagnosis and/or potential adverse reactions. Medication delivery should not be delayed pending this information, however, unless such information is essential to the safe administration of the medication.

### Special Considerations

Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage. The pharmacy label **does not** constitute a written order and **cannot** be used in lieu of a written order from a licensed prescriber. When a properly labeled medication comes to the health office accompanied by a written request from the parent(s) or guardian for administration of the medication, but without a written order from a licensed prescriber, the following procedure will be followed:

- Contact parent(s) or guardian regarding need for written order from a licensed prescriber.
- Contact licensed prescriber to obtain verbal permission to administer medication.
- Request fax or written orders to be received within 48 hours.

- Contact parent(s) or guardian and discontinue medication if written orders are not received in 48 hours.
- Document above steps.

## **Parental Responsibility**

A written statement from the parent(s) or guardian requesting administration of the medication in school as ordered by the licensed prescriber is required. The students' medical doctor who prescribes the medication to be given in school should complete medication Administration Forms. These forms can be obtained from the School Nurse, or from the main office. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian to have the medication delivered directly to the health office in a properly labeled original container.

## **OTC Medications**

Must be in the original manufacturer's container or package with the student's name affixed to the container. The same applies to drug samples. For certain medications, especially **controlled substances**, standards of best practice include counting or measuring the medication upon receipt and periodically thereafter. This is not a legal requirement but constitutes a sound practice when handling controlled substances.

Discrepancies should be reported to the parent(s) or guardian and to the School administration immediately. Best practice includes close supervision of medication taking. Medications must not be transported daily to and from school. Parents or guardians will be advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers, one to remain at home and one at school. Instructions will be left for substitute nurses that are clear and concise on the handling of all aspects of medication acceptance, handling, delivery and storage. Education of families regarding the LP medication protocols is an ongoing responsibility of the School.

## **Medication Administration**

All medications will be administered as close to the prescribed time as possible. Given student schedules and compliance with coming to the health office in a timely fashion, medications accepted for school administration generally may be given up to one hour before and no later than one hour after the prescribed time. Parents or guardians and licensed prescribers must advise the School, however, if there is a time-specific concern regarding administration of the medication. Parents or guardians, students, and the school nurse will work together to ensure that the student receives his or her medication at the appropriate time.

If a student fails to come for a dose, the administration will provide support to health office personnel, such as security personnel, administrative or clerical staff to locate the student. If the medication has not been given for any reason within the prescribed time frame, the School will make all reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent(s) or guardian that day, as they may need to adjust a home dose accordingly.

If students chronically fail to come for medications, the School nurse will contact the parent(s) or guardian to address the issue. The licensed prescriber will be informed of the poor compliance, so that the medication protocol can be reviewed and possible adjustments made, i.e., home administration, extended release medication.

Ongoing communication and collaboration between the School and parents or guardians will occur to assist students in assuming personal responsibility for their health behavior.

A medication may be changed or discontinued by a written order of the licensed prescriber at any time. If a student's parent(s) or guardian request discontinuation of a prescribed medication without the prescriber's order to do the same, the School will send a confirmation to the parent(s) or guardian with a copy to the prescriber of the School's intention to discontinue the medication.

When the dose of a medication is changed by a licensed prescriber's written order and a parent's or guardian's request, and the old pharmacy bottle label has not been corrected, the nurse may label the bottle with the correct dose until the new pharmacy-labeled prescription bottle is received. The School will communicate to the parent(s) or guardian the importance of sending in a new bottle quickly.

### **Storage of Medication**

No medication may be brought into the School without the knowledge of the health office. Procedures that facilitate this practice will be publicized so that parents or guardians and students do not feel the need to hide medication or to circumvent cumbersome procedures. All medications, except as otherwise arranged, will be properly stored and secured within a health office cabinet, drawer or refrigerator designated for medications only. The site must include a lock for the cabinet, drawer and refrigerator, as well as a lock to the outside health office door. Controlled substances will always be secured and will never be left open or accessible to the public at any time. Even self-directed students will not be given unsupervised access to controlled substances under the care of the School. Whenever possible, medication storage units will be secured to the wall or floor and will not have breakable glass doors. If possible, all medications will be stored in a health office. There may be instances, however, when requests are made by a student's parent(s) or guardian and physician for a student to carry and self-administer medications because of the emerging nature of the health problem or the severity of the health condition.

### **Carry and Self-Administer Medication**

If the School receives a request from a parent or guardian and licensed prescriber to permit a student to carry and self-administer his or her own prescribed medication, such decisions will be made on an *individual basis and in accordance with the following criteria*:

- Severity of health care problems, particularly asthmatic or allergic conditions.
- Licensed prescriber's order directing that the student be allowed to carry his or her medication and self-administer.
- Parent or guardian's statement requesting compliance with licensed prescriber's order.
- Student has been instructed in the procedure of self-administration and can assume responsibility for carrying properly labeled medication in original container on his or her person or keeping in school.
- School nursing assessment that student is self-directed to carry and self-administer his or her medication properly.

- Parent or guardian contact made to clarify responsibility regarding the monitoring of the student on an ongoing or daily basis to ensure that the student is carrying and taking the medication as ordered. This contact will be documented.

The School nurse will counsel any student self-administering medication without proper authorization. In addition, the parent(s) or guardian will be notified. In all instances, the School administration will also be informed. Periodic reevaluation of the effectiveness of the procedure will be instituted.

## **School Policies and Procedures**

### **Elevators**

If medically needed, students may obtain an elevator pass from the main office with appropriate documentation, for the duration of their disability.

### **Safety Drills**

ICS requires all students and staff to participate in twelve fire drills and four lockdown drills throughout the school year. During fire drills, students and staff must exit the building by following the directions posted in the room and leave in a speedy, orderly and silent manner.

### **School Trips**

Students may participate in school trips if they: 1) attend classes regularly; and 2) maintain good attendance. Students with disciplinary records or history of cutting may be barred from the trip. Students and staff participating in trips over several days must comply with all ICS regulations, such as parental permission, emergency notification, chaperone/student ratio, the Discipline Code, and other pertinent trip information. Parents and students must meet with the lead trip teacher and the Principal prior to departure.

### **Student Activities**

The Activities Director supervises all clubs and student activities. Students who attend school regularly and maintain good academic standing may participate in extracurricular activations. Students participating in interscholastic sports in collaboration with Port Richmond High School must comply with Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) regulations.

### **Student Government**

The Nicotra Charter has a representative student council of annually elected officers. Students have the right to run for office if they meet the requirements set for candidates.

### **Clubs/Activities**

Clubs are student created and supervised and assisted by a faculty advisor. Students may charter a club and recruit student members, create by-laws, and develop a mission and vision for the club that conforms to student interest. You will create the history of club/student activities here at Nicotra Charter. All clubs must develop a charter that is approved by the school principal.

## Student Records

### FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that ICS or the School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, ICS and/or the School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised ICS or the School to the contrary, in accordance with School procedures.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow ICS and/or the School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs), such as ICS, receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. <sup>1</sup>

If you do not want ICS or the School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the School in writing by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

ICS has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

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<sup>1</sup> These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

- Weight and height of member of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

## **FERPA Notice of Rights**

FERPA affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("**eligible students**") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day ICS or the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the School Principal that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request ICS or the School to amend the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask ICS or the School to amend a record should submit a written request to the School Principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why it should be changed. If ICS or the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, ICS or the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before ICS or the School discloses personally identifiable information ("**PII**") from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to School officials with legitimate educational interests. A School official is a person employed by Integration Charter Schools ("**ICS**") as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the ICS Board of Trustees. A School official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the School who performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and

who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another School official in performing his or her tasks. A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, ICS or the School will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer; however, ICS or the School will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

#### Disclosures that ICS or the School may make without parental consent

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires ICS or the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

ICS or the School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other School officials, including teachers, whom ICS or the School determines to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions;
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer;
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to



outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf;

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid;
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released;
- To organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of ICS or the School, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction;
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency;
- Information ICS or the School has designated as "directory information";
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement; and
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

## **Nicotra Charter' LEA and Title I School Parent Involvement Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and facilitate involvement by parents or guardians of students participating in the School's Title I School Wide Project (SWP) programs in the educational programs and experiences of students. The policy shall provide the framework for organized, systematic, ongoing, informed and timely parental involvement in relation to decisions about the Title I services within Nicotra Charter. Below is the School's policy acting as both a Local Education Agency and Title I school. It thus fulfills the requirements for LEA and School-level parent involvement policies as required by Title I.

## **Parental Policy Involvement**

The partnership between home and School will be supported by:

- Nicotra Charter' development of an infrastructure to continually assess, plan and implement strategies that build the partnership.
- A School-wide committee of parents, teachers, and administrators to guide overall program efforts and serve as a home-School partnership network.
- Coordination of activities through the staff development system in areas of teachers in-service, assessment of teaching strengths, and communication with parents or guardians toward the creation of the best possible learning experience for each student.
- Self-study of parental involvement practices by teams of parents, teachers and the Principal using the following seven basic principles considered essential to home-school partnerships.
- Every aspect of the School climate is open, helpful and friendly.
- Communications with parents and guardians (whether about School policies and programs or about their own children) are frequent, clear and two-way.
- Parents are treated as collaborators in the educational process, with a strong complementary role to play in their children's school learning and behavior.
- Parents are encouraged, both formally and informally, to comment on School policies and to share the decision-making.
- The Principal and School administrators actively express and promote the philosophy of partnership with all families.
- The School encourages volunteer participation from parents and the community at large.
- The School recognizes its responsibility to forge a partnership with all families in the School, not simply those most easily available.
- Resources will be provided to the Principal, teachers and parents by the coordinator of Title I services.

## **School-Level Involvement Policy Component**

The School invites parental participation in all aspects of Title I educational programming for its students. Nicotra Charter will involve parents in the following ways:

- a. Nicotra Charter will convene an annual meeting to inform parents of the School's participation in Title I. In conjunction with the Parents Association, if applicable, the Principal will schedule this meeting at the beginning of each school year. The administration will also send letters to parents informing them of the date and location of the meeting, and will post this information on the School website.
- b. If deemed necessary by the Parents Association and the Principal, the School will hold multiple meetings so as to include as many parents as possible. Nicotra Charter will use appropriate Title I funds to provide necessary transportation and child care for parents attending the meeting;
- c. The Parents Association will hold regular meetings in accordance with its by-laws. These meetings will regularly address improvement of Title I programs, including the School parental involvement policy;

Nicotra Charter will provide parents:

- a. Timely information about Title I/SWP programs. The Principal will keep parents updated about the types of services their children are being provided, the planned duration of service, and the goals of the services;
- b. The School performance profile required under Title I section 1116(a)(3);
- c. The student's individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results.
- d. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the School, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- e. Opportunities for regular meeting. The Principal will be attentive to parents' needs, and will schedule parent meetings as requested and is feasible;

### **Description of Parent Participation in Development of Policy**

The Board of Trustees has developed the Parent Involvement Policy draft in expectation of revision in conjunction with the Parents' Association and approval, if applicable.

### **Policy's Availability to Parents**

The policy will be translated into Spanish and other major languages of the School. The policy will also be available at registration and/or orientation to all new parents, at Parents' Association meetings, curriculum night, and parent-teacher nights; and on an ongoing basis at the school office.

### **Technical Assistance and Support**

The principal, teachers, and the Parents Association provide technical support to help parents plan and implement effective parent involvement activities.

Technical assistance will include:

- a. Assistance in parent outreach through mail and telephone;
- b. Joint planning of parent activities;
- c. Preparing and translating parent involvement announcements and pamphlets;
- d. Staff participation as presenters at Parents' Association events;
- e. Support in preparing parent information such as reading lists, parent guides, and partial-immersion brochures;
- f. Assistance in making available sound-system, video, and electronic equipment for events;
- g. Individual teacher meetings with parents on homework, and other instructional support.

### **Annual Evaluation of Parent Involvement Policy**

Nicotra Charter' will ensure the policy is up-to-date and effectively addresses the changing needs of the School community through an annual policy evaluation process. At least once each school year, the Principal and Parents' Association will meet to evaluate the policy's content and effectiveness in increasing parent involvement. They will discuss ways to identify strategies for overcoming barriers to parent participation and to increase parent participation. As needed, policy revisions will be based on the evaluation and will be incorporated into the Parent Involvement Policy. The Principal will be responsible for the implementation of the Policy and for revisions.

## **Security and Safety**

School personnel may use reasonable physical restraint, if necessary, to protect persons or property from physical injury or damage or to remove a violent or disruptive student from self-harm or harm to others, the student has refused to comply with a request to refrain from further disruptive acts and alternative procedures and methods not involving the use of physical force cannot reasonably be employed to achieve these purposes. If damage or loss of school property occurs, official report cards and transcripts may be withheld until payment for the damage is received or the lost property is recovered.

## **Appendix A – Student and Family Grievance Policy**

### **Grievance Policy**

#### General Procedure

Any parent/guardian who has a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, is encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at your student's school by telephone or email; contact information for the staff members at your student's school can be found on the school's website. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to parent/guardian concerns. If an issue is not resolved promptly or satisfactorily, please contact the Principal to discuss the matter further.

Any individual or group may bring complaints or concerns of any kind to the Principal of your student's school. The Principal will work to resolve conflicts fairly and informally, as quickly as possible. After reviewing the complaint, the Principal will respond in writing, by telephone, or in person depending on the circumstance. If the Principal is unable to resolve the complaint to the individual or group's satisfaction, or if the complaint is about the Principal, the individual or group may bring their complaint to the President of Integration Charter Schools (ICS). After reviewing the complaint, the President will respond as quickly as possible and shall take such steps as he deems necessary in order to resolve the complaint.

The Board of Trustees of ICS shall serve as the appeals body for any complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved. The complaint may be presented to the Board in an open meeting, in written form, by letter or via email to [icsboard@integrationcharterschools.org](mailto:icsboard@integrationcharterschools.org). The Board of Trustees shall investigate and respond to all complaints in a timely manner.

#### Procedure for Complaints under Section 2855 of the Charter Schools Act

Section 2855(4) of the New York Education Law (part of the New York State Charter Schools Act (CSA)) provides that any individual or group may bring a complaint directly to the Board of Trustees of ICS alleging a violation of the CSA, the School's charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of ICS. All such complaints should be in writing and include the following:

1. the name, address, and phone number of the complainant;
2. a detailed statement of the complaint, including the specific provision of the School's charter or law that allegedly has been violated;
3. the relief sought by the complainant; and
4. the response, if any, received from the School thus far.

The Board of Trustees will respond in writing to any complaint submitted in writing no later than 30 days from receipt of the written complaint. Depending upon the circumstances, the Board's first response to a complaint may be to advise the complainant as to the timeline for further review, investigation, and resolution of the complaint, rather than an immediate resolution of the complaint.

If the complainant believes that the Board of Trustees has not adequately addressed the complaint, the individual or group may then present the complaint to ICS's charter entity, the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York ("Board of Regents"). The Board of Regents has delegated authority to handle complaints concerning charter schools to the Commissioner of Education. The Charter School Office of the New York State Education Department, on behalf of the Commissioner, will investigate and respond to complaints concerning charter schools that have been appropriately filed, and has the power and the duty to issue appropriate remedial orders involving any such complaint.

The process for bringing a complaint to the Board of Regents can be found here:  
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/complaint.html>

The complaint may be submitted via email to the Board of Regents at [charterschools@nysed.gov](mailto:charterschools@nysed.gov), or by writing to the Board of Regents at the following address:

New York State Education Department  
Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234  
(518) 474-1762

## **Appendix B – Code of Conduct**

### **Code of Conduct**

We believe that all students are able to meet behavioral expectations. Through in-class supports provided by teachers and educational assistants and a curriculum that explicitly identifies and teaches self-management strategies, we expect students to succeed in learning to manage their own behaviors. By implementing these strategies in conjunction with individual Behavior Intervention Plans where appropriate, we expect students to achieve a high degree of success. In the event that a student's behavior is not responsive to our supports and interventions, and his or her behavior is disruptive to the educational environment and/or poses a danger to the student or others, such behavior will be addressed, consistent with the requirements of due process, by the School's Code of Conduct. Students with disabilities will be governed by the same discipline policy as other students, except when it is determined that the behavior at issue is a manifestation of the student's handicapping condition. In such instances, compliant with our policies on disciplining students with disabilities and due process, where applicable, a review will be undertaken to determine whether referral to the CSE is warranted.

### **Integration Charter Schools Core Values**

Within the ICS family, our core values, behaviors, and beliefs define who we are a community and our commitment to the culture we have worked so hard to create. The ICS Core Values are:

1. Make the impossible, possible
2. Value diversity
3. Ensure a safe and supportive place to grow
4. Respect and hear all voices
5. Overcome barriers
6. Open doorways for the leaders of tomorrow
7. Play nice in the sandbox
8. Make a better Staten Island
9. Believe in second chances
10. Embrace creativity and discovery
11. Foster lifelong learning
12. Welcome everyone with a smile

### **The High School Student Achievement Program**

At Nicotra Charter, the behavior management system is organized into tiers relating to the severity of the behavioral challenges and is a guide for teachers and administrators who will use professional judgment in its application. Nicotra Charter is committed to a policy of positive behavioral reinforcement and rewards. Minor challenges that impede orderly classroom procedures or interfere with the orderly operation of the school can usually be handled by individual staff.

The High School Student Achievement Program focuses on receiving acclaim for positive decisions that will enable the student to be eligible for special events. Each student will earn 1 point per class, which will be given at the end of the period. In order to receive the point, students are expected to adhere to the following behaviors points for the entirety of the class:

Arrive “on-time”,  
Remain “on-task”,  
Come prepared,  
Stay engaged,  
Be considerate always, and  
Follow cell phone/device and internet policies

Students who accumulate enough points can participate in events such as: dances, game, nights, special trips, etc. All Nicotra Charter faculty acknowledge and reward students for exhibiting positive behaviors. In the event teachers need to redirect negative behaviors, teachers will apply progressive discipline classroom management techniques.

### **Reflection Room**

Teachers may refer students to the lunch period “Reflection Room” if students have difficulty regulating their negative behavior(s). Parents of students referred to the Reflection Room are notified by phone of their child's referral. In the Reflection Room, students work with staff to reflect upon and understand their behavior, the impact their behaviors have on others and themselves, and learn techniques to improve their executive functioning. Students also have an opportunity to further develop academic skills. Each student is asked to write in his or her reflective journal before the period ends.

### **After School Reflection Program**

With parent consent, students may be asked to participate in an after school reflection session as a behavioral intervention. These sessions consist of self-reflection, discussion circles, role-play, solution brainstorming, self-improvement plans, and one on one conferencing.

### **Reflect, Correct, Learn (RCL) program**

In certain cases of disruptive behavior, or for every four Reflection referrals a student accumulates over the course of 4 school weeks, he or she may be assigned to the Reflect, Correct, Learn (RCL) program. Before students attend the RCL program, parents/ and or guardians are notified by phone and the student is sent home with a letter from the principal explaining why they will be attending the RCL program. The goal of the RCL program is for students to reflect upon the actions and decisions that were made that led to this assignment and to come up with a plan for correction. With the assistance of a counselor and/or a teacher, the student will work on a plan of correction that will address these behaviors and create a list of alternative choices that can be implemented in future situations. Students will also be given the opportunity to make up work that is missed during this process, and upon successful completion will return to class. If a student is resistant to this process and does not actively participate, then the student will remain in the RCL program for the rest of the day while receiving direct instruction from their teachers and it will be counted as a half day of removal/suspension; the parents will be contacted and proper due process procedures will be followed.

### **Seminar**

The purpose of a Seminar is to take an educational approach to help students avoid negative behaviors. Often students do not understand the impacts of their actions and the Seminar is prescribed to help students understand how others perceive their actions. Examples of Seminars topics include Bullying, Inappropriate Touching, Social Interactions, etc. A letter will be sent home to parents before a student is to participate in a Seminar. The Seminar is delivered through the Counseling department and students will return to class upon completion of this intervention.

**Parent/Guardian Contact:** Teachers may contact parents or guardians and conference on the phone or in person depending on the severity of the issue.

**Additional Consequences:** In the event that the above interventions are not successful, additional consequences, such as loss of trip or end of the year celebrations, may be employed at the Principal's discretion depending on the behavioral issue being addressed.

### **Cell Phones/Technology ("All Devices")**

Students may bring cell phones or computing devices to school, but All Devices may not be turned on or used at school. All Devices must be turned off before entering school and are not to be turned on until students have left school property. All Devices may not be turned on or used during safety drills.

All Devices may not be turned on or used during the administration of any school quiz, test, or examination, except as authorized by the school, or pursuant to an Individualized Education Plan or a Section 504 accommodation plan.

Students who use cell phones or computing devices, in violation of the Code of Conduct, the school's policy, and the Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy will be subject to discipline in accordance with the guidance interventions and disciplinary responses set forth in the Code of Conduct.

Students who choose to bring devices to school are fully responsible for that device/system by keeping that item on their person or storing the item. ICS and Nicotra Charter are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones or devices.

### **Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

The student is ultimately responsible for his/her actions in accessing technology at Integration Charter Schools. Failure to comply with the guidelines of technology use may result in the loss of access privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action. Severe violations may result in civil or criminal action under the New York or Federal law. Students are expected to observe the following:

#### **Guidelines**

1. The student technology will be used solely for the purpose of research, education, and school-related activities.
2. Access to school technology is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in



cancellation of these privileges and appropriate disciplinary measures.

3. Students are expected to maintain their instructional files and media in a responsible manner, which includes backing up files at regular intervals to a memory device or cloud service and deleting files at the end of the school year.
4. Students are responsible for their individual accounts and should take reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a student provide their password to another person except to a teacher, school administrator or their parent/guardian.
5. All school e-mail accounts and information accessible and accessed via Integration Charter Schools technology is and shall remain the property of Integration Charter Schools.
6. Students will use school resources (e.g. printers, cameras, etc.) only for educational purposes.
7. Student computer configurations shall not be altered; this is including but not limited to screensavers, desktop settings, network settings, passwords, etc.
8. The student must immediately report to their teacher any issues occurring with their school computer or technology device.
9. Integration Charter Schools has the right to closely monitor student activity and take disciplinary action and/or remove computer and networking privileges for any activity deemed unethical or unacceptable. ICS has the right to take legal action or report to proper authorities any unlawful activity.
10. Integration Charter Schools actively uses internet filtering software and hardware to meet the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirement and to prevent students from accessing graphics that are (a) obscene, (b) pornographic, or (c) harmful to minors. Integration Charter Schools retains the right to block unacceptable web sites. Filtering software is not a perfect science and it may be possible for users to access inappropriate sites. However, Integration Charter Schools will take appropriate disciplinary action for those who attempt to disable, bypass or otherwise circumvent the ICS content filter that has been installed in accordance with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act.
11. If a student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, they should immediately minimize their screen and tell their teacher. This will protect the student against a claim that he/she has intentionally violated this agreement.
12. Students will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt or harm the computer system or its hardware or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or any other malicious software or by any means. Use or possession of "hacking" tools are prohibited.
13. A filtered e-mail account may be provided to students for educational purposes and not as a public or student forum.
14. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message or

information they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable while on the web, using e-mail, chat rooms (authorized by teacher), forums or other forms of messaging services.

15. Students will not post or share information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption to Integration Charter Schools or any other organization or person.
16. Students are prohibited from accessing or attempting to access instant messages, chat rooms, forums, e-mail, social networking sites, or other messaging services during the instructional day unless authorized by a teacher or school administrator for instructional purposes.
17. Students will not plagiarize works they find on the internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. Plagiarism could result in loss of grade for the assignment in addition to other consequences.
18. Students will not download or install pirated software, music, video or files that infringe on copyright laws onto computers. Possession of unlicensed or pirated software is illegal.
19. Teachers will provide alternate activities for students who do not have permission to use the internet.
20. If Integration Charter Schools reasonably determines that the student has willfully damaged/hacked any school hardware/software, Integration Charter Schools reserves the right to apply the appropriate disciplinary action to the student who is responsible for such violation.

### Violations of this Policy

ICS, including central offices and schools, reserves the right to terminate any user's access to ICS Internet Systems - including access to ICS e-mail - at any time. If a student violates this policy, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken consistent with the Code of Conduct. If a student's access to ICS's Internet System is revoked, the student may not be penalized academically, and ICS will ensure that the student continues to have a meaningful opportunity to participate in the educational program. All users must promptly disclose to their teacher, supervisor, principal or manager any information they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

The Principal or designee will contact the student's parent/guardian if a student violates the school's Student Internet Acceptable Use policy.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Nicotra Charter welcomes all students equally, regardless of their race, color, national origin, disability status, sex, sexual orientation or religion or any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law. All students will be treated as individuals and different treatment based on (real or perceived) race, color, national origin, disability status, sex, sexual orientation or religion or any other characteristic protected by local, state, or federal law will not be tolerated. Anyone who feels that he or she has been treated differently on any such basis should speak with a

counselor, who will apprise the Principal of all reports. Anyone who raises any concerns of discrimination on any basis will be free from retaliation for raising such a concern.

## **Search and Seizure**

For the safety of students and everyone in the Nicotra Charter community, school property that is assigned to students, including but not limited to laptops and desks, remain the property of the school. Students, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. School authorities will make an individual search of a student's bag, backpack or desk only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in the possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Searches will be conducted under the authorization of the Principal or his/her designee. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from students' desks, bag, backpack, and person by school authorities.

## **Dignity for All Students Act Policy (DASA)**

Nicotra Charter is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. In accordance with New York State's Dignity for All Students Act ("DASA"), Nicotra Charter will promptly address all incidents of harassment and/or discrimination of or by any student enrolled at the school. This includes bullying, taunting or intimidation in all their myriad forms.

## **Policy Definitions:**

*"School property"* means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus, as defined in section 142 of the vehicle and traffic law.

*"School function"* means a school-sponsored extra-curricular event or activity.

*"Harassment"* and *"bullying"* shall mean the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. For the purposes of this definition the term "threats, intimidation or abuse" shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.

*"Cyberbullying"* shall mean harassment or bullying as defined above, where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

*Student Rights:* No student shall be subjected to harassment or bullying, including cyberbullying, by employees or students on school property or at a school function. Additionally, no student shall be subjected to discrimination based on the student's actual or perceived race, color,

weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex, by school employees or students on school property or at a school function.

The Nicotra Charter Code of Conduct prohibits harassment and bullying, and students who engage in such behavior will be disciplined as set forth in the Code of Conduct. Further, the School reserves the right to discipline students, consistent with our Code of Conduct, who engage in harassment or bullying of students off school property under circumstances where such off-campus conduct:

1. affects the educative process;
2. endangers the health and safety of Nicotra Charter students within the educational system; or
3. is reasonably believed to pose a danger to the health and safety of Nicotra Charter students within the educational system.

This includes written and/or verbal harassment which materially and substantially disrupts the work and discipline of the School and/or which school leaders reasonably forecast as being likely to materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school.

### **Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC)**

Nicotra Charter has designated a staff member to serve as the Dignity Act Coordinator (“DAC”). The DAC is trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The name and contact information for the DAC is posted on the school’s website under “Parent Resources” and is as follows:

Alvin Hillary, [AHillary@nicotracharter.org](mailto:AHillary@nicotracharter.org), 347-855-2238

The DAC is accessible to students and other employees for consultation and advice.

### **DASA at Nicotra Charter**

Beginning with their first week of school and subsequently reinforced thereafter in the wellness curriculum, students are advised of the school’s DASA policy, reminded that bullying and harassment are violations of the Code of Conduct, and informed of how they can access the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC).

### **Reporting and Investigating**

All Nicotra Charter staff members are responsible for reporting harassment, bullying or discrimination of which they have been made aware to their immediate supervisor. Any student who believes that s/he is being subjected to harassment, bullying or discrimination, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of harassment, bullying or discrimination, shall report the harassment, bullying or discrimination to any staff member, the DAC, or the Principal. A staff member who witnesses harassment, bullying or discrimination or who receives an oral or written report of harassment, bullying or discrimination shall promptly orally notify the Principal not later than one school day after witnessing, or receiving a report of, such acts and shall file a written report with the Principal not later than two school days after making such oral report.

The Principal shall promptly investigate the complaint and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority (e.g. the President of ICS) and/or other official designated by the ICS Board of Trustees to investigate allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination. When an investigation reveals any such verified harassment, bullying or discrimination, the School will take prompt actions that are reasonably calculated to: end the harassment, bullying or discrimination; eliminate any hostile environment; create a more positive school culture and climate; and prevent recurrence of the behavior. Any such actions shall be consistent with the Nicotra Charter Code of Conduct, which follows a progressive discipline model, utilizing supports and interventions to respond to most behavioral infractions, including bullying and harassment, prior to imposing discipline. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged harasser and victim shall be made to ensure that the harassment, bullying or discrimination has not resumed and that those involved in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination have not suffered retaliation.

Material incidents of discrimination and harassment on school grounds or at a school function will be reported to the State Education Department as required by law.

The Principal shall promptly notify law enforcement authorities when the Principal believes that any harassment, bullying or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.

### **No Retaliation**

Nicotra Charter prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination. All complainants and those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and school policies and who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

### **Distribution of Policy**

Nicotra Charter shall distribute a written or electronic copy of this Policy to all employees, students, and parents/guardians at least once during every school year.

### **Serious Violations**

Each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation is unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique student and the unique situation. The needs of all students differ and it is expected that the Principal will, relying upon professional experience, take into account the needs of individuals as well as the overall effective functioning of the school in making judgements regarding all behavioral consequences.

We recognize that some behaviors threaten the learning environment for all students and will address these through a system of suspensions and, if necessary, expulsion.

Any disciplinary consequences will be decided in accordance with a student's individualized education program (IEP), behavior intervention plans, and/or 504 plan, if applicable. At times, it may be necessary to suspend or remove students with disabilities from the academic environment. In the event that a student is removed from school for more than 10 consecutive or

cumulative days, a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as applicable. We adhere to all applicable laws to ensure due process and the provision of mandated procedural safeguards.

First Nicotra Charter suspensions will normally be for one day. Subsequent suspensions will increase by a day if the incident is a repeated behavior. In the case of students with disabilities, the Principal will determine if a pattern of removal exists.

All violations of law will be reported to law enforcement agencies.

<b>Progressive Infraction Levels</b>	
Level 1	Uncooperative/Noncompliant Behavior
Level 2	Disorderly/Disruptive Behavior
Level 3	Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior
Level 4	Seriously Dangerous or Violent Behavior

- Consequence for first offense will continue being a Seminar, depending on the severity of the case, at Principal’s discretion
- Each level will incur an individualized consequence/set of consequences based on the chart below
- Seminar is available for all levels of offense
- Multiple infractions with the same offense will result in a higher consequence at the discretion of the Principal.
- Each student’s discipline record will be reviewed prior to receiving consequences and actions

<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with teacher</li> <li>-Parent/Guardian Conference</li> <li>- Seminar</li> <li>- RCL</li> <li>- Reflection</li> </ul> <p><u>Behaviors are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violation of the Uniform Policy</li> <li>• Out of class, no pass</li> <li>• Cheating</li> <li>• Running in hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting with teacher</li> <li>-Parent/Guardian Conference</li> <li>-Seminar</li> <li>- Short term Suspension</li> <li>- RCL</li> <li>- Reflection</li> </ul> <p><u>Behaviors are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disorderly conduct during fire drill/lockdown</li> <li>• Play fighting</li> <li>• Threatening or intimidating another person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Privilege</li> <li>Probation/restricted activities</li> <li>- Parent/Guardian Conference</li> <li>- Seminar</li> <li>- Short term Suspension</li> <li>- RCL</li> </ul> <p><u>Behaviors are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying – inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees; includes cyberbullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Privilege</li> <li>Probation/restricted activities</li> <li>- Parent/Guardian Conference</li> <li>- Seminar</li> <li>- Short term Suspension</li> <li>- Long term Suspension</li> <li>- Expulsion</li> </ul> <p><u>Behaviors are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment-verbal or physical behavior creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment;</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate use of cell phones / technology</li> <li>• Violation of internet acceptable use policy</li> <li>• Minor damage to school property</li> <li>• Using obscene, profane or vulgar language, gestures or behavior</li> <li>• Verbal altercation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major damage to school property</li> <li>• Smoking or use of electronic cigarettes</li> <li>• Plagiarizing</li> <li>• Verbal altercation which create a dangerous situation</li> <li>• Possession or use of Hazardous material, pepper spray or mace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fighting – Participating in use of force or physical violence against another person that may or may not result in injury</li> <li>• Theft</li> <li>• Engaging in Gang related behavior</li> <li>• Inappropriate touching</li> <li>• Falsely activating an emergency alarm</li> <li>• Sexual Misconduct: includes engaging in sexual conduct on school premises or at school-related functions; sexually aggressive behavior; forced sexual behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes sexual harassment</li> <li>• Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous object</li> <li>• Possession or use of illegal substance</li> <li>• Possession or use of alcohol</li> <li>• Serious harm to staff or student</li> <li>• Making a bomb threat</li> <li>• Threat of mass violence</li> <li>• Using force against or attempting to inflict serious injury against school personnel</li> <li>• Starting a fire/Arson</li> </ul>
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**Other Considerations**

- Based on the severity of the infraction, students will be provided with varying levels of interventions or consequences such as: Seminars, parent conferences, loss of earned end of the year activity privileges.
- The school makes every effort to limit the use of suspensions and expulsions.
- School personnel may use reasonable physical restraint, if necessary, to protect a person or property from physical injury or damage or to remove a violent or disruptive student, if the student has refused to comply with a request to refrain from further disruptive acts and alternative procedures and methods not involving the use of physical force cannot reasonably be employed to achieve these purposes.

**Gun Free Schools Act**

Federal and State laws require the expulsion from School for a period of not less than one year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to the School, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the Principal may modify such expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis, if such modification is in writing, in accordance with the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (as amended).

Any such expulsion must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its implementing regulations, for a student with or presumed to have disabilities.

“Firearm” as used in this law is defined by 18 USC § 921(a), and includes firearms and explosives.

The Principal shall refer to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system any student who brings a firearm or weapon to the school. "Weapon" as used in this context shall mean any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than two and half inches in length.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

### Overview

Student disciplinary offenses are those actions or inactions that violate the School's Code of Conduct or interfere with the delivery of educational services, jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school community, or threaten the integrity and stability of the school itself.

- A disciplinary offense may occur while the student is:
  - at school and/or on school grounds;
  - participating in a school-sponsored activity;
  - walking to or from school or a school-sponsored event;
  - walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school-provided transportation; or
  - walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to and from school or a school-sponsored activity conducted off school grounds.
  
- School-related disciplinary offenses may also include misconduct outside the school, such as social media that reasonably could affect the school or learning environment.

School administration will use their professional judgment in determining which disciplinary action(s) will be most effective in dealing with the student's misconduct, taking into account the following factors:

- The student's age and maturity level;
- The nature and seriousness of the infraction and the circumstances which led to the infraction;
- The student's previous disciplinary record;
- The effectiveness of other forms of discipline;
- Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate;
- The student's attitude; and
- Other relevant factors.

### **Procedures and Due Process for Short-Term Suspensions**

A short-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from Nicotra Charter for disciplinary reasons for a period of up to ten (10) days. This includes in-school suspension.

The Principal may impose a short-term suspension and shall follow due process procedures consistent with applicable federal case law. Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal shall notify the student orally of the charges against him or her. If the student denies the misconduct, the Principal must provide an explanation of the evidence against the student. The student shall be given an opportunity to deny or explain the charges against him/her that led to the suspension. The Principal shall immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing that the student may be suspended from school. The written notice shall be provided by



personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to impose suspension at the last known address(es) of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Notification shall also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parent(s) or guardian(s).

The notice shall provide a description of the incident for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal. Both the notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). At the conference, the parents or guardians of the student and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student's version of the incident and to ask questions of the complaining witnesses under such procedures as the Principal may establish. The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to the suspension of the student unless the student's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

An appeal of the decision of the Principal may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the Board within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Principal's decision, unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board of Trustees will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the School's authorizer.

### **Procedures and Due Process for Long-Term Suspensions or Expulsion**

A long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from Nicotra Charter for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than ten (10) days. Expulsion refers to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons. This is the final level of correction.

Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension or expulsion, the following procedure, consistent with applicable federal case law, will be followed:

- The student shall immediately be removed from the class or the School, as needed.
- The Principal shall verbally inform the student of the charges and the evidence for those charges; where applicable, the student will have the opportunity to explain his or her side of the events.
- The Principal shall immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardians in person or on the phone.
- The Principal shall provide written notice that the School is going to commence a disciplinary hearing to the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) by personal delivery or express mail delivery as soon as possible to the last known address of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident that resulted in the suspension and shall state that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion.

- The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s) if it is known to be other than English.
  - The notice will state that at the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, present and question witnesses, and present evidence.
- The School will set a date, time, and place for the formal hearing, which shall be set forth in the written notice described above.
  - An audio transcript of the hearing will be created and made available to all parties upon request.

The Principal, or his/her designee, shall serve as hearing officer and preside over the hearing. The hearing officer's report shall be advisory only and the Principal may accept or reject all or part of it. A written decision will be issued within five (5) school days after the formal hearing to the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

An appeal from the written decision may be made to the Board of Trustees, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the Board within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written decision, unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board of Trustees will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. Final decisions of the Board of Trustees may be appealed to the School's authorizer.

### **Provision of Instruction During Removal**

Nicotra Charter will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the general curriculum of Nicotra Charter. Alternative instruction for suspended students will be of sufficient duration to enable a student to cover all class material, take all tests and quizzes, keep pace with other students, and progress to the next grade level. All suspended students are entitled to receive alternative instruction commencing within 24 hours of the suspension or expulsion. Alternative instruction dates and times will be listed on the student's suspension letter. All students will be provided with a minimum of two hours per day of alternative instruction.

For a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided in like manner as a suspended student until the student enrolls in another school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

Alternative instruction will take place at Nicotra Charter. One or more of the following individuals will provide instruction: teacher, teacher aide. Please note that whoever administers this instruction will meet all certification requirements as stipulated in Section 2854(3)(a-1) of the New York State Education Law.

### **Discipline for Students with Disabilities**

In addition to the disciplinary procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior that is the subject of the disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(b)—

that a disability exists shall also be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. Nicotra Charter shall comply with sections 300.530-300.537 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

Nicotra Charter shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities including the name of the student, a description of the relevant behavior, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Students whose IEP includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will immediately be referred to the appropriate Committee on Special Education (CSE) for any consideration of changes.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year with a determined pattern of behavior, and a disciplinary change of placement appears to be imminent, the student will immediately be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

Nicotra Charter will ensure that the Vice President of Career Development/Student Integration or special education teacher and/or the general classroom teacher will attend all meetings regarding their students initiated by the CSE of the student's district of residence. These meetings could be relating to the development and implementation of behavioral intervention plans, initial referrals, change in service, or annual reviews, Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs), among other things.

### **Provision of Services During Removal**

Nicotra Charter will place students in an interim alternative educational setting as appropriate and mandated by 34 C.F.R. § 300.531.

Students removed for a period of fewer than ten cumulative days during the school year will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The School also shall provide alternative instruction to assist the student, so that he or she is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum, including additional instruction, phone assistance, computer instruction and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals equals ten or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately

in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the student's special education teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

During any removal for drug, weapon, controlled substance and/or seriously bodily injury offenses pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g), services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence.

### **Additional Due Process (MDR)**

If discipline that would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with a disability, the following steps shall be taken: (1) no later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parent(s) or guardian of the student with a disability shall be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 C.F.R. § 300.504; and (2) immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made, the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that is the subject of the disciplinary action.

If, upon review, it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability, except as provided in 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the student will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent or guardian requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to drugs, weapons, controlled substance and/or serious bodily injury offenses, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent or guardian and the School agree otherwise.

### **Students with a 504 Plan and "Deemed to Know" Students**

With regard to disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion, the Section 504 rights of charter school students with disabilities are the same as other students with disabilities.

When addressing discipline for students with disabilities, including students with 504 plans or those who are "presumed to have a disability," Nicotra Charter will comply with applicable legal requirements governing the discipline of a student for misconduct.

## **Compliance with the Child Find Requirements of IDEA**

Nicotra Charter will comply with the federal Child Find requirements (34 CFR §300.111), which require schools to have in place a process for identifying, locating and evaluating students with disabilities. Students enrolling for the first time in a New York public school will be screened by a team of teachers (including both regular and special education teachers) to identify any possible indication that the child may need a specialized or Individualized Education Program, or referral to the CSE of the student's district of residence. Other students will be brought to the attention of the team if they are demonstrating any problems within the regular classroom environment. Strategies will then be implemented to address any identified special needs of the student. Should the problems persist and a disability is suspected, the student will be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for an evaluation.

## **Nicotra Charter Rules while at St. John's University**

Students must comply with all rules and regulations of the City University of New York Security Staff who secure the buildings and campus of The Lois & Richard Nicotra Early College Charter School. Students must present program cards and photo I.D.'s upon request to the Nicotra Charter and SJU Security Staff as well as to any school staff members.

- The use of technology is prohibited in the high school buildings.
- Students may not smoke anywhere on campus.
- Students may use only those buildings assigned to them as indicated on program cards.
- Students must eat lunch only in the designated Cafeteria.
- Students may not leave the campus during the school day.
- Appropriate attire is required in all classes. Students may not wear hats, do-rags or other headgear in classrooms. No midriffs, short shorts nor heavy metal chains are to be worn in school.
- Students must observe all safety rules when using science laboratories, gymnasiums and the pool. These rules include proper and safe behavior and attire. For safety, no jewelry, including body-piercing jewelry, is permitted in the gym.
- Loitering in halls and bathrooms is prohibited.
- Students are to report any altercation or possible violation of the Code of Conduct to either a teacher, Campus Security, the Principal or Assistant Principal.
- Students may not enter the gymnasiums nor participate in recreational activities in the gymnasiums unless a teacher is present.

## **Appendix C - Distance Learning and Reopening Plan**

As we face the COVID-19 pandemic together, you can find our most recent version of our Distance Learning and Reopening Plan, [here](#).