

**Florida Autism Center of Excellence  
Parent/Caregiver Handbook  
2017-2018**



**FACE**

FLORIDA AUTISM CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to the Florida Autism Center of Excellence (FACE). We look forward to working with you to provide your student with a rewarding learning experience. This handbook is designed to provide you with specific information regarding the policies, procedures and programs at the FACE. Your student's success begins with your support of the school implementing educational and behavioral programs.

***Please review this handbook with your student.***

Following school policies is one of the most important responsibilities of a student. These policies allow every student at FACE to have a safe and enriching learning environment. Our policies inform the student about the rules of the school and the expected behavior of students while on the school campus or in the community. If unacceptable behavior does occur, these policies explain the actions that may be taken by the teacher, the Director, or other school staff.

***You have a right***, as the parent/caregiver of a student at FACE, to clear communication with your student's teacher or administrative staff on a weekly basis. This contact may be through phone calls, e-mail messages, notes, and/or conferences.

***You have a responsibility*** to collaborate in making and implementing instructional and behavioral decisions.

Together, you and the FACE staff can make this a successful school experience for your student.

Sincerely,

Annie Russell, M.Ed.

School Director

Dear Student,

Welcome to FACE!

The purpose of this handbook is to guide you successfully through your placement at FACE. It contains many different rights and responsibilities that will enable you to have a safe, meaningful experience and allow you to attain the best possible level of academic achievement.

You have specific rights as a student;

***You have the right to:***

A challenging curriculum and a written code of classroom rules

Protection from any physical or verbal abuse

A school climate free of violence

Due process under the law

Consequences to be given in a fair and humane manner

You have specific responsibilities as a student;

***You have a responsibility to:***

Arrive at school on time

Dress appropriately and practice good personal hygiene and safety toward yourself and others

Respect the rights of fellow students and school personnel at all school related activities

Respect school and community property

Follow all school rules and city, state, and federal laws

Sincerely,

Annie Russell, School Director

## Introduction

Access to a free public education is both a right and a privilege. A positive learning environment can only be sustained through adherence to basic rules and regulations, which provide the necessary measures to ensure an orderly and creative learning environment and, at the same time, respect individual rights and differences.

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence asks students, parents/caregivers, and staff to adhere to the following FACE commitment and join in the effort to guarantee that a rewarding educational experience will be provided to every student at each individual school site.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or religion in any of its policies, practices or procedures. This nondiscrimination policy complies with the requirements of Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other Federal and State laws. Coverage applies to both (a) admission and access to, and (b) treatment and employment in, FACE programs and activities, including vocational education. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in the vocational education or any other FACE program.

Students, parents/caregivers, or any other individuals having questions or concerns regarding FACE's non-discrimination policy or the filing of discrimination complaints should contact your school's Director. Discrimination complaints should be filed in a written format, i.e., a letter addressed to the Director.

# General Information

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence staff is present and available to you from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM Monday through Friday (except holidays and vacations). Students are present from 8:00 AM to 2:15 PM Tuesday through Friday and from 8:00 AM to 1:15 PM on Mondays, which are early dismissal days. Student arrival is from 7:45-8:00 and dismissal is from 2:15-2:30 daily (1:30 on Mondays). For your convenience, we also have voice mail available at the school before and after school hours. Please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

## **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Annie Russell, School Director	813-985-FACE-(3223)
Tabitha Chapman, Office Manager	813-985-FACE (3223)
Karen Kelley, Data Processor	813-985-FACE (3223)
Lori Edgar, ESE and Enrollment Specialist	813-985-FACE (3223)

## **FACE MISSION STATEMENT**

FACE educates students with autism, to achieve their highest potential.

### **Vision Statement:**

FACE is the school of choice for students impacted by autism, professionals dedicated to their education, and the autism community at large.

### **Value Statement:**

Florida Autism Center of Excellence (FACE)'s values are the principles that guide our daily work; how we interact with others and those we serve.

These values guide our Board, volunteers and staff in making ethical decisions that affect all of our stakeholders.

- **Impartiality** – We adhere to an objective, fair and consistently applied process for collecting and evaluating information for decision-making that treats all people with equity.

- **Integrity** – We ensure fairness, accuracy, validity and reliability in the development and administration of the program to ensure it meets the highest standards (as defined by experts in the field).
- **Accountability** – We accept responsibility individually and collectively to create a quality, sustainable organization that operates in an honest and transparent manner and is prudent in the use of financial and volunteer resources.
- **Diversity** – We embrace and include the strengths, skills and perspectives that contribute to the development of the program and its students in order to build bridges among all stakeholders.
- **Service** – We engage in continuous organizational review and improvement in order to deliver a program that meets and exceeds expectations.
- **Compassion** – FACE staff acts in the best interests of the students and their families when making decisions and providing education services.

## **FACE PHILOSOPHY**

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence's educational philosophy is based on the belief that all individuals can learn and lead productive lives in the community, when provided with the proper learning environment. However, even the clearest vision is useless without effective teaching strategies. FACE has developed an educational and behavioral improvement model well known for its effectiveness and accountability. This model emphasizes assessment of students' motivational variables; positive and proactive teaching strategies, student-teacher interaction, clear measurable teaching objectives, data-guided teaching, empirically demonstrated teaching methodologies, and strategies for successful collaboration between all participants in a student's educational environment (peers, teachers, parents/caregivers, administrators, and support staff).

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANS**

It is the policy of FACE to assure that students with serious and pervasive behavior challenges are provided teaching strategies which: 1) result in lasting positive change; 2) provide greater access to community, social, and public events; 3) do not cause pain or trauma; and 4) respect the dignity and privacy of the individual.



Before a plan can be implemented, parent/caregiver consent must be obtained for behavioral assessment. Once the assessment determines the reason for behavior, a positive behavior intervention plan (BIP) is written. The goal of behavioral intervention is to replace maladaptive behavior with alternative acceptable behavior and instill in the student a greater level of independence and self-control. This plan describes what and how positive behaviors will be taught to replace inappropriate behaviors. The IEP team (parent/caregiver, case manager, school district, education co-coordinator, teacher, and others) then comes together and if the plan is agreed upon, this becomes part of the IEP.

## **CRISIS PREVENTION**

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence implements positive behavioral supports, functional behavior assessment and function based interventions, re-direction, time and space, active student engagement. We also focus on skill building such as self-monitoring and management. If a student has become a danger to themselves or others a safe, non-harmful, restraint position to safely control an individual until they can regain control of his/her own behavior may be implemented only as a last resort. FACE utilizes Quality Behavior Solutions' approach to physical management and staff is trained in Safety-Care™ techniques.

## **SAFE SCHOOL POLICY**

Florida Autism Center of Excellence is committed to the maintenance of a learning environment where students may attend a school free from acts of violence, aggression, terrorism, intimidation, or harassment.

Actions such as the use or possession of a weapon, criminal behavior, or gang activities in the school, on the school grounds, at school sanctioned activities, or when students are being transported in vehicles dispatched by the school or districts will not be tolerated.

## **PARENT/CAREGIVER RIGHTS AND PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The fundamental principle of our behavioral interventions is non-aversive or positive interventions, designed to develop and strengthen desirable behaviors. These should be used to the maximum extent possible and are preferable to the use of aversive and more restrictive procedures.

All of the procedural protections available to students with disabilities and their parents/caregivers under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including notice and consent, opportunity for participation in meetings, and the right to appeal, shall be observed when implementing/developing behavioral interventions.

### **WHAT IS AN IEP?**

IEP stands for Individualized Education Program. IEP's are developed each year and more frequently to accommodate a change in the student's or parent/caregiver's needs. The IEP lists student educational goals, teaching strategies, and current levels of performance in the following domains: Curriculum and Learning, Social/Emotional, Independent Functioning, Communication, and Health academics, independent living, community, vocational, recreation/leisure, speech and communication, behavior, social, and transition. We solicit parent/caregiver input and participation in the development of the IEP. Please call us for more information, and talk to your student's teacher frequently about his/her progress.

### **WHAT IS A TRANSITION IEP?**

The Transition IEP is a plan developed in conjunction with the student's IEP to facilitate the student's move from school to a quality adult life. Successful transition includes plans for meaningful employment, continuing education, living arrangements and participation in the community through social activities and recreational opportunities. The initial TIEP is written when the student is 14 years old. In addition to the domains addressed above, transition IEP's also address instruction,

community experiences, employment and other post-school adult living objectives.

## Grading Policies

### **PROGRESS REPORTS / REPORT CARDS**

Progress reports are completed four times per year, as based on your student's school district requirements. The student's teacher and Lead Teacher write the reports. Progress on each individual IEP goal is assessed and reported. Again, please feel free to call your student's teacher if you have any questions about the progress reports. In addition to the more formal progress report, we also utilize individual data sheets to assess progress on goals on a more frequent basis; summaries are sent home to parents on an average of a monthly basis.

### **GRADING SCALE**

***Middle and High School use the following scale:***

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

Below 60 F

***Elementary School uses the following scale:***

K-2 Codes

3-5 Codes

E=Excellent

A=Excellent

S=Satisfactory

B=Good

N=Needs Improvement

C=Satisfactory

U=Unsatisfactory

D=Needs Improvement

F=Unsatisfactory

*Note: Child's Instructional level is reflected on their Individual Education Plan.*

## **END OF GRADING PERIODS**

**October 7, 2016:** End of 1st Grading Period

**December 16, 2016:** End of 2nd 9 weeks

**March 10, 2017:** End of 3rd 9 weeks

**May 26, 2017:** End of 4th Grading Period

## **REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION DATES**

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
2:30pm-6:30pm

Report Card Pick-Up/Conference

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Report cards sent home with students

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
2:30pm-6:30pm

Report Card Pick-Up/Conference

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Mailed to students

## **CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS**

To maximize each student's academic and behavioral success, students are expected to abide by school rules. These rules are developed and encouraged in order to maintain student safety by being safe, responsible and respectful when in all school environments.

### **Students are expected to:**

- Walk at all times with a staff member. Students must always remain within the line of sight of a staff member.

- Use appropriate language. Students are expected to treat staff and students with respect. Repetitive and excessive incidents of verbal harassment, threats, provoking and/or gestures to harm staff and other students will not be tolerated. Consequences for such behavior may require:
  - change in supervision level
  - change in the instructional area away from peers until appropriate behavior is demonstrated.
  - a conference with the parent/caregiver and student
  - change and/or development of a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan
- Students may always ask a staff member for help if they are upset or frustrated with an academic, social, or other problematic situation.
- Respect personal and school property. Students are expected to keep all of their personal belongings in a backpack, desk, or lunchbox. Students should bring and only use materials needed to complete their work successfully at school. Students may not destroy the property of others or the school. Destruction of property and vandalism may result in restitution (repayment for damaged items), a conference with the parent/caregiver and student, an Emergency IEP meeting, etc. Students are encouraged to ask for a break, ask for help, or request to problem solve with staff in lieu of damaging property.
- Remain on campus during the school day. Students are expected to remain with their assigned classroom for the duration of the school day. Students will be able to leave the classroom when they are with a staff member or have a pass, staff permission, for restroom breaks, P.E., or with peers, etc. Students may leave campus only to implement community or vocational IEP goals or participate in community based activities. Students transitioning back to a less restrictive school setting may leave campus as deemed appropriate by the IEP team. Students who run out of their classrooms or off of campus will be considered to be endangering the safety of

themselves or others, and emergency procedures may be used depending on the severity of the situation.

### **PAYMENT OF FEES**

FACE is a free, public school in Hillsborough County. As such, there is no fee to attend FACE. If your child receives a school lunch or participates in FACE morning care fees may be incurred. FACE expects prompt payment of all fees and appreciates your cooperation.

# Florida Autism Center of Excellence Rules & Procedures

## VISITING THE SCHOOL

Note: All visitors must report to the office and sign in before going into any classroom. Before going to a classroom, you will receive a visitor's pass; we ask that you prominently display the pass. FACE supports classroom observations by parents/caregivers, and county representatives. We do request that at least one day's notice be given to the Director or the classroom teacher to be observed. Due to a variety of positive behavioral intervention plans and the need for consistency, a staff member may be assigned to accompany you into the classroom. When attending a class, we ask that visitors respect the classroom rules and be as quiet and as unobtrusive as possible. FACE's policy for observations is outlined below.

Policy on Therapist/Professional Observations:

- Prior to setting up an observation, parents must complete the Hillsborough County School District Consent Form to obtain and release information to the person/agency conducting the observation. This form must be completed annually.
- All observations or meetings with teachers must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance. Times must be mutually agreed upon by teachers, parents, and observing professional.
- All therapists must pass Level 1 Background screening as provided through Serve.
- Observations may be no longer than one hour per day.
- Observations may not interfere with classroom activities.
- Therapists and teachers may only discuss the specific student observed.
- Persons conducting observations must sign in and out of the office.

***Should a student need lunch, a change of clothes, or other items brought to him/her during school hours, it should be labeled and taken to the office. School staff will deliver it to the student.***

## **PICKING UP A STUDENT BEFORE DISMISSAL TIME**

If your student needs to be taken out of class early, please call the campus and/or send a note stating the time and reason you will be taking your student out of class. Be sure to indicate who will be picking up the student. If it is someone other than the parent/caregiver, be sure the person picking up your student is listed on the emergency demographic sheet. For the protection of our students, anyone coming in to the building to pick up a student must first sign in at the front office of the school site and show valid identification. Please use this same procedure if a student is to be picked up rather than ride the bus/van for any reason.

***Only persons who have been authorized in writing by the parent/caregiver will be permitted to pick up a student from school.***

In order to minimize classroom disruption at the end of the day, early sign-outs will not be permitted 30 minutes prior to dismissal each day. If you arrive after this window please proceed through the carpool line to pick up your child.

Additionally, we ask that you minimize late arrivals and early departures as they take time away from your child's instructional day. In order to effectively address curriculum content and IEP goals, we must maximize the number of minutes each student receives in the classroom environment. If students have a pattern of regularly leaving the school day early they are missing valuable instruction. A conference with the school Director will be scheduled to discuss the issue and determine potential solutions, up to and including the student returning to their neighborhood school.

**\*\*\*PLEASE SEE ATTENDANCE SECTION FOR AN IMPROTANT NOTE REGARDING LATE DROP-OFF AND EARLY PICK-UP\*\*\***

## **LATE PICKUP**

Our dismissal time is from 2:15-2:30. After 2:30 students are considered to be late pick-ups. FACE does not offer an aftercare program; however, we do have many students who attend aftercare at All People's Life Center. FACE does offer assistance in transitioning students to All People's after dismissal. All People's is a division of Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation. For more information please visit their website at <http://hillsboroughcounty.org/parks/>.



Students who are not picked up prior to 2:30 will incur a flat fee of \$15 per day.

## **SCHOOL CONFERENCES**

A parent/caregiver may request a meeting with the teacher at any time.

Joint Custody Guidelines - At the request of either parents/caregivers, conferences can be arranged with the student's teacher. Both parent/caregiver can also request a copy of the progress reports, transcripts, midterm reports and school newsletter.

We encourage parents/caregivers to contact the school at any time. Good communication is essential. Often what may appear to be a problem or misunderstanding can be cleared up by clarification of facts. Please keep in mind that teachers may not be available to talk during school hours.

Parent/teacher conference nights will be schedule twice throughout the year. These are great opportunities for families to communicate with school staff and keep updated on student progress. All families are strongly encouraged to attend scheduled conference nights.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION**

Florida Autism Center of Excellence maintains strict confidentiality of all student information and records. In accordance with privacy acts and laws, all individuals have a right to privacy of information pertaining to them and access to all student information must be strictly limited to protect that privacy and civil rights of the student. Written Consent (informed consent by parent/caregiver, conservator, or student over 18 years of age who have no conservator) is required before student information can be shared with individuals outside of the Florida Autism Center of Excellence. Federal law allows for the waiver of written parent/caregiver consent in release of information only under very specific conditions (FERPA 99.31) including:

- A. To education institution/ LEA school officials/ teachers with legitimate educational interests.

- B. To officials of another school/school system where a student seeks to enroll.
- C. To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- D. To parents/caregivers of dependent students (“Dependent” meaning in this case, minors in custody of the state).
- E. To comply with judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- F. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.

Information concerning FACE students is not shared outside the school without written consent except as waived by law. A record of all approved transfers of information is kept in the student’s cumulative file. This transfer of information is limited to documents in the cumulative file, which have been generated by FACE and does not apply to documents in the cumulative file, which have been generated by other agencies or professionals.

## **INSPECTION OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Student cumulative (CUM) files are stored in locked file cabinets in the school office. FACE will not make these student records available, nor disclose any confidential information regarding the student, to any individual or agency other than parent/caregiver with educational rights and appropriate FACE representatives without a signed release from the parent/caregiver, except as waived by the law (See FACE Release of Student Information). All personnel with access to student files must sign the Confidentiality Agreement.

As the parent/guardian you have the right to inspect your student’s cumulative file. All requests must be submitted to the school Director. A mutually agreeable time for you to review the file with school personnel will be scheduled.

Request copies of the CUM folder:

1. Notify FACE registrar that copies are being requested.
2. Copies will be made and provided within three business days.

3. A fee of \$0.20 per page will be assessed.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular student attendance is extremely important. Days missed can never be duplicated. Absences should be restricted to illness and medical/dental appointments. In order to maximize the quality of your child's educational experience, it is essential that they attend school on a regular basis. This ensures consistency in strategy implementation and allows students to acclimate to the school environment, both of which facilitate learning.

Our first priority is to provide effective and individualized educational programs for your child. If they are not present in our classrooms, our ability to address their needs effectively is significantly diminished, and IEP goal attainment becomes extremely challenging. We believe that continued collaboration and cooperation between school and home is essential to your child's success, and that consistent attendance at school affords us the opportunity to provide your child with the education they deserve.

Students have the right to:

- physically attend a public school within their attendance area;
- attend a Technical or Special Education Center when they qualify and are accepted for enrollment;
- participate in one of the other choice options – Magnet, School Choice, Charter, etc.;
- receive information concerning attendance policies at their school to include excused and unexcused absences and tardy;
- make up any work missed because of excused absences;
- request a transfer to another school outside their attendance areas when they experience severe hardships. All appeals must be submitted to the Office of Student Planning and Placement;
- homebound instruction if not attending school due to extended illness (longer than 30 days).

Students have the responsibility to:

- attend classes daily and on time unless circumstances beyond their control prohibit;
- request make-up work from their teachers after the absences have been adequately explained;
- attend school until the age of 16. Students ages 16-18 who desire to leave school prior to graduation may do so only upon completion and filing with their school an “Intent to Terminate Enrollment” form and an exit interview;
- abide by School Board attendance policies;
- make an application for services with the Exceptional Student Education office if they are eligible for homebound instruction.

Parents have the responsibility to:

- notify school personnel about their child's absence from school on the day of the absence;
- notify the school of any change of address, phone numbers, and emergency contact numbers;
- make application to the Exceptional Student Education office if a student is eligible for homebound instruction;
- notify school personnel if the family is moving out of town or out of the school's attendance boundary;
- be aware of Student Academic Calendar and coordinate trips, vacations, and personal business to support attendance on school days.

### **ATTENDANCE ALERT TO PARENTS**

When a student accumulates five absences during a grading period, notification will be sent to the parent or guardian unless school personnel have informed the parents/guardians previously. When a student accumulates ten unexcused absences (not including suspensions) within a 90 calendar day period, a letter will be sent to the parent or guardian. Excerpt from Florida Statute 1003 .26 (1)(b)(c)(e) “The Principal shall . . .a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential

remedies, and the Principal shall notify the district school superintendent and the school district contact for home education programs that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance.” If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team will implement the following:

- frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and family;
- evaluation for alternative education programs;
- attendance contracts.

The child study team may, but is not required to, implement other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommendation for filing a truancy report.

If the parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the district board. The School Board may provide a hearing officer, and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the district School Board. If the district School Board’s final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the district Superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for non-compliance with compulsory school attendance.

Students who display a pattern of non-attendance may be required to present medical evidence.

Students who are absent from class but not listed on the absentee bulletin shall be reported by the teacher to the appropriate office.

In the preparation of cases for prosecution under the Compulsory School Attendance Act: Florida Statute Section 1003, the school system is authorized to release pertinent school data in interpretative form to the State Attorney’s Office, to the Office of Youth Services, and to the Circuit Court, Juvenile Division, without parent consent.

For students receiving outside therapy, we ask that you schedule these appointments after the school day has ended.

Please call your student's school between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM if your student will be absent that day. If we do not have telephone verification for an absence, we will need a note stating the reason for the absence. The note should include the following information:

- Student's name
- Reason for absence
- Your name and signature

### **ABSENCE VERIFICATION**

The Education Code still requires the parent/caregiver to communicate with the school by phone or note as to the reason for a student's absence. The following are considered excused or acceptable absences for the purpose of Compulsory Attendance laws:

- A. An illness of the student or a medical or dental appointment; six (6) or more absences within a nine-week grading period, may require a doctor's statement by school officials.
- B. An accident resulting in injury to the student
- C. A death in the student's immediate family
- D. An observance of an established religious holiday. Documentation of the religious affiliation of the student may be required by school officials. If the religious holiday observance cannot be identified as a traditionally well-known day, school officials should require a note from the parent and a letter from the leader of the faith organization stating that the day, if celebrated, would result in an absence. If the letters are submitted, the absence should be excused and also recognized as an established religious holiday that does not impact any attendance incentives;
- E. Pre-planned absence for a personal reason that is acceptable to the Principal or designee. A parent must make the request in writing to the Principal or designee at least three (3) days prior to the date of the absence. The parent will be notified of the decision. Vacations, other than on non-student days, must be pre-approved.

- F. A subpoena by a law enforcement agency or a required court appearance;
- G. An emergency for a reason acceptable to the Principal/designee for an emergency such as:
  - severe weather conditions;
  - a major personal or family problem;
  - fire, flood, or other major damage to the home;
  - an accident on the way to school.

### **CLEARANCE OF ABSENCES**

Absences must be cleared within five school days of the date of the absence.

After five school days, an uncleared absence will be counted as unexcused.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE ABSENCES THAT:**

- Are caused by truancy of the student

### **PROCESS FOR ABSENCE VERIFICATION**

- Notes, signed by a parent/caregiver should be obtained whenever possible.
- Phone calls may be accepted and logged.
- Other sources of information may be used if they are satisfactory to the person making the verification.
- It is acceptable for 18-year-old students to document their reasons for absences, either in the form of a note or phone call.

## **TARDINESS (HCPS POLICY 5200, 5230, 5600)**

A student is tardy when the student arrives after the beginning of the school day. A student's tardiness shall be excused when the reason given is acceptable to the Principal or designee. Examples of acceptable reasons for tardiness are the same as the examples of acceptable reasons for excused absences.

A student has the responsibility to be in class on time. A student failing to make an effort to attend class shall be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. A student's excessive unexcused tardiness shall be considered willful disobedience, and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action. More than four late arrivals during a grading period shall require medical or other documentation to be excused. For students with a regular pattern of tardiness a conference with the school Director will be scheduled to discuss the issue and determine potential solutions, up to and including the student returning to their neighborhood school.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING TARDIES (HCPS POLICY 5230)**

Students who are tardy to school must be signed-in at the Main Office. For safety reasons, elementary students must not be dropped off. An excused tardy exists when reasons acceptable to the Principal or his or her designee are given. Excused sign-in includes:

- illness;
- medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required);
- automobile accident;
- deaths or funerals;
- emergency situations acceptable to the Principal or designee;
- required court appearance (subpoena required);
- established religion observance;
- severe weather;
- breakdown of school bus.



- Unexcused sign-ins include the following:
- car problems (ex: flat tire, no gas, car won't start, student getting a parking decal);
- heavy traffic;
- overslept;
- returned for forgotten items or student obtaining an absentee admit;
- non-educational appointments;

Excessive tardies may result in revocation of choice hardship.

### **SIGN-IN PROCEDURES: (HCPS POLICY 5230)**

Any student arriving to school after 8:00am when the school day has begun must report to the Main Office. A parent or guardian must accompany the student into the school to be signed in. Once signed-in a school staff member will walk the student to class. More than two late sign-ins during a grading period shall require medical or other documentation and/or a parent must be present in order to be considered excused.

FACE strives to assist all families and students succeed. In order to do so, students must be present and signed in at the start of the school day. Students who arrive after arrival are not considered in the care of FACE staff until signed in at the main office. As such, FACE staff are unable to assist with transitioning students from their vehicles into the building. Once the student has entered the building with their parent or guardian FACE staff may assist in transporting the student to the classroom. We highly encourage all families to utilize our arrival line from 7:45-8:00 so that students may begin their instructional day promptly at 8:05. Any students arriving after 8:00 should enter the building from the main entrance unless otherwise directed.

### **SIGN-OUT (PRE-APPROVED AND EMERGENCY) (HCPS POLICY 5200, 5230)**

Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave without permission from an administrator or designee. In the event a student must leave

early, the parent/guardian must make the request in person in the Main Office. A picture ID must be presented. We request that any students who are signed out early in the office be picked up no later than 30 minutes prior to dismissal. After this time the students are packing up and transitioning to dismissal; bringing students to the office can create additional chaos during an already hectic time in the day.

Your child's attendance in school is very important. Just as with late arrivals, your child has the responsibility to be in class for the duration of instructional time. We want your child to receive as much from the school day as possible. To facilitate this we request that your child be present for the duration of each school day. While we recognize that early sign-out is necessary from time-to-time, this should not be an everyday occurrence. More than four early sign-outs during a grading period shall require medical or other documentation to be excused.

Excused sign-outs include the following:

- medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required);
- deaths or funerals;
- emergency situations acceptable to the Principal or designee;
- court appearance (subpoena required);

Unexcused sign-outs include the following:

- forgotten items (for instance: books, lunch, money, homework, projects, admits);
- violation of dress code (to obtain appropriate dress);
- non-educational appointments.

Excessive early sign-outs may result in revocation of choice hardship.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS: (HCPS POLICY 5230)**

During school hours a principal or designee shall permit a child to leave school only in custody of one of the following adults:

- parent/guardian of the student with photo ID;

- person listed on Emergency Contact Card, with photo ID;
- a law enforcement officer;
- an authorized worker from the Department of Children and Families.

At the end of the school day, students are released at a specified time and place and are expected to go directly home. Parents must notify the school office in writing regarding any change in the student's normal transportation. Car riders should be picked up immediately in the school's designated area. Students riding buses are expected to unload from the bus at their designated stop.

### **DRESS CODE POLICY**

It is the mission of FACE to provide every student with an educational program that meets his or her individual needs. FACE recognizes that, within certain limits, each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The purpose of this dress code is to encourage students to come to school prepared to participate in the educational process. FACE authorizes the Director to enforce school regulations prohibiting inappropriate student dress or grooming practices.

The following Dress Code is required for FACE students:

- Solid color polo shirt.
- Solid color slacks, shorts, or skirts worn at the waist, or jumpers. Baggy or tight clothing, overalls, jeans (unless there is a designated casual day), or pants or shorts that sag will not be allowed. Shorts, skirts and jumpers must be of a length that is no more than three (3) inches above the knee. Basketball shorts, yoga pants, and other athletic wear are not permitted.
- Closed-toed shoes or sneakers. Shoelaces must be tied and Velcro flaps must be fastened.
- No hooded garments. If weather necessitates, jackets or other types of outerwear may be worn to school but must be removed once inside the building.
- Jewelry or accessories that distract from the learning process will need to be removed and given to the teacher.

- Hats or head coverings are not allowed inside the building.

All clothing must fit appropriately. Any student wearing or carrying satanic, tobacco, alcohol, and other drug-related clothing or symbols as well clothing deemed to be in conflict with the school's dress code policy will be referred to an administrator. The administrator will ask the student to make the appropriate corrections. If the student refuses, the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s) shall be contacted, and the student may be sent home to change clothes or required to change clothes using clothing available on campus. \*\*If your student has unique sensory needs please contact a FACE administrator.

Student's and Parent/Caregiver's Responsibilities are to be aware of what clothing is considered appropriate and inappropriate (including shoes) and abide by the school's dress policy.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

An emergency fact sheet and demographic sheet must be completed and updated annually. The parent/caregiver or care provider must complete these forms. These forms request the phone numbers of each parent/caregiver's employer and the name and phone number of persons to contact if parent/caregiver cannot be reached. Also, the sheet requests a physician name and phone number and other vital information you think we should be aware of. Help us keep this information current by notifying us of new names or numbers throughout the year.

You, as the parent/caregiver or legal guardian are responsible for providing this emergency information to the school, as well as informing us of any changes. In the event of a medical emergency, the school will contact you first. If you cannot be reached, we will begin calling those designated as alternatives on the emergency fact sheet. However, if none of these emergency numbers are successful, it will be necessary to call 911.

## **INCIDENT REPORTS**

An incident report is a written report that is completed for the following reasons: 1) an incident occurred which resulted in any physical contact with the student that was not part of the student's approved Behavior Intervention Plan, 2) an incident resulted in injury or property damage of any kind, 3) a student attempted to run away or was missing from the classroom/activity, 4) an incident which involved the public in any way, or, 5) there was an indicator of possible neglect or abuse. These reports are to document incidents as well as provide information needed to prevent behavioral crisis and other student-related issues. These reports are then sent to the district, Education Coordinator, and parent/caregiver, as appropriate. Follow up is provided as needed.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The campus has an Emergency Preparedness Plan developed so that emergency procedures are established before any crisis occurs. These include plans for hurricanes, safety breaches, fire, etc. In the unlikely event that a major disaster occurs during the school day, which precludes students from going home or prevents parent/caregiver from picking up students, we are prepared to stay onsite for several days. Any medications your student may need for an extended stay at FACE should be sent in and be in compliance with the medication policy. Local emergency services and parent/caregiver will be contacted as soon as possible. Call the Administrative Office in Tampa 813-985-3223 if you are unable to reach your student's campus.

We need your help in providing a safe school environment for your student. We also want to inform you of health services that are required by law. A safer environment can be accomplished by:

- A. Workable emergency telephone numbers
- B. Emergency Contact Information

We cannot release a student or obtain direction in case of an emergency from a person who is not listed on the emergency contact sheet. Please

complete the emergency contact sheet with all important health and physician information.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS, CANCELLATION, DELAYED OPENING, OR EARLY DISMISSAL**

When the School District of Hillsborough County is closed or being evacuated due to a weather emergency, FACE will do the same. For information regarding such, listen to your local TV/radio stations or call the school.

## **STUDENT ILLNESS POLICY**

In an effort to minimize the likelihood of exposure to contagious illness, the following will specify the conditions under which students should remain at their homes/residences or if at school, be sent back home or to the residence due to a contagious illness.

### A. Contagious symptoms:

- Fever: any temperature above 100 degrees.
- Diarrhea: any occurrence of abnormally frequent intestinal evacuations.
- Vomiting: NOTE\*\* in the case that vomiting is being treated in a behavior plan, it will not suffice as a reason for sending the student home unless the topography of the behavior, as determined by the Program Coordinator has changed and is in this case thought to be a medical issue.
- Runny nose: excessive nasal discharge, which has a yellow or green color.
- Coughing: severe and/or frequent coughing.
- Skin irritation/rash that is consistent with a contagious illness (e.g., ring worm)
- Exposed rash or fungus: an untreated and/or uncovered fungus

- Lice

B. Procedure:

- When a student comes to school with these symptoms, we will call the parent/caregiver and promptly send the student home.
- Once the parent has been contacted for a sick child the child must be picked up from the school within one hour.
- In the event the determination has been made that the student should be sent home, the teacher or other assigned staff member will contact the home or residence to make arrangements for student pick-up.
- Per Hillsborough County Schools a student must be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- The school may request written medical verification that the student is no longer contagious.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

In those instances when it is necessary for a student to receive medication at school, the following procedure must be followed:

- A. Provide the school with a written authorization form from the physician (Consent form available from your school)
- B. Parent/caregiver must provide written permission for school staff to dispense medication (Consent form available from your school)
- C. The most current prescription must be brought to school in the original prescription bottle. Medications should be given to the classroom teacher so that they may be locked in the designated area and managed by the Office Manager.
- D. The prescription bottle must be clearly marked with:
  - Doctor's name
  - Student's name
  - Name of medication

- Dosage
  - How and when to give
  - Date of the most current prescription
- E. Only the number of pills to be given at school should be sent in the original prescription bottle. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to contact the doctor who prescribed the medication.
- F. Signed consents for FACE staff to provide medication to your son/daughter are valid for 1-year from the date they are signed.

Over the counter drugs to be given at school must also meet the above requirements. These will only be administered when the proper forms are completed and an unopened, sealed container marked with the student's name is provided by the parent or caregiver and delivered to the school office. A consent form for giving over the counter drugs is available from your student's school.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

FACE has zero tolerance for any form of sexual harassment in the schools. Action will be taken against any employee or student who engages in unlawful sexual harassment.

Teachers shall discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure students that they need not endure any form of sexual harassment.

## **DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

## **FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment may occur as a pattern of degrading sexual speech or action ranging from verbal or physical annoyances or distractions to



deliberate intimidation and frank threats or sexual demands. Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Verbal Harassment- Spreading of sexual rumors, derogatory comments, jokes, slurs, and graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body/dress or sexually degrading words used to describe an individual.
- B. Physical Harassment-Unnecessary or offensive touching or impeding or blocking movement. Visual Harassment-Derogatory or offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, or gestures, suggestive or obscene letters, objects, notices or invitations.
- C. Reprisals-making threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR ENGAGING IN SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Director, with assistance from clinical personnel, administrative personnel, and the teacher shall determine the appropriate course of action for a student who engages in sexual harassment toward others.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Any student who feels harassed should immediately contact the Director. If a situation involving sexual harassment occurs, a complaint can be filed. The Director shall determine which procedure is appropriate.

FACE prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complaint or any participant in the complaint process. Each complaint of sexual harassment shall be promptly investigated in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Students who feel they have been sexually harassed by an adult or a student should report the harassment to an adult who will help file a written complaint with the Director.

## **SUSPECTED STUDENT ABUSE REPORTING**

Persons required to report student abuse or neglect include any school employee of FACE, who observes, has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a student has been subjected to abuse or neglect, as defined in the Student Protection Act, is required by law to report that suspected instance of student abuse to the abuse hotline; this information is confidential and reported anonymously.

ONLY ADULT OR STUDENT PROTECTIVE SERVICES CAN CONDUCT THE INVESTIGATION.

## **DEFINITION OF STUDENT ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Student abuse is defined as:

- a. A physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means;
- b. Student sexual abuse including both sexual assault and sexual exploitation;
- c. Willful cruelty or unjustified punishment, including: inflicting or permitting unjustified physical pain or mental suffering, or the endangerment of the student's person or health;
- d. Unlawful corporal punishment or injury, willfully inflicted, resulting in a traumatic condition;
- e. Neglect of a student, whether "severe" or "general", must also be reported if the perpetrator is a person responsible for the student's welfare.

## **SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

Parent/caregiver/s may request a school accountability report annually from the school site.

## **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION**

FACE prohibits discriminatory behavior directed toward staff and/or students.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

### Students' Responsibilities

- Attend class regularly
- Respect the rights of other students to learn by not being disruptive.
- Bring to class all of the materials required and be prepared to participate in the daily lessons.
- Seek assistance from the teacher when having difficulty understanding the class work.

### Parent/Caregiver Expectations

- Be aware of your student's progress in class.
- Contact the school for a conference with the teacher(s) regarding any questions about the curricula or the student's progress.
- Attend the Back-to-School event at your student's campus in the fall to learn about the course outline, class procedures, expectations, and to view student work that will be displayed.
- Be aware that Progress Reports are issued quarterly.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an extension of learning that takes place in school. If a teacher assigns homework, it may be part of an assignment that receives a grade, for practice or enrichment, or it may be just a sampling for parents/caregivers understanding of a student's skills.

Classroom teachers will notify parent/caregiver of their individual homework expectations.

## **REVIEW OF CURRICULA**

A prospectus of curricula, including titles and descriptions used in classrooms, is available at the school campus upon request from the Director.

## **TESTING FOR PROFICIENCY**

Students in grades 2-11 will participate in Standardized Achievement testing as determined by the IEP team.

## **HIV/AIDS AND GROWTH DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

Depending upon the educational activities occurring in a classroom and the age of students, education in the areas of HIV/AIDS and sex education may be appropriate for some students. The topic of sexual education may occur in a student's IEP meeting or during the course of the year when a teacher communicates with parent/caregiver about the potential for this area of coursework to be included in the lesson plans for the classroom.

Instruction in HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted disease, human sexuality, health, growth and development, or family life education may be presented by trained classroom teachers, or guest speakers.

Parents/caregivers will be notified of the date(s) of instruction at least 2 weeks before instruction. Parents/caregivers may request an outline of the topics to be covered in a lesson plan and/or preview all materials, which will be used for this instruction.

Any parent/caregiver who wishes a student not receive such instruction should notify the school in writing to insure the student is not included in this instruction. An alternative education activity will be made available to a student whose parent/caregiver has made such a request. The student shall not be subject to disciplinary action, academic penalty, or other sanction if the parent/caregiver declines to permit the student to receive said instruction.

## **DIPLOMA OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SB 850)**

\* Authorizes students with disabilities for whom the IEP team determines that the Florida Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate way to demonstrate skills to earn a standard high school diploma through a combination of course substitutions, industry certifications, portfolios, and other options.

\* Authorizes students with disabilities for whom the IEP team determines that mastery of academic and employment competencies is the most appropriate way to demonstrate skills to earn a standard high school through documented successful employment.

\* Repeals the special diploma option effective July 1, 2015.

\* Authorizes students who are currently pursuing the special diploma option to receive a special diploma if all applicable requirements are met.

\* Authorizes students who are currently participating in the Road to Independence Program to continue to participate in the program.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/BillSummaries/2014/html/863>

## **TRANSFERS/TRANSITIONS**

### ***Transition Back to the District of Residence***

Transitioning back to a public school may be discussed at each IEP meeting. As identified challenges are remediated, transition plans will be discussed.

### ***Transfer to Another School District***

If a student moves to another district, the parent/caregiver:

A. Must complete and submit a FACE withdrawal form. If moving at the end of the school year, notify FACE of intent not to return.

B. Must enroll the student at the new district.

## **COMMUNITY OUTINGS AND FIELD TRIPS**

FACE is a community-based program. When a community outing or field trip is planned each student will receive a general permission slip from his/her teacher (by signing the IEP you also give permission for us to take your student to the specific destinations listed on the plan). You will receive individual permission slips each time a teacher schedules such an event.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a wonderful way to enhance the learning of our students. Trips are planned around particular units of study or interest. Once transportation costs are set, no refunds will be permitted. If you would like to chaperone a trip, please let the teacher know. Please review the chaperone guidelines provided by the classroom teacher.

In any situation where the Department of Homeland Security issues a "Red Alert Status," FACE will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of its students and faculty including the cancellation of scheduled field trips and school events. Should this trip or event be canceled as a result of a "Red Alert Status," FACE cannot guarantee any monies (including deposits) will be refunded by the vendor(s) associated with this transaction. Therefore, students, parents, guardians, etc., are hereby cautioned and advised that FACE will not be liable for any reimbursements associated with this event that are not refunded by the vendor(s) and returned to FACE.

## **POLICY FOR OFF-CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITIES**

Off-campus activities can often be unpredictable and present over stimulating situations for many students on the Autism Spectrum. Our main priority is to ensure safety for all of our students, whether in class or off-campus on a field trip. In order to provide appropriate levels of coverage and supervision for our students, we have instituted the following policy in regards to off-campus activities. In order to be eligible to participate in the off-campus activity students must:

- A. Demonstrate safe behavior for the 2 weeks prior to the planned activity (as outlined in the student's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)) or If the student is not "behavior-free" for the 2 weeks prior to the planned activity (as outlined in the student's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)), parents may elect one of three options:
  - Chaperone their child to the activity with the understanding that they, and not FACE, are liable for their child's behavior, as well as any potential injury or incident that occurs during the off-campus activity

- Indicate unavailability to chaperone and acknowledge that their child will remain at school, under another teacher's supervision, while the class is off-campus
  - Keep their child at home on the day of the off-campus activity
- B. Parents electing to chaperone their child on off-campus trips must first meet at the school for attendance, after which they would use their own personal vehicle to transport both him/herself and their child to the off-campus location.
- C. Parent chaperones are highly valued and we welcome your participation on all of our off-campus trips, even if your child has demonstrated safe behavior for the 2 weeks prior to the activity.

## **STUDENT USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES OR TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### 1. Student Use of Technology Policy

The Director shall oversee the maintenance of each school's technological resources and may establish guidelines and limits regarding their use. He/she shall ensure that all students using these resources receive training in their proper use as well as copies of related FACE policies and regulations. Students should be aware that access to, and use of school technology, is a privilege, not a right.

### 2. Computers, On-line Services, Networks, and the Internet

Students are authorized to use school computers and on-line services in accordance with user obligations and responsibilities as specified below. Teachers may develop specific guidelines for supervision of students while using the Internet (e.g., staff sitting next to the student).

- A. The system shall be used only for purposes directly related to education to include positive reinforcement procedures. FACE uses active Internet filtering and monitoring technology and reserves the right to monitor and view any on-line communications, files, or documents to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Students and users understand that work or email accessed or stored on school computer systems and

servers are not private. Personal use of the school's computer system is strictly prohibited.

- B. Users shall not use the system to encourage the use or sale of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, nor shall they promote unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or FACE policy.
- C. Users shall not create or transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit, or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on race, national origin, gender, appearance, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or political beliefs.
- D. Copyrighted material may not be placed on the system without the author's permission. Unless specified otherwise, users may download copyrighted material for their own educational or instructional use. However, such material shall not be distributed or duplicated without the author's written permission.
- E. Users shall not read other users' mail or files without permission; they shall not attempt to interfere with other users' ability to send or receive electronic mail, nor shall they attempt to read, delete, copy, modify or forge other users' mail or files.
- F. Password sharing and account trespassing are strictly forbidden and may result in the student losing access to computer services. The sharing of documents and data (unless authorized by the teacher), selling, or purchasing of term papers, book reports and other forms of student work is strictly prohibited.
- G. Students and users will not participate in any acts related to credit card fraud, online transactions, electronic forgery, and other forms of illegal and unacceptable behavior. FACE will not be responsible for unauthorized costs incurred by students or users, nor will the school or district vouch for the accuracy of information obtained through the Internet, nor will FACE be responsible for students' or users' negligence, acceptable use policy violations, or mistakes.
- H. Users are expected to keep all network and email messages brief and use appropriate language and decorum.
- I. Students will not have school issued email accounts.



**Note:** Any violation that is determined to be illegal may result in criminal prosecution. Parent/caregiver may be held financially responsible for costs incurred as a result of their student's act of intentional vandalism or damage to software, computers, or related hardware. Teachers may develop specific guidelines for staff supervision of students while using the Internet (e.g., sitting next to student).

## **ITEMS FROM HOME**

Students may only bring school related items from home. This is to ensure the academic success of all students. These items include any clothing needed for school activities (i.e. sneakers for P.E., a jacket, sweatshirt, etc.), toothbrush and toothpaste (if needed), lunch, extra soft drinks or water, backpack, notebook, writing instruments, and supplies the teacher may request. Students are permitted to bring electronic devices designed to enhance participation in school curriculum and activities, therefore, we are happy to allow these items in the classroom. However, FACE cannot be held liable for any damages or loss incurred to such devices while on school campus. If you plan to send your child to school with an approved electronic device please contact the FACE office to obtain the electronic device release form.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

FACE is committed to the goal of a positive, effective and orderly process of instruction. FACE school administrators, teachers, parent/caregiver, support personnel and students assume their share of the responsibility for the attainment of this goal.

Consequence-based practices at FACE are founded on positive behavior. Parents/caregivers can communicate with the student's teacher to learn more about how to maintain consistent consequences at home.

## **IMPLEMENTATION FOR SEARCHES AND SEIZURES**

The following guidelines should be observed by all authorized FACE personnel conducting or involved in searches or seizures in connection with any situation in which FACE is authorized to conduct searches and seizures.

### **Basis for Personal Searches**

- ▶ Fourth Amendment: Prohibition against unreasonable search and seizures without **probable cause**.
  - ▶ Public School/Nonpublic School Administrators work under a lesser standard called **reasonable suspicion**.
- A. No personal search should be conducted except upon a reasonable, individualized suspicion by the school Director or staff member that the student is in possession of contraband in violation of state or federal law or of FACE policy. Such reasonable, individualized suspicion shall be reported to the Director for further action.
- B. A reasonable, individualized suspicion is one based upon objective, observable facts. Examples: (1) Observation that a student had a small plastic bag in his hand, and when the student saw the staff member approaching he hurriedly stuffed the bag down the front of his pants; (2) Observation that student's gait was impaired, speech slurred, etc.
- C. When possible, the observations upon which a Director or staff member bases a reasonable, individualized suspicion should be confirmed by another administrator or staff member.
- D. Before initiating a personal search, the Director or staff member should explain the basis of his or her suspicions to the suspected person and give the person an opportunity to explain the observed behavior upon which the administrator or staff member bases his or her suspicion. A referral for a search is appropriate if the student fails to provide a satisfactory explanation.
- E. If the student refuses to comply with the search when there is reasonable cause, the parent/caregiver will be contacted. In addition the local police may be contacted to search the student. **FACE does not conduct the search unless the student agrees.**

F. In no instance should any school personnel resort to any type of physical constraint, force, or threat, and no one should be physically compelled to submit to a search. If at any point in the search, the student refuses to cooperate with the search, the searcher should explain that such refusal could be the basis for suspension and expulsion. If the student continues to refuse to cooperate, he or she should be referred to the School Director. Any student so referred may be subject to immediate, short-term suspension and to further action pursuant to the terms of FACE policies and the regulations of the Florida Department of Education.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

**NONDISCLOSURE** - No information of any type that leads to or results from a search or seizure should be communicated, revealed, or disclosed by FACE personnel to any person, except as follows:

- A. Such information should be communicated to other school personnel only upon a "need-to-know" basis. A "need-to-know" basis means that the person to whom such information is communicated is authorized to take action on behalf of the school upon learning such information and needs the information to discharge his or her responsibilities.
- B. Such information may be communicated to the parent/caregiver of a student to whom the information relates; such information may be disclosed to law enforcement agencies only upon the authorization of the Director.

## **GANG ACTIVITY**

FACE recognizes that the harm done by the presence and activities of gangs in the schools exceeds the immediate consequences of such activities such as violence and destruction of property. Gang activities also create an atmosphere of intimidation in the entire school community. Both the immediate consequences of gang activity and the secondary effects are disruptive and obstructive to the process of education and

school activities.

It is therefore FACE policy that gangs and gang activities are prohibited in the FACE schools, according to the following.

- A. Definition - For purposes of this policy a "gang" is any group of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts or acts in violation of disciplinary rules of FACE.
- B. Prohibitions - No student on or around school property or at any school activity shall:
  - a. Wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign or other items that evidence or reflect membership in, or affiliation with any gang;
  - b. Engage in any act, either verbal or nonverbal, including gestures or handshakes, showing membership or affiliation in any gang;
  - c. Engage in any act in furtherance of the interests or any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to:
    - i. wearing certain known gang-colored clothing (all reds or all blues), do-rags, chains on pants pockets;
    - ii. soliciting membership in, or affiliation with, any gang;
    - iii. soliciting any person to pay for "protection," or threatening any person, explicitly or implicitly, with violence or with any other illegal or prohibited act
    - iv. painting, writing, or otherwise inscribing gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols, or signs, on FACE property;
    - v. soliciting any person to engage in physical violence against any other person
    - vi. engaging in violence, extortion, or any other illegal act or other violation of FACE policy;
    - vii. exposure of any gang-related tattoos, gang-related skin branding, or other gang or member affiliated drawings or carvings on a student's skin.
- C. Violations of Policy - Students who violate this policy shall be subject

to the full range of FACE suspension/termination, in addition to applicable criminal and civil penalties. Procedures for violation of this policy are as follows:

- a. Students will meet with the Director when a staff member or contact person has reasonable, individualized suspicion that a student is in violation of this policy.
- b. Upon determined policy violation, the Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible. Students will be suspended until the parent/caregiver attends a conference with the Director to choose consequences for policy violation.
- c. Consequences for violation of this policy may include:
  - i. The student will participate in educational programming about the dangers of gang activity,
  - ii. The student will sign a "no involvement in gang related activity" contract to be witnessed by the parent/caregiver,
  - iii. The student will be suspended for up to three (3) days. No grades will be earned during this time.
- d. The Director will call an emergency IEP meeting to address the student's gang involvement. Recommendations will be made by the IEP team to address the issue. Within seven (7) working days of the student's return to school a conference will be held with the parent/caregiver, Director, the student and the IEP member(s) to discuss recommendations and develop an intervention plan. The parent/caregiver and the student will sign the intervention plan.

## **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

FACE prohibits students from using, possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, and from possessing, using or distributing drug paraphernalia, while on school property or at school-sponsored activities. Student use or possession of tobacco is also prohibited.

FACE reserves the right to search a student's person, personal effects, and

vehicle when there is reasonable cause as per FACE's search and seizure policy.

## **1. Definitions**

- **ALCOHOL:** Any liquor, wine, beer, or other beverage containing alcohol.
- **DISTRIBUTION:** Selling, passing on, or giving away any controlled substance.
- **DRUGS:** Any drug, including illegal drugs, legal prescription, over-the-counter drugs, marijuana or inhalants that are used, possessed or distributed for unauthorized purposes, including counterfeit (look-alike) substances.
- **DRUG PARAPHERNALIA:** Equipment or apparatus designed for the purpose of measuring, packaging, distributing, or facilitating the use of drugs.
- **SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE:** The use of alcohol and other drugs are in violation of state or federal laws, or in violation of FACE policy.
- **TOBACCO:** Any product containing tobacco, which can be smoked or used in, non-smoking form (e.g., snuff, chewing tobacco).
- **CLOTHING:** Hats, jewelry, slogans or clothing displaying or representing drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products

All prescribed medication to be taken at school shall be kept in a secure centralized location

## **2. Possession/Use/Under the Influence of Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia or Alcohol**

### *A. First Offense*

- The staff member will inform the Director immediately.
- The Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent/caregiver as soon as is possible.

- The Director will arrange a conference with the parent/caregiver and the student.
- The student will sign a "no-use" contract to be witnessed by the parent/caregiver.
- The object will be held for evidence.
- The student will participate in educational programming about the dangers of using, abusing or selling drugs/ alcohol.

#### *B. Second Offense*

- The staff member will inform the Director immediately.
- The Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible.
- The Director may notify the police after consultation with the Director.
- The Director will arrange a conference with the parent/caregiver and the student.
- The student will sign a "no-use" contract to be witnessed by the parent/caregiver.

#### *Third Offense*

- The staff member will notify the Director immediately.
- The Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible.
- The Director, after consultation with the Director, may notify the police, and the student may be released into the custody of the police.
- The student will be suspended until an emergency IEP meeting to request alternative educational placement is requested.

### **3. Distribution of Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia or Alcohol**

#### *A. First Offense*

- The staff will inform the Director immediately.
- The Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the

parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible.

- The Director, after consultation with the Director, may notify police.
- The student will be suspended for a minimum of three (3) days. No grades will be earned during this time.
- The Director will contact the parent/caregiver and arrange for a conference. The Director will call an emergency IEP meeting to address drug issues.
- Recommendations will be made by the IEP team to address the issue.

Within seven (7) working days of the student's return to school a conference will be held with the parent/caregiver, Director, the student and the IEP member(s) to discuss recommendations and develop an intervention plan. The parent/caregiver and the student will sign the intervention plan and a "no use" contract. If the parent/caregiver and/or the student refuse to follow the recommendation of the IEP team, the IEP team will report such non-compliance to the Director in writing. The Director may recommend short-term suspension and/or alternative placement of the student to the IEP team. Reinstatement to the school would necessitate compliance with IEP team recommendations. FACE may take other actions as deemed appropriate.

#### A. Second Offense

- The staff member will inform the Director immediately.
- The Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible.
- The Director, after consultation with the Director, may release the student into the custody of local authorities.
- The student will be suspended while procedures for expulsion are activated.
- Expulsion will be recommended to the IEP team as per FACE student termination/exit policy.



## **WEAPONS IN SCHOOL**

FACE prohibits students from bringing weapons onto school property, or carrying or keeping any weapons on school property while attending or participating in any school activity that includes transportation to and from such activity.

### 1. Definition

- Any firearm, knife, explosive, or other object, even if manufactured for a non-violent purpose, that has a potentially violent use,

OR

- Any "look alike" object that resembles an object that has a potentially violent use

AND

- If, under the surrounding circumstances, the purpose of keeping or carrying the object is for use, or threat of use, as a weapon.

### 2. Violations

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to the full range of FACE suspension/termination, in addition to applicable criminal and civil penalties.

### 3. Procedures for violation of this policy are as follows:

- A. Students will meet with the Director when a staff member or contact person has reasonable, individualized suspicion that a student is in violation of this policy.
- B. Upon determined policy violation, the Director will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent/caregiver as soon thereafter as possible. Students will be suspended until the parent/caregiver attends a conference with the Director to choose consequences for policy violation.

### 4. Consequences for violation of this policy will may include:

- A. The student will participate in educational programming about the dangers of gang activity,

- B. The student will sign a “no involvement in gang related activity” contract to be witnessed by the parent/caregiver,
- C. The student will be suspended for up to three (3) days. No grades will be earned during this time.
- D. The Director will call an emergency IEP meeting to address the student’s gang involvement. Recommendations will be made by the IEP team to address the issue. Within seven (7) working days of the student's return to school a conference will be held with the parent/caregiver, Director, the student and the IEP member(s) to discuss recommendations and develop an intervention plan. The parent/caregiver and the student will sign the intervention plan.

### **PROBATIONARY SYSTEM**

If your student has involvement with the criminal justice system, and has a probation officer assigned, FACE will request that the parent/caregiver provide FACE with any copies of court reports, juvenile hall records (i.e. incident reports, grades, transcripts, etc.) and citations. The purpose for FACE to obtain and review these reports is to adequately design an educational and behavioral program that would meet your student’s needs. It is also FACE's intent to maintain the safety of your student, as well as the safety of FACE staff and students.

If your student does have a probation officer, FACE will work collaboratively with the student, family, probation officer and any other community service providers (i.e. Mental Health) to maintain your student's educational and behavioral program at FACE.

FACE may request the probation officer and other service providers attend any IEP meetings held for your student.

If your student exhibits a behavior that is considered to be a violation his/her probation, FACE will notify the probation officer as soon as possible. In addition we will notify the authorities if necessary, and you, the parent/caregiver as soon as it is possible.

### **RESTITUTION FOR PROPERTY DESTRUCTION**

Students, who purposefully destroy, vandalize, set fire to, or break property after being reminded that their behavior is unsafe, may be responsible for

repaying FACE for a portion of the costs to repair or replace the items. The Director will determine restitution on an individual basis.

## **EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL INFORMATION**

FACE requires all parents/caregivers to complete an Emergency/Medical Information form for each student being transported. If your student has a specific individual need (i.e. epilepsy, diabetes, incontinence/toileting needs, etc.), it is required that this information be given to your bus driver on the form available from the bus company.

## **SCHOOL PARTIES**

Class or school parties are restricted only to such functions as holidays and teacher designated special occasions. Please check with your child's teacher on any questions. Only store bought unopened items are permitted.

## **RESPONSIBLE ELECTRONIC USE GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS**

***I have access to the Internet, school networks and electronic devices so I can...***

- expand my learning;
- communicate with others about what I am learning;
- research topics for class projects or for my personal learning;
- create products highlighting my learning;
- learn how to be a responsible and productive digital citizen.

Here are some things I need to know:

- Electronic devices include but are not limited to computers, netbooks, iPads, iPods, tablets, cell phones, cameras, and other electronic devices that allow me to create and communicate.
- I am responsible for all my online activities that take place through the network connection with my school's devices or through access with my own personal electronic devices.
- I am responsible for obeying all laws, including copyright. This also means I may not use the District logo or other District-owned content on my personal posts.

- I do not have the right of privacy when accessing the Internet or network while at school.
- Communicating electronically includes using my camera and cell phone to communicate visually.
- When communicating electronically, I should ask myself: Is it safe? Is it kind? Is it respectful? Is it appropriate?
- I do not have an absolute right to take, publish/post photographs or videos of others at school, as it may impact their individual rights of privacy.
- Bullying or harassing someone either in person or electronically is wrong, violates the Code of Student Conduct, and is against the law.
- Information I find on the Internet is not necessarily true or accurate.
- There are filters to prevent access to inappropriate information, but no filter is perfect. I must protect myself by knowing how to close a window or click on the back button.

Here's what I agree to do as a responsible and productive digital citizen:

- I will follow all school rules and laws when using electronic devices at school.
- I will not damage equipment, upload harmful files, damage files, delete files, or access someone else's files because it impacts others.
- I will keep my password to myself and will not share it with others.
- I will not search for or try to access obscene, harmful, or inappropriate material.
- If I accidentally access inappropriate materials, I will close the window and tell a responsible adult.
- I will not post or send hurtful, offensive or inappropriate material.
- I will behave honestly, fairly, and with integrity when posting online, including my social networks.

- I will follow rules of network etiquette, and I will be polite when communicating with others electronically. I will not use bad language or access messages from others who use bad language.
- I will not post or share pictures of others without their knowledge and approval.
- I will stay safe and will never meet or give out personal information such as my name, phone number, or address to someone I meet on the Internet without the express permission of my parents and/or teachers.
- I will discuss my online activities with my parents so they understand how I am learning to be a good digital citizen.
- My teachers and administrators have the right to access whatever I do online while in school if they are concerned about my safety or the safety of others.
- I will not use others' work without permission or without citing their work according to copyright laws.
- If I'm not sure how to do something or whether something is okay to access or do, I will ask a responsible adult.

What happens if I violate this agreement and am not a responsible digital citizen?

- Violations of this agreement will result in disciplinary action.

### **CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

During school hours cell phones and other electronic devices (unless authorized for school use with prior approval) are not to be activated or used in any manner and must be stored out of sight.

#### ***Student Consequences:***

- First Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to the administrator. The administrator will notify the parent/guardian and will return the device to the student at the end of the day.
- Second Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled and given to the administrator. A mandatory

conference is scheduled and the electronic device is returned to the parent. This can be a phone conference since some parents cannot physically come to the school.

- Third Offense: The device will be confiscated by the staff member, labeled, and given to the administrator. A mandatory conference will be held with the parent/guardian and disciplinary actions will be imposed by administration (detention, work detail, etc.).

Students are permitted to bring electronic devices designed to enhance participation in school curriculum and activities, therefore, we are happy to allow these items in the classroom. However, FACE cannot be held liable for any damages incurred to such devices while on school campus.

If you plan to send your child to school with an approved electronic device, you hereby release the FACE school from liability for any damages incurred to personal electronic devices (iPads, FM Transmitters, AlphaSmarts, etc.) sent to school with your child for the purposes of educational support. An electronic device release form must be on file before the student is permitted to use the device at school.

### **BULLYING (HCPS POLICY 5517.01)**

It is the policy of Hillsborough County Public Schools that all of its students and school employees have an educational and workplace setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The district will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

#### **Definitions:**

“Bullying” includes “cyberbullying” and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any

threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

- teasing
- threat
- intimidation
- stalking
- cyberstalking
- physical violence
- theft
- sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- public or private humiliation

**Bullying and harassment also encompasses:**

- Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
- Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
  - incitement or coercion;
  - accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system; or
  - acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

**“Harassment”** or **“bullying”** also includes electronically transmitted acts (i.e., Internet, email, cellular telephone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) directed toward a student(s) or staff member(s) that causes mental or physical harm or is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

### **Expected Behavior**

The school expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment. Such behavior is essential in maintaining an environment that provides each student the opportunity to obtain a high quality education in a uniform, safe, secure, efficient, and high quality system of education. The standards for student behavior shall be set cooperatively through interaction among students, parents/guardians, staff and community member, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of such an atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff and community members. School administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers serve as role models for students and are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying. The school district upholds that school-related bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited:

- during any education program or activity conducted by a school site's education institution;
- during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- on a school bus or at a bus stop of a school site's educational institution; or



- through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a school site's education institution.

**Bullying** may be limited to a single incident. However, in most cases, bullying is characterized by repeated harmful actions on the part of the bully(ies).

An individual has the legal right to report an incident(s) of bullying without fear of reprisal or retaliation at any time. **Retaliation** is defined in the dictionary as meaning "to pay back (an injury) in kind." When a person is accused of having engaged in an inappropriate action, especially **bullying**, the common reaction of that person be angry and want to pay the victim back (retaliate). Retaliation must **not occur**.

Some examples of retaliations are:

- attempting to discuss the matter in any way while it is under investigation;
- spreading rumors;
- following the person;
- becoming physical in any way;
- destroying property;
- using the telephone or any other electronic or written form of communication to retaliate in any way;
- ostracizing.

Therefore, allegations of **bullying** will be promptly investigated, giving due regard to the need for confidentiality and the safety of the victim and/or any individual(s) who reports an incident(s) of **bullying**.

#### **Ways to Report a Bully:**

- Verbally to an adult at school
- Via email to school administrator or district office
- Via a telephone call to school administrator or district office
- Crime Stoppers (1-800-873-8477)

### **If You Are the Victim of Bullying:**

- Clearly tell the bully(ies) to stop.
- Don't ignore the incident. Immediately report the incident to someone at school or seek peer mediation at school.
- Tell your parent(s)/guardian(s).
- If the bullying continues after you have clearly told the bully(ies) to stop, make a written record of the incident including date, time, witness or witnesses, and parties involved in the incident.
- Report the incident immediately to an adult who has authority over the bully(ies); for example: teacher, school counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- Avoid being alone with the person(s) who has attempted to bully you in the past.

### **To Minimize the Risk of Being Accused of Bullying**

#### **DO:**

- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Remember that NO one has a right to harm another person in any way.
- Think before you speak.
- Immediately apologize if you accidentally say or do something that has made another person feel oppressed.
- Report all incidents of bullying behavior you have witnessed to appropriate school personnel.

#### **DON'T:**

- Touch anyone without his or her permission and especially in an inappropriate way.
- Keep interacting with a person after he or she has perceived your behavior toward him or her as being inappropriate and has clearly told you to stop.

- Make remarks that may cause another person to feel oppressed (stressed, scared, intimidated).

### **HARASSMENT (HCPS POLICY 5517, 5517.01, 5517.03)**

Harassment is when a person continually teases, annoys, threatens or insults another person in either a verbal, physical or written manner.

Sexual harassment is when a person bothers another person using sexual words, pictures, gestures, or conduct that the other person would find offensive. Sexual harassment can also occur when a person is forced by his or her location or situation to see or overhear sexual comments, gestures, or conduct that he or she finds offensive.

Harassment is specifically prohibited by state and federal law. The school will not tolerate harassment activity by any of its students or employees. Harassment occurs when a person subjects another person to any unwelcome conduct on account of sex (or race, origin, religion, etc.) on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Persons who engage in such conduct will be subject to a range of punishment.

#### **Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to the following:**

- verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature;
- subtle pressure for sexual activity;
- repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implication (for example, a person's body, clothes or sexual involvement, display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or written materials);
- discrimination because of real or perceived sexual orientation/gender identity or expression thereof.

Harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or welcomed interactions of a socially acceptable nature. Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent harassment at any of the schools sites or activities. An individual has the legal right at any time to raise the issue of harassment with appropriate site and/or district personnel without fear of reprisal. Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated, giving due regard to the need for

confidentiality. Information relative to the prevention and correction of harassment shall be provided in writing to personnel and students.

A person is being harassed if one or more of the following are occurring, and this behavior is unwanted and unwelcomed:

- sexual comments, jokes, or gestures;
- suggestive comments;
- being “sexually rated” by an individual, for example, on a scale from 1 to 10;
- being pressured to go out with someone;
- being the recipient of whistles, jeers, or catcalls;
- being touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way;
- being intentionally brushed up against in a sexual way;
- spreading sexual rumors about a person;
- having clothing pulled in a sexual way;
- being shown, given, or left sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes;
- being forced (because of their location) to view centerfolds, photographs, posters, or drawings of a sexual nature;
- having one’s way blocked in a sexual way;
- others placing messages or graffiti written about that person on a computer screen, bathroom walls, in locker rooms, or any other public site;
- being forced to kiss someone;
- being forced to do something sexual other than kissing;
- being called gay, lesbian, or any other term that denigrates sexual identity;
- having clothing pulled off or down;
- being spied on while dressing or showering;

- requesting sexual favors;
- continually teasing, annoying, threatening or insulting another person in either a verbal, physical or written manner;
- teasing annoying, threatening or insulting.

Those being harassed should take the following steps:

- **Clearly** tell the harasser to stop.
- If the harassment continues, make a written record of the incident including date, time, witness or witnesses, and parties involved in the incident.
- Report the incident immediately to an adult who has authority over the harasser. For example: teacher, school counselor, assistant principal, or principal.
- If harassment continues or you feel uncomfortable reporting this fact

**Confidentiality** must be maintained as much as possible during any harassment investigation. Confidentiality is maintained when the identity of the people involved or the circumstances surrounding the incident are kept private.

**Florida Autism Center of Excellence**

**PARENT/CAREGIVER HANDBOOK RECEIPT 2016-2017**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print

To: Parent/Caregiver

The Florida Autism Center of Excellence has a Parent/Caregiver Handbook, which reflects important policies for our schools and the students who attend. These policies are designed to guide our students through successful school experiences by stating our expectations in areas including, but not limited to, attendance, dress code, progress reports, receiving credits for coursework, sexual harassment policy, and access to the Internet.

We require that all parents/caregivers return this cover sheet acknowledging that this document has been received and read.

We also encourage parents/caregivers to contact the Director with comments and questions about our Parent/Caregiver Handbook.

Thank you,

Annie Russell, M.Ed.

FACE Director

*Please sign and return this form to the school office.*

I have received and read a copy of the FACE Parent/Caregiver Handbook, and I understand that if I have any questions about the Parent/Caregiver Handbook, I may consult the Director.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***This form will be kept on file at the school office.***