

## **2600 – North County Charter School Safety and Security**

### **A. Releasing a Student from School**

The organization is concerned about the safety of our students. Students will only be released to people who are their parents or legal guardians, unless we have received written permission to release the student to another adult, and that adult's name is entered into the Student Information System as an approved contact. In the case of divorce or separation of the parents, both parents shall have full rights until legal notification is provided to the school limiting the rights of either parent.

### **B. Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities**

It is the organization's policy to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies in promoting the welfare of students, staff and the community. In accordance with Florida law, an Indian River County Sheriff's Deputy, or designated School Resource Deputy (SRD) will be present on campus from the time gates open and close for the regular school day session.

### **Child Abuse, Molestation, Neglect**

The organization considers the welfare of students to be of paramount concern in its responsibilities. Therefore, all organization employees and volunteers are directed to take whatever action may be necessary as required by Chapter 39, and 827 F.S. and all statutes and laws of the state of Florida as regards to all instances of suspected child abuse, molestation and child neglect. We are a reporting agency, and not an investigatory entity. Therefore, NCCS administration and staff will not discuss reports made to law enforcement or the Department of Children & Families with any individual that may be the subject of, or reason for the report.

Any employee of the organization or volunteer who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families Abuse and Neglect Hotline. A person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. Further, a person who does make a report of suspected abuse in good faith has immunity from civil and criminal liability pursuant to § 39.203, F.S. The person making the call shall notify the Principal, or designee immediately. Any person who reports should keep a record of the date and time they made the report, whom they spoke to and the general information they provided to the Abuse Hotline. The school Principal should maintain records of the report but these should not be placed in a student cumulative folder.

The report shall be made under the following circumstances: When there is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or maltreatment has been inflicted through willful or negligent acts which result in neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical injury, or mental injury. Neglect is a failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter or medical condition. Abuse or maltreatment may also include aiding, abetting, counseling, hiring or procuring a child to perform or participate in any photographic motion picture, exhibition show, representation or other presentation which, in whole or in part, depicts sexual conduct, sexual excitement or masochistic abuse involving a child as defined by law.

### **Interviews, Interrogations and/or Removal from School by Law Enforcement, and Department of Children and Families Investigations**

Law enforcement interview, interrogation or removals - The school has legal jurisdiction over students during the school day and hours of approved extracurricular activities. The school administration is responsible for making an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials.

When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal, or designee will be present and the interview will be conducted in private. Additionally, unless the parent or legal guardian is the subject of law enforcement investigation, a reasonable effort will be made by the administration to notify the parent/guardian of law enforcement's request, or conduct of interviews on campus or during school-sponsored activities.

Removal of Student from School by Law Enforcement - Before a student at school is arrested or taken into custody by law enforcement or other legally authorized person, the school Principal, or designee will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student. The school Principal, or designee will also make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian that the student is being removed from school.

Department of Children & Families Investigations or Removals-The school Principal, or designee will not be present for DCF interviews related to neglect or abuse investigations; however, the Principal or designee will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school before providing time, space and access to the student(s). Further, the SRD will be notified when DCF officials arrive or request to use school time and/or facilities to conduct interviews, so that the SRD may check/verify if the circumstance has any possible crime associated with it.

#### **Reporting Violent Behavior**

The organization requires school administrators to report acts of school violence to teachers and other employees who are directly responsible for the student's education or who interact with the student in the performance of the employee's duties. School administrators will also disclose to appropriate staff members portions of any student's individualized education program that is related to past or potentially future violent behavior. Violent behavior and the phrase acts of school violence are defined as the use of physical force by a student with the intent to do serious physical injury to another person while on school property, including a school bus, or while involved in school activities.

In addition, the school Principal or designee will report to law enforcement officials, as soon as is reasonably practicable, the commission of any of the acts or related juvenile offenses which are committed on school property, including school buses, or while involved in school activities.

#### **C. Searches by School Personnel**

In accordance with the state and federal law, should a school administrator have reasonable suspicion that a crime or violation of school rules has occurred; the administrator has the authority to conduct an appropriate search. In cases where an immediate action may be necessary to secure a dangerous item, such as a fire arm, a knife, or harmful substance, any staff member may secure a student's property immediately, and restrain an individual to accomplish an immediate search.

Reasonable suspicion is defined to mean that the person initiating the search has a well-founded suspicion -- based on objective facts that can be articulated -- of either criminal activity, threat or a violation of school rules. Reasonable suspicion is more than a mere hunch or supposition.

If reasonable suspicion exists, and if the administration can justify the search at its inception, a reasonable search can be conducted to prove or disapprove the stated suspicion.

School property, such as student lockers, desks, computers or other devices may be searched by school administrators or staff who have a reasonable suspicion that they contain dangerous items, drugs, alcohol, or other materials that violate school rules, or that may pose a danger to the health or safety of students and school employees. In addition, the board authorizes the use of trained dogs to sniff lockers or other school

property to assist in the detection of the presence of drugs, explosives, and other contraband. The board does not need reasonable suspicion to utilize drug sniffing dogs.

Students or student property may be searched based on reasonable suspicion of a violation of school rules, policy or state law. The privacy and dignity of students shall be respected. Searches shall be carried out in the presence of adult witnesses, preferably both the individual conducting the search and the witness will be of the same gender as the student. Students may be asked to empty pockets, remove jackets, coats, shoes and other articles of exterior clothing for examination if reasonable under the circumstances. No employee shall perform a strip search of any student, where undergarments would be revealed, or removed. Law enforcement should be contacted, and the student should be kept under very close surveillance, if it is felt that an additional search might be necessary to secure a dangerous item on campus.

Law enforcement officials shall be contacted if the search produces a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, weapons, stolen goods or evidence of a crime, in any case involving a violation of law when a student refuses to allow a search, or where the search cannot safely be conducted. Parents may also be contacted, when it is reasonable and prudent to do so.

#### **D. Non-Employee Access to NCCS Facilities**

**Normal School Day (Including Before and After Care Program-7AM to 6PM)**-Non-Employees who are visitors to the school may not enter the campus until properly admitted through the main office by showing a proper ID (e.g. FL Driver's License) that may be successfully run through a check with the Raptor System. A visitor pass sticker will be issued, and the visitor must wear it prominently displayed on their chest in plain sight for the duration of the visit. If the office is not open (normal hours are 8AM to 4:30PM), or the office is not manned by an individual who can properly use the Raptor system, visitors may not be admitted onto the premises, with the following exceptions:

1-An employee meets the visitor at the front gate, escorts and maintains physical proximity to the visitor during the entire visit until they depart (e.g. A parent conference before or after school or a Before or After Care Parent).

***\*IMPORTANT: At NO TIME shall such visitors be allowed to supervise, or be left alone with any student, unless it is their own child. Approved volunteers with proper fingerprinting/background check authorization may be granted supervisory responsibilities under certain conditions, under the auspices of an employee.***

**After School Events**-Non-Employees attending events after school hours shall be expected to adhere to the following expectations:

Visitors who are spectators attending after school events such as drama productions, student demonstrations, academic fairs, graduations/celebrations, or orientation-type events may be admitted onto campus under the supervision of administration and/or appropriate approved staff; however, will be required to enter their name onto a sign-in list to verify and record their attendance. ***At no time shall they be allowed to supervise or be alone with any student other than their own child(ren).***

Visitors who are allowed to chaperone or help as a volunteer at a special event such as a dance, or student activity shall be placed on a list approved in advance by the administration, and shall meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Possess valid and up to date fingerprinting/background check and be on the school's current approved volunteer list; OR

2. Be scanned through raptor and provided a proper visitor pass by an approved employee. Visitors who are not fingerprinted and who are not on the approved volunteer list MAY NOT be placed solely in charge of any student or group of students. An administrator or school employee must be present, and hold the supervisory responsibility. A volunteer may never be in charge of a visitor working with students, other than their own child(ren).

**\*IMPORTANT:** All chaperones and volunteers for any event must be on an approved (by administration) list prior to the start of an after school activity. Once the list is approved, NO OTHER ADDITIONS to the list may be made without permission granted by an administrator, and no other visitor will be allowed through the school's gate to be on campus. Parents, or designees picking up children MUST wait outside the main gate when picking up their child. They will not be allowed through the gate.

**\*IMPORTANT:** Any chaperone or visitor that violates school policies or safety rules (e.g. using tobacco products on campus, participating in an unsafe act or removing a student from the supervision of authorized personnel), or who enters the premises under the influence of alcohol or drugs, will immediately be removed from campus, reported to law enforcement and likely be legally trespassed by the Indian River Sheriff's Department upon request for such action by the Director/Principal, and for an indefinite period of time.

Last, in keeping with generally established protocols for qualifying to volunteer at NCCS, any regular visitor performing a re-occurring role is to be properly placed formally on the volunteer list once vetted and approved by administration. This includes classroom volunteers, cafeteria volunteers, playground volunteers, field trip chaperones and other roles approved by the Director/Principal.

#### **E. Heat and Lightning Safety**

NCCS will follow the following protocol to protect students from potential heat injuries:

1. Secure an appropriately calibrated "wet bulb" device to measure "feels like" temperatures from the main office while students are outside in potentially dangerous heat conditions. Using this device, the following measurements and associated decisions will be utilized:
  - A. Heat Index is less than 95 degrees = Normal Outdoor Activities
  - B. Heat Index is 95 to 98 degrees = Outdoor Activities Will Be Limited to Shady Areas ONLY with Frequent Water/Hydration Breaks (Every Student/Every 10 Minutes)
  - C. Heat Index is 99 degrees or above = Outdoor Activities Cancelled

NCCS will follow the following protocol to protect students from potential harm due to lightning strikes:

1. Secure an appropriately calibrated lightning detection device to retain and monitor in the front office. Using this device, the following measurements and associated decisions will be utilized:
  - A. If lightning/dangerous electrical disturbance is detected within 10 miles of the school site, all students will be brought inside from recess/other outdoor activities. Students will also be required to use covered walkways when moving about the campus.
  - B. If lightning/dangerous electrical disturbance is detected within 10 miles of the school during dismissal, students will remain in classrooms until their names are called for pick up. At that time, they will follow covered routes, enter the main office, cue up in the vestibule and be escorted to cars/buses as duty staff are ready. Once it is all clear, large group dismissals may resume as normal. This decision must be made by an administrator, or the School Resource Deputy if an administrator is not available.

**Part F: UPDATE TO POLICY 2600-SCHOOL SAFETY**  
**(Related to House Bill 1473)**

**Adopted and Effective: June 12, 2024**

This is the School Safety Policy/Plan of North County Charter School. This policy is intended to comply with the requirements of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (as amended), Rule 6A-1.0018, Florida Administrative Code, Rule 6A-1.0017 Florida Administrative Code, and other relevant laws. This policy shall be considered confidential and exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, pursuant to Section 119.071(3), Florida Statutes.

**1.) School Hardening**

The School shall comply with the school safety requirements set forth in Section 1006.07 F.S. including, but not limited to locking all gates and doors when not being used for ingress or egress. If a gate or door is left unlocked, it must be actively supervised. Further, the School will comply with all inspection and reporting requirements. All classrooms will have shelter in place areas clearly marked, and all students will be notified of such spaces within the first 10 days of school.

**2.) School Safety Specialist**

The Director-Principal shall serve as the School Safety Specialist for the school. The identity of this person should be reported annually to the Governing Board. The School Safety Specialist is required to attend trainings regarding school safety procedures from the district and state. The individual shall also serve as a member of the Threat Assessment Team and shall be the point of contact for the School District of Indian River County Safety Specialist.

**3.) Emergency Procedures (Active Assailant Response Plan)**

North County Charter School has adopted Emergency Procedures which are incorporated by reference in Exhibit A. All school personnel must be trained annually on the protocols set forth in the Emergency Procedures no later than October 1 of each year.

**4.) Safe School Plan**

North County Charter School currently submits a Safe School Plan annually to the School District of Indian River County.

**5.) Threat Management**

North County Charter School will utilize the Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Manual for the School Threat Management Team (STMT). A copy of the Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Manual is attached hereto as Exhibit "C" and made a part of this policy. This policy should be referenced for all questions related to composition of the STMT, training for STMT members, recordkeeping, and procedures for conducting threat assessments and providing ongoing monitoring for identified threats.

#### **6.) Parent Notification and Access to Information**

Parents of charter school students have a right to the timely notification of threats, unlawful acts, and significant emergencies. If there is a threat to the health and safety of students and faculty on school grounds, during school transportation, or during school-sponsored activities, the Principal, or a designee, will provide parents with timely notification of the incident. In the case of an imminent threat of harm to students, including an active assailant incident or hostage situation, notification to parents must be made as soon as practicable. Such notification should be made in consultation with local law enforcement and first responders in order to avoid compromising the safety of students and the efficacy of the emergency response and investigation.

The extent of the information provided in the notice will depend on the individual circumstances of the event. In determining the content of notifications to parents, school personnel must consider including specific information about the threat or incident necessary to inform parents and safeguard the community as determined by the threat assessment team or the Principal. Such information may include the date and time of the incident, the location and nature of the threat or incident, how and whether the threat or incident was resolved, a description of the suspect (where applicable), crime prevention and safety tips, and crime and threat reporting information. Notifications must be made in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. s. 1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, and Section 1002.22, F.S.

Examples of unlawful acts and significant emergencies requiring notification to parents, include, but are not limited to:

- Fires
- Natural emergencies, including hurricanes, tornadoes, and severe storms
- Active assailant and hostage situations
- Bomb threats
- Weapons possession or use when there is intended harm toward another person
- Murder, homicide, or manslaughter
- Sex offenses, including rape, sexual assault, or sexual misconduct with a student by school personnel
- Exposure as a result of a manmade emergency
- Specific and articulable threats of harm against an individual or individuals
- Other significant events

**Reunification.** Employees should follow the reunification procedures set forth in the Emergency Procedures.

### **7.) SESIR**

School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) will be implemented with fidelity throughout the school year in accordance with Rule 6A-1.0017, Florida Administrative Code. SESIR incidents that require a SESIR report pursuant to the rule will immediately be reported to the School Resource Officer or to another Law Enforcement Officer. The Principal or designee will be responsible for reporting each SESIR incident and will undergo the required SESIR reporting training. Pursuant to Section 1002.33(9)(r)2., Florida Statutes, parents of charter school students have a right to access school safety and discipline incidents as reported through SESIR.

### **8.) Involvement of Law Enforcement**

In the event of an imminent threat or actual occurrence of harm to any persons in the school community, the Principal or their designee, will immediately contact law enforcement and notify them of the incident. The administration will also consult with law enforcement for all Level I and Level II SESIR offenses, as identified in Rule 6A-1.0017, Florida Administrative Code. This is not intended to limit the authority of school personnel to involve law enforcement in any matter relating to a suspected or actual violation of the law or in any other circumstance warranting the involvement of law enforcement.

### **9.) Safe-School Officer**

The school shall comply with Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, and ensure that a safe-school officer is present on campus during the school day when the campus is open for instruction. This is accomplished via annual agreement with the Indian River County Sheriff's Department.

### **10.) FortifyFL**

North County Charter School will adequately promote the use of FortifyFL, the mobile suspicious activity reporting tool operated by the State of Florida. The Principal or designee will ensure that there is a link on the school's website, at least two newsletters per year will make reference to the service, and posters will be made available on the community bulletin board. In addition, the application will be installed on all mobile devices issued to students, and the site will be bookmarked on all computer devices issued to students. The Board will designate one or more persons who are authorized to receive tips through FortifyFL and ensure that accurate and up-to-date contact information is timely maintained in the FortifyFL database.

### **11.) Mobile Panic Alert System**

The Director-Principal shall annually review options for a mobile panic alert system and ensure that the system is installed and working properly. The Director-Principal will also ensure that appropriate staff members are trained on the use of the system. The Principal or their designee, will work with emergency services to ensure the system is set up and operating appropriately. The mobile panic alert system will meet the requirements set forth in Section 1006.07(4)(c), Florida Statutes. The system in place for NCCS is CENTEGIX. The mobile panic alert system includes mobile devices worn by all staff across the school campus, every day (push button cards). In determining the number and placement of devices needed to afford all staff members

the ability to silently and easily activate the panic alert in the event of an on-campus emergency, the school has consider use of a combination of fixed panic alert buttons, mobile and desktop applications, landline phone capabilities, and wearable panic alerts (such as on a lanyard).

#### 12.) Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool (FSSAT)

In order for the School District of Indian River County's School Safety Specialist to complete the school security risk assessment at the school, school personnel will cooperate with the School Safety Specialist's requests for information and access. The Board and administration must ensure that any information needed for required reporting of safety information within FSSAT is timely provided to SDIRC according to their policies, as necessary. The school will also cooperate with the SDIRC School Safety Specialist in allowing first responders and public safety agencies to tour the campus every three years to provide recommendations related to school safety.

#### 13.) Emergency Drills

The School Safety Plan will clearly document the procedures and details for drills and emergency evacuations. All students and staff members shall be made aware of the plan. Maps highlighting the escape routes for fire drills will be posted in all school rooms and provided to students and staff if requested.

- **Requirements for Drills.** All persons on the campus during an emergency or fire drill must participate in the drill. During emergency drills, fire drills, and during actual emergencies, NCCS staff will use plain language to communicate the nature of the emergency and instructions to students and staff. Plain language means communication that can be understood by the intended audience, which is free of coded language, jargon, and acronyms, and meets the purpose of the communicator. NCCS will vary the conditions of emergency drills and fire drills. Drills must be held at both expected and unexpected times and under varying conditions that require school staff, students, and building occupants to take protective actions based on the specific circumstances of the simulated incident. The time of day in which emergency drills and fire drills are held must be varied. In setting the drill schedule, the NCCS administration must consider drills beginning at nonstandard times, such as within an hour of the start of the school day, during lunch, when students are between classes, or within an hour of the end of the school day. Emergency drills and fire drills must test all applicable functions included in the threat scenario, such as panic buttons, participant movement (lockdown, shelter-in-place, or evacuation), simulated communications with first responders, notification to parents, and appropriate protective actions, such as turning off lights, and covering windows. Emergency drills and fire drills must be conducted in accordance with developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate procedures.
- **Frequency:** Fire drills must be completed monthly or as often as otherwise required under Florida's Fire Prevention Code. NCCS will conduct six (6) emergency drills every school year that are nonconcurrent with fire drills. One (1) emergency drill must take place within the first ten (10) days of the beginning of the school year, and the remaining drills must take place at least every forty-five (45) days that school is in session. Four (4) of the six (6) emergency drills must address active threats. The

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remaining two (2) drills must address other emergency events, such as severe weather, natural disasters, hazardous materials, or reunification. Law enforcement officers must be physically present on each school campus and directly involved in the execution of active assailant emergency drills, unless their presence is determined to be unnecessary by the sheriff.

- **After Action Reports:** An after-action report must be completed following each emergency drill and fire drill. After-action reports must identify the type of drill, location and date of the drill, participants, and involvement of law enforcement or other public safety agencies. In addition, the after-action report must describe actions taken by participants, must analyze areas of success and areas where improvement is needed, and include input from public safety agencies and a plan for corrective action. After-action reports must be submitted to the SDIRC School Safety Specialist for review fifteen (15) calendar days following drill completion, or as otherwise required by SDIRC.

#### **14.) Hurricane Closures**

The organization will follow the same emergency closures as SDIRC. Parents should monitor local news outlets during inclement weather. If the public schools are closed, the school will also be closed. In the event that multiple closures occur, and time must be made up, school days will be added according to the adopted amended school calendar by the school's governing board.

#### **15.) Submission of Documents to District**

All relevant forms and documents may be found in the Emergency Binder at the front desk. NCCS will timely submit all required documentation related to school safety, including, but not limited to, the following to SDIRC:

1. FSSAT plan submitted annually to state
2. Annual Safe School Plan for Evacuations provided to SDIRC, by submitting in Charter Links, by prescribed due date
3. Annual Student Crime Watch Program- *FortifyFL 1006.07(3) F.S.* and comply with posting requirements, 943.03, provided to SDIRC.
4. First Responder/ Law Enforcement Agency Tour of school site (every 3 years-due May 30, 2022—next due date 24-25 SY. 1006.07 (6)(a)(4) F.S provided to SDIRC.
5. Annually schedule and conduct periodic testing of Communications Systems 006.07 (4)(c) F.S. Submit Communication Test to SDIRC.
6. Annual SDIRC Weapon Use, Hostage, and Active Assailant Situation Training each year with local Law Enforcement. 1006.07 (4)(b)(1) F.S. Submit Attendance Verification Form.

#### **16.) Violation.**

Staff members who knowingly violate this safety policy, or any other law, rule, or policy regarding school safety, including section one of this Policy, shall be subject to the progressive discipline policy.

**Board Secretary Certificate**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Section F of the NCCS Safety and Security Policy was adopted by a majority vote of a quorum of the Governing Board of Directors at a duly noticed meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Adopted: May, 2023

Updated: March 11, 2024 (To Add Part D)

Updated: April, 17, 2024 (To Add Part E)

Updated: June 12, 2024 (To Add Part F)